

AMONG the DEAD™

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GDW

DARK CONSPIRACYTM

2107

Among the

Dead

TM

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Among the Dead

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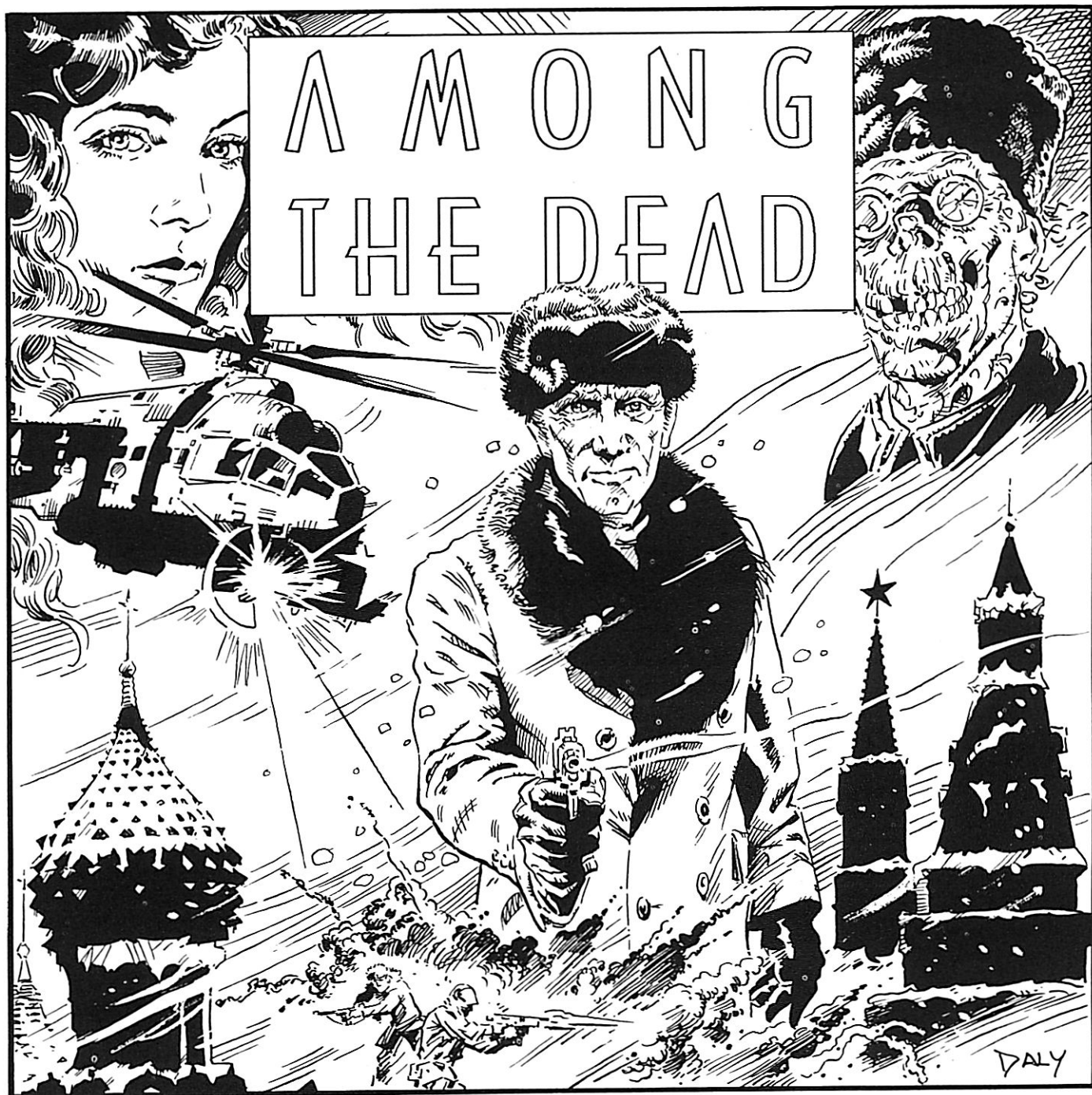
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In the week since Davis had taken the custodial job with the hospital, we had prepared. They wouldn't let Davis into ward seven, but we were as familiar with it as several dozen snapshots through a telephoto lens and the blueprints we had would allow. At the edge of the security fence, Bannerman hooked up the alligator clips from the black box he said would neutralize the alarms, and we cut through the wire mesh like we'd been doing it all our lives. We ran across the grounds as quickly as possible, hoping nobody was watching the back fence by the East River. We had to go through the fence because when Bannerman and

Viktor examined the electronic locks, neither was sure their mag-card lashup would crack them.

Ward seven was fairly remote from the rest of the hospital, one of those big, brick, institutional eyesores that always seem to cover with about a zillion layers of off-white paint—I guess once you paint brick, you have to do it forever and ever.

Collins had called in a favor from one of her friends at city hall and got a look at the architects' plans of the hospital. Ward seven was one of the older buildings, and she said we could probably gain access through the old steam tunnels. The boiler building had been made into a warehouse



when the hospital converted over to gas heat, but Collins figured they hadn't bothered to fill in the tunnels. "People usually forget about them," she assured us. She used to be a professional burglar, so I guess she knows about this stuff.

The side door to the warehouse (boiler building) was padlocked, but Collins' picks made short work of it, and we were inside. The access plate to the steam tunnels had been tacked shut with an arc-welder—dots of brazing metal at the four corners—but they were old and poorly done. A couple of minutes' work with a crowbar, and we were climbing down into the steam tunnels. We turned on our flashlights, and Collins got out her compass and began to study the blueprint copies. I studied our surroundings.

The steam tunnel was lined with old, cracked concrete. It had a rusting pipe running down the middle, swathed in enough flaking asbestos insulation to give lung cancer to everyone on the East Coast. The tunnel was about six feet high, so some of us were going to have to duck our heads. Any gunplay at all would be deafening, and we would be exceedingly lucky if none of the tunnels had seeping groundwater in them. Off in the distance, I could hear faint sounds, which I tried to tell myself were just rats.

Don't you just love it when a plan comes together?

AMONG THE DEAD

As the Earth slips further into chaos and despair, some places have that far less to slide:

Amidst the chaos and desperation of day-to-day life in the big city, authorities have little time to monitor anything but the most vital services and centers, and the Dark Minions have taken full advantage of this. One of New York City's largest children's hospitals, funded by "private donations," is being used to provide orphans as human raw material for some unspeakable purpose. This could have gone unnoticed for a long time, had not one of the nurses stumbled on part of the secret. She vanished, just another victim of the city's lawlessness, but leaving a worried and suspicious uncle. Now a man's love for a niece he never met is going to plunge the characters into corruption and intrigue at the very heart of the darkest of conspiracies.

In another part of the world, Moscow—once the heart of a great empire, then of a global superpower—presides over the remnants of a fallen giant. The high hopes for democracy and prosperity that followed the end of the Soviet Union are forgotten now, after the savage ethnic and political brushfire wars that ripped the new union into what is now called the Time of Troubles. A series of dirty and ultimately pointless squabbles and clashes to settle historical feuds, seize valuable resources and establish new frontiers, the Troubles left society, economies and dreams all shattered. By the end, even a few tactical nuclear weapons had been used, and some of the Russian countryside still bears the visible and invisible marks of modern war at its most destructive and pitiless.

From the Minions' perspective, a job well done.

Behind it all, amidst the ruins of a Russia blighted by pollution, war, hunger and fear, stands an age-old figure of unimaginable evil. Once he was called *Koshchey Bessmertny*, Koshchey the Undying, and he became the dark enemy of fairy tales and folklore, a name to whisper when the moon passed behind a cloud. In the 1930s and '40s, people called him another name, and he became the sinister mind behind the deaths of millions in the Siberian GULag.

Now, with the world overrun by the Dark, it has become a playground for Koshchey. His interest has been aroused in the dark passions and echoing psychic resonances of Stalin's terror. Koshchey is happy with his latest joke, having risen as patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church and member of the committee which governs Moscow. For the moment, he is happy to let his underlings prepare Moscow for a fearsome experiment—it promises to be a wondrous spectacle, fit for his jaded palate! He is content to let the pitiful humans secretly (they think) try to trace his roots and define what he is—he is what he is, and has no curiosity beyond that. He is filled with glee at the prospect of the next little treat he has in store for Moscow—let the good old days of the terror come back in style!

What he does not know is that the death of a nurse threatens to bring the loose strands together into the net that may at last drag him down. If, that is, the PCs are able to face and overcome the horrors waiting them **Among the Dead**.

REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

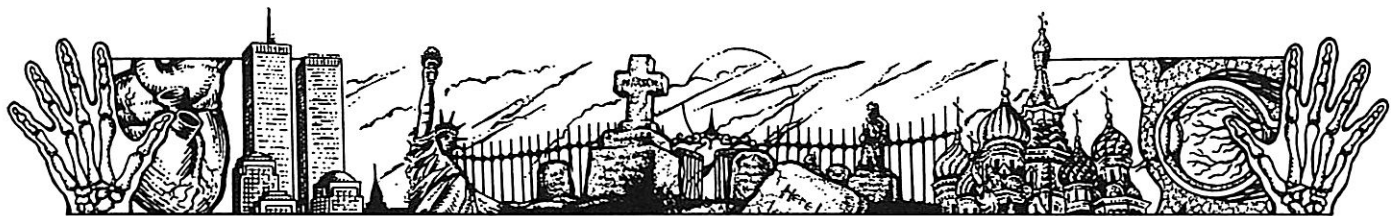
Players should not read this section, nor any other portion of the book, unless permitted to do so by the referee.

This book contains adventure sequences which are designed to lead into one another. For example, not only does the resolution of the first sequence trigger the second, but clues in the early sequences have a direct bearing on the climax of the series. The sequence of events, however, should not become a straightjacket. If the characters want to follow a sideline interest, let them, while reserving the right to introduce some external factor to bring them back on track.

After all, the real progression is one based on evidence and events. As matters unfold, new dangers come to light, and one incident triggers another. In such troubled and chaotic times, who are really masters of their own destiny?

Referees should familiarize themselves with the background material for New York (page 55) and Moscow (page 62).





A CRY FOR HELP

The starting point of the adventure is Alexander Lobov, a wealthy, independent business man. Lobov resides in whatever city the characters are in (it will be necessary for the referee to make some slight adaptations if the group is in New York).

The most likely approach is that Lobov has heard of the characters as reliable and efficient people who might also have a talent for dealing with the more unusual of circumstances. Alternatively, he might be a business contact, or be able to exert pressure or open negotiations with the characters through some official connection.

On meeting the characters, Lobov is at first reserved and formal, but he becomes increasingly emotional, even desperate. He is a strong-willed man, sincere, but seriously worried. He is concerned by some letters he recently received. His niece, Annya Makasheva, whom he calls *Annushka* (little Annya), recently disappeared without a trace in New York, a section of the massive metroplex known as New Boswash.

When the New York police were unable to find any trace of her, Lobov hired a private detective. But after several phone calls and a number of letters, the detective couldn't shed any light on the mystery, either. Clear-eyed and well-connected, Lobov is aware that, as he puts it, "we live in a different world than our fathers did," and this does nothing to ease his fears.

Lobov explains that he and his sister had a falling-out long ago over something better left buried. They did not communicate for years, and Lobov had effectively forgotten about her until her recent death. He was unaware that his sister had a daughter, and Annya Makasheva learned of him only when she found his name in the family Bible she inherited upon her mother's death.

They began corresponding, but when he invited her to join him, she refused to accept money from him, insisting that she must first graduate from nursing school and then earn her own way to America. Upon graduation, she managed to get a job in New York, taking advantage of a shortage of trained nurses to get a visa and to get the hospital to pay for her passage. For a moment, the old man's pride shines through his sadness.

Lobov then passes over Annya's last few let-

ALEXANDER ("SASHA") LOBOV

Alexander Mikhailovich Lobov, 63, was a child of *perestroika*. When the Soviet Union began opening up and moving toward a market economy, he played an enthusiastic part. Fluent in English, dynamic and effective, he became an overseas representative for a St. Petersburg industrial corporation, marketing everything from tractors to "Gorby" dolls. As the USSR



began to fragment, and new emergent industrial economies in the Pacific and Eastern Europe overtook it, he was faced with a dilemma: Stay in America or return to the motherland. The birth of his twin daughters, Elena and Katerina, decided matters, and he remained in the US. But America is not so comfortable now—his wife and daughters are dead, killed in a senseless and unreported terrorist bombing. Finding no solace in a fortune built up over 40 years of dealing and trading, he has become increasingly interested in and sentimental about his family. When contacted by his niece, Lobov was surprised and delighted. Rich but lonely, Lobov hoped Annushka would become a new daughter of sorts to fill the emptiness in his life. He harbors a belief that she is still alive, somewhere, and he is willing to back this belief with his fortune.

Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 5; Intelligence 7

Skills: 4; Bargain 5, Russian 9, English 6

Initiative: 2

Motivation: *Heart Queen:* Lobov has transferred his love for his dead children onto Annushka. *Diamond Four:* Lobov believes money is the only guarantee of personal freedom, and he accumulates it by reflex these days.

ters (see pages 9-14), written in idiosyncratic English, which tell the tale of an increasingly worried young woman, and the letter from the New York detective agency.

"Please," he concludes, "no matter what happened, I must know. Money is no object, but find my *Annushka*."



"NEW YORK, NEW YORK"

Lobov provides transportation to New York, hotel rooms (nothing fancy, but no flophouse) and \$1000 each for expenses. The investigation in New York will lead the PCs, directly or indirectly, to Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital and a horrifying secret. Annya Makasheva stumbled onto this secret and has vanished into the depths of the building known as ward seven.

The horrible secret of ward seven is this: Brains and other tissues from the young patients at the hospital are being harvested, frozen and sealed in stainless-steel biological material containers, little silver coffins stenciled with the mysterious letters BPX. Deep beneath ward seven, in long forgotten steam tunnels dating from before the hospital's construction, the aluminium containers are wheeled through a mysterious portal that carries them to a place not as far away in time and space as you might think—a warehouse in the center of the old city of Moscow.

MOSCOW

If the PCs follow the BPX containers through the portal, they arrive just as the Moscow end is attacked by a fanatical but not completely competent anti-Minion group sworn to combat the Dark Minions whenever and wherever they are found. All they succeed in doing this time, however, is involve the group in a firefight and completely wreck the portal, stranding the PCs in Moscow.

Fortunately, the attackers are also affiliated with the Moscow version of the international empathic underground movement, so the characters have allies in the strange land.

In the city of Moscow, the PCs discover clues to lead them further in their dual quest—the search for Annya and for the reason behind the New York atrocities. The poor victims in their silver boxes are being used as parts for a grandiose piece of DarkTek, a computer network designed to pick up, amplify and broadcast psychic disturbances as part of a larger plan to tap into the residual energies left by the millions of deaths and the monstrous suffering of the Stalin era—the persecutions, purges and prison camps. The device will enable the Dark Lord Koshchey to regress the population back to the height of the terror—and this time, it will be terror without an end.

The system is being built underground, along the shafts and tunnels of the metro. Not only will this provide a network covering the city, it will be amplified by the psychic residues in the oldest tunnels—those built by Stalin were constructed with slave labor under terrible conditions.

The underground leads the group into the real underground—the abandoned tunnels of the old Moscow subway system, built in the 1930s with political prisoners as slave labor. In destroying the BPX biocomputer, the group must destroy part of the subway system, angering Moscow's governing committee—and the Dark Lord Koshchey.

THE STEEL ANGEL

Unfortunately, the governing committee approves exit visas. Since the portal by which they entered the country was destroyed, the PCs must stay out of trouble until a decision on their case can be made—they are, after all, illegal aliens.

The underground suggests that the PCs pass the time and do a great service by looking into some strange events in the city of Kazan. In the process, the PCs uncover the rest of the Dark Minion plot. They also discover that Koshchey, Beria (Stalin's chief of Secret Police and, some say, puppet master) and Mikhail (patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church) are all three one and the same.

The group must destroy Koshchey's influence on the committee, thwart his latest plot, find Annya if they can, and get back home safely.

RUSSIAN NAMES

Russian names are slightly different from those the readers normally run into, and a short explanation seems appropriate. First and last names are like those you are used to: Pavel Chekov, Alexandra Rozanov and so on. Instead of a middle name, however, Russians receive a *patronymic*, a name derived from the name of their father. Patronymics have either masculine (-*vich*) or feminine (-*vna*) endings, depending upon the sex of the person named: *Mikhailovich* is son of *Mikhail* (Michael); *Pavelovich*, son of *Pavel* (Paul); *Mikhailovna*, *Pavelovna* is daughter of, etc. Friends will often refer to each other using only first name and patronymic: Boris Ilyevich, Natasha Feodorovna and so on.

PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

○ Dearest Uncle Sasha!

○ I try to write by English for August 10
now I am here in America.
New York seems very strange
after Vologda, very large, and can
be quite "frighten". But I soon
have good job in hospital again,
and I will learn well, and will
soon have enough to buy flight.
Thank you, but I will pay my own
way. I's pride of the Labor family!

○ I share flat with three other
girls. One is Mary Maximovna Trulina
from Novosibirsk, and she works at
hospital where I am applicationed.
One is called Annita Santos and she
draws pictures for American
magazine advertisements. We laugh
because we have the same name,
almost. One is Barbara Adams, and
she is first American black person
I meet. She works with Annita,
but she writes things for advertisements,
not pictures. They do not work for
one company, but this one sometimes
and that one other times.

○ Love to you, Respected Uncle,

Annushka



Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital
Roosevelt Island
New York City, NY 10299
(212) 555-1234

Dearest Uncle Sasha! August 14
I have finished my first day at the hospital. It is the children's hospital, on the Roosevelt's Island. It is quite big and quite modern compared to the hospitals at home, but I am told that it is not the best of American hospitals. Roosevelt's Island is near the Manhattan Island, and from the windows of the hospital I can look out and see the giant towers the other nurses call "Fort Stinging Ridge." What a funny name!

The hospital is a specialist in children, but very strange. The doctors are men, not like at home. They tell us we must be professional, and do what told. As if not what did we do before! Marya is working on the same shift as I, which is good, for the other nurses seem quite silent and busy. Our section cares for orphans, which is important job. They are very young babies and my heart aches because some are so weak. We make them stronger to be adopted.

I am doing my own washing now, to save on the cleaning bills. I have liberated (is right word?) writing paper of hospital. They have so much and everyone takes some, even chief nurse.

I look forward to coming to live with you.

Love,
Annushka



Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital
Roosevelt Island
New York City, NY 10299
(212) 555-1234

Dearest Uncle!

Work is busy - there are so many poor little ones. I have met a very nice boy, here, in the hospital. His name is Viktor, and he is computer worker, which means he makes computers work in records office. He has help me get into American citizen class, and soon I take test.

We meet, but we must keep quiet, for the hospital does not like relations (is right word? I think so) in staff. He is from Siberia, too, and is funny. At this is flat in place called Mike's town. Small, but his alone, and so we can meet without chief nurse (a Dragon!!!) knowing. It is not as good as the place I know staff, but it is near the 57th Street and the American Avenue.

Did I tell you about the special laboratory? Many children are sent there for operations and then are adopted. Marya is transferred there next week, because she train in scrub nurse operations. Special laboratory is run by Doctor Seabrock, but he is a very important man, and I have never see him. Also, I wonder, how do his operations make people adopt children?

Weather goes rain and city seems grey and sad. Money is short, but I do good work and save a little each week. I look forward to seeing you, as soon as I can.

Your Annushka



Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital
Roosevelt Island
New York City, NY 10299
(212) 555-1234

September 20
Dearest Uncle!
Thank you for the birthday message
in the funny little card! For my
birthday, Viktor and I go to eat in a
place called the Russian Tea Room, but
it is a restaurant, and I am glad I was
not paying, for the prices are very
large. It was very good, especially
pierogi, which were almost as good as
those of Grandmother Rozanov (I hope
she does not anger if I call her Grandmother
instead of Babushka, but I want to
be American in all things).

Last night Marya shouts with me
about washing the dishes. She cries
sometimes when she thinks I do not see
her, and she will not tell me what is
wrong. At first I think that Doctor
Seabrock wants relations with her, but
now I am not so sure, because Marya
means in her sleep about babies and
little silver boxes. I am very purple.
Your Annushka



Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital
Roosevelt Island
New York City, NY 10299
(212) 555-1234

Dearest Uncle!

September 28
Terrible day!!! Marya went to shop
in the city and she killed by criminals!
I do not like New York, it frighten
me. As soon as I have saved, I come to
live with you. Not everywhere in
America has danger as New York, Uncle
Sasha? I am sure not.
All of us here is (are?) sad for Marya.
She has funeral Monday and we all
will go to honor her.
I wish I could leave this place
today!

With Sadness,
Annushka

Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital
Roosevelt Island
New York City, NY 10299
(212) 555-1234



Dearest Uncle Sasha!

October 12
Yesterday I had shouts with Chief
Nurse, and she said something which
frighten me. She say I must be
careful or I end up like Marya. What
am not the fool, that is threat. What
did Marya do? If Marya not killed
by criminals, who did? Did that kill
her because she shouts with Chief
Nurse?
I want to come and live with you
and forget all about this place, but
first I must do some things, or I
will suffer conscience pains (right
words?). On Monday I am success
filled, I will buy ticket and fly to you.
Your Annushka



D. Phillip Colligan Associates

Confidential Inquiries
2 WestBrooke Square, suite 2134
New York, NY, 10282-4837-2134

8 November

Mr. Lobov,

In the matter of the whereabouts of your niece, Annya F. Makasheva, I regret that my associates and I have been unable to uncover anything that the city police have not already found.

The police report (copy enclosed) indicates that your niece was last seen in the early afternoon of Sunday, 16 October by her roommate Barbara Adams. Ms. Adams told investigating officers that Annya left the apartment at approximately 1:15 PM, but did not state a purpose or a destination. Investigation officers report questioning Annya's roommates and others in her building without a result. A check with the morgue turned up a number of unidentified bodies matching Annya's description, but fingerprint evidence eliminated the possibility that any of them were Annya.

Investigation of taxi records show no pickup of a woman answering Annya's description. My associates and I canvassed the neighborhood with a photograph of Annya, we were not able to locate anyone who could remember seeing her that day, although many people in her building and in adjacent ones recognized her face. A check of the nearest bus routes revealed nothing (most drivers do not pay much attention to passengers), and the subway token stations are automated.

Our conclusions match those of the investigating police detectives, namely that the circumstances of your niece's disappearance will remain unknown unless further evidence is uncovered.

It is my unpleasant task to suggest that your niece probably met with accident or foul play, as there is nothing in her background to suggest that she would voluntarily disappear. Realistically, I see no point in further investigation.

I have arranged for a final bill to be sent via separate cover. If Colligan Associates can ever be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

D. Phillip Colligan
D. Phillip Colligan

DPC/Ic
cc: files
Enc: 1



THE BIG APPLE





Once in New York, the group will want to secure a base of operations and begin the investigation.

Lobov has arranged for the PCs to have a group of adjoining rooms in the Hotel Lexington, in the 300 block of West 57th Street. This is on the edge of the Hell's Kitchen Anthill, but the hotel security is good, and the group will have a fairly secure base of operations. The Lexington is maintained by a cartel of Tojicorp sublicensees, businesses which have reason to want to be near the Tojicorp corporate tower but which do not have enough influence to get a suite in the tower itself. Lobov does business with most of these corporations.

Lobov has arranged for a rental car to be placed at the characters' disposal while they are in New York, stored in the Lexington's parking garage.

INVESTIGATION

The PCs will presumably want to conduct their own investigation into the disappearance of Annya Makasheva. Lobov has provided copies of Annya's letters and several photographs, one of her in uniform. The section below discusses the clues the group will run into, and the results of various encounters.

POLICE

A first step many groups will take might be to get in touch with one or more law enforcement agencies. New Boswash has no single police department. The old police jurisdictions are still in force—federal, state, county and city. The state and county police forces do not operate in New York City.

New York Police

Contacting the New York City police will prove to be largely a waste of time. The PCs will meet with layer after layer of bureaucracy—from the local precinct station house to the missing persons branch of the headquarters detective division—and will be unable to learn anything the letters have not already told them.

Annya: Characters with law enforcement backgrounds can learn that Annya's disappearance was investigated as well as an overworked

detective squad could manage, given their limited resources, but no special effort was made. The file remains open, but no detective is currently assigned.

Marya: As for the death of Marya Trubina, a very sparse police report reads that her body was found in a garbage dumpster in an alley off West 21st Street, battered and slashed. She left her apartment in the West Village seven hours earlier, intending to buy groceries. Evidence at the site indicated that two or more individuals were involved, and that robbery did not seem to be the motive. There were no witnesses, no fingerprints and no suspects. The case remains open, but no detectives are assigned.

Contacts: If a character has a contact with the New York City police, the referee can allow the PCs to learn two additional facts:

- Annya and Marya were not the first workers at the hospital to vanish or die.
- A detective looking into links between these disappearances was found shot once in the temple at close range with her service weapon (evidence was insufficient to prove murder or suicide). Since this incident, no one in the department is very interested in looking too closely at what's going on at Roosevelt Island.

Empathy: Police officers encountered will not have any direct experience with the case and will not have been "warned off." Characters with Human Empathy can detect nothing of particular use except a general unease about looking too closely into the disappearances.

Federal Agencies

Federal law enforcement agencies contacted about the disappearance will claim they have no jurisdiction. "We can't get involved. Missing persons are a local matter. There's no evidence of a kidnapping, no evidence of a federal crime—no solid evidence of anything."

Contacts: Contacts with federal agencies will reveal that the feds suspect that something funny is going on at Roosevelt Island, but they lack the personnel to follow up on these suspicions.

Empathy: Characters with Human Empathy can detect nothing of particular use from any of the federal agents.



Detective

If the PCs seek out the detective, D. Phillip Colligan, he will not be willing to talk to them until they mention Alexander Lobov, at which point he will agree to see them briefly. He will repeat the information he gave in his letter to Lobov and try to dismiss the characters as quickly as possible. Colligan is an experienced NPC and a competent investigator, but he has his reasons for wanting the group to stop the investigation into Annya's disappearance.

Empathy: Characters making an Average Human Empathy roll can sense that Colligan is deathly afraid of something. An outstanding success will reveal that his life has been threatened if he looks too closely into the disappearance of Annya Makasheva or anything else connected with the hospital.

State Agencies

State law enforcement officials will claim they do not have jurisdiction. Attempts to use contacts or empathy reveal nothing of use.

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

A canvas of the neighborhood around Annya's apartment will produce nothing useful. Most of the people never give their neighbors a second thought and keep pretty much to themselves. A number of inhabitants of Annya's building recognize her photograph as that of the Russian nurse from the fifth floor. The remarks will be something like: "Yeah, I saw her plenty of times. Name's Anna or something. Ain't seen her lately."

Empathy: Characters with Human Empathy will be able to detect nothing of particular use.

Roommates

None of Annya's remaining roommates work at the hospital, and none will be familiar with conditions there, except for what they heard from Annya (which is nothing the characters have not already learned from Annya's letters). Questioning of Barbara Adams will reveal an inconsistency with the police report (as described in Colligan's letter). Annya did give a reason the day she left:

FOREBODINGS

The first visit to the Roosevelt Island Childrens' Hospital should induce a slight uneasy feeling in characters with Foreboding skill. Nothing specific, just a hunch that something is not quite what it seems. After the visit (or at whatever point seems convenient) the referee should have one or more members of the group experience the following dream:

You are walking along a dark, underground tunnel. The roof reaches about eight feet above your head, and the tunnel is wide enough to drive cars through. It seems to have an inch or so of gooey mud on the bottom. It smells wet, dank and musty, like it has been sealed for a long time.

As you walk along, you hear your feet slurping as you pull them out of the mud. After you walk for a couple of minutes, the tunnel grows brighter, and you see that the walls are covered with pinkish-purple stuff, covered with folds and convolutions, and shot throughout with tiny red lines. You look down, and the floor is covered with the same stuff, and your feet are submerged in it up to your ankles. Then you notice that the little red lines are blood vessels, and the pink-purple stuff is folded and convoluted like brain tissue! You're filled with a nameless fear, and you try to run back down the way you came, but the gooey stuff sucks at your feet, clinging and climbing up your calves and around your knees. Arms—little arms, like those of children—reach out of the stuff on the walls and the floor, and begin writhing and grasping. The stuff is over your knees now, and you are slowing down as you finally see the edge of the stuff and the bare concrete of the tunnel a few feet away. Just five or six more steps. The arms—thousands of them—are grasping and pulling at your legs. You make one final lunge to escape the pink mire—one of the arms trips you, and you fall into the stuff, submerged in it up to your armpits now. The ooze is filled with thousands of arms, and childrens' faces, and you see parts of their bodies surface and submerge in the goo as the arms grasp at you, pull you under, slowly, agonizingly. A hand grabs your hair, then another and another. Your face is pulled under—you scream, but your mouth fills with brains and gore, and nothing comes out but a muffled, bubbling whimper.

You wake up in a cold sweat, heart racing, hands shaking.

"She said she was going the hospital—that there was something she had to do or she wouldn't be able to live with herself."

If asked about this, Barbara will become a



little irritated but will confirm that she told the police detectives and Colligan the same thing: Annya said she was going to the hospital, and was going to use Marya's card—whatever that means."

Barbara will add that Annya had arranged to borrow some money from her and Annita in order to buy a plane ticket, promising that she would repay it once she settled in with her uncle and got a job. She obviously did not intend to disappear and did not intend to kill herself.

Annya's possessions are still in the room she shared with Marya, boxed up. If the PCs wish to examine them, they will have to convince Barbara to allow it (a situation that will have to be roleplayed out). The PCs will find a small quantity of clothing, a number of books in Russian and English, photos, toys and other mementos of her family, and Annya's hospital ID card.

Empathy: Characters with Human Empathy

DR. NICHOLAS SEABOCK

With his cool, unblinking stare, flat, lifeless tone and absolute lack of any compassion for his charges, it might be easy to think that Dr. Nicholas Seabock, 39, is an alien or Dark Minion. He is, unfortunately, all human—in the loosest sense of the world.

Amoral, motivated only by knowledge and the satisfaction of possessing secrets closed to everyone else, he was a perfect subject for the Dark Minions' blandishments and the ideal man to run their evil laboratory.

Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 5; **Intelligence** 10, **Education** 9, **Empathy** 1

Skills: 4; **Medical** 9

Initiative: 3

Motivation: *Diamond King:* Seabock thinks only of himself, and his own concept of his destiny. *Spade Queen:* He is totally free of any sentimentalism, mercy, or concept of morality or fair play.



will detect in the roommates considerable concern for Annya, but nothing else except the usual uneasiness of talking with a stranger about a sensitive subject.

HOSPITAL

The Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital is an obvious place to seek answers about Annya. This section of the adventure will cover a casual visit by PCs seeking general information about her. A description of the hospital and a discussion of more serious expeditions will be covered in the next section of this book.

Receptionist: The hospital has a reception desk inside the public entrance, and the hospital does have visiting hours, as noted by a large sign by the entrance. However, because of the type of patients (mainly indigent and orphaned children) and its location (an island in the East River), visitors are rather rare. A large sign at the door requires all visitors to obtain a visitor's pass from the receptionist on duty.

Actually having visitors is pretty much of a novelty for the receptionist, so the PCs will not have much trouble striking up a conversation. The receptionist will enquire which patient the group is visiting, issue a visitor's pass to each member of the group, and offer to direct them to the correct room.

Visitors' Passes: Most hospitals in the world of *Dark Conspiracy* require that visitors obtain a visitor's pass, good for one specified day, at any time during the stated visiting hours. Visitors' passes are sealed inside a machine under the receptionist's desk, and deteriorate within six to eight hours upon exposure to the air. The receptionist touches a button, and the machine stamps a time/date code on the pass and rolls it out. The passes come with a peel-off adhesive strip to facilitate attachment to a visitor's clothing (like the "Hello! My name is..." badges at conventions and trade shows).

Visitors without passes or visitors in areas not open to the public will be escorted off the grounds by hospital security.

Questions: If the PCs ask about Annya, they will be referred to the chief nurse, Helen Rchette, and directed to her office. If they ask about ward seven, they will be told that visitors



are not allowed into that building, as it is an operating theater. Queries about Dr. Seabock will be met with a nervous aversion of the eyes and the statement that Dr. Seabock is quite busy, but the PCs can make an appointment to see him through his secretary if they wish.

Hospital Staff: It will not be difficult to locate members of the hospital staff—doctors, nurses, nurses' aides, orderlies, custodians,

cooks, lab technicians and administrative personnel. The lower-level staff is friendly enough, but most of them did not know Annya personally. After politely answering a couple of questions, members of the lower-level staff will break off the conversation with the announcement that they have work to do, and will move along.

Chief Nurse Rachette: The characters will be able to find the chief nurse's office



without difficulty. Upon being told that the characters represent Anya's family, Rachette will agree to make a brief statement about the missing nurse:

"Nurse Makasheva was too sensitive for the work we have to do here, and she allowed herself to become overly involved with several of the hopeless cases. That sort of thing is very hard on a person of a sympathetic nature. I would not be at all surprised to learn that Anya had taken her own life."

If the characters appear credulous, she will talk a little longer, and may reveal a few more details about Makasheva's work (she worked in the reception ward, where abandoned children were nursed to health before being passed on to

ward seven for screening, classification and eventual adoption). If the PCs openly doubt her, she will become hostile and defensive, and will send them away.

Dr. Seabock: The doctor sees no visitors. He has an office in the main building, but he spends the bulk of his working hours in ward seven. Dr. Seabock's secretary is well-trained in deflecting visitors, both in person and on the telephone, and will be happy to make an appointment—for this coming July. See the sidebar on page 18 for more information on Dr. Seabock.

Viktor Danilenko: Another possible lead is the mysterious Viktor. The PCs know only his first name, that he works with the hospital's computers and that he has an apartment on 57th Street and Sixth Avenue (also known as the Avenue of the Americas). If all else fails, they can make a house-to-house search. Eventually, they will find Viktor Danilenko.

Viktor turns out to be a moderately good-looking individual of 24, even though his hair is already thinning. He is also very frightened. He may try to flee the PCs or brandish what looks like a gun, but which observant characters will recognize as a plastic replica.

If encountered in the hospital, he will refuse to talk to the characters. If contacted outside the hospital, out of sight of any other employees, he will eventually tell his story.

Viktor works in the data center at Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital, and Anya asked him to trace one orphan who had been in her care, a diabetic. She was worried that the new parents might not be able to find the right type of insulin, and she was going to offer to buy it for them at the hospital. He came up with the address, and she went to visit them. She came back shocked, angry and horrified. Viktor had never seen her like that. Anya said that a serious mistake must have happened and that something had to be done.

Next day, she was gone.

Viktor is terrified that the hospital authorities know about his part in this, and he will beg the PCs to help him find a new job, to help him get away, somehow. If asked why he is afraid, he will look at the characters for a moment and then say, "You don't know the people in ward seven—or Dr. Seabock. If you did, you wouldn't ask."

VIKTOR

Viktor Vaselevich Danilenko was born in Alma Ata 24 years ago. His father died when he was 3, and his mother brought him to America when he was 13. He found a career in electronics and computers, and he now earns a living as a computer troubleshooter. His job takes him to many places, and he is currently working for the Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital, trying to keep the aged computer records system from collapsing under its own weight.

Viktor speaks excellent Russian, very good English, and pretty fair computer.

Experience: Novice

Attributes: 5

Skills: Computer 8, English 8, Russian 10

Initiative: 1

Motivation: *Heart 10:* Viktor is what used to be called a "people person." He likes humanity in general, and it was this that attracted Anya to him. *Diamond Jack:* Viktor's curse through his entire life has been that he a coward at heart. His life in New York is miserable, and he does little but work and hide in his apartment. His love for Anya almost overcame his cowardice, but her disappearance has driven him back into his shell.





Viktor can be of more help. He still has the address of the adopting couple Annya visited that set her off so. Also, he knows the internal layout of the hospital, and he might be able to steal some blank employee IDs, if pressed.

A KINDLY OLDER COUPLE

Should the PCs visit the address of the adoptive couple Viktor provides for them, an anonymous apartment in a crumbling block on the fringes of the East Village, they will discover that the Dark Minions have begun plugging some loose ends. When Annya visited, she found Roosevelt and Judy Flyte, a charming but childless old couple, who didn't have an adoptee, had never wanted an adoptee and generally didn't know what she was talking about.

Annya has vanished, and those in charge of the project want to find her as much as her uncle does—but for different reasons. Hence, the Flytes have been replaced with cyborg changelings, ready to capture further investigators for questioning. One possible clue is that the other locals have noticed something of a change. If asked directions to the apartment, someone may say something like, "They're getting on a bit, you know. Not all there these past few days."

The changelings seem amiable and invite visitors in for coffee. But once the PCs are inside and reveal why they have visited, the changelings will do their best to capture them, fighting until they have won or been destroyed.

This situation is primarily to provide the group with some excitement after their dull, fact-finding investigations in New York. The only useful clue the apartment will contain are some suggestive hints about what happened to the real Roosevelt and Judy Flyte—a stained hacksaw and a dubious smell near the toilet—and the obvious conclusion that the characters are on the right track in their investigation.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED—MARYA

Marya's job was to help in one of the operating rooms, where she was told that the tissues were being salvaged from deceased children for use in transplant operations or scientific study. When it became obvious to her that the children she was helping to "harvest" were not dead, only

heavily sedated, she confronted Seabock and threatened to go to the authorities. Seabock said that if she told anyone, whoever she told would be killed. And if she told the authorities, she, too, would be implicated. Eventually, conscience overcame fear, and Marya decided to go to the police. On the way there, she was killed by thugs, who were instructed to make the murder look like a robbery that went too far. They were interrupted before they could complete the job.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED—ANNYA

In a search for what was really going on at the hospital, Annya used Marya's ID card to open the doors and gain admission to ward seven, hoping to pass for a newly assigned nurse long enough to find out what was going on. She managed to discover what was happening in the operating rooms, and she was filled with a compulsion to discover what the "product" was used for. She followed a group of orderlies to the subbasement and through the steam tunnels to the portal, which she assumed was some strange lighting effect, being unfamiliar with DarkTek.

Annya followed the orderlies through the portal and found herself in a warehouse on the surface, which she thought was decidedly odd, since she had only moments before been about 15 meters underground by her reckoning. All the street signs had changed into Russian! She wasn't even on the island anymore, and the hospital was nowhere to be seen.

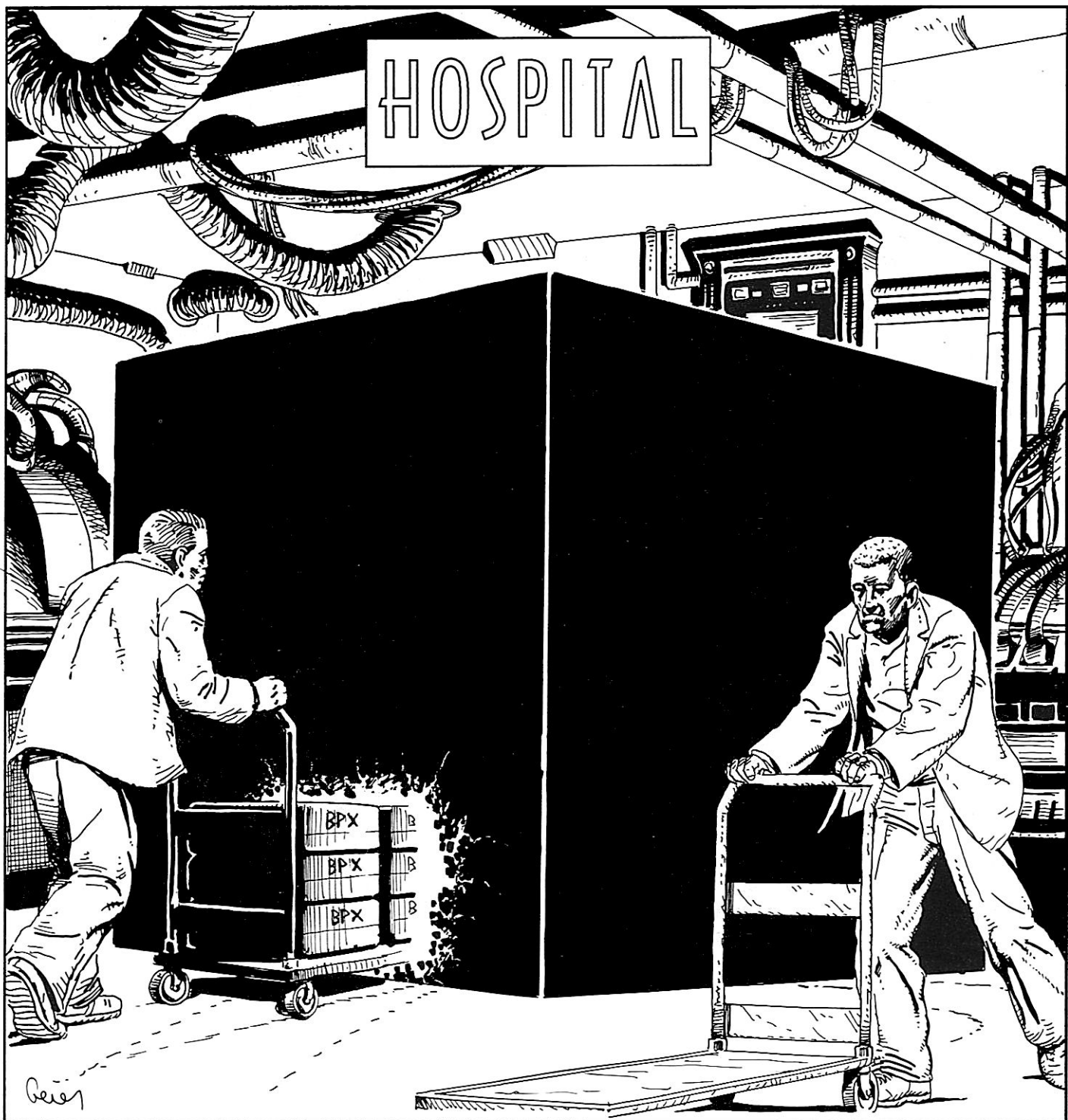
Bedraggled and exhausted, Annya stumbled into a military post, muttering about horrible vivisections and complaining about the street signs. Without identity papers, without money and "obviously" deranged, Annya was committed to a state hospital for the insane, and she is so heavily sedated that she is incapable of coherent speech. But she is alive.

CHANGELING

Strength: 7
Constitution: 5
Agility: 7
Initiative: 7

Move: 3/10/18/35
Skill/Dam: 7/7
Hits: 40
Appear: 2 (See rulebook)

Both have internal Armor Value 1. "Judy" also has a blade hand. See *Dark Conspiracy* page 215 for details.



Casual visits to the Roosevelt Island Childrens' Hospital were dealt with in the previous section. This chapter will cover the hospital in more detail.

BACKGROUND

Roosevelt Island was once the site of a prison that housed (among other convicts) the members of the "Tweed Ring," the infamous and corrupt 19th century political machine. In addition to a correctional facility, Roosevelt Island contains

several hospitals, including the New York Correctional Hospital, City Hospital, Coler Hospital, and Roosevelt Island Childrens' Hospital (not to be confused with Roosevelt Hospital at 58th Street and 9th Avenue).

The island can be reached by bridge, or by the aerial tramway from 59th Street and 2nd Avenue.

DESCRIPTION

Roosevelt Island Childrens' Hospital consists of



a fairly large complex of buildings (most interconnected by subterranean walkways for protection from the elements) and a number of smaller outbuildings. The hospital grounds are surrounded by a three-meter-high, chain-link security fence with two entrances—a main gate leading to the parking lots and a larger delivery gate leading to the hospital loading dock.

Parking Lots: There are two parking lots—one large public lot and a smaller employee lot. Both lots are surrounded by fences.

Admittance to the employee lot is controlled by a gate which requires the driver to insert an employee ID card into a magnetic strip reader. Drivers need not show a card to exit the employee lot (an electric eye opens the gate). The employee ID is needed to activate the electronic lock at the employee entrance to the building, also.

The public lot has no gate. The only exits are to the street (for cars) and to the main entrance of the hospital (for pedestrians).

Administration Building: The administration building is a relatively new (built in the last 20 years) brick and glass building. It contains the offices of the hospital administrative staff, the cafeteria, kitchens, laundry, a few lecture halls and meeting rooms (rarely used these days), and the hospital's central diagnostic and records computers. The building is two stories in height, and has no basement or connection to the steam tunnels.

Wards: All wards except ward seven are connected to each other and to the administration building by a series of underground tunnels or covered elevated walkways, to permit rapid transfer of patients in all types of weather. Wards one through four are for normal inpatients. Wards five and six are for cases requiring intensive care (Annya worked in ward five, and Marya started out there). Ward eight is for isolation of patients with contagious diseases. Wards nine and ten are surgical theaters and contain preparatory rooms, scrub rooms, operating theaters and recovery rooms. Ward seven is discussed on pages 29-30.

BOILER BUILDING

The hospital was once heated by steam, piped underground from a single boiler building, because it was cheaper and easier to operate a few very

EMPATHY

The empathically aware will be conscious of a subtle but increasingly powerful miasma of bewildered pain and fear within the hospital grounds, radiating from ward seven. Part of this is due to the fact that the building was once the prison ward, and the characters are picking up leftover "signals" from previous decades. At least one character should feel a very strong connection between the dream mentioned in the last section (see page 17), and whatever is going on in (and underneath) ward seven.

large, oil-fired boilers than one small boiler for each building. Steam was piped through underground tunnels connected to each of the old buildings of the hospital, and the grounds are crisscrossed by the old tunnels. Many of the buildings once served by them are no longer standing, and a number of the newer wings were built after the hospital switched to gas heat when oil became too expensive.

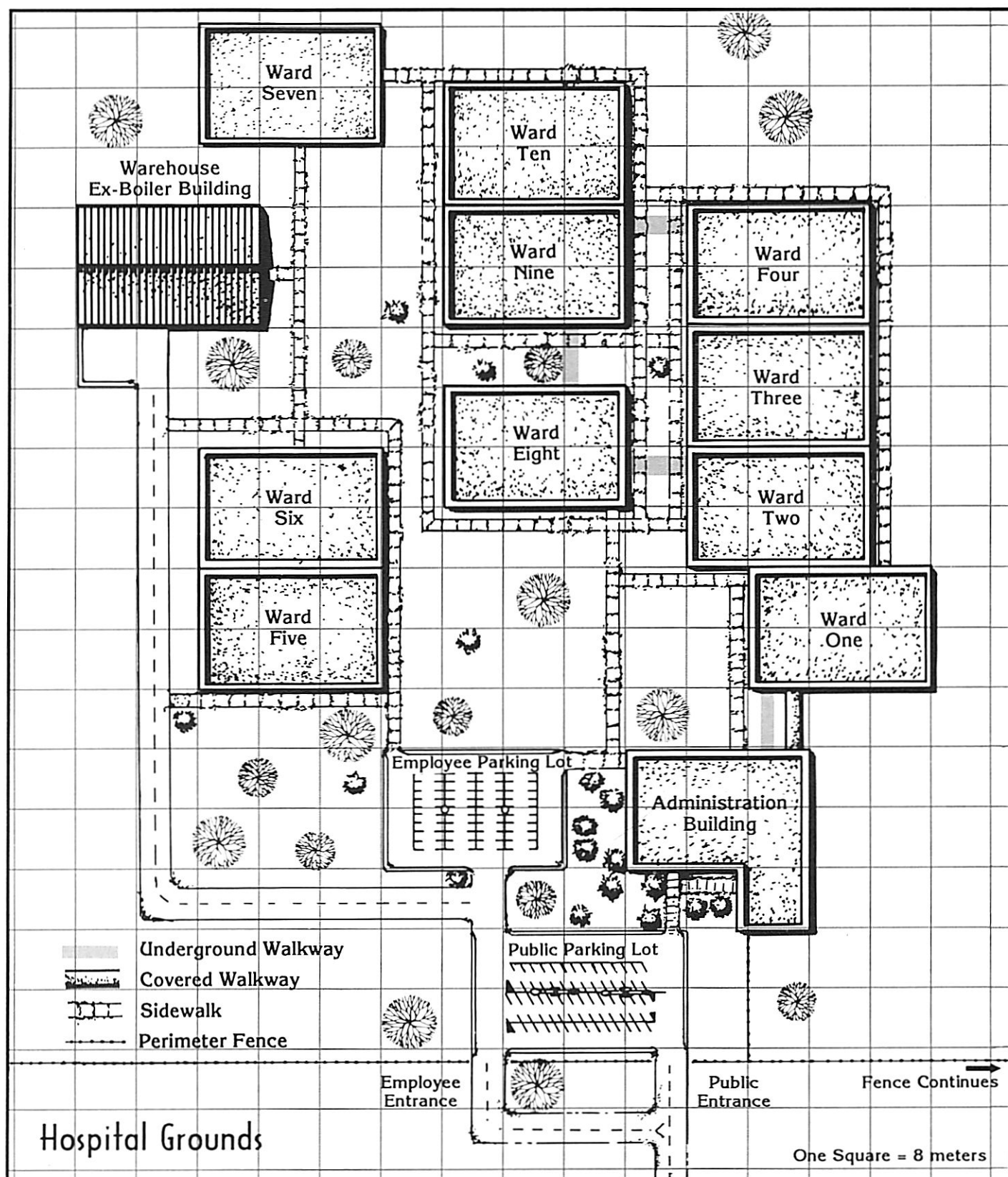
The building is now used as a storage facility for old hospital records (some from the precomputer age), paper products and other supplies. The boilers were sold for scrap, and the concrete floor was patched over with an ugly institutional linoleum.

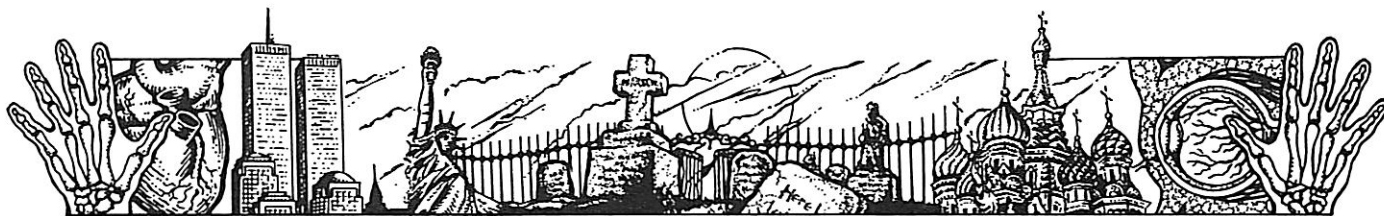
INFORMATION GATHERING

After an initial scouting visit, the PC group may wish to send in one or more members for serious information-gathering. They will eventually want to enter ward seven in search of some trace of Annya and to find out what is going on there. The PCs will have no trouble coming up with schemes to accomplish this objective. For the referee's benefit, we will outline some possibilities. Most of these tricks will not get anyone into a restricted area of the hospital, but they will enable one or more members of the group pretty much free reign to move about the hospital, for a while at least.

Visitor: The main reason people visit hospitals, of course, is to visit patients. The patient can be a friend, relative or (in the case of the present hospital) child.

Volunteer: Getting into the orphans' ward may require a person to pose as a charity





worker distributing candy or fruit baskets for indigent patients, or as a visiting religious worker. Religious personnel often visit hospitals for a variety of reasons. Credentials of this type are not hard to forge and will seldom be examined too closely if the behavior of the visitors matches what they are purporting to be (Disguise skill as well as Forgery comes into play here).

Sales Representative: Medical equipment or drug company representatives are not as common as they used to be, but they still show up from time to time. Again, credentials for this type of disguise are not hard to forge, but the persons attempting to pull it off will need considerable medical or technical knowledge.

Delivery Person: One person at a time can impersonate a courier for an overnight delivery service. All this takes is something resembling a uniform, a clipboard and an important-looking package labeled "RUSH—Medical Supplies." If such couriers proceed with speed and confidence, as if familiar with the building layout, the security staff will not bother them unless they enter a restricted area.

Inspector: Public buildings are periodically inspected by officials from the fire department, various utilities and so on. The only problem with this approach is that the hospital will assign someone to accompany the inspector (as is the custom in most establishments).

Job Applicant: Given the current situation, people are always looking for jobs, and this particular hospital seems to be going through trained nurses at a prodigious rate. If any of the group have the requisite skills to get through a job interview at the hospital, this method may have good results.

GETTING IN

The PCs may come up with a variety of methods for getting into ward seven.

Entering the Steam Tunnels: Access to the steam tunnels is through a metal plate in the floor, readily visible through the worn layer of linoleum covering it. A knife will make short work of the linoleum. The plate has been tack-welded shut, but can be opened in a minute or two with a pry bar (the referee may allow the group

to find one in the warehouse if the group neglected to bring one along).

Over the Fence: The main fence is not electrified, but at night it is patrolled by security guards. Several hours of nocturnal observation will reveal that these run a regular schedule of sweeps and pass the same area approximately every seven minutes. Climbing the fence requires an Average test of Agility, success indicating that the crossing takes 15 seconds, failure indicating that the climb takes 30 seconds. Catastrophic failure means that an item of the climber's clothing or equipment has become entangled in the fence (determined at random by the referee).

Windows: Opening a window is not difficult, but opening one on the ground floor requires that the grill and the alarm be dealt with. Doing this in five minutes or less requires an Average test of Lockpick, one minute or less a Difficult test. Failure means the window remains locked. Catastrophic failure means the alarm is triggered (see Security, pages 28-29).

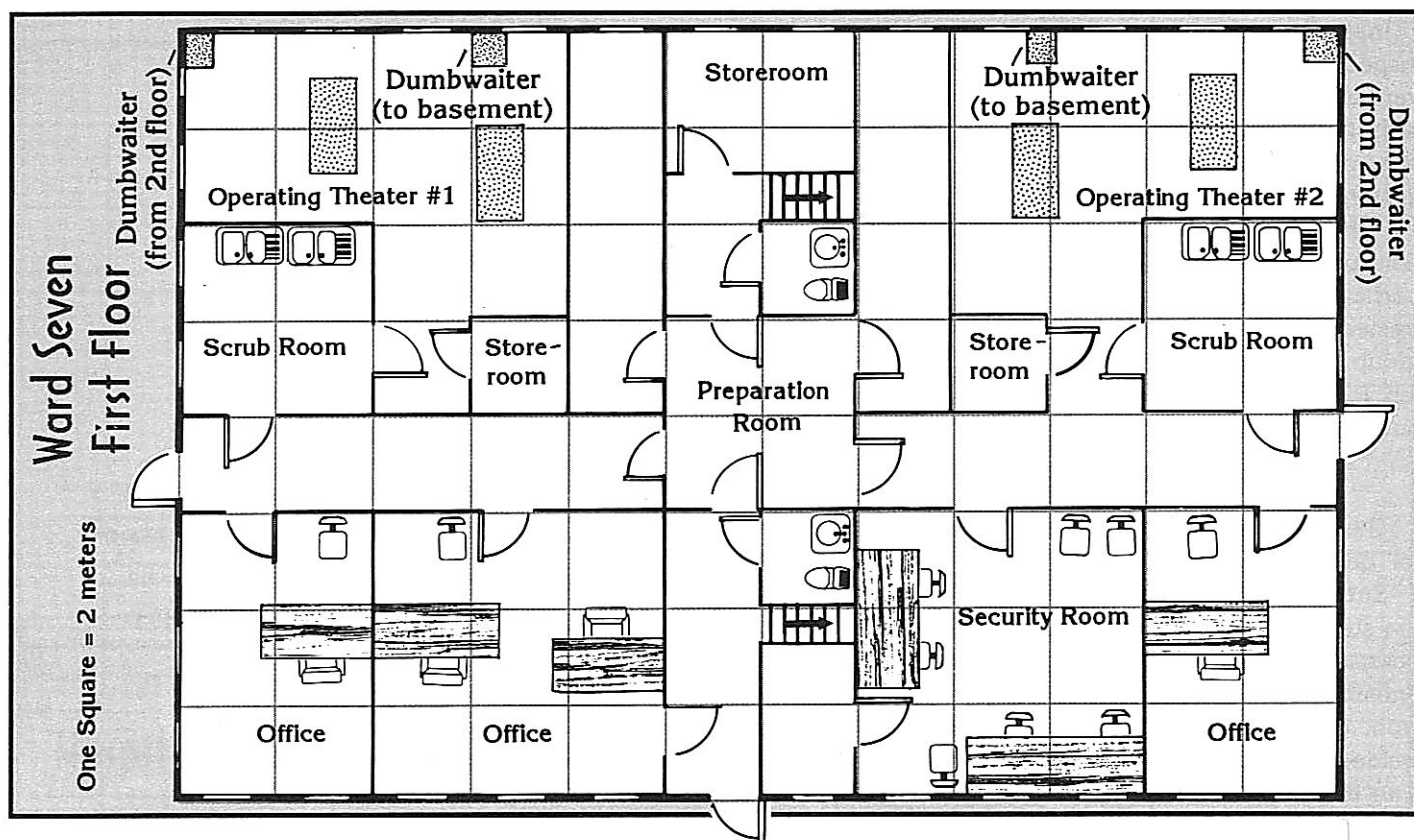
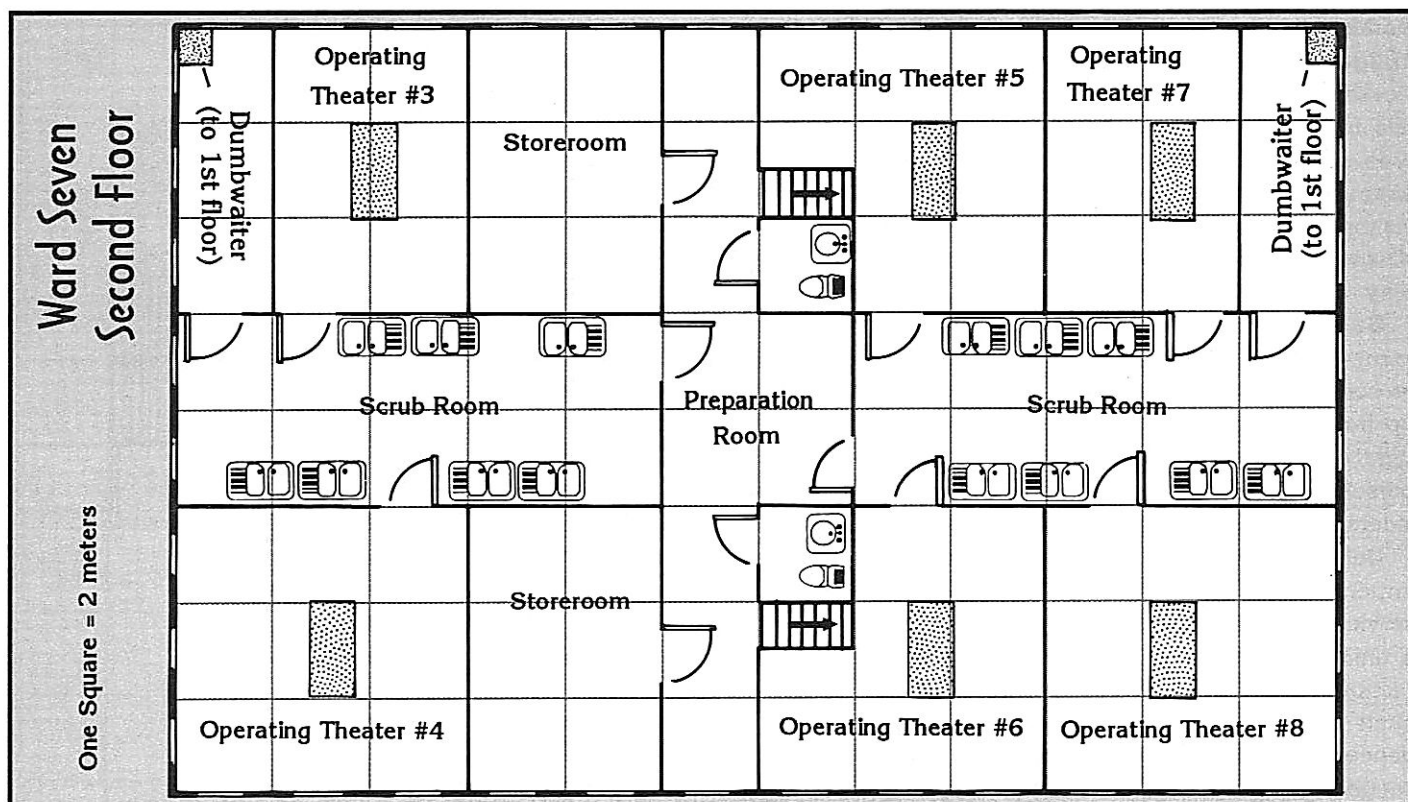
Doors: Opening a door with a normal lock requires an Easy test of Lockpick. Any failure means the door remains locked. Opening an electronic lock requires passing both a Difficult test of Lockpick and a Difficult test of Electronics. Failure to open an electronic lock means an alarm is triggered (see Security, pages 28-29).

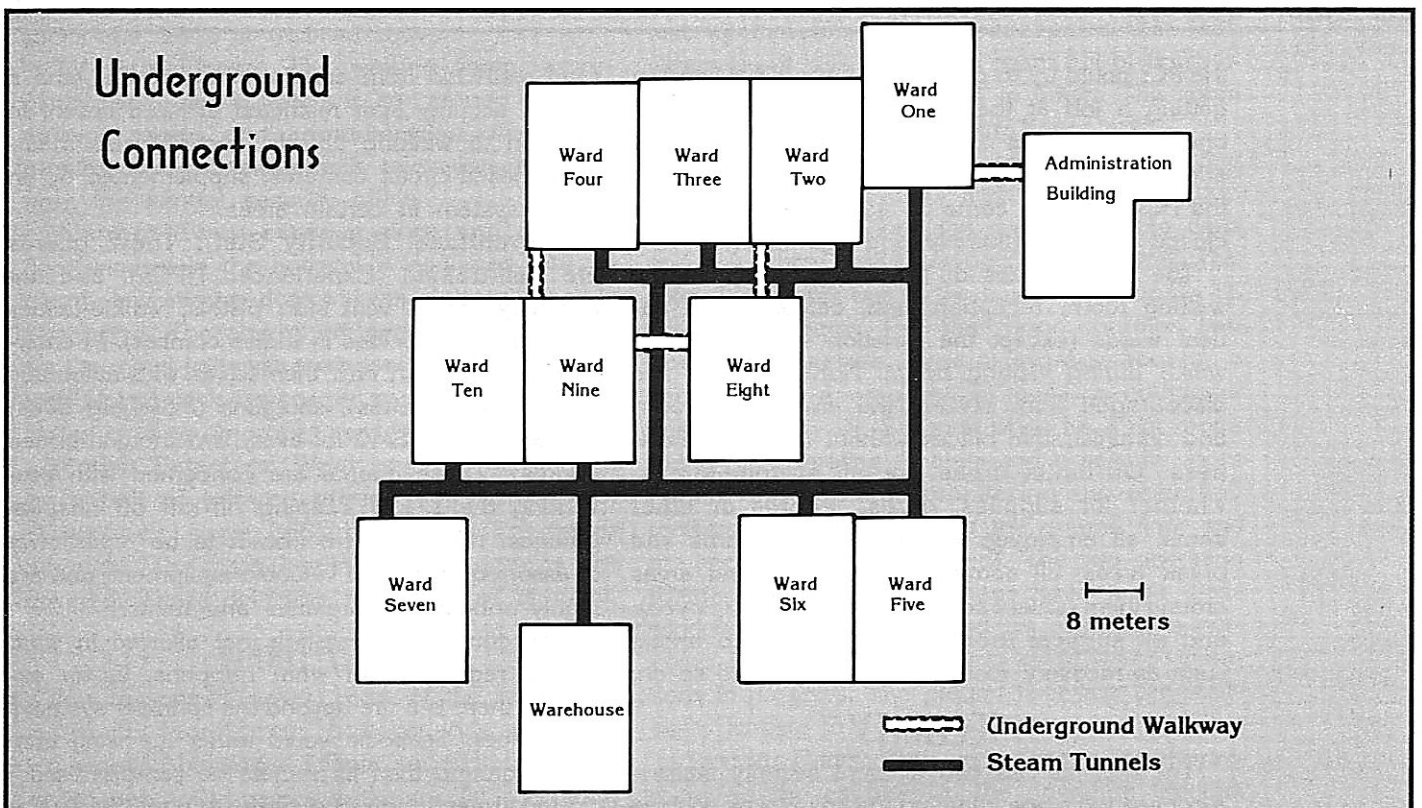
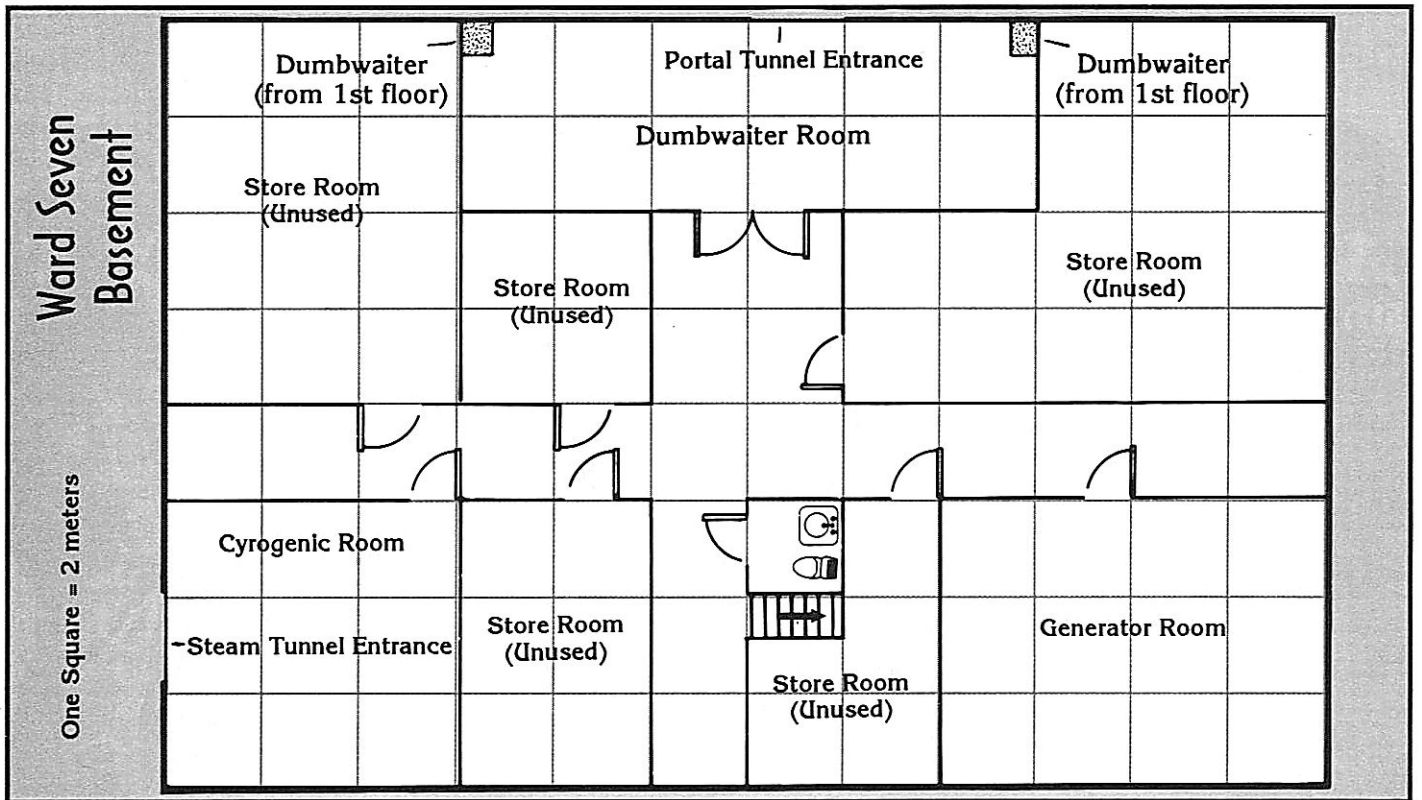
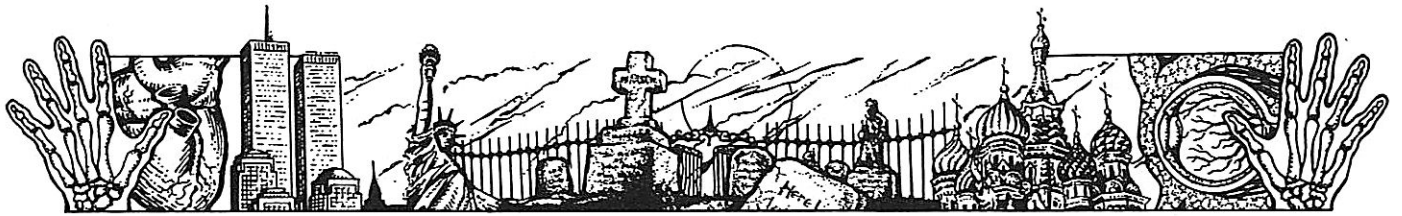
Computer System: The central security computer can be accessed from the main computer room through a little-known diagnostic line that Viktor has discovered but is afraid to exploit. Once accessed, the records can be altered to cause any given ID card to allow admission to any electronic lock in the hospital, or to disable a particular lock or alarm during a particular time period (all of these operations require a Difficult test of Computer Operation).

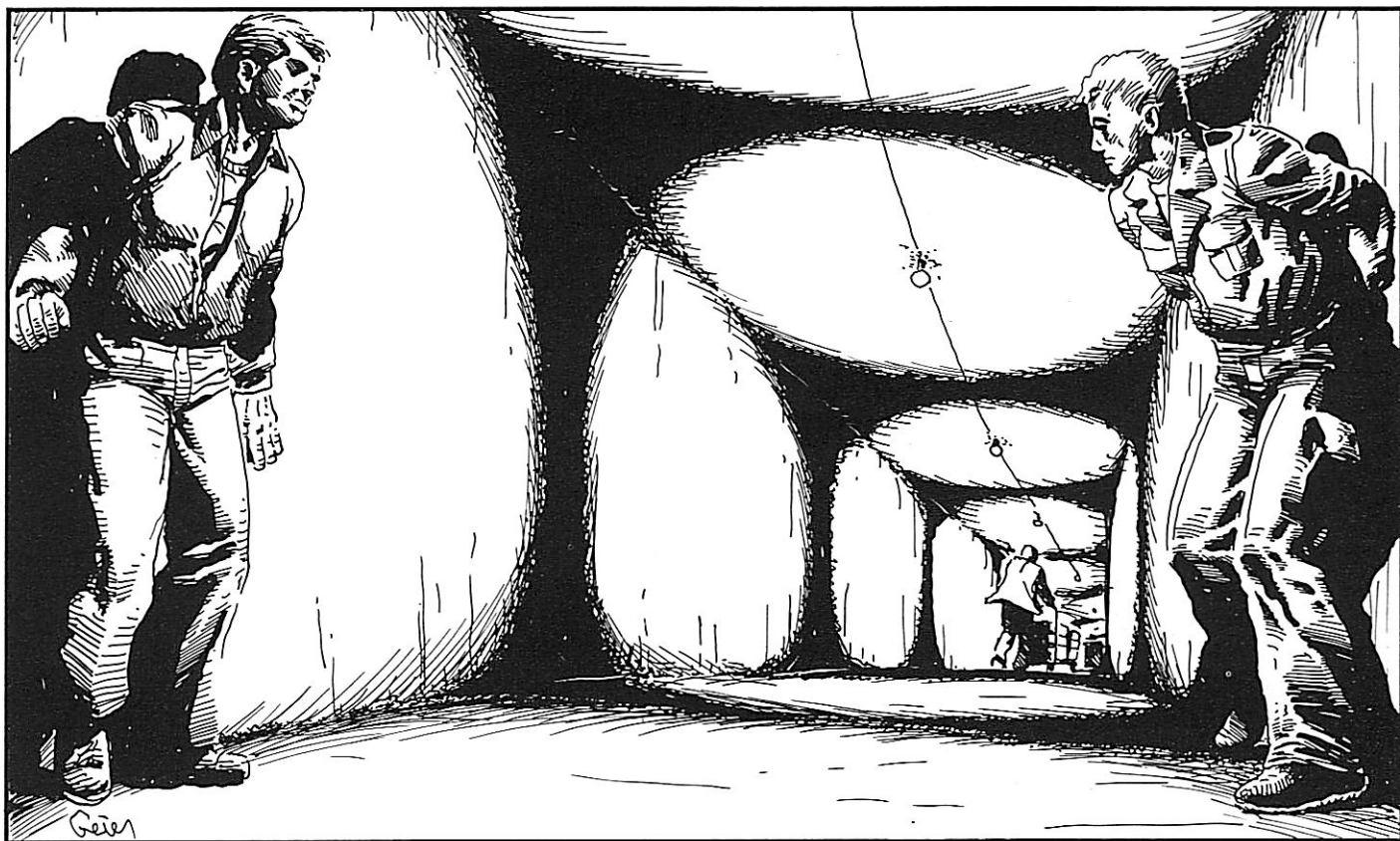
Of course, getting to the main computer room requires that the PCs be able to get into the administration building.

ONCE INSIDE

PCs will hardly have free reign. A computer literate PC may be able to get around the problem of the ID cards used to gain access to restricted areas (see Computer System, above). Of course,







the PCs could try to get an employee ID or two (by getting a job at the hospital or by “borrowing” one), for purposes of study or for use before the administration cancels them. Whatever the case, the PCs will soon come up against doors that are closed to them (literally and figuratively).

The public areas of the hospital include the waiting room, reception area, cafeteria and patient wards (except the isolation ward and burn ward) during visiting hours. Nonemployees are discouraged from visiting the emergency room and administrative offices without legitimate business. Off-limits areas are all storage areas, whether for supplies, drugs, records or other items; all employee lounges, locker rooms and break areas; all administrative offices and areas around them (unless accompanied by an employee); and all surgical theaters and associated areas, such as recovery rooms, scrub rooms and so on.

SECURITY

The hospital has two different security staffs—a conventional one guarding the hospital as a whole

(and restricted from entering ward seven), and a special security staff restricted to ward seven. In addition to walking patrols, security also maintains closed-circuit cameras, supplemented by an alarm system in certain areas.

Conventional Security Staff: These guards are well-trained (Experienced NPCs), and are normally armed with stun pistols, walkie-talkies and nightsticks (clubs in melee combat). In emergencies, they can arm themselves with automatic pistols (M9 Berettas), shotguns (Mossberg 500s) and SMGs (one SMG for every two shotgun-armed guards). These guards are concerned with preventing thefts and keeping riff-raff off hospital grounds. (Hospitals are known to be repositories of assorted drugs and valuable equipment, and are highly subject to burglaries and thefts.)

The conventional staff is not allowed in ward seven, regardless of what happens. If, for example, there is a fire beyond the sprinkler system's capabilities, Seabock would rather the wing burn to the ground than its secrets be compromised.

Encounters with the Conventional Staff: The



conventional staff does pretty conventional security-type things. These guards patrol the halls of the patient wards infrequently, but sensitive areas are given greater coverage, and some doors have guards permanently assigned (the drug storerooms, for example). Suspicious behavior or merely being in the wrong place will attract the attention of security guards.

Reaction depends on the situation. If the PCs seem to be lost, they will be challenged, questioned and escorted to a public area (unless it is after visiting hours, in which case they will be escorted off the grounds). If the PCs are caught trying to break into a locked area, they will be apprehended and taken to security headquarters for questioning. Triggering an alarm will bring three armed conventional guards in 1D6 minutes.

Special Security Staff: The special security staff consists of eight human igors (*Dark Conspiracy*, page 176) and six dark elves (*Dark Conspiracy*, page 221) in human disguise. They are restricted to ward seven and do not socialize with the other hospital staff. They are uniformed as the other security guards, but are always armed with stun pistols, automatic pistols, nightsticks and SMGs as outlined above.

TV Surveillance: The waiting room, emergency room, and corridors in and around the drug storage rooms and administrative offices are monitored by closed-circuit television, watched from the central security office.

Alarms: Every external door and ground-floor window in the hospital is equipped with an alarm. Any internal door with an electronic lock is also wired. The alarms are triggered if the door (or the metal grill over a window) is opened. Doors with electronic locks trigger an alarm if they are forced or if an improper card is used.

Motion Detectors: Ward seven is surrounded by a belt of infrared motion detectors (*Dark Conspiracy*, page 266), placed at five-meter intervals. The path leading to the door is not covered. These detectors are activated at night.

WARD SEVEN

For reasons of cover, most of the hospital is legitimate. Ward seven, however, has a horrifying secret. Abandoned infants are nursed back to health, only to be passed to the special laboratory.

There they are rendered down into organic spare parts for Darkling technological devices and one experiment in particular (described in the "Down Among the Dead Men" chapter).

Ward seven consists of a basement, ground floor and second floor. Formerly a dormitory, the building has been converted to numerous other purposes over the years. The building is an older brick edifice, with the ground-floor windows blocked by metal grills and wired into the alarm system. The upper windows are unblocked and not wired. Windows to operating rooms will be lit at night; those to other rooms will not. Descriptions below apply to the map on pages 26-27.

Basement: The basement contains a generator room, unused storerooms, the dumbwaiter room and a cryogenic room. The basement has a staircase leading to the ground floor.

Generator Room: This room contains the auxiliary generator, silent unless the power is off, an event that occurs with some frequency.

Cryogenic Room: This room contains machinery used to liquefy nitrogen, and the insulated pipes used to send it to the operating theaters in the rest of the building. PCs should make a Difficult test against Education to recognize this fact. Otherwise, it will look like a room full of unfamiliar machinery, albeit human in origin. This room is the one in which the steam tunnel exits.

Dumbwaiter Room: This room is the receiving end of the dumbwaiters from the second floor. Two waiting igors load the cryoboxes onto carts and wheel them through an opening in the wall. This room is the only one in the basement normally lit.

Ground Floor: The first floor contains two operating theaters, several storage rooms, a scrub room, a preparation room, a couple of offices used by Dr. Seabock when he is not monitoring the operating theaters and a security room (where the cameras monitoring the operating rooms and the corridors of the ground floor and the second floor are located). The two operating theaters on the ground floor have large glass windows, originally designed for observation purposes so that medical students could watch operations in progress. The ground floor has two staircases leading to the second floor.

Security Room: This serves as a monitoring room for the cameras in the operating theaters



and as an armory/ready room for the special security guards. It has a bank of TV monitors across one wall, several racks of weapons, a table, a couple of desks and numerous chairs. It is always inhabited by six special security personnel. This is the room where Dr. Seabock spends his time when he is not in one of the operating rooms.

Preparation Room/Operating Theaters: No effort should be spared to underline the horrifying nature of what goes on in these rooms, but there is no need for gratuitous description here. It will probably suffice to talk of bewildered and crying infants and older juveniles being anesthetized and strapped into gumies which then trundle into the operating theaters. The "products" are stainless steel boxes of organic material (see Cryoboxes on page 30) which are loaded onto dumbwaiters and sent into the depths of the building.

Scrub Rooms: These rooms are where the operating room staff washes and dons sterile gowns, caps and gloves. The room contains several sinks, and tables piled high with sterile packages of disposable paper gowns, caps and rubber gloves.

Storerooms: These contain cartons of surgical gowns, caps, gloves, and other medical supplies.

Offices: The offices are conventional in appearance and contain nothing of significance.

Second Floor: The second floor consists of six operating theaters, a preparation room, a storeroom, and a scrub room (all of them essentially identical to those on the ground floor).

ANOTHER TUNNEL

The group will naturally be curious to trail the cryoboxes to their ultimate destination, what-

ever that is. The dumbwaiters from the second floor go only to the first, where the boxes are transferred to a second set of dumbwaiters. These lead, in turn, to the basement, where the cryoboxes are transferred to carts. Every hour or so, when enough cryoboxes have accumulated to fill a cart, the igors push the cart through an opening in the wall that leads to a tunnel. This tunnel is about eight feet in height, floored in relatively new concrete and lit by a string of lightbulbs overhead. It slopes gradually down, and the igors are not so much pushing the cart as limiting its speed as it rolls downhill. After a few minutes, the igors return, with an empty cart.

The igors in the basement's dumbwaiter room never leave it except to go down the tunnel, so the characters will have two options if they wish to explore the tunnel—follow the igors when they push a cart down the tunnel or deal with the igors in whatever way seems most convenient.

The tunnel is a little convoluted and leads steadily downward, with a number of small cul-de-sacs and side passages (the main tunnel is clearly marked by the string of lights overhead). The PCs may wish to conceal themselves in one of these side tunnels and wait until the igors return to the surface before continuing down the tunnel.

PORTAL

The tunnel leads about half a mile through a tortuous series of passages obviously converted from storm drains, sewers, utility tunnels and the like. As was mentioned above, the main passage is firmly floored with concrete and brightly lit by a string of overhead lights.

The group will eventually arrive at a large subterranean chamber, cluttered with alien machinery and a totally opaque black cube, about 2.5 meters on a side. Those at all familiar with DarkTek will recognize this as a portal, a gate to another place. Trails worn by cart wheels in the dust on the floor will show that carts and igors regularly enter and leave the portal. Depending upon circumstances, the group may actually see a pair of igors push a loaded cart into, or an empty cart out of, the portal. A cinematic ending for this segment of the adventure would be a confrontation in ward seven, culminating in a chase through the basement and underground tunnels to the portal.

CRYOBBOXES

Cryoboxes are heavily insulated, stainless-steel tissue containers, about 0.6 meters square and 0.2 meters thick (the size of medium-sized suitcase). Each is stenciled in red with the symbols BPX. These are not English letters, but do resemble them. They are Cyrillic letters, the kind Russian is written in. Characters with any Russian skill will recognize them as the letters "V-R-Kh" and will know that the letters do not form a Russian word—they are simply a string of consonants.

INTO THE LIGHT





Once through the portal, the PCs find themselves inside an abandoned warehouse building. They are at ground level, as can easily be determined by looking out the windows, which are mostly broken. Several gaping holes in the walls also provide a glimpse of a ruined urban landscape, one that looks at the same time strange and tantalizingly familiar.

The portal has taken the characters to an abandoned warehouse in the center of the city of Moscow, on the edge of the city's Demonground. Moscow time is eight hours ahead of New York's. If the PCs decided to conduct their raid on the hospital in New York at 2 a.m., for example, it will be 10 a.m. in Moscow. They will have entered a building in the small hours of the morning and found themselves in a different building hours after sunrise.

Portions of the warehouse's roof have collapsed, and the rest of the building is dotted with piles of rusted metal, wrecked pallets and other junk. A few yards away are three white-coated orderlies from the hospital, busily loading the tissue containers into the back of a large white panel truck which also bears the legend BPX stenciled on its side. Standing around them are three armed guards, carrying AK-74 assault rifles, and wearing helmets and magazine pouches, over gray coveralls also bearing the BPX marking. At this point, chaos breaks out.

A LITTLE FIREFIGHT

From outside, a burst of machinegun fire breaks out. As the characters dive for cover, a whooshing

sound is heard from above. Any characters who look up will see two figures firing Russian RPG grenade launchers at the portal, enveloped in the resulting cloud of smoke and dust. Automatic weapon fire breaks out from both outside and inside the warehouse as the guards return fire at their attackers, and the portal, struck by the RPG rounds, explodes in a spectacular pyrotechnic display.

The orderlies, who have been running toward the portal, stop in their tracks and flop to their bellies as the portal explodes. Any PCs who have not taken cover by this time should be subjected to a hail of fragments from the portal, but nothing more than a scratch (or a light wound at the most) should be inflicted.

Any character looking toward the roof will see that one of the RPG gunners has taken up an AK and is beginning to spray rounds toward the truck, while the other gunner is swiftly reloading the launcher. Any character looking toward the truck will notice that two of the guards have taken shelter under it and are firing wildly at no discernible targets, and a third is sprinting toward a pile of rubble away from the wall. Followed by a burst of AK fire, two more guards come running into the warehouse through the large loading bay door, running toward the truck. One of them stops to throw a grenade back outside and is then cut down by a burst of fire.

The PCs hear another whoosh from the roof, and the panel truck explodes in a fireball of burning gasoline, followed an instant later by the grenade outside.

If the PCs are unarmed, or if they do not fire their weapons at the attackers, they will not be fired upon. In any case, at this point, one of the RPG gunners from the roof will shout down into the warehouse, in Russian, and the attackers' fire will slacken and then stop. (If any PCs speak Russian any level, they will automatically recognize this as a call on everyone in the warehouse to surrender or be killed.) After a moment of silence, the surviving warehouse guard will throw his AK out onto the concrete and slowly stand, arms raised.

What happens next depends on the PCs' actions.

The warehouse has been attacked by an anti-Minion group called *Spasiteli* (the Saviours). The

SUNRISE/SUNSET

To aid referee's in determining whether it's night or day, here are the approximate sunrise and sunset times for December (when the adventure is presumed to be taking place). Referees who wish to set the adventure at other times of the year should consult an almanac for these times.

City	Morning		Sunset	Evening	
	Twilight Begins	Sunrise		Twilight Ends	
New York	5:41 a.m.	7:18 a.m.	4:53 p.m.	6:30 p.m.	
Moscow	6:33 a.m.	8:53 a.m.	3:56 p.m.	6:16 p.m.	



Saviours have a tendency to go off half-cocked, and upon discovering that a Minion portal was located here, decided to attack and destroy it.

The surviving warehouse guard will be seized, bound and bundled off into a corner of the warehouse. The PCs will be approached by an unarmed man wearing civilian clothes and a pair of Serengetti vermilion sunglasses. He will address the group in Russian, asking who they are and what they are doing. If no one understands him, he will try other languages. Eventually, a common language will be settled upon, and the referee should allow the group to roleplay the meeting with the Saviours. The Saviours will explain that they are dedicated to combating the forces of the Dark. The Saviours will want to know why the PCs have come through the portal, where the other end is and what great plot they have thwarted by destroying the Moscow end of it. They will be apologetic when they discover that nothing has been accomplished except stranding the PCs in Moscow.

ONE WHITE SHOE

During the firefight, one of the characters should have discovered a single white shoe, of Korean manufacture and obviously designed for people who spend a lot of time on their feet. The inside is heavily cushioned, but with firm arch support. The shoe is of a size that could fit a small man or an average-sized woman (one about Anya's size). The referee should tell the PCs that every nurse at the Roosevelt Island Children's Hospital wears similar shoes.

WHERE ARE WE?

The PCs are sure to experience some confusion regarding where they have ended up. Most people in *Dark Conspiracy* know far less about the rest of the world than people do now. News and analysis has given way to a deluge of sensationalist trivia and largely fictional (and libelous) gossip and speculation. Hence, the PCs will quite possibly know very little about the state of affairs in Russia. What little they do know will quite possibly be inaccurate or contradictory, a collection of tourist notes and news snippets. Government agents may know a little more, especially if they work in foreign services or have appropriate contacts, but even this information will be limited.

SPASITELI (THE SAVIOURS)

The group known as *Spasiteli* (the Saviours) is a virulent anti-Minion group, dedicated to the immediate destruction of Darkling influences wherever and whenever they may be found. They tend to waste a lot of time and money attacking minor Minions and servants of the Dark Lords, and are considered a minor nuisance by both the Dark Minions in Moscow and the Moscow empathic underground. The Saviours have had the Moscow warehouse under observation for a few days, during which time they have observed several shipments of the silver boxes arrive through the portal and depart in BPX-marked vans.

For the referee, the main purpose of the Saviors is to provide PCs with a source of information about Moscow, to serve as a source of spear-carriers, weapons and equipment if needed, and to furnish an NPC to act as a Russian/English translator (also, several members of the Saviours speak English, French and German at skill levels 1 to 4). Of course, they also serve to strand the PCs in Moscow, where the adventure plot continues.

What is certain, however, is that the group still has a mission. Wherever the BPX boxes are being taken holds the clue to whatever the stolen tissues are being used for.

After everything is sorted out and introductions are made all around, the Saviours will decide the best thing to do is to take the group to meet the one public official in Moscow who will be sympathetic to their plight, Major Vladimir Samsonov of the Customs Office (see sidebar, page 34). The PCs are, for better or worse, now in Moscow, and they are without papers of any kind. They are illegal aliens, and Samsonov is a senior case officer for the Aliens' Board which monitors foreigners' activities in Moscow. The name is ironic, in a way, because Samsonov is also a member of the Moscow version of the empathic underground, which is also concerned with aliens, but of a different variety. Samsonov can get the PCs temporary visas and find out how to arrange to get them home. He can also put them in touch with people who will be very interested in the group's mission.

The Saviours will offer to escort the group to Vyshgorod, the central district of Moscow.



MAJOR VLADIMIR SAMSONOV

Major Samsonov, 42, is tall and lean, with a wiry-muscled body mismatched with a polite, blinking academic's gaze and thick glasses. Exceptionally able and well educated, after a brief career in journalism (as the *Moscow News* reporter in London, when Russian newspapers could still afford foreign correspondents), he joined government service as a customs officer and agent.



He is now a senior case officer for the small Aliens' Board which, despite its name, monitors foreigners' activities in Moscow. There aren't many visitors these days. The few there are tend to be businessmen or indentured mercenaries already on the Zil Moscow payroll (see page 65). Arrivals like the PCs intrigue him. Samsonov usually wears his customs uniform, pale khaki with peak cap and gun belt (with Makarov pistol). While it is an old, comfortable outfit, he always looks spruced up and correct.

Level: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5; Observation 7, Interrogation 6, English 5

Initiative: 4

Motivation: *Heart King:* Samsonov knows he lives in a world of chaos and deceit, but his honor is the rock to which he can anchor himself. *Club Two:* For all his mild manner, Samsonov is prepared to take whatever action he deems necessary, including the use of violence.

Entry into the district is controlled by perimeter checkpoints and regular spot checks in the streets by wandering soldiers, who are everywhere. Foreigners and government and corporate employees have access to the center—and the shops and services clustered there—but ordinary Muscovites must apply for permits and usually grease someone's palm to avoid being put at the bottom of a year-long waiting list.

The top hotels—the Metropole, *Mezhdunarodny* (International), Excelsior and Ukraine (currently closed for modernization)—are all found in Vyshgorod. So, too, are the few remaining embassies, branch offices for several multinationals and a dubious mix of government staffers, corporate executives, black market kingpins and officers—anyone with the pull or the bank balance to get in.

Vyshgorod is a strange mix of army base, corporate dreamland and bazaar, and the PCs should be made aware of its rich and even desperate atmosphere. They will be approached by all sorts of black marketeers, offering anything from guns (all too often broken AKRs) to "authentic vodka" (brake fluid and raw spirit, adulterated with water). Astute characters could gain much information from these well-connected wheeler-dealers, but run the risk of being suckered or robbed if they appear too wealthy or insufficiently streetwise. Foreigners and executives tend, even here, to stay in their central areas or travel with bodyguards, and a mugging is always a possibility, especially if the PCs are obviously foreign. This is always a good way to engender paranoia: Was it *really* random street crime?

VYSHGOROD

Vyshgorod, the central district of the city, looks like any other urban area—but with onion domes. It has several distinctive features. The Kremlin, built as a fortress, is one again, studied with gun towers and radar domes, garrisoned by troops quartered in the former Rossiya Hotel. While the Kremlin is the political center of the Committee for the Salvation of the Motherland, most of the rest of Vyshgorod is broken into corporate holdings.

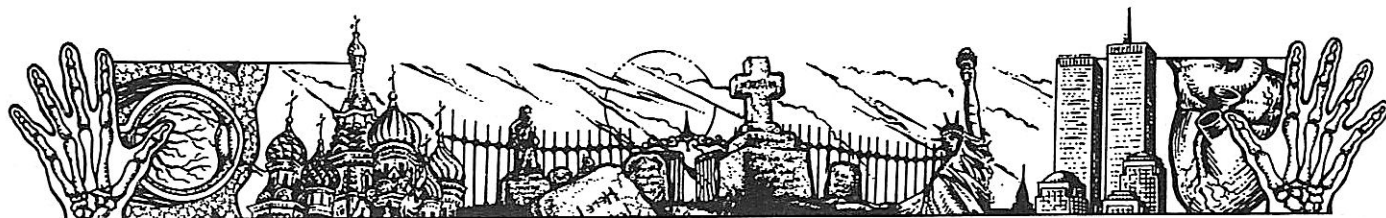
BPX

The Saviours tell the PCs that BPX is Cyrillic, a Russian acronym that transliterates as VRKh (pronounced "Veh-Air-Khah," Kh being a single letter in Russian). They know only that BPX is a small, highly secretive Russian company.

Note: BPX is dominated by Minions and is engaged in a project involving the underground metro system. VRKh (see page 36) does not advertise, does not appear in the phone directories and works largely through subsidiaries—even Samsonov would not have come across it.

DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN





By this time the PCs should have realized that they are on the trail of a powerful, but still faceless enemy, one who can arrange for a portal from New York to Moscow. They have acquired a contact in Samsonov, who will arrange for transient papers and quarters for them (spartan, but better than sleeping outdoors) and will soon put them in contact with other allies and friends. The Saviours can now go their own way, leaving one of their party to act as a translator (at the referee's option).

LEADS AND LINKS

Metro-1: If the PCs choose to further investigate the mysterious BPX/VRKh, they may be able to find out that it is a holding company which owns a string of smaller companies all over Russia (see below). One of its subsidiaries, Metro-1, is highly visible, with vans and ads all over the city.

Psychic Resonances: An empath may pick up psychic resonances, echoing the aura of the foreboding dream (page 17). At first, there will appear to be no pattern to locations where the traces can be detected, but after a while it will be noted that they are especially strong and frequent near three of the closed and sealed metro stations in the Vostok district along one line: Taganskaya, Yeltinskaya and Volgograd Street.

Nighttime Attack: A final, and rather unsubtle, lead might come from a nighttime incident where one or more of the PCs are set upon by some thugs. One might be wearing Metro-1 overalls. Or, if they are overcome, the heavies will admit they are Metro-1 employees told just to deliver a warning

beating. Like the majority of the company's employees, they know nothing of the Dark plot and are engaged in genuine reconstruction work. Heavy questioning of the Metro-1 attackers (assuming that the PCs survive the attack and capture one of them) will reveal that a government official named Georgi Golubovsky gave them their orders.

GEORGI GOLUBOVSKY

Golubovsky is quite a well known figure, and it is not too difficult to find out more about him, largely because Moscow's newspapers feature him quite often, as does the English-language *About Moscow* weekly magazine for businessmen and tourists.

He has recently been made secretary for urban renewal, and one of his main projects is the metro reclamation program. His office is in a reconditioned building in Vyshgorod, guarded and busy. He will refuse to deal with the PCs, though they may be able to meet him by, for example, masquerading as reporters (he has a keen awareness of the advantages of a high public profile).

Confronted on his home ground, he will be cool and confident. While he is summoning security, though he will let slip that Metro-1 is behind his actions: "I don't know what bad blood there is between you and Metro-1, but if it is a choice between having you imprisoned or losing the best bid to get our subways running again, I won't even think twice about it." (See page 44 for details.)

Off his home ground, though, he may be more forthcoming. He lives in an apartment in Universitet and could be followed there when he drives home from work, or underworld contacts may be able to trace him. Alternatively, the *About Moscow* profile has a photo of him outside his local church and a quote making it clear that he often visits there. To trace the church just involves a browse through a tourist information database or book, or a word with a priest, and then the PCs could wait for him or just look for the tell-tale official Volga sedan.

This is not without some risks, for if either Special Police patrols or the handful of private security guards find the PCs trying to grab, intimidate or otherwise bother one of their charges, they will fail to appreciate it. On the other hand, Golubovsky may be persuaded to reveal that he was asked to "discourage" the PCs by Metro-1 as

VRKh

VRKh is a Russian holding company, itself owned by a chain of holding companies and dummy corporations. There is no direct link to Patriarch Mikhail, but ultimately Koshchey controls VRKh. See the BPX section on page 34.

The company's subsidiaries are:

Alfa Tsent: Pskov. Management consultancy.

Cheremetev & Mishina: Novgorod. Management consultancy.

Land Reclamation Services: Kazan. Construction.

Metro-1: Moscow. Construction.

RusskInfo: St. Petersburg. Dataprocessing.



a favor: He got the impression their paths had crossed before, and there was some grudge being settled. If pressed further, he will say he had no reason to demure when even the patriarch wants to see the metro running again.

Golubovsky may decide to press charges against the PCs, and the PCs could find themselves being hunted by the authorities. While the authorities lack the time, resources or inclination to do much about it (though the PCs need not be told this!), this would make life difficult if the PCs run afoul of them for some other reason or try to get through the checkpoints into Vyshgorod.

METRO-1

Two years ago, Metro-1 won the government contract to survey the metro system and restore the central stations and lines. Since then, its bright white and orange vans, tents and road-block sawhorses have become a familiar sight on Moscow's streets. The company is starting with one east-west line, and has already cleared and made safe a stretch from Taganskaya though Yeltsinskaya to Volgograd Street.

As the genuine reconstruction teams move outward, others—under the pretext of “phase two,” the laying of new power lines and electronics—are using the tunnels for the construction of a biocomp. Two of these stations are sealed off at ground level, with goods and personnel access at Yeltsinskaya.

Formerly Proletarian Square, Yeltsin Square is now dominated by the Metro-1 operation. An apartment block on the corner has been bought up to provide accommodation for phase two workers; a cafeteria has become, in effect, the staff canteen; and the center of the square is always full of Metro-1 trucks and buses.

These workers are a rather different breed from those in phase one. They always stick together in large groups, wear large, photo-embossed ID badges, and, in conversation, always seem stressed and brittle-tempered—angry suspicion one minute, thigh-slapping bonhomie the next.

Empaths will feel psychic disturbance as an almost physical discomfort. It is easy to deduce what prolonged exposure to the biocomp must have done to the sanity of these igors.

There is also a regular presence of Metro-1 security staff (Experienced NPCs with clubs and Vz-52 pistols) but, significantly, the troops of the 3rd Emergency (see page 67) seem to give the square a wide birth. They—and their commander—have their orders.

The main access route is in use night and day, but is under guard, and all workers and visitors must show IDs to get in. The referee should emphasize that security is tight and that a frontal approach seems unlikely to succeed. Further observation will reveal two other factors: Every day, a lorry in BPX/VRKh livery drives straight through the security barrier and unloads its cargo in the works site forecourt. If any PCs are empathic or making a point of watching or mingling with the workers, they notice one individual's behavior is becoming increasingly erratic.

GEORGI GOLUBOVSKY

At 32, Golubovsky is young for his position, but he has benefitted from natural ability and the patronage of two committee members: Deiter Kazakov (Golubovsky went to Harvard Business School with Kazakov's daughter) and Patriarch Mikhail (he is also devout Russian Orthodox and has written several texts for seminary work). Pudgy and more than a little plain, nonetheless Golubovsky enjoys the trappings of success: a Volga sedan, imported suits and even fresh food. Forever on the move—conference calling on his carphone, dictating notes while signing letters—Golubovsky is rising fast. He is too busy to have any vices and has a clean record.



Experience: Experienced

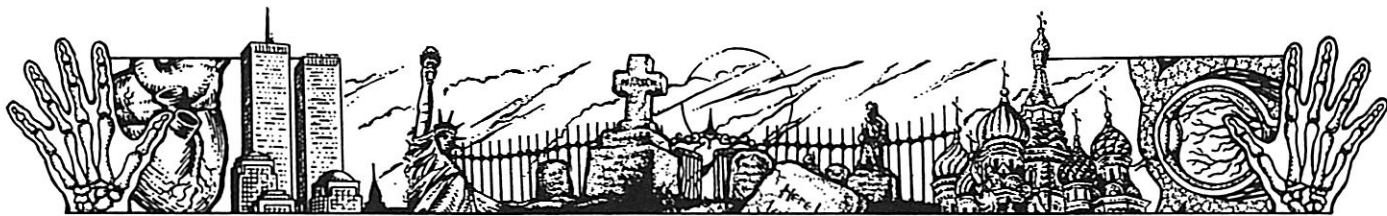
Attributes: 5; Education 8

Skills: 4; English 6, Business 7

Initiative: 2

Motivation: *Club Queen:* The single-minded determination that has brought Golubovsky success also means that he is stubborn and inflexible. *Space Five:* He is ambitious, eager to rise to the heights of the bureaucracy.





PACING THE ADVENTURE

It is probably a bad thing for the PCs to be allowed or encouraged to try to get straight into the metro. Either they will come too quickly to the logical climax of this section of the adventure, or—perhaps more likely—they will be unprepared, out-gunned and, soon enough, history.

The ideal course of events may be for them to gain enough evidence that something is amiss in the metro (such as testimonies, photos or a link with BPX/VRKh) to discredit Golubovsky and muster some support for further action. This may or may not follow an abortive bid to gain direct access to the metro.

Of course, player characters being player characters, they may adopt different approaches, and this may prove an area where the referee will be forced to improvise. Remember that there is a fine line between creative improvisation to induce the PCs to adopt a particular course of action, and clumsy and dictatorial editorial control. Ultimately, if the PCs have a brilliant and foolproof plan to win success at the first attempt, they should reap the rewards, while if they insist in going undefended and incautiously into a danger zone, they should pay the price.

VRKh, AGAIN

The daily visit by the BPX/VRKh van is an obvious event to investigate. The vans are the same style as the one blown up in the warehouse earlier. One arrives at Yeltsin Square at about 11 a.m. every morning and drives into the partially screened works site forecourt. Observers would have to be in the Metro-1 hostel or in one of the (occupied) apartments in 6, Yeltsinskaya to get a clear view. They see workers unloading stainless steel cryonic capsules (see page 23) onto powered trolleys and then loading other, obviously lighter, capsules back into the truck, which sets off at about noon.

The departing truck follows a twisting route through quieter parts of Vostok (traffic in fuel-hungry Moscow is quite scarce, these days). It keeps up a steady 30 km/h, except in two places, where traffic is heavier. About five minutes from the site, the truck has to pass through one of the many street markets and slow to a crawl. About

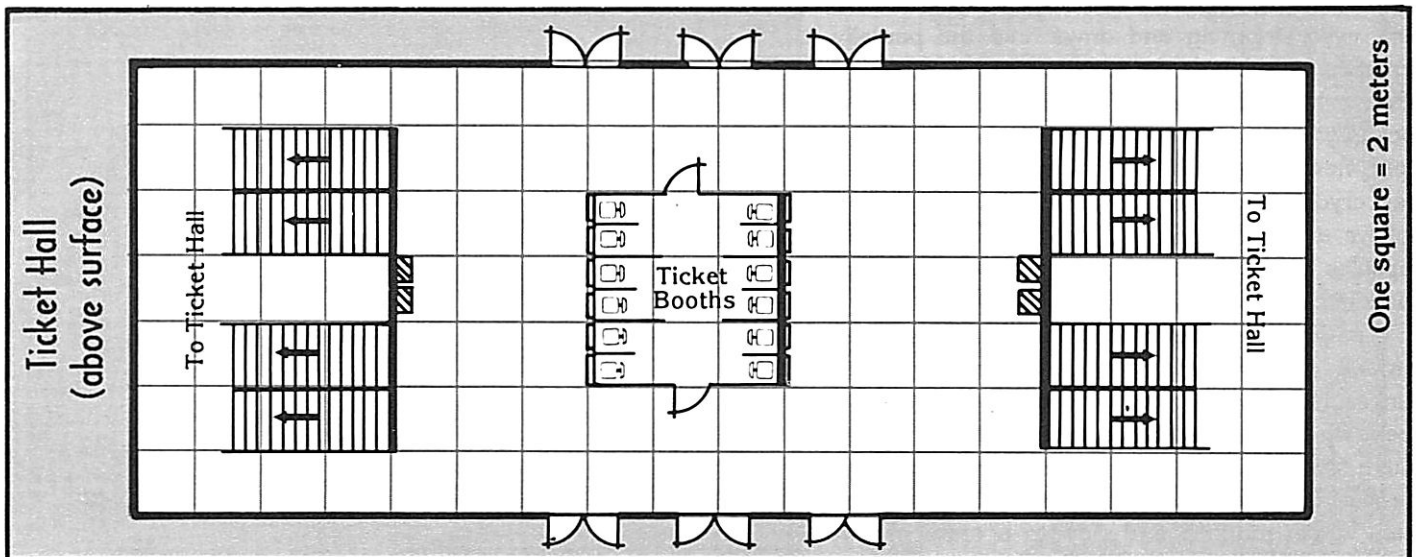
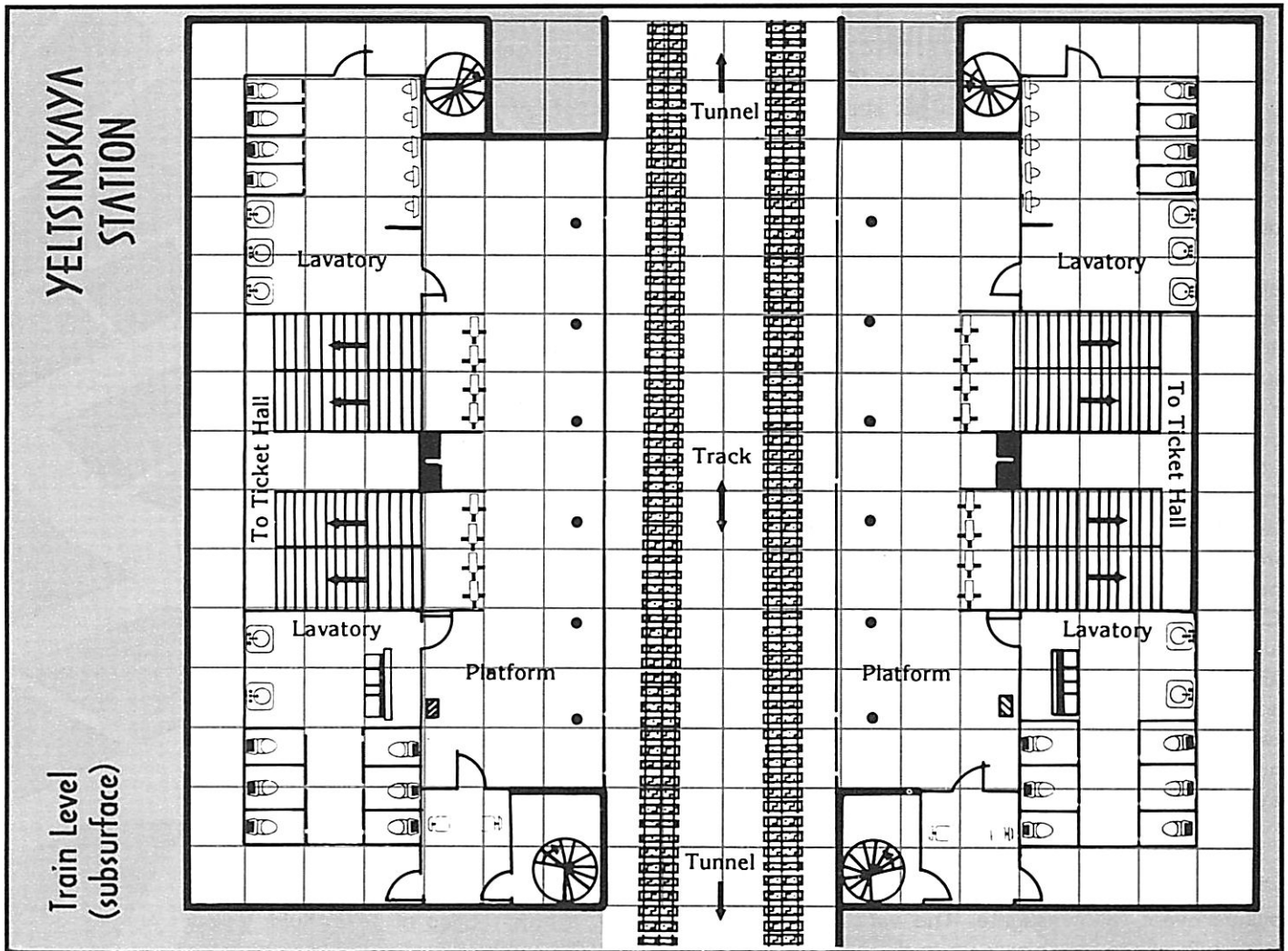
10 minutes later, its route brings it across a major road which still has traffic signals, and it must usually stop for its turn to cross. After another 10 minutes, the truck turns into a shadowy riverside warehouse. This is the site for a largely automated operation that takes the "product" of the Roosevelt Island Childrens' Hospital ward seven and prepares it for use in the metro biocomputer.

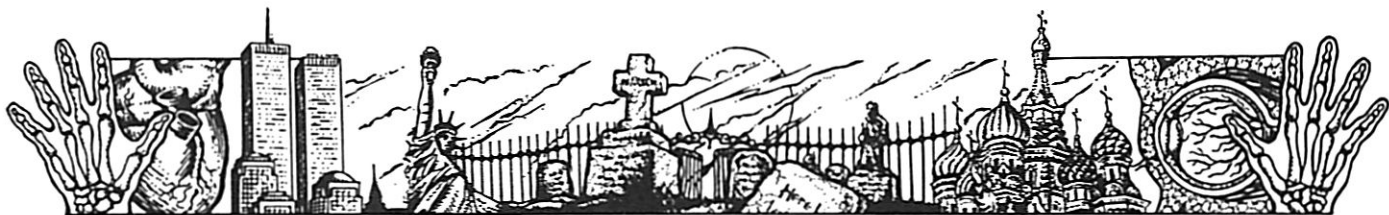
The vans drive into the warehouse and shut down. A gang of nukids (15 Novice NPCs with switchblades and the like, and two Experienced leaders with Makarov pistols) are employed taking refrigeration pods to and from the vans. The processing takes place in the warehouse's basement, in a heaving and moaning piece of DarkTek. The processor is in the charge of three more sophisticated nukids (Experienced NPCs—one is a torch—with access to an AKR and AKMR), with an ogre to do the heavy lifting. (See *Dark Conspiracy*, page 225, for more on nukids and ogres.)

The gang's morale is brittle: In a fight, they will at first show ferocity, but they will soon turn and run if luck, numbers or firepower are against them. For all their grotesque mutation (one has a face that is little more than a mass of gray and pink scar tissue), the nukids are intelligent and cunning. If necessary, they will flee, but if they have a minute with the processor, they can set it to destruct, and within three minutes it will have decayed into a messy heap of green fluid, yellow nodules and oily smoke.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE METRO?

The poor victims of Roosevelt Island Childrens' Hospital are being used as parts for a grandiose piece of DarkTek, a computer network designed to pick up, amplify and broadcast psychic disturbances as part of a larger plan to tap into the residual energies left by the millions of deaths and the monstrous suffering of the Stalin era: the persecutions, purges and prison camps. This experimental system is being built underground, along the shafts and tunnels of the metro. Not only will this provide a network covering the city, it will be able to start with the psychic residues left in the oldest tunnels, for those constructed by Stalin were built with prisoners, as slave labor.





If the PCs capture one of the three leaders, they will soon learn that these nukid igors are convincingly insane, but a successful Interrogation check will reveal that they were expecting a new supply of workers from the city of Kazan.

PRESSING THE FLESH

While phase two workers largely keep to themselves, it is not impossible to get to meet them, especially in the cafeteria at 14, Yeltsinskaya, very much their place to hang out. The back room hosts nightly games of cards and dice, and outsiders could always mingle with the workers over a friendly wager (a useful rule of thumb—the more you lose, the more friendly they become).

Most workers are either amoral and happy with their high wages, or convinced igors, but all display the brittle tempers mentioned above, and fights are frequent. Prying outsiders could easily either trigger such a brawl or attract the attention of the security staff, who will either arrest and interrogate the PCs or just beat them and eject them from the area. One particularly persistent journalist found himself dumped, naked and bloody, in the Zone (page 61) at nightfall—an anecdote that still arouses much mirth amongst the clannish workers.

The workers may not be especially pleasant, but they are human, and one might be bought by a sufficiently large bribe, or intimidated, even snatched for a full interrogation. They may also let slip snatches of information while drunk. Or unguarded comments—like “I don’t know how much longer I can take this!” or “We’re not building it. It’s growing, down there!”—might be overheard. Besides which, PCs will likely notice how the workers avoid and ignore the wretched Abel Mikhailovich.

ABEL MIKHAILOVICH

Poor Abel Mikhailovich Mzhavanadze (Experienced NPC) is one of the workers, the one empathic characters might have noticed, the one the others clearly shun. Abel is a Georgian who fled to Moscow after a kidnapping went bad and the captive died. On the run, he took whatever job was going and found himself working for Metro-1. Genuine ability and rather skimpy morals got him assigned to the phase two teams, but he has been

ZHAO QING

A political exile from one of the many coups and purges in a fragmenting China, Zhao Qing, 39, came to Moscow 15 years ago and has become fiercely loyal to her adopted city. Returned to her original profession of engineer, she worked for a succession of technical consultancies before being hired by Metro-1.

Never part of the inner circle suborned to the Dark, she has become increasingly concerned that she is being taken for a fool and used as a tool. What is happening to her beloved Moscow?

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5; Engineer 8, Cantonese 6, Russian 5, French 3

Initiative: 4

Motivation: *Heart 10:* Zhao Qing is fiercely committed to justice and the city. *Club Nine:* She is energetic and forceful. Hardened construction workers cower before her rage or flinch from her waspish scorn.



having second thoughts. His internal turmoil, added to the emanations of the biocomp, have driven him dangerously close to the margins of sanity.

Abel mutters to himself, has a pronounced facial twitch and drinks all the time. Drunk, he just becomes more gloomy, often tearful, sometimes violent. Whether by sympathy, intimidation, persuasion or sheer charisma, PCs might get him to talk, though he knows few of the details of the project. All he knows is that there is something terrible *being grown* in those tunnels, something that should not exist. He could be interviewed, even recorded on audio or video tape, but he cannot help PCs get into the site.

What is more, anything but the most careful treatment will only serve to bring his inner debate to some sort of crisis. Later, he will throw himself from the top of a residential block, crying, “Forgive me!”



IT'S A TOUGH JOB, BUT...

Potential sources of help might include the "normal" Metro-1 workers. Most have no idea what is going on, but they are being well-paid and feel a loyalty to their company. PCs snooping about the ordinary Metro-1 work sites (at Nogina Square, Kuznetsk Bridge, Geroiskaya or Kuzminskaya stations) may have encountered Zhao Qing, one of the senior, and certainly most energetic, of the supervising foremen. She has some reservations about what is going on, and may be persuaded to provide information or access, or even join the PCs' investigation.

FRONT DOOR

Even if she is willing to try, there is no way Zhao Qing can bluster her way into the station. Major Samsonov could get as far as the inner forecourt while someone rang the authorities and found he had no official warrant. PCs can try to pass themselves off as workers, but this would require a Difficult test of Act/Bluff without the right uniforms and forged ID badges.

During the day, there are always 2D6 workers in the forecourt, and another dozen or so at work in the station ticket hall. There are also three human security guards above ground and three below. The escalators going down do not work. One has been covered with plastic tracks, and a small, electric winch lifts and lowers loads on pallets.

Many machines keep the ticket hall and the station below absolutely dry and arid. The air is uncomfortably dry, and all the workers wear treated gauze face-masks to cut down on their exhalation of moisture. The station platform area houses more of these machines, as well as huge freezer units used to store the tissue from VRKh until it is needed. Typically, there will be another dozen workmen and several dark elf (Dark Conspiracy, page 221) supervisors. At first glance, the area looks normal, but there are also traces of DarkTek, especially around the mouths of the tunnels, which are, on closer inspection, at least half-filled with biomachinery.

BACK DOOR

An alternative route into the forbidden tunnels would be to get into those being worked by the

phase one teams and break in through the side.

Security on these work sites is far more lax. Zhao Qing could easily slip the PCs in as "consultants" or "inspectors." However, there is a stretch of still uncharted and potentially dangerous tunnel between the work sites on each side and the barriers. In these areas, there is no power, and every effort should be made to make the PCs feel at risk. There are, after all, various dangers—pockets of stale air or dangerous (and inflammable) gasses, subsidence, large rats.

The barriers are little more than sticky membranes, largely intended to block moist air—easy, if unpleasant, to cut through.

Just beyond the barriers, the biocomputer is being extended. This is a largely automatic process, as several large creatures looking like huge (six-foot-long) woodlice exude various mucous mixes and fluids which soon harden into different disgusting textures. Other creatures, resembling six-armed monkeys with beetles' carapaces, carve and mould these substances into their appropriate forms. While these may look like animals, they are really little more than engineered constructs, biological robots "programmed" with the appropriate blueprints. Mindless, they will not react to any external stimuli.

The woodlice must be fed with regular infusions of various raw materials, so a few intelligent staff will be on hand—typically a couple of dark elves (armed with Vz-52s) and some trusted igors (Experienced NPCs). It might be possible to sneak past them or to overcome them with the advantage of surprise. If the PCs are noisy in breaching the barrier, or if they panic and open fire at the constructs, the dark elves will organize an ambush, using the igors as decoys, while alerting their leaders.

INSIDE THE TUNNELS

Once the PCs are inside the forbidden tunnels, the extent of Dark involvement will be obvious. The tunnels, some 15 feet in diameter, are clogged and overgrown with the twisting and inhuman biocircuitry of DarkTek, often leaving just narrow crawlways a few feet across. Negotiating the tunnels will be a slow and disturbing experience, as ventricles dilate and contract, and glowing bulbs pulse their way through translucent "veins."



All characters will feel the accumulating pain and terror being collected and broadcast by the device. Their Initiative scores are reduced by 1, making them slower to react and more prone to panic. Empaths with Empathy 7 or more, or anyone with Empathy 6 or more, are so demoralized and pained by the psychic resonance that they lose fully 2 points of Initiative. As they get closer in to the tunnels, characters get increasingly clear pictures of the suffering still imprinted in the walls and air about them. One character may suffer a momentary flashback to life as one of the prisoner-slave workers in the 1930s (the referee can easily fill in the details).

The tunnels are largely empty, and it takes about 15 minutes to get from one of the barriers to the central chamber, which is a mere five minutes from the Yeltsinskaya station.

CENTRAL CHAMBER

In a center chamber, near Yeltsinskaya station, some sort of central node is being created. More bioconstructs are at work, this time foot-long, segmented, two-headed worms and quivering, pulsing gray slabs of living tissue. The blobs squeeze their way into VRKh-labelled sterile containers and engulf the tissue. Then, tinged a new and sickly pink, they heave and slither their way to a depression in the center of the chamber. There they deposit a pile of gray-pink slime that quickly hardens into an iridescent solid. The worms then scurble and scrape their way across it, etching it with all sorts of tracers and veins. In this way, they are building a shape that looks like it will become a treble arch.

The psychic pressure in and by this chamber is extraordinary, and PCs will be assayed by what appear to be spirits of slave laborers but which are, in fact, figments of their imaginations—albeit dangerous ones (see page 67). Each PC may face one “figment”: Have each player roll 1D10, and a figment manifests itself to anyone rolling his Empathy or less. Describe these to the players afflicted as the shades of slave workers who died in the tunnels. Those lucky enough to be unaffected see their companions suddenly twist and convulse in inner conflict.

Everybody feels the sheer evil and alien nature of the construct—it cries out to be destroyed.

There are several dark elves in the chamber. Typically, none are armed (though if the PCs are expected, they will have AK-47s and AKMRs). If they are attacked, or if the PCs give themselves away (such as by screaming and groaning while fighting a figment) the dark elves will retire to arm or give the alarm.

The construct can be destroyed in a variety of ways. Gunfire will slowly shatter it into shards, and while explosives will be far more effective, they could bring the roof down. A PC with the Project Emotion skill could try to engage it in empathic struggle, against the equivalent of Willpower 7. Failure causes the empath to faint, while a stage three success, or two consecutive stage two successes, causes the construct to begin shivering and collapsing in on itself.

Less dramatically, characters may consider the significance of the effort being put into keeping the area dry. Until the machine is complete and compounds used to bond it together are dry, it is very vulnerable to water.

Even such simple sabotage as cutting the site's power supplies would harm or even destroy it as the air becomes more humid, while a computer hacker might be able to break into the machines' control system and set them to maintain a higher humidity level. More directly, the contents of a single water flask would start a quick reaction, sending a gray smear spreading across perhaps a third of the construct's surface, an area that then breaks down into a stinking ooze.

THANKS, OF SORTS

If the PCs destroy the construct or gather conclusive evidence of what is going on, the committee will grant them a grudging reprieve from expulsion from the country. Samsonov may hear that there are apparently divisions within the committee. The site manager, a dark elf with the power of Dimension Walk, will slip away, leaving menials behind.

Research in corporate information databases—or, more directly, by stealing or searching documents in the site manager's office at 9, Yeltsinskaya—will reveal Metro-1's board of directors, which includes several members of the committee. Hearing of Metro-1's connection with Kazan, Major Samsonov will quirk an eyebrow: “Now that's interesting.”

THE COMMITTEE



Patriarch Mikhail



Ivanovsky



Kalinin

The emergency regime running Moscow—as far as that is possible—calls itself the Committee for the Salvation of the Motherland (KSR, in its Russian acronym). Made up of a collection of army officers, public figures and power-brokers, its only real purpose is survival, the desperate struggle to keep Moscow alive and in some sort of order. Members use ruthless methods and every underhand stratagem, if it holds the chance of advancing this aim. They are the archetypal moral extremists who believe that the ends justify the means, and thus they could prove a formidable enemy of the Dark or an unwitting tool.

Whatever their course of action, the PCs will, by now, have made some enemies in Moscow. Metro-1 and VRKh certainly resent the destruction of the portal. And depending on how the PCs conduct their investigation, they may gain the attention of other officials.

The committee (and Patriarch Mikhail), still considering the matter of the PCs' visas, is not pleased that the restoration of the subways has been interrupted—many are not even convinced of the reality of the Dark Menace—and

they hold PCs responsible. Samsonov and the empathic underground have friends on the committee, but their review of the group's actions could go either way. At some point, the PCs are eventually called before the committee and interviewed. The committee consists of the following members: Patriarch Mikhail of Novgorod, Colonel General Aleksei Ivanovsky, General Viktor Kalinin, Academician Tatyana Rusanova, Marina Volkova and Dieter Kazakov. Character summaries are presented to aid the referee in roleplaying the interrogations.

Depending on how effectively the PCs have done their homework and how able they are at picking up

the unspoken subtexts of their interrogations, they may manage to draw up a simple table of those who take the Dark threat seriously, and those seeking to play it down.

TAKING SIDES

At some point, the PCs will meet Colonel Maxim Beda, a crippled veteran in a wheelchair, who will approach the matter of the Dark Minion threat with military matter-of-factness: What sort of threat might the Dark Minions pose? What are their weaknesses? Beda wears the China Campaign Star and is Ivanovsky's former chief of staff.

Indeed, most military officers prove relatively open to the PCs' message, except for one Colonel Vladimir Yerechin. Further inquiry may elicit the fact that he heads the Zil Municipal Defence Force and is on Zil Moscow's payroll (see page 65).

After a discussion with some civic dignitaries, the PCs may overhear young and ambitious Deacon Petr say, "Of course, I share your concerns, but I am worried by the danger of panic—the blow to our people's morale—if we give these stories any official credence. And I am sure I speak for the patriarch in this." He will be supported by two others. Tatyana Savina, deputy director of Zil Moscow's public relations department, will flatly deride the whole notion of otherworldly influences, while mousy little Igor Meretskev will be worried about the international implications. Further inquiry will reveal that Meretskev is part of Rusanova's team.

PATRIARCH MIKHAIL OF NOVGOROD

The Russian Orthodox Church does not just provide moral support for the committee—it is an increasingly important force in the city: Its soup kitchens help dull the edge of popular hardship and anger, while its new agricultural developments, combined monasteries and land reclamation centers provide food for the city, work for the unemployed and even some foreign capital from export. For all his small stature and self-effacing manner, Mikhail is a powerhouse of energy and organization.

Mikhail of Novgorod is a Dark Minion, and is also known as Lavrenty Beria, Koshchey the undying and other names.



COLONEL GENERAL ALEKSEI IVANOVSKY

Ivanovsky chairs the committee and is indispensable because of his prestige and his qualities. A famed veteran on the last Chinese war, the "Bear of Ussuri" has public support vital to giving the committee some legitimacy. Old now, he is also prepared to accept that his role is not to rule but to preside—to build consensus and pilot compromise. It is doubtful that anyone else could be as successful in getting such an array of ambitious and powerful men and women to work together.

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 4

Skills: Leadership 8

Initiative: 6

Motivation: *Space Ace:* The general is extremely charismatic, although at his age he is no longer the handsome young officer he once was. *Heart King:* The general is an extremely honorable man, another trait which makes him the obvious leader of the committee.

GENERAL VIKTOR KALININ

Kalinin represents the army, in so far as there is one. More to the point, he represents the security forces, and generally coordinates their operations. Lacking Ivanovsky's charisma, the quiet and brooding Kalinin is a tactician of brilliance and a master of organization. He can be relied on to assemble what is needed, when it is needed.

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 4

Skills: Business 6, Leadership 2, Tactics 6

Initiative: 5

Motivation: *Heart Two:* Kalinin is not a good socializer. *Club Ace:* Kalinin's talent as a soldier is unequalled.

ACADEMICIAN TATYANA RUSANOVA

As the chair of New Moscow University's School of Foreign Policy Studies, Rusanova is the nearest thing Moscow has to a foreign minister. Her job, often little more than touting for foreign trade or aid, is not easy, but she retains a wry dignity.

Experience: Novice

Attributes: 5

Skills: Computer Operation 4, Business 3

Initiative: 2

Motivation: *Spade Four:* She has a mild ambitious streak. *Heart Jack:* A great native wisdom has led to her position.

MARINA VOLKOVA

Officially on the committee to represent the interests of ordinary Muscovites, Volkova is the city's leading black marketeer and crime godmother, with interests in a wide range of legal, semi-legal and downright illegal activities. Her relationship with the committee is pragmatic. It sanctions her activities; she never directly or excessively harms the interests of the state; and she uses her network of agents and minions to keep a lid on any political unrest.

Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 5

Skills: Bargain 8, Streetwise 6

Initiative: 2

Motivation: *Spade Queen:* Marina is ruthless in her quest to succeed, because of her origins. *Diamond 10:* Coming from a poor rural family, Marina is determined to never be cold, hungry or wet again.

DIETER KAZAKOV

The chief executive of Zil Moscow and an influential member of the Zil Corporation's management board, Kazakov represents corporate interests on the committee. Of Russified Volga German stock, Kazakov's stocky and coarse appearance belies a shrewd and sophisticated intellect.

Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 3

Skills: Leadership 5, Bargaining 4, Business 8

Initiative: 3

Motivation: *Heart Jack:* Kazakov is extremely intelligent. *Diamond Four:* A major concern in his existence is the accumulation of money.



Rusanova



Volkova



Kazakov

STEEL ANGEL



FOREBODING

The new dream goes something like this.

You awaken shivering, but you are not in your own bed. You are inside a building walled with sheet-metal, the sides shaking with the wind outside, and you are cold—very cold. It was a shout that awakened you, a shout from a very large, very mean-looking man in a thick coat and a fur cap, carrying a length of knotted rope. He is walking down a row of bunk beds toward you, bellowing orders. All around you men leap from the bunks and begin moving frantically toward the only stove in the room. It is surrounded with boots, and for some reason, you feel that you must get there before anyone else. As you elbow your way through the throng, you see that everyone, yourself included, is dressed in drab gray with dirtier gray prison stripes, and everyone is thin and pinched.

You force your way to the stove and grab a pair of boots, noticing as you do that your boots are not made of leather at all, but have been sewn from many layers of thick felt. The word *valenki* enters your mind when you see them, and you remember that is what the strange boots are called, remembering it as if it were an answer to a history test you took years ago. You remember that the reason everyone is in such a rush is that the last ones to the stove have to take the *valenki* farthest from the stove—the ones that will still be wet from yesterday, the ones that will freeze like blocks of ice to the skin of your feet and cause your feet to lose circulation and, eventually, require amputation.

You awaken shivering.





After the destruction of the abomination in the metro, the next few days will be a whirlwind of debriefs and interviews, as the PCs are shuttled from one arm of the Moscow bureaucracy to the next. The ubiquitous Major Samsonov will be their guide, and a succession of skeptical and increasingly powerful functionaries will have to be convinced that the action that was taken was right and good.

From Samsonov, other contacts or just hints dropped in conversation, it will become clear to the PCs that they are caught in the midst of a major debate within the committee.

Something else of interest, however, is that the PCs will begin having another dream (see the sidebar titled *Foreboding*, page 46).

A SIDE TRIP

After their interview with the committee, Samsonov will strongly suggest that the group go to Kazan. Not only do they have experience in dealing with, shall we say, the unusual, but it would probably be good for their health to be somewhere else while this power struggle within the committee works itself out. Samsonov can provide places on a military transport headed that direction.

Should the PCs mention their search for Annya, Samsonov will agree to continue investigations in Moscow on their behalf. He knows a few strings to pull that may yield something.

SUNNY KAZAN

Kazan is one of the few major Russian cities still professing direct loyalty to Moscow, although it is largely left to run its own affairs. The bond between the two cities is forged of equal parts economic and military necessity. Kazan has a thriving chemicals industry that has prospered due to the criminally lax Russian environmental protection laws, and it needs a major source of cheap petrochemicals, which Moscow can provide, thanks to its new Northern Exploitation Zone. Lying so close to the aggressive Ural Free Russian Republic, it also needs Moscow (with its nuclear capability), as a powerful protector.

The flight to Kazan is an uncomfortable two and a half hours in a barely civilianized Russian

CAPTAIN OLEG TITOV

The scrawny and ill-favored Captain Titov is no advertisement for the Kazan police. He is astonishingly lazy, and gives the most ridiculous reasons for not carrying out tasks—so ridiculous that people are usually too astonished to object. When actually forced to work, he will whine and drag his feet, so much so that people typically fail to notice that he both knows Kazan very well and has quite a measure of shrewd street smarts when he can see something in it for him.



Titov is provided as a translator and guide for the group while they are in Kazan.

Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 5

Skills: 4; Bargain 6

Initiative: 2

Motivation: *Diamond Three:* Titov is by nature greedy; *Club Two:* For all his laziness, Titov is not necessarily put out by the threat of physical violence.

RUSSIAN CITIES





GRIGOR GOLOSOV

Academician Golosov, 53, is the sort of man who makes few friends. Undeservedly arrogant, pompous and long-winded, he also has an encyclopedic knowledge of Russian history in general and that of the Kazan region in particular. He is also utterly honest and intolerant of corruption, a rare trait, these days. He is a stocky, balding man, with thick-rimmed glasses and shiny, cheap suits. He prefaces almost every observation with, "To me, this is clear..."



Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 5; Education 9

Skills: 4; History 7, English 5

Initiative: 2

Motivation: *Heart King:* Golosov clings to a rigid, even pig-headed, sense of ethics. *Spade Jack:* Absolutely convinced of his own worth, Golosov is an insufferable and self-centered bore.

Air Force transport. The seats are rusty metal covered with a half-inch of foam cushion, in-flight service nonexistent. Most of the Russian passengers travel either with a half dozen huge boxes or cardboard suitcases (left scattered through the aisles) or a few sheep or pigs (which wander placidly up and down the aisles, trampling unconcernedly over the boxes).

On arrival, Kazan is unlikely to impress. The city is perpetually shrouded by a smog blanket from the chemical works on the outskirts of the city. Outsiders are prey to a wide range of respiratory problems, sore eyes and similar problems: Pick a character at random each day to suffer -1 Initiative that day due to the pollution. A street map of Kazan is not important and is not provided.

The PCs will be met at the airport by the shabby and listless Captain Titov, who has been assigned by local authorities to act as their

liaison. In between scratching and yawning, Titov will tell the PCs that they have rooms booked at the Kazan Hotel and appointments already set up to meet the police chief. He will then get into a battered Volga and wait for them to stow their luggage and get in. Some welcome.

OPEN CASES

The chief of police, Colonel Olya Olyanova, is much like her force—overstretched and under-resourced. She will explain that her police are too busy trying to hold the line against street crime to divert any resources to the "headline stuff," but she does admit to some unusual developments in the past few months:

Werewolves: There have been a few claims of sightings of *Oboroteny* (werewolves) recently. She would discount this out of hand, had *Episkop* (Bishop) Nikolai of the Church of Our Lady of Kazan not been found last full moon, torn limb from limb and partially eaten.

Disappearances: People have been vanishing in ones and twos, from all parts of the city and with no apparent connection beyond that families who have lost one member seem rather more likely to lose a second, even a third. In all, some 220 people have disappeared. No ransom demands and no clues.

Archives: Perhaps the most perplexing of the three cases—the entire historical archives from the Kazan Local History Museum were stolen five months ago, only to show up within a few days, dumped in a pile on the outskirts of the city.

Olyanova turns a gaze full of weary entreaty on the PCs. They are welcome to turn their hand to solving these mysteries, but please don't get in the way of the real police work. Other than Titov, she cannot supply any assistance, but she agrees to supply the group with beds and meals at the police barracks.

MISSING IN KAZAN

Files on the missing people are kept on an anachronistic Protechnik EVM-3626 computer. They are, of course, in Russian, though a computer programmer could overlay a translation routine either with a purpose-built package (Average versus Computer Operation and Russian)



or by writing in a link to a commercial translation database (Easy versus Computer Operation).

On the surface, there is no common pattern to the disappearances. But the computer can cross-check everything from shoe size to date of birth infinitely faster than humans could (Difficult versus Computer Operation, with bonuses due to Computer Empathy at the referee's discretion). Or those with Foreboding skill may guess that it has something to do with their ancestry (requires at least a stage three success).

All those missing are descended from unions in which one or both parents died in one of Stalin's concentration camps—a GULag. They are being snatched by the werewolves (see below) and bundled off to the research site at Camp 2166. The abductors have managed to get away with the kidnappings thanks to a piece of ET DarkTek—capacitors of invisibility.

More conventional investigation at the scene of the crimes may elicit the following information, depending on the characters' zeal and their success in various Observation, Streetwise and Interrogation checks. Hairs which forensics may reveal to be wolf fur may be found at more recent scenes of crimes. In one or two cases, shambling, stooped figures were seen wearing motorcycle helmets with the visors down. But usually, no one saw anything. Nonetheless, people near the crimes have complained of vision problems or a buzzing in the ears for some time afterward.

A character with appropriate scientific experience or, more likely, Foreboding skill, may feel a slight prickling at the scenes of the crimes.

HISTORY LIVES

Investigating the loss of the archives will bring the PCs into contact with the irascible and impossible Professor Golosov, who may be a useful contact, given the historical dimension of the conspiracy, but will certainly be a trying one.

Given the apparent failure of their security system, the disappearance of their long-standing security guard, and the fact that they have spent the past months trying to reconstruct

archives dumped in mud (and, apparently, dropped from a height), the museum staff members are unhappy to discuss the matter, though Captain Titov, if sufficiently prodded, will reluctantly emphasize the PCs' semi-official status.

Inquiries may reveal that a week before the burglary, a postal request for access to the archives was received from Vasily Slepets of 55, Pushkin Street. Unfortunately, the staff had to turn him down, since the museum doesn't have the funds to keep its libraries open.

A visit to Pushkin Street reveals that number 55 is a cemetery, which includes the grave of the late V.P. Slepets, as the grumpy and surly young caretaker/chaplain, Father Mikhail, will reveal. He will say that a letter arrived for Slepets from the museum, but he thought it was a hoax or an advertising circular and threw it away.

In fact, Father Mikhail was instructed to send the request and await a reply by *Dyakon* (Deacon) Fedor, then *Episkop* Nikolai's deputy and now the acting *Episkop* of Our Lady of Kazan. Father Mikhail does not know why, but he knows that this was meant to be a secret, and he will try to mislead the PCs, then promptly telephone Nikolai. Nikolai will ensure that Mikhail gets a visit from some werewolves the next night to silence him permanently. Mikhail is a Novice NPC, with Act/Bluff 3.

After the failure of the legal approach, Koshchey sent werewolves to steal the archives. They seized the whole lot, masked by individual cloaks of invisibility, sorted out what they

WEREWOLVES

Like all of the Dark Minions, Koshchey's favorite game is terrorizing a helpless humanity. A recent experiment, made possible by contacts with an ET scientist, was to engineer some Moreau weres as *Oboroteny*, to help in instilling terror and to do heavy labor. When Koshchey decided to resurrect a *specifically* Russian fear, he decided to conduct a test, using Kazan as a prototype. The *Oboroteny* were put to work as the heavy muscle for the project.

Eight are currently sheltered in one of the barracks of Camp 2166, with a dozen more operating near Kazan.



CHILDREN OF THE STEEL ANGEL

The Children of the Steel Angel are a band of religious fanatics, originally Russian Orthodox, who believe Stalin was the son of God who came to Earth to build a paradise for believers. He was betrayed before he could finish this task, and Russia was forced into a dark age until his return. That time is very close, as the angel's right hand has come to prepare the way. *Episkop* Fedor, main recruiter for the children in Kazan, encourages the belief that Patriarch Mikhail is Lavrenty Beria, the right hand of Stalin (though he personally thinks the resemblance is a coincidence).

Koshchey established the children as a means of controlling large groups of humans. The camp guards are all children, and they support the aims of the camp. They believe they are studying the ways the Steel Angel dealt with the unholy. The PC group may speculate on the identity of the Steel Angel, which will presumably revolve around robot or cyborg creatures. The Steel Angel is really Stalin ("steel" in Russian), leader of the Soviet Union from the death of Lenin until his own death in 1953.

wanted over the next few days, and dumped the rest on the edge of town.

A check of the Museum will reveal traces of a forced entry, with the main door lock burnt through, probably by an oxy-acetylene cutting torch. A successful Observation check will reveal some wolf hairs caught in a carpet.

Turning to the missing archives, what the PCs learn depend on what they ask Professor Golosov and how effective they are in dealing with such a prickly character. At worst, they will be told they were papers relating to local events through the 1930s. At most, Golosov will underline that this was the Stalin era—they were the records of locals arrested and imprisoned and add that there was a *GULag* (a forced labor camp) in the area.

If questioned about this camp, Golosov will say that it would take him a day or so to find its exact location because it was bulldozed and left to become overgrown years ago. He will add that a close friend's grandfather was a prisoner in the local camp, and, after a moment of wistful reflection, he will remark that his friend is now one of the missing.

WHISTLE-BLOWER

Episkop Nikolai's death resulted from his growing suspicions that the church hierarchy is somehow involved in the crimes taking place in the city. In fact, *Dyakon* (now *Episkop*) Fedor is a creature of Patriarch Mikhail (and thus of Koshchey). He is aware that the Children of the Steel Angel are only a ruse, although he believes he is working only for earthly, human politics rather than anything more outlandish. Fedor has noticed the resemblance between Mikhail and the photographs of Beria that he has seen, and once remarked on this to one of the Children, a statement that was soon repeated and blown out of proportion.

Investigating PCs will be given full access to the scene of the crime—Nikolai's study—since Deacon Fedor is sure no loose ends lead his way. A successful Difficult test of Observation will turn up a few wolf hairs in the curtains.

A TRIP IN THE COUNTRY

Whether or not the characters are alerted to the presence of Camp 2166, they will receive another clue in the form of Old Zakharov. A well-known and respected figure in the town, he hunts pelts in the forests. One day he staggers into town, bleeding, mauled and near dead. He is rushed to Kazan Infirmary, but dies under surgery. His wounds are similar to those of the old *episkop*. What he says before dying is the talk of the town:

"Wolves...like...men.... Men...like...zombies.... The...camp...is...back!"

Everyone has their pet theory of what he means, though delirium is the most frequent guess. Pulling Zakharov's police file or speaking to his widow, Akatsiya, will reveal the fact that 15 years ago, Zakharov was briefly imprisoned on a charge of public assault, after fighting with an actor involved in making a docudrama on the site of Camp 2166. Zakharov had been hired as an animal handler to help with the dogs. This is his only criminal record.

Local maps at the police HQ or Professor Golosov will locate the site of Camp 2166 as 20 kilometers to the northwest, in the middle of the forest. Police Chief Olyanova will not spare any



more men other than Titov, but she may provide a police vehicle (a wheezing GAZ Sportabout in police colors).

The journey will be rough, even with the GAZ, and the forests are thick, dark and often pollution-blighted. There may be reason to check the drivers' skills a few times to avoid accidents, or the PCs may encounter one or more *Leshy* (see page 68). Titov, surprisingly, will insist on coming along—he does, after all, represent the local authorities. If the group insists, he can obtain weapons for them from the police arsenal—one AK-74 per person, a PKM machinegun for the group as a whole, and (if the group thinks to ask) a case of 16 hand grenades.

CAMP 2166

The Stalinist-era GULag, Camp 2166, has been recreated in every detail, from the thin-walled, poorly insulated barracks to the watchtowers and barbed wire of the perimeter fence.

Koshchey's experiment in Kazan is linked to the atrocities in New York and the abomination under Moscow. New York's children provided the raw material for an organic biocomputer under Moscow. The biocomputer and its associated fields will enable Koshchey to take complete control first of Moscow, then all of Russia. The information he gathered from the camp in Kazan would enable him to create the greatest fear for the least effort. Koshchey's plan combines the science of the humanoid ETs with his own devious intelligence, and will yield him a feast of fear, suffering and terror such as he has not experienced since the 1930s.

Approach: As the group's vehicle approaches Camp 2166, they will notice signs of recent activity—new trails hacked through the trees, open spaces where the trees have been clear-cut to provide construction materials for the camp, signs of small campfires where guards have brewed tea while watching the prisoners. Eventually, they will come to a newly constructed road.

Observation: The woods are lightly patrolled, and the group will be able to get close enough to the camp to observe some general facts without being discovered. The camp is a slightly distorted square about a half a kilometer in area. A

perimeter fence of barbed wire surrounds a number of crude barracks buildings, some of which are made of wood recently harvested from the surrounding forest, others walled with corrugated sheet metal. A single road winds from the forest to the main gate. It is evident

STALIN

A bankrobber-turned-revolutionary from the Soviet Republic of Georgia, Joseph Vissiarionovich Djughashvili, AKA "Stalin" ("steel" in Russian) rose to power because he was able to use his job as Party administrator (he had files on everyone, could put his own people into key jobs and always knew what was going on). And he was "one of the boys," one of the new breed of hard men, dedicated but often under-educated, with little time for Marxist theory and more concern with doing what was necessary, whatever the cost, and little time for the "high-falutin' intellectuals" who started the revolution.

Only Lenin saw how much power Stalin was accumulating, but by then he was sick and dying. In the next few years, Stalin efficiently and ruthlessly eliminated all the leaders. Then he heard that Kirov was going to stand for the leadership of the party against him. Kirov was another "hard man," and handsome, Russian and popular with the Party, whereas Stalin was ugly, uncharismatic and a Georgian. When Kirov died in a "mysterious" assassination in 1934, Stalin used this as his pretext to launch a massive clamp-down throughout the USSR, claiming that "enemy agents and counterrevolutionaries" were to blame.

His tactics were simple. Smash every possible rival power structure. Make everyone distrust everyone else. Play them off against each other. Reward those who "play the game"; kill or imprison those who don't. Simple, but effective.

He purged the Party of all its brightest and most confident leaders. He purged the army, killing 90% of all Soviet generals in the single year 1937. Then he made sure he purged the secret police, so that his main weapon could not be used against him.

He regularly removed his chiefs, playing deputy heads against their bosses just to keep them busy. Until, that is, he appointed his fellow Georgian, Lavrenty Beria, in 1938. Beria was the perfect agent, an evil, sadistic little man who knew how to play to his master's every whim, and he had the organization skills and sheer monstrous callousness to keep the system of slavery, intimidation and murder that was Stalinism grinding on. The perfect match.



that the camp guards are not concerned so much with someone getting in as with someone getting out.

The perimeter fence is patrolled by six uniformed guards at all times. The main gate has a machinegun (use the PKM's statistics) and three uniformed guards on duty at all times, and each of the six watchtowers has a machinegun, but there is no sign of any other heavy weapons. A guard is stationed at the door of each of the seven prisoner barracks buildings, and two are stationed at the door to the administration building. Guards are relieved at eight-hour intervals. It is obvious that the camp is being expanded, as several more barracks buildings are present in various stages of completion.

If further information is desired, one or more characters will need to approach the camp more closely (Easy versus Stealth at night, Average during the day). Inside the fence, small work parties of prisoners can be observed during the day (only patrolling guards are observed at night). Some of these parties are constructing more barrack blocks, carrying lumber, and performing other obviously useful tasks. Others are engaged in patently irrational actions—digging holes and filling them in again, moving huge piles of timber from one place to another then moving them back. After a moment's reflection, this will be seen to be make-work, something to keep everyone too exhausted to try to escape.

Two buildings stand out from all others:

One, obviously an administration building, is built of cinder blocks instead of wood and is of quite substantial construction. The administration building obviously has its own generator, as two fairly large exhaust pipes can be seen sticking out of the roof, and a fuel tank (with a capacity of several thousand liters) is located next to them. At least once during the group's observation of the camp, a small party of prisoners will be led into this building. After a group is led in, they will be led out by a separate door, one at a time, back to the barracks.

The second is a small, well-built wooden barracks next to the administration building. Neither the guards nor the prisoners go near it, but occasionally, large human figures can be observed coming and going from it. These are

Koshchey's *Oboroteny* (werewolves), wrapped in huge coats and wearing helmets with full-face visors to conceal their identity during the day. Four of them are present in the camp at any one time, and another four patrol the woods outside the camp (the group may have encountered one on the way in).

Action: It will be quite easy to capture one of the guards, either patrolling in the forest on the edge of the camp clearing or escorting a wood-cutting party of three to five prisoners.

The guard will be wearing an odd variant on the Russian military uniform, with brick red facings and cap band, armed with a bolt-action rifle. It is extremely doubtful that any of the characters will be sufficiently well acquainted with the Russian military to identify the uniform, but they may have casually thumbed through one of Professor Golosov's books and seen something like it (Difficult versus Observation). Any character with a good knowledge of firearms (Difficult versus Education) will recognize the weapon as an M1891/30 Nagant, the rifle carried by Soviet soldiers in WWII. The prisoners will be wearing gray prison fatigues, so dirty that the stripes can barely be observed on them.

Guard: The guard captured is human, a male about 20 years old. Questioning will eventually reveal that his name is Vasili Rosanov; he is a former student in Kazan; and he is now a member of the Children of the Steel Angel. He has no fear of the characters and will tell them of this group with the fervor of a religious zealot attempting a conversion (for that is what he is).

"The Angel cannot come himself until the time is ready, but he has sent his right hand to guide us, to help us prepare the way. We must return to the old ways, the things the Angel ordained—we must purify the unholy and regress them until they learn. Those who will not learn must be eliminated. *Episkop* Fedor told me he works for the right hand of the Angel, the Georgian—I have seen the Georgian with my own eyes, come to this very camp to teach the unpurified. He is not a mere man, for I have seen him ascend to heaven. No one can look upon that and not believe. Let me go, and I will take you to the Georgian, for he is in camp now!"



Prisoners: The prisoners are all malnourished and in a state of exhaustion. If the group has obtained a list of names and/or photographs of the missing persons (on a portable computer, perhaps), and has cross checked one or more of the prisoners with this list, there will be correlations. The prisoners are the missing persons, without a doubt.

Further examination will reveal a new puzzle, however. While they answer to the last names of the missing, and their photos match their faces (except for their mistreated appearance), they all seem to believe that they are one of their own ancestors and that the year is 1938. To tie the whole package up with a bow, the referee could decree that one of the prisoners the group finds is Academician Golosov's friend, who is convinced that he is his grandfather.

INTO THE CAMP

If one of the group wants to infiltrate the camp in the captured guard's uniform (pick one of the group at random for the uniform to fit), this should be allowed. The other guards are not encouraged to ask questions, and for a short time, the imposter will be assumed to be a newly recruited member. However, as soon as the imposter ceases to act "guard-like" (by snooping, acting polite to the prisoners, publicly taking photographs, and so on) the other guards will report the imposter to their superiors, who will order the imposter apprehended.

Exactly what happens in this situation should be gamed out. It is possible that the imposter will get in, look around and get out again, all without arousing suspicions. It is also possible that the imposter will be discovered immediately and captured. Or something in between.

As it happens, Koshchey is in camp (courtesy of his Dimension Walk abilities) overseeing the "treatment" of the latest batch of prisoners.

TREATMENT

Inside the administration building is a hallway, a few small rooms that serve as holding cells and a large central "treatment" room.

This room, all white and antiseptic, contains numerous examples of Darkling and ET technology. The room is dominated by a cage, a glowing



KOSHCHEY/BERIA/MIKHAIL

Koshchey is a Dark Minion whose powers most resemble those of the dark elves. He considers himself unique, the last of his kind, and he may be right. Koshchey (the name he has assumed on Earth) is one of those few Minions who penetrated to this world before the ET contacts in the late 1940s, and developed a preference for terrorizing the Russian people. His only equal, a "brother" of sorts, vanished in the European chaos of 1945. Koshchey, as Lavrenty Beria, was the power behind Stalin, while his "brother," as Martin Bormann, occupied the same position in Germany. From 1933 to 1945, they enjoyed 12 glorious years of terror, pain and suffering.

Koshchey spent years trying to find his missing "brother," to no avail. He finally decided the search was pointless and began to concentrate on a new enterprise, making use of what he had learned from the ETs. The hospital in New York, the abomination in the Moscow underground and the horrors of Camp 2199 are part of his plan to return Russia to the terror of Stalin, and feast upon the fear and suffering. The camp experiments have enabled him to sharpen his technique, and he has applied the lessons learned there to the machine in Moscow. He leaves the use of nuclear weapons and ecological calamities to other Minions. For himself, nothing can equal the purely Russian nightmare that was the Stalin era. With the destruction of the portal to New York and of his biocomputer under Moscow, Koshchey is angry, and he has come to the camp seeking a way to begin the construction over again—perhaps using the camp as a location and the prisoners as both materials and labor.



white and purple crystal lattice, with a chair in its center—a chair with several restraining straps, sensor leads and connecting cables.

The whole process is visible through a window, but it is unlikely that a character will be able to stand by the administration building to observe the process undisturbed in the daytime (the guards will notice almost immediately). The night is a different matter, however.

The treatment consists of strapping a prisoner into the chair in the crystal cage and attaching various unidentifiable objects (DarkTek sensor leads and the like) to the victim's head, chest and limbs. The machine regresses the victim back in time, removing modern memories and emotions, and replacing them with the memories and emotions of the victim's ancestor.

The victim is made to relive the terrors of the ancestor's past, which the machine empathically extracts from the locale and implants in the mind of the victim. Hovering over it all, taking in every moan, every twitch, is Koshchey, whom the characters know as Patriarch Mikhail. He seems to gain strength from the pain and fear of the victim, and it should become obvious at this point that Mikhail is not human.

Eventually, the victim is released from the cage and escorted out of the building to a life of unending torment and mistreatment.

CONFRONTATION

For the PCs to thwart Koshchey, they must destroy the machine in the administration building. A direct assault is probably out of the question, as Koshchey has four werewolves and a couple of dozen armed guards at his disposal.

The gasoline tanks next to the administration building, however, are quite vulnerable, and if they were set ablaze they would soon involve the whole administration building.

A HAPPY ENDING

Upon their return to Moscow, the characters have been granted exit visas, have been cleared of all charges of wrong-doing, and have merely to travel to Riga, where they will board a steamship and travel across the Atlantic. Of course, Major Samsonov's influence is limited, and the characters will not be on a passenger

ship. They will be riding on a cargo vessel, loaded with Zils, surplus Russian Army combat rations and sundry household goods.

Any queries the characters may have made into Annya's whereabouts in Moscow will have resulted in no useful information at that time. Such queries will have sidetracked the group from Koshchey's trail and diverted their attentions at an inopportune moment. Upon their return to Moscow, however, Major Samsonov will have a surprise for them.

The group's queries about a nurse eventually rang a bell among one of the officials Samsonov mentioned the incident to, and the tale of the deranged woman claiming to be a nurse in America was uncovered.

Unfortunately, Samsonov has been unable to get the woman transferred out of the sanitarium, where a few weeks without drugs would allow her to recover her senses. Samsonov has no influence over the sanitarium, but he can arrange an appointment with the sanitarium's director. Samsonov indicates that the group would be well advised not to break any laws, as the committee's patience is wearing rather thin.

To secure Annya's release, the PCs have to catch a train to Riga in seven hours, so they must move swiftly. They are presumably in possession of Annya's photographs and other artifacts acquired along the way. They must make a presentation that will convince a mental health official to release a patient into their care. After an adventure full of firefights and encounters with hellish creatures, that should be simplicity itself! But the referee should emphasize the rush necessary to prepare their case, get to the sanatorium, secure Annya's release and get back in time to meet the train. (Note that Annya has no belongings with her, other than the clothes she was wearing when she stumbled across the dimensional portal.) The referee should play the sanatorium's staff as professionally skeptical and unwilling to be rushed, but ultimately willing to listen to reason. Keep in mind that this portion of the adventure is a denouement, specifically to provide PCs with a sense of satisfaction at having completed their hired task—so don't make it too easy or too difficult.

The reunion between Lobov and his niece is left up to the reader's imagination.





Founded by the Dutch in the 17th century (when the city was known as New Amsterdam), New York did not achieve its status as America's largest city until the 19th century. Because of its location and excellent port facilities, it soon eclipsed Boston, Charleston and Philadelphia as the center of cross-Atlantic trade. The massive European immigrations of the 1800s swelled the city's population, and New York had become the nation's cultural and economic mecca by 1910.

New Boswash: In the latter portion of the 20th century, the urban areas of the East Coast had expanded until they had formed one continuous community in a strip from Boston to Washington, DC, a metropolitan area nicknamed "New Boswash." A single metropolitan government was never established—there is no mayor of New Boswash. The community straddled several states and numerous counties, and each retained control over its portion of the metroplex. Each separate community governmental unit sends a representative to a kind of quasi-official council, however, and this body tries to coordinate the actions of the various components of the metroplex (without a great deal of success).

MANHATTAN

The island of Manhattan is what comes to mind for most people when they think of New York, and this book will concentrate upon that island because that is where the action of the first "act" of the adventure takes place.

Physical Conditions: The skyline of Manhattan would seem at once familiar and oddly different to a visitor from the mid- to late-20th century. Most of the familiar skyscrapers are still standing, but they are now put to different purposes (for example, many of the office buildings were converted into apartments for the rural populace that moved in during the Farm Family Relocations).

The main building additions are the corporate tower complexes (such as the TojiCorp Plaza over what used to be Hell's Kitchen), the so-called "Dreamlands" and the elevated road-

ways (the major roads in large cities now come in layers). Practically every window within grappling hook distance of the ground now has bars, and many ground-floor windows are bricked over or blocked off to foil burglary attempts.

Demographic Conditions: As with almost all cities in the world of **Dark Conspiracy**, the gulf between the richest and poorest inhabitants has widened tremendously, with hedonistic opulence existing cheek-by-jowl with disgusting squalor. In this sense, the cities have come to resemble Victorian London or the Rome of the Caesars. Crime rates have soared, and the average quality of life has deteriorated greatly from the period between 1950 and 1975.

Economic Conditions: The financial district is still around, but the stock exchange has been eclipsed by those of Singapore, Tokyo and Bahrain. New York remains an import financial center, but at nowhere near its former level of importance. Manhattan remains an important business center, but it is no longer the world leader in this area. As an interesting side note, a major industry in New York remains the filming (or more properly, taping) of television shows, especially soap operas. The music industry is also a major employer, especially in taping neo-retropunk funkabilly trideos (connoisseurs of the art form agree New York is the preferred backdrop).

Many Mikes (middle classes) in Manhattan are primarily employed the entertainment or advertising media, usually on a piecework, freelance basis. New York's Mike-Towns are filled with starving graphic artists, recording technicians, copywriters, producers, dancers, directors and, last but not least, actors.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOODS

A map of Manhattan is provided on pages 58-59, indicating the various neighborhoods discussed below. A short discussion of the other four boroughs of New York is located at the end of this section.

Upper East Side: This area is nicknamed



"Fort Stinkin-Rich" by the Mikes. The neighborhood contains a few high-rise Dreamlands, luxury complexes for the wealthy and privileged. The older luxury buildings remain standing, but each is now surrounded by a wall and comes equipped with extensive security measures. The streets of the Upper East Side are patrolled by private security forces (the nomenklatura of the UES does not have much faith in the metropolitan police any more).

Hardly anybody who lives at these places rides in a car unless it is on one of the new elevated roadways. They fly in and out of town on helicopters or VSTOLs that land on their rooftop helipads.

Upper West Side: The poorest of the gnomes (nomenklatura) live in the apartment/forts of the UWS. The main difference from the outside is that the streets are patrolled by metro police instead of rentacops, and most people use cars instead of VSTOLs.

Hell's Kitchen: The area known as Hell's Kitchen is the site of the world-famous TojiCorp Plaza (see the sidebar on Corporate Towers, page 60). Underneath the pilings of the plaza, Hell's Kitchen has become one of the city's worst Ant Hills. Deep beneath the streets, something worse exists (see Demonground, page 61). The city police do not enter the Ant Hill, and are not allowed into the plaza except in extreme cases.

Chelsea: The district known as Chelsea is inhabited by Mikes who would like to live in the UWS but can't afford it.

West Village: The West Village is inhabited by a few die-hard Bohemian types, but it is primarily a neighborhood where everybody is either in a band, looking to get into a band, managing a band, acting in a soap, looking for a job acting in a soap, etc.

SoHo: The artists deserted SoHo when it became trendy for Wall Street corporate raiders to convert the ex-warehouses into apartments. With the Greater Depression, these turned into middle-class apartments, then subdivided apartments, then prole quarters. SoHo is now in the process of deteriorating into an

CITY ENCOUNTERS

The urban encounters listed in the **Dark Conspiracy** rules on pages 157-159 will serve well in New York, with the situations adjusted to local conditions. Here are some suggestions, plus additions not in the original rules:

Abduction: An abduction, totally unconnected with the main plot, can be an excellent red-herring to divert the PCs' attention from their main objective.

Bigwigs Take Precedence: An alternative to this is the possibility that some corporation has blocked off a street to shoot a soap episode, or decided to raze a building because it blocks a camera angle.

Blackout: "Rolling blackouts" are a fact of life in New York. The power supply is always chancy, and in some areas, it is turned off between certain hours. Some buildings generate their own power, and some do not have power.

Eco-Commandos: Whenever it rains to excess, the storm drains overflow into the normal sewer system, and a toxic stew of raw sewage and pollutants is spilled into the Hudson and East rivers. Eco-commandos, wishing to demonstrate this fact for an increasingly apathetic public, might choose to try to divert the floodwaters into Central Park lake or down Broadway.

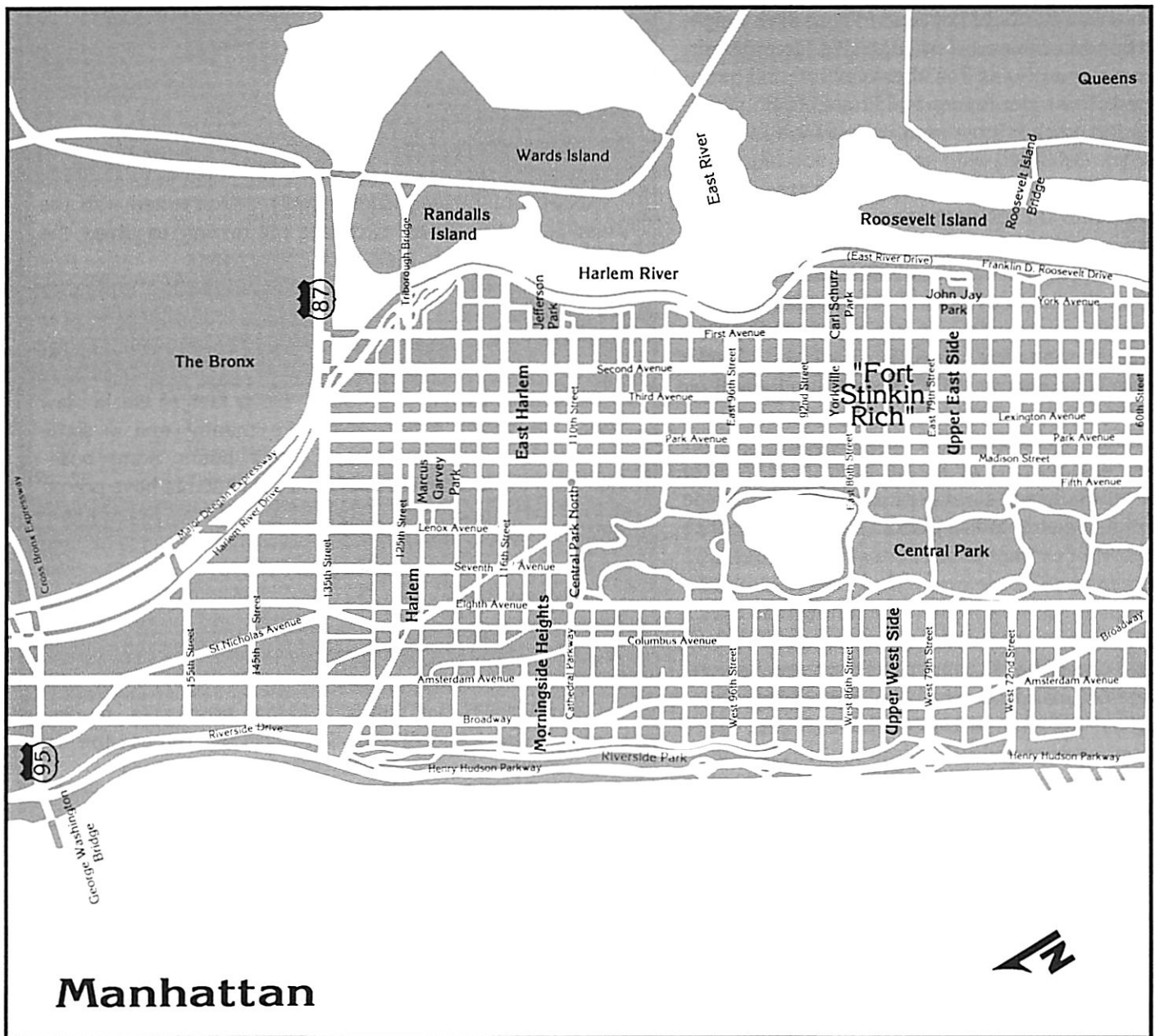
Gang War: Street gangs, criminal syndicates, feuding security organizations, corporate security forces—the list of possibilities for combat in New York is endless.

Health Alert: Obviously, disease is unlikely to have blown in from Asia, as the rules book suggests. The referee should substitute a chemical plant explosion or a leak in a transport container loaded with biowar material headed for a war zone.

Protest Marchers: Heaven only knows there is enough to protest about in New York. Just about anything can serve to set off a small, fanatical group in opposition to whatever is going on—computer rights activists, anticensus demonstrators, virulent pro-vivisectionists and so on—the more outrageous the better.

Shadow: Will the NYC police sit by and watch while the PC group stirs up whatever is happening out on Roosevelt Island? Are they following the group?

Fake Taxi: A common robbery technique is the fake taxi, in which a driver will pick up a fare and drive to a prearranged spot, where confederates are waiting. The victims, usually out-of-towners, are relieved of their valuables, and the fake taxi goes looking for another "fare."



Ant Hill as the proles are moved to newer precincts at Fresh Kills on Staten Island.

Lower East Side: The LES is a major center of popular music recording. This is where the main recording studios for neo-retropunk funkabilly are located.

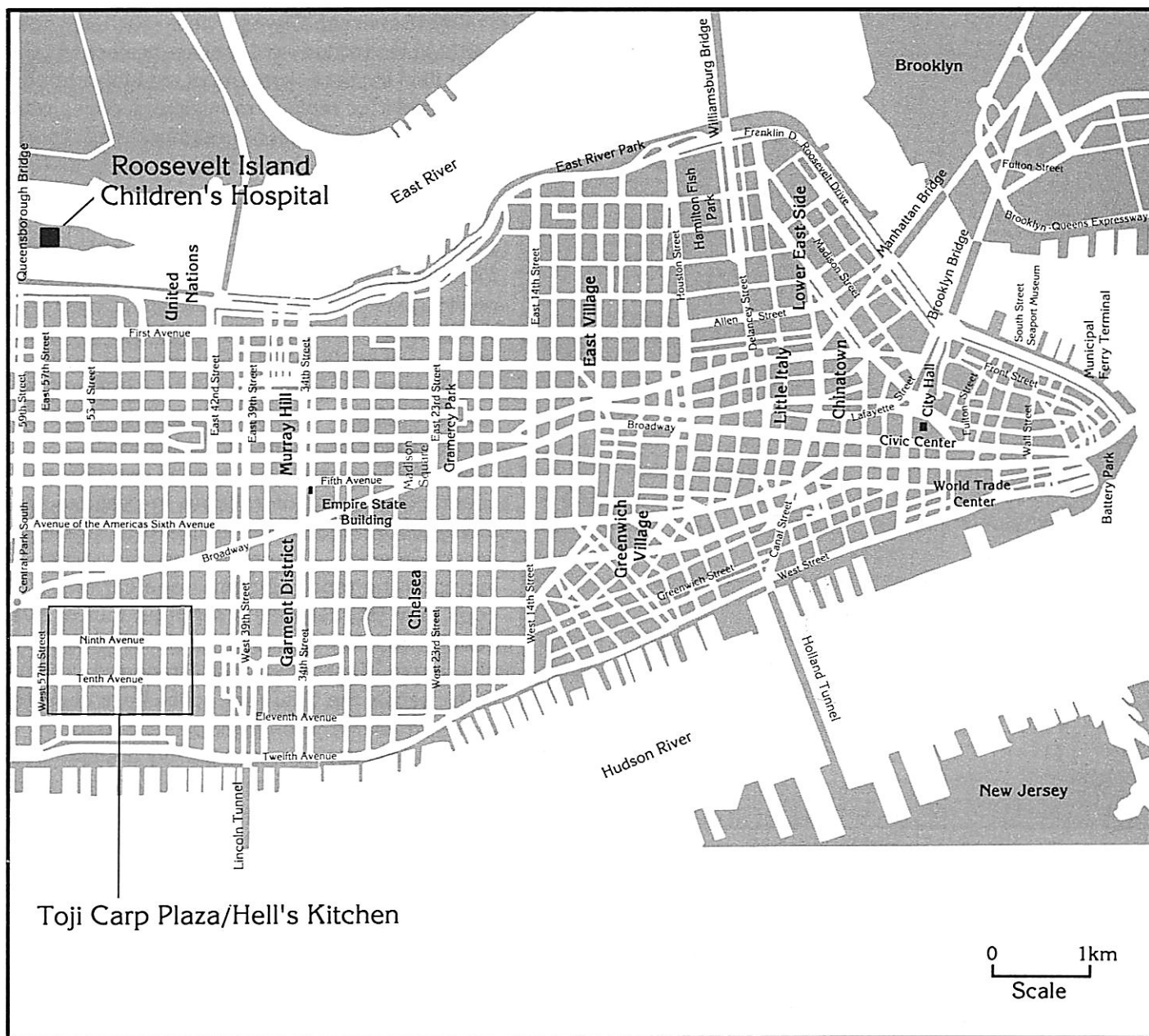
Central Park: The city's largest park is safe enough in the daytime, but even the police don't venture into it at night.

Other Neighborhoods: The ethnic neigh-

borhoods (Chinatown, Little Italy, Harlem, etc.) largely lost their unique identities as a result of the forced influx of population during the Farm Family Relocations.

The older inhabitants resent the newcomers, and considerable strife has been the result, making the areas a street-by-street mix of Mike-Town, precincts, mini-Ant Hills and Out-Law.

Wall Street: The great banks and financial



houses have moved to less depressing quarters on Long Island.

Those that remain stay primarily for the mystique that somehow remains attached to the name "Wall Street."

City Center: The increasingly decrepit municipal and federal buildings are still standing (city hall, police headquarters, the federal building and so on) and are still doing business, albeit with less funding and personnel.

GOVERNMENT

New York is governed by a variant of the previous borough system. The city is divided into five boroughs, each with a president and a local bureaucracy.

Electrical Supply: The electrical power grid in North America is interconnected to such an extent that electricity generated in Michigan can show up in New York, depending upon



CORPORATE TOWERS

A description of the TojiCorp plaza will serve to sum up all of these:

When the plaza was built, TojiCorp bought only a few selected buildings in the area, which it demolished and used as sites for the ground pylons of a huge aerial construct. The "floor" of the plaza (well above ground level) is supported on "stilts" and effectively roofs over many square blocks of the area known as Hell's Kitchen (the effect on property values can be readily imagined—also the bribery and civic corruption that is necessary to allow something like this to occur).

The plaza itself is a Xanadu-like park, with acres of real grass, walkways, zen rock gardens and other features, as well as a fully equipped heliport. A fairly standard (albeit largish) skyscraper rises from the center of the plaza, serving as TojiCorp's Eastern US headquarters, and containing corporate offices, employee apartments, shops, stores and everything a TojiCorp employee needs. Elevators through a couple of the central pylons lead down to the new elevated roadways, although there is little reason for the average corporate employee to ever leave the complex.

Security, as can be imagined, is rather strict at all entry points, but life inside the plaza is quite safe because of these precautions.

loads, usage patterns, and so on. This means that an interruption or accident can have equally wide-ranging consequences. All of the corporate towers, Dreamlands, and a good many smaller buildings and private homes have their own power generation equipment.

Water Supply: New York's water comes from reservoirs in the Catskill Mountains of upstate New York, brought to the city by canals, aqueducts and three giant water supply tunnels, two dug in the late 19th century and one completed only a couple of decades ago.

Water supply in the Ant Hills and slums is irregular.

Many corporate towers have their own arrangements, which rely heavily on recycling and desalinization.

City Services: City services such as gas, garbage collection and police protection are irregular at best, and most neighborhoods supplement or replace municipal services with private corporations or neighborhood cooperative organizations.

POLICE

Cutbacks of city funds and the resulting RIFs forced a change in policy on the New York City police (as well as many other departments)—a shift from the patrol-oriented system used over much of the 20th century to a reaction system. The single-car patrol is a thing of the past in most of New York, although they can still be found in quieter neighborhoods.

Most police activity is now in reaction to a specific complaint of a crime in progress, an alarm or a request for help from a private security agency—the precise response depending upon the reported crime (one car and two cops may still be what is sent, but four or five vans containing as many as 20 officers may also arrive, depending on the reported crime). In this sense, the New York police have come to more resemble firefighters.

Of course, special street patrols are assigned to problem neighborhoods and areas where crime is especially heavy.

The city is divided into a number of precincts, each headed by a captain and consisting of a patrol division (for reaction teams and the day-to-day police work) and a detective division (for investigation of robberies, burglaries and the like).

Manhattan also has a borough-wide homicide department, a special antiterrorist department, administrative and intelligence departments, and a number of smaller specialty groups such as river patrols, hostage negotiation teams, bomb disposal squads, SWAT teams and so on. In practice, the homicide department handles only major cases; garden variety street murders are investigated by the precinct detective divisions.

Precinct Buildings: The tremendous number of terrorist bombings and criminal



assaults on police stations have resulted in a great deal of paranoia among New York's Finest, and entering a police precinct house is a quite a procedure.

Citizens who have complaints or who wish to report a crime must do so by phone, by fax or through intercoms provided in weatherproof shelters outside the building. Citizens with business inside are required to pass a weapon/destructive devices check using a metal detector similar to that used at international airports, in addition to checks by explosive-sniffing dogs and a full-body fluoroscope (if the situation warrants). Precinct houses in sensitive neighborhoods may also require body cavity searches and other more intrusive tests on visitors. All of these tests are performed in a special "bomb room" designed to direct most of the force of an explosion outward, away from the building.

TRANSPORTATION

Public transit is poor in New York and is getting worse. Large sections of the once-great subway system are now closed down, mostly due to lack of maintenance (although there are certainly enough rumors of horrible underground disasters to make most passengers think twice about using the system). Many taxis are still in service, but they refuse to travel in some areas. The city bus system was privatized a decade ago and has since split into numerous smaller neighborhood systems. A few are even operated by street gangs!

The referee should use problems in transportation sparingly as a means of establishing atmosphere or as a minor obstacle if the PCs are having too easy a time of things.

Approximate costs are as follows:

Subway: \$2 per trip (limited areas).

Bus: \$2-4 per mile.

Taxi: \$15 per mile (restricted destinations).

OTHER BOROUGHES

The following quick sketches are provided so the referee can answer player questions about

other parts of the city. As has been mentioned earlier, the action all takes place on Manhattan, and there is little reason for the group to go elsewhere.

The Bronx: The South Bronx is uncontrolled Ant Hill, with occasional depopulated Demongrounds occupying a few square blocks in the middle. The area north of the Bronx Park is a mixture of Mike-Town and prole housing, blending into the 'Burbs at Yonkers and New Rochelle.

Brooklyn: Brooklyn remains primarily Mike-Town by the East River, with areas of 'Burbs and Prole housing running from the Verrazzano Narrows Bridge east to Jamaica Bay. Jamaica Bay itself is said to have been contaminated by a massive chemical spill and has been closed by the US Navy. In reality, the area is heavily contaminated, but it is the fact that several islands are Demonground that has caused the navy to close off the area.

Queens: Riker's Island still contains the New York Correctional Facility, and the area opposite the island is an Ant Hill. The rest of Queens is taken up by prole quarters, 'Burbs, and a number of 'bot cities surrounding JFK International Airport. Long Island east of Queens is 'Burbs, except for a number of luxury seaside Dreamlands on the better beaches.

Staten Island: Staten Island is rapidly filling up with prole precinct buildings, the newest construction taking place in the area around Fresh Kills.

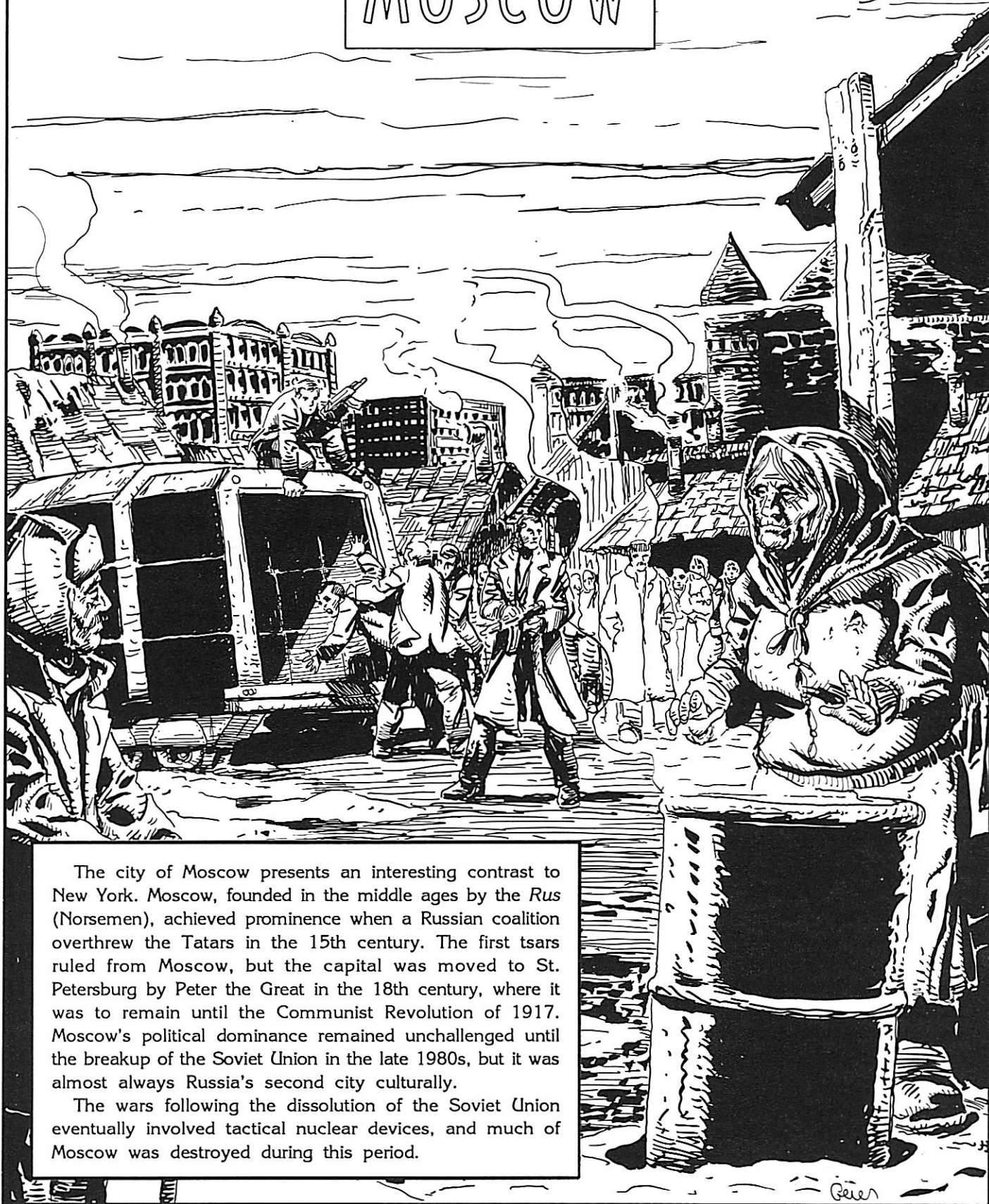
This site was formerly the location of the largest landfill in the world, but it had to close for lack of space at the end of the 1990s.

DEMONGROUND

For reasons completely unknown, New York's Demonground mostly seems to prefer to remain underground, deep beneath the some of the city streets, in a small portion of the labyrinth of unmapped storm drains and catchbasins, forgotten sewers, buried streams, and abandoned utility tunnels.

The primary infestations are shown on the map on pages 58-59.

MOSCOW



The city of Moscow presents an interesting contrast to New York. Moscow, founded in the middle ages by the *Rus* (Norsemen), achieved prominence when a Russian coalition overthrew the Tatars in the 15th century. The first tsars ruled from Moscow, but the capital was moved to St. Petersburg by Peter the Great in the 18th century, where it was to remain until the Communist Revolution of 1917. Moscow's political dominance remained unchallenged until the breakup of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, but it was almost always Russia's second city culturally.

The wars following the dissolution of the Soviet Union eventually involved tactical nuclear devices, and much of Moscow was destroyed during this period.



WELCOME TO MOSCOW

Given Russia's poverty and the fact that most people in this decaying future do not travel, foreigners are pretty much rich, by definition. Entrepreneurial Russians try to milk foreigners for all they are worth: Customs officers try to shake them down (though quickly back off if they don't rattle and seem to know their way around the system); porters and drivers overcharge monstrously; and all sorts of people approach them, offering their services as guides, interpreters, bodyguards, whatever. All speak at least one foreign language, and claim to be able to provide any service or procure any item.

NPCs such as these are a useful opportunity to involve the PCs in some spirited social interaction (a chance to pass on some local information or misleading rumor), to allow them to hire someone (whose loyalty and competence may be an unknown factor) or to suffer some minor upset, from a pickpocketing to a gratuitously intrusive and destructive baggage search by a disgruntled customs officer.

"NEW MOSCOW"

Moscow proper now occupies only part of its old area, as low-level fallout, pollution, hunger and lawlessness led to a massive wave of emigration. "New Moscow" is made up of seven districts sprawled across the middle of the "Zone," the largely uninhabited and often overgrown ruins of the old city. There are roving groups of gangs and nukids at loose in the Zone, as well as several patches of Demonground, but this area does not merit the superstitious dread in which most Muscovites hold it. Ancient fears of the unknown, of the darkness beyond the campfire's light, have returned redoubled in these troubled times.

Vyshgorod: Meaning "high city," the Vyshgorod was originally the central fortress of every Russian town. Although the walls and towers are long gone, Vyshgorod is still the name applied to the corporate and government heart of the city.

Afghan: This faded but relatively quiet Mike-Town was the site of specialized housing developments for veterans of the Afghan war. When the old Soviet government collapsed, these by-now aging men banded together and used their skills to

SUGGESTED ENCOUNTERS

With the city under martial law, soldiers are a common sight on Moscow's streets, and the characters will have the opportunity to see them at their best and their worst. The PCs must make hard choices as to when to intervene and when to do what most Muscovites do—keep their heads down and hope no one notices them.

Security Check: Soldiers set up an impromptu road block ahead. A security check or a free-lance shake-down?

Soup Kitchen: The 3rd Emergency (page 67) has set up a mobile soup kitchen, under the watchful eyes of a dozen armed soldiers—always a good place to pick up on rumor and gauge the public mood.

Spetznaz Snatch: A collection of tall and fit-looking but otherwise nondescript young men suddenly pull out a ridiculous number of large guns and pile onto some inoffensive passer-by. Two unmarked vans roar up. The victim is thrown bodily into the back of one, and the attackers get into the other. Another Spetznaz snatch (page 67).

Artillery Attack: Everyone ducks instinctively as a salvo of rocket-propelled shells screams overhead; the Spetznaz have come up with a target, out in the Zone, and the 139th (page 67) is pounding it to gravel.

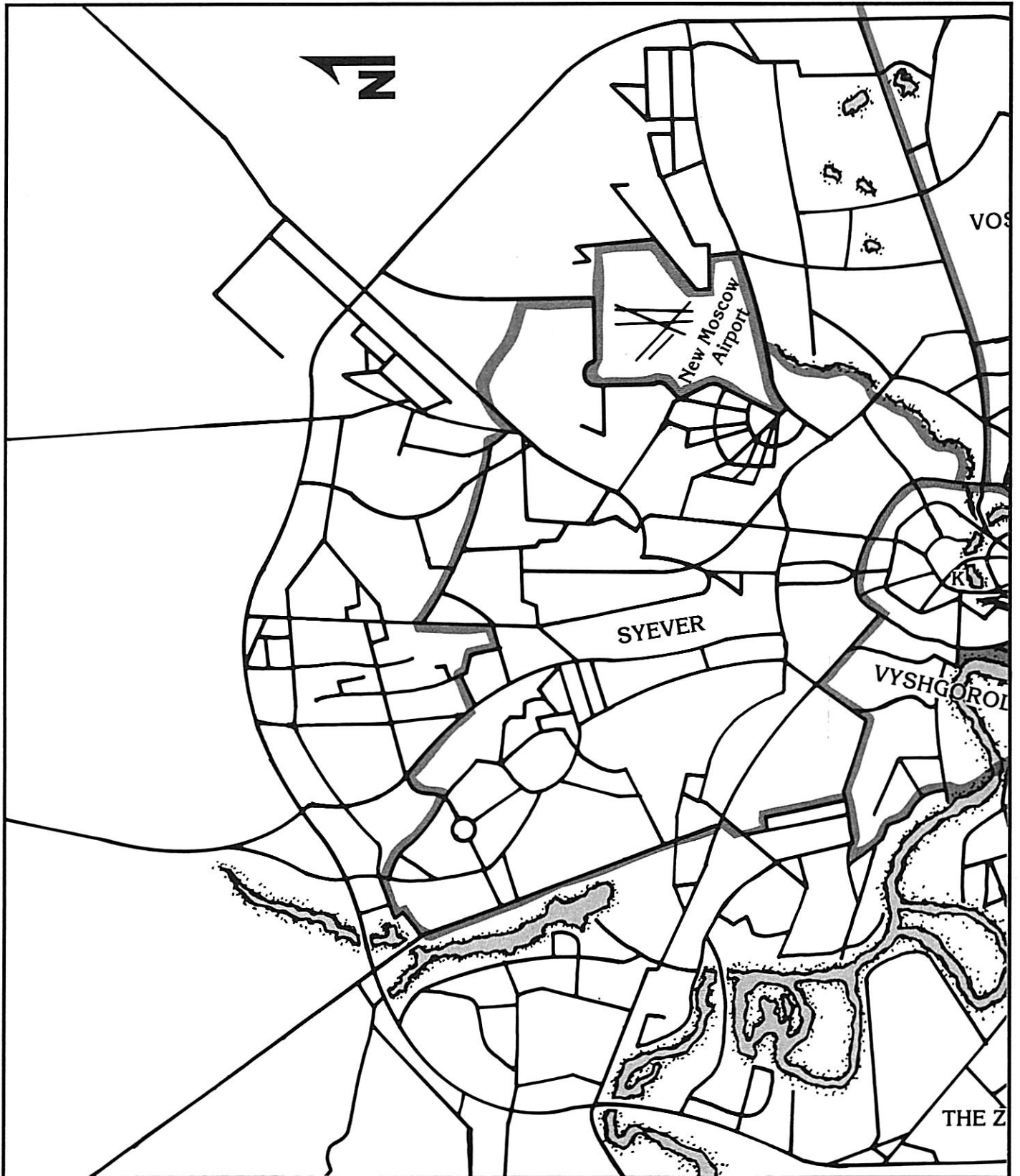
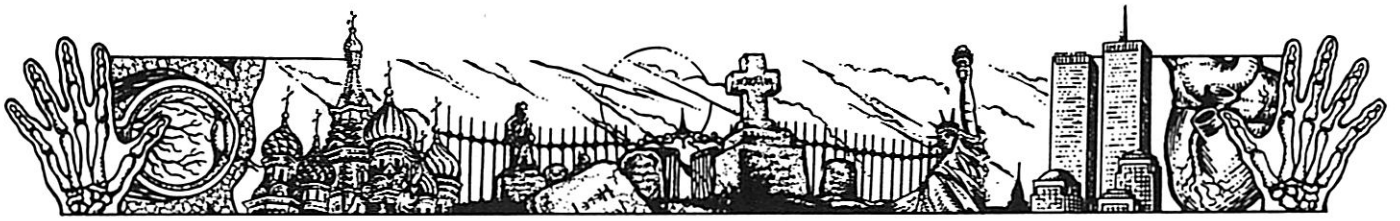
Ambush: The street seems too quiet, everyone too eager to complete their business and be gone. Suddenly, from the rooftop, there is the flash of sunlight on a gun barrel. Another ambush on the airport convoy?

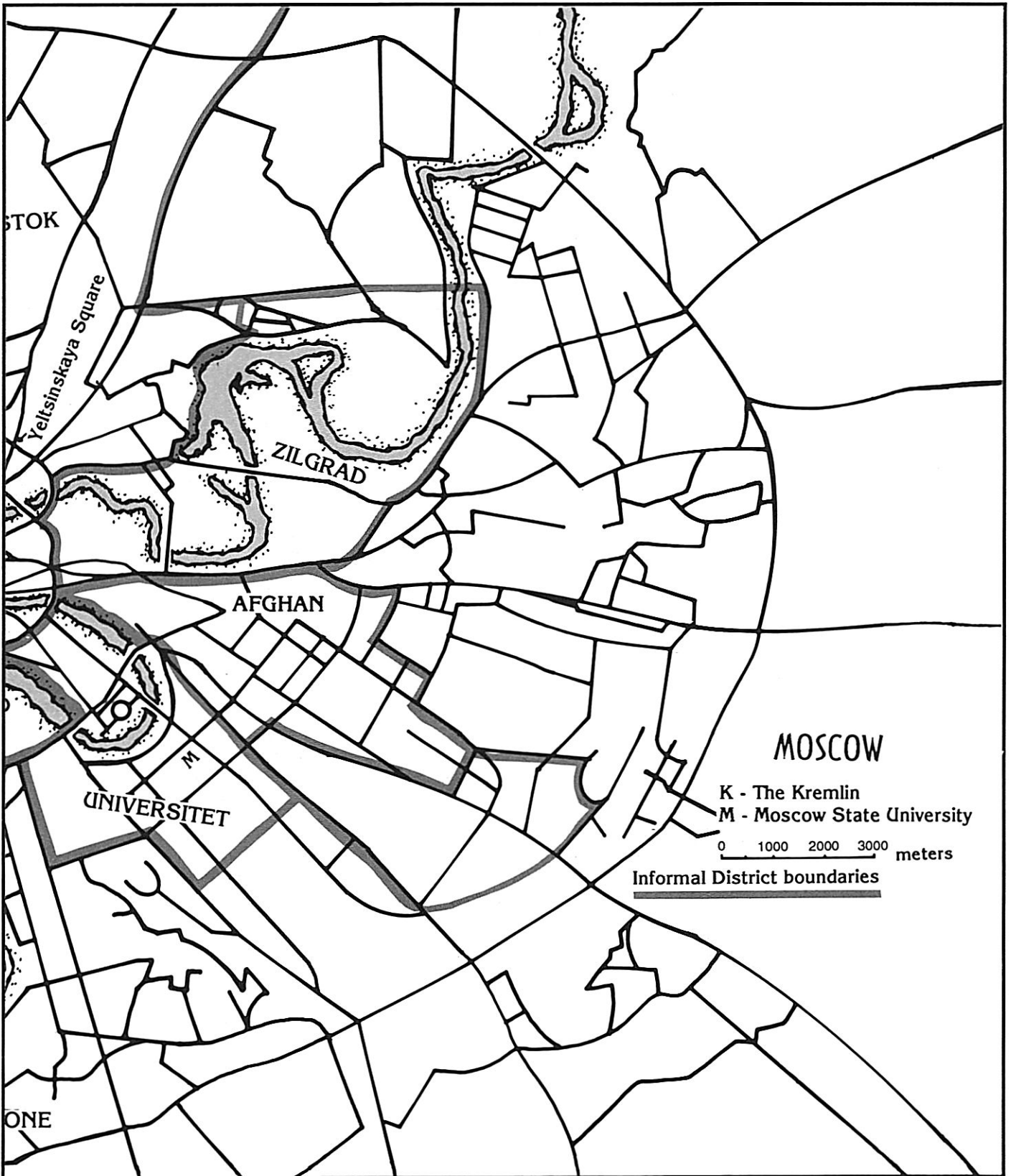
R&R: Some drunk soldiers are celebrating some R&R by ganging up on a passing citizen. Is doing something about it worth the risk?

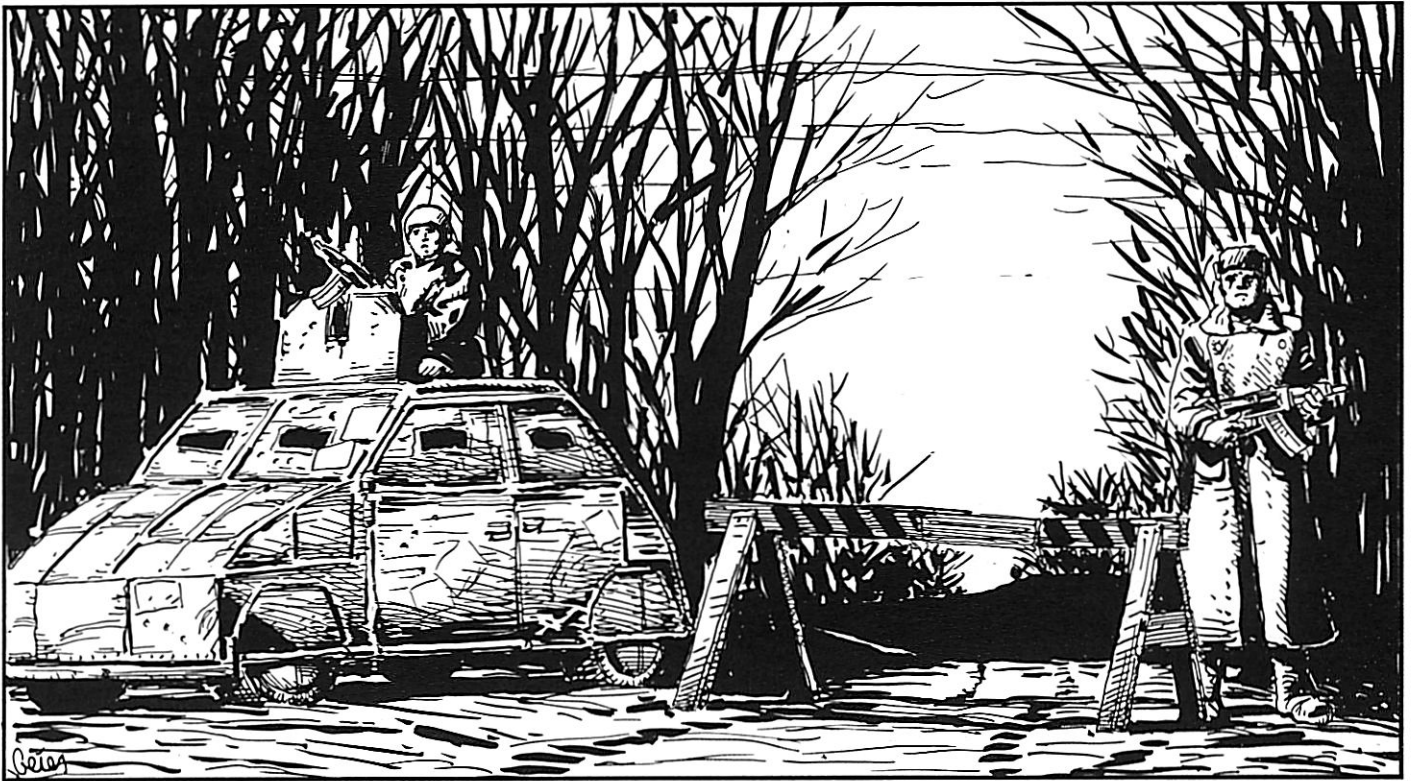
keep the area relatively secure and clear of refugees and marauders who rode the wave of economic collapse and civil war. The name was inevitable, and it has stuck.

Universitet: This is another Mike-Town, built around the burned-out ruins of the old Moscow State University. A new university has been established nearby, on the banks of the River Moskva, but it depends on corporate sponsorship and struggles to provide even a skeleton service.

Gagarin: Gagarin is a rambling, jumbled mix of run-down tenement accommodation and barracks-style housing for out-of-towners and transients, dominated by the huge market that threads through a dozen of its main streets. Peasants from







the countryside bring in their produce on horse-drawn carts and aging, rusty trucks, to trade them for corporate ration vouchers or, more often, to barter.

Zilgrad: The name is a nickname that everyone came to use, and reflects the dominance of the area by the huge Zil works (the name is actually an acronym for the Russian phrase "factory named after Lenin," but no one talks about that these days). Its heart is the Zil Auto Complex, a mix of 'Bot city and old-fashioned human plant. Around it are huge corporate housing projects and 'Burbs. Here you work for the company, earn corporate scrip, use it in corporate shops and look to corporate rentacops for protection. And as long as the committee gets its taxes and their backhanders, the government couldn't care less.

New Moscow Airport: The city's old airports are now radioactive ruins, and New Moscow Airport has been built in the northern reaches of the Syever district, near the border with the Zone, the rubble, ruined and often overgrown remains of a larger, older Moscow. Syever is an Ant Hill region, effectively outside the control of the authorities. The airport is a heavily armed

military installation, surrounded by a complex of barbed wire, concrete antipersonnel obstacles and mines similar to the wall that once divided Berlin.

Vostok: This is a sprawling Ant Hill district, where hundreds of thousands of ordinary Muscovites live and end their depressingly short and miserable lives. The area is largely policed, and the utilities (power, sewage, running water) are normally present, so it could be worse.

Syever: Syever ("North") is the "worse" that Vostok *could* be. Another Ant Hill district, this sprawling maze of shanty towns and squats is largely outside government control. This is the sort of region where even firemen need air cover. The new city airport to the north is a fortified enclave, and the convoys which link it with Vyshgorod go armed, armored and at high speed. Syever is definitely bandit country.

THE RED ARMY—IN RUINS

Soldiers are often all that stand between Moscow and anarchy. But looking at them—in their motley array of domestically produced and imported uniforms and equipment, roaring round the



city in their customized and slogan-painted trucks and armored vehicles—it is often difficult to tell them from the bandits and vagrants.

After all, the KSR (the Russian acronym for “Committee for the Salvation of the Motherland,” the committee that governs Moscow) depends on the army more than vice versa, so the military gets a lot of leeway. Soldiers are used in every aspect of the KSR’s desperate, daily struggle to keep the city alive, from policing the center to scavenging through the ruins for spare parts. Military commanders are usually either fanatic nationalists with the charisma and the drive to hold their own unit together for the good of Russia, or they are mercenary entrepreneurs who keep their soldiers happy by striking deals with the government and by judicious extortion (“secure road tolls”) and plunder (“emergency taxes”).

As a result, there really is no “Russian Army,” just a motley collection of separate units with their own organizations and styles, armed and equipped with Russian weapons and cheap East European copies. There are six main units operating in Moscow, along with two exceptions to this patchwork pattern—the Spetznaz Battalion, commanded by Colonel Pyotr Grigoryenko (cousin of General Kalinin), and the Security Detachment, directly controlled by the KSR’s representative for state security, Marat Tsubchenko.

Kantemirov Guards Tank Division: For all its grandiose name, this is the smallest unit, if the most mobile. Under its free-wheeling commander, Colonel Dmitry Usoltsev, it has gathered a wide collection of old tanks, personnel carriers and home-made armored vehicles (typically trucks and jeeps with metal plates welded to the top and sides, and wire mesh over the windows). Its main role is to run the convoys between Vyshgorod and New Moscow Airport, through the violent and unruly anthills of Syever.

2039th Engineer Battalion: The engineers are the unsung heroes of Moscow. Although Major Maxim Maximovich uses his position to make a comfortable living, his men are dedicated professionals, often the only ones keeping the power supply, sanitation and water systems working.

Special Police: Colonel Ekaterina Rummyantseva is a powerhouse of energy and dynamism, and her police battalion has become a vital force

maintaining law and order in Universitet, Afghan and Gagarin. Despite their name, the Special Police are soldiers like any other, typically light infantry driving open-topped jeeps and vans.

Zil Municipal Defence Force: The Zil works, the last major industrial employer in Moscow, has its own corporate guards, but also payrolls a mercenary unit to keep Zilgrad quiet and to protect the steady stream of raw materials flowing into the factories and manufactures flowing out. Its commander, Colonel Vladimir Yerevin, is known as the most corrupt man in Moscow, but this is unfair. He is just one of the most corrupt men in Moscow, and no worse than the Poles, Romanians, Bulgarians and Ukrainians he leads.

3rd Emergency Field Hospital Detachment: Major Sofia Melnikova does more than just provide one of the few efficient and widely available hospitals in the city. She also commands a company of mechanized troops who daily struggle to keep the peace in the Vostok Ant Hills.

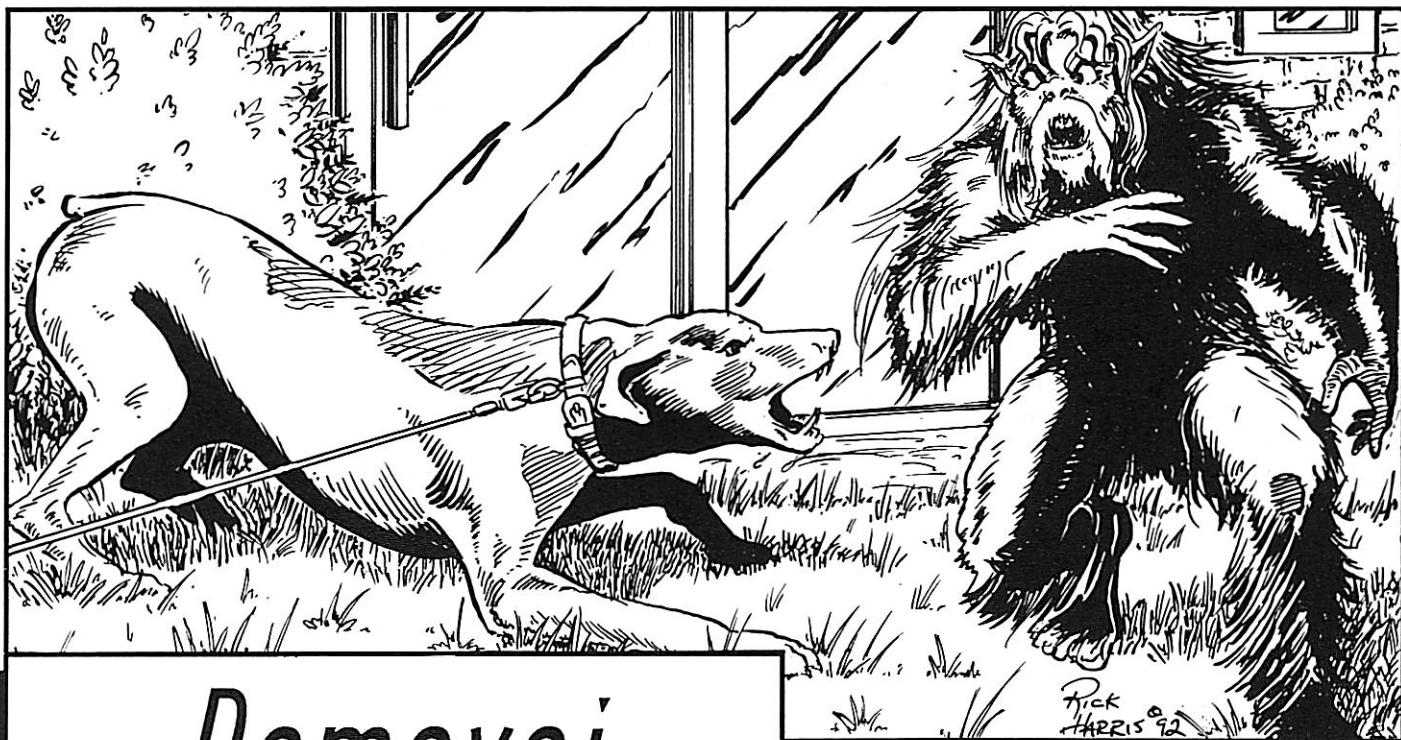
139th Regiment: The 139th is a mixed unit of motorized infantry, with a small heavy artillery unit. The new commander, Colonel Viktor Pushkin, is desperately trying to get it into some sort of shape. But his last predecessor let the 139th degenerate into the next thing to bandits.

Spetznaz Battalion: Successors to the Soviet special forces and still an elite formation, the Spetznaz spend most of their time fighting anti-government terrorists. They often launch nighttime snatches, capturing suspected terrorists and interrogating them quickly and mercilessly to reveal the location of their colleagues, hideouts and arms caches, before the alarm can be raised and people and weapons hidden. They may not be popular, but they are effective. Spetznaz operate in small units, often undercover or without support, and are hence flexible and independent. As a result, they are also usually called on when the KSR is confronted by something new and unknown.

Security Detachment: This more straightforward guard unit protects the Kremlin and New Moscow Airport. Equipped with the best the KSR can afford, well trained and well fed, these are generally regarded as the KSR’s most loyal troops and even have an armored company. This is the only unit where all soldiers wear a standard uniform and are equipped with the same weapons.

RUSSIAN NIGHTMARES

The Russian and Slav people have their own distinctive myths and nightmares, and this is reflected by the range of Dark beasts and entities found preying on them. In some cases, this is just a matter of different names or slightly different appearances, but not all. Some of those creatures are described and illustrated here.



Domovoi

Strength:2	Education: 3	Move:5/10/18/35
Constitution:1	Charisma: 3	Skill/Dam:8/1
Agility:7	Empathy: 7	Hits:2/4
Intelligence:4	Initiative: 4	# Appear:1

Special: Telekinesis. Avoidance—a specialized form of Project Thought that makes people somehow fail to notice the *domovoi* and whatever it is doing.

Folklore depicts these as unseen, but friendly, household spirits, always eager to help around the farm in return for a plate of milk and hunks of black bread and cheese. This is nonsense. A *domovoi* is painted in such a benign light for the same reason that the ancient Greeks referred to the Furies as “the Kindly Ones”—so as not to annoy it.

In fact, the *domovoi* is a petty and spiteful household tyrant, who moves into a home—whether farmstead or city apartment—and promptly engages in making people’s lives a misery. Stealing keys, unplugging refrigerators, strangling pet

cats, resetting alarm clocks to the middle of the night, greasing linoleum floors, ringing expensive telephone services and then leaving the phone off the hook to run up huge bills—the *domovoi*’s ingenuity is impressive.

They look like a small humanoid, covered in long brown fur, usually matted and unkempt, with malicious gleaming in their beady eyes. When a home is infested by one, there is little you can do but be stoical and hope it moves on soon (you can’t even flee from it, since it regards following faint-hearts to their new homes as great sport).

One tactic that does work is getting a large dog. Dogs can detect a *domovoi*, and the antipathy is mutual and extreme. Since most dogs of 20 kilograms or larger can readily dispose of a *domovoi*, the latter will usually move on to a less dangerous household.

There are other, less common, members of the same family: The *bannik* haunts baths and wash-houses; the *ovinnik* favors barns; and the *ratannya* moves into stables for the joy of tormenting and scaring horses.



figment

Strength: — Education: — Move: —
 Constitution: — Charisma: — Skill/Dam: —
 Agility: — Empathy: — Hits: —
 Intelligence: — Initiative: — #Appear: 1

Special: Figments, in effect, are creatures of projected emotion.

Figments do not, strictly speaking, exist. They are the representations of internal guilts or external psychic pain, only visible to you. These "ghosts" seem perfectly solid—and they can kill.

A figment may appear in a variety of guises, often as someone dead or wronged, always wild-eyed and murderous. It has largely the same physical attributes as its target, but its damage is psychosomatic (in the mind) rather than directly on the flesh. Calculate damage normally, but if the target defeats the figment, damage "heals" after a few minutes' rest. If the target suffers "death," the character must roll 1D6: A score of Initiative or less means unconsciousness. Otherwise, the character suffers a heart attack, which leads to the loss of 1D6 points to Strength, Constitution,

Agility or Intelligence, determined randomly. This loss may not be permanent, but healing requires extensive medical and/or psychiatric treatment. Targets can use any weapons they may have, but a figment will usually appear adjacent and move straight into hand-to-hand combat. Note that while the target believes bullets or other missiles hit and wound the figment, this is illusory, and companions are at risk from stray shots.

The victim is alone in fighting the figment—the rest of the world seems to dim and slow down. An empath, though, can provide some moral support. A successful Project Emotion provides the target with "healing" of psychosomatic wounds equal to its power level. If a figment is defeated or its target is knocked unconscious, the creature disappears. During the fight, others see the target as writhing and flailing in internal struggle, and may think it a fit.



Leshy

Strength: 13
Constitution: 14
Agility: 4
Intelligence: 2

Education: 2
Charisma: 5
Empathy: 8
Initiative: 3

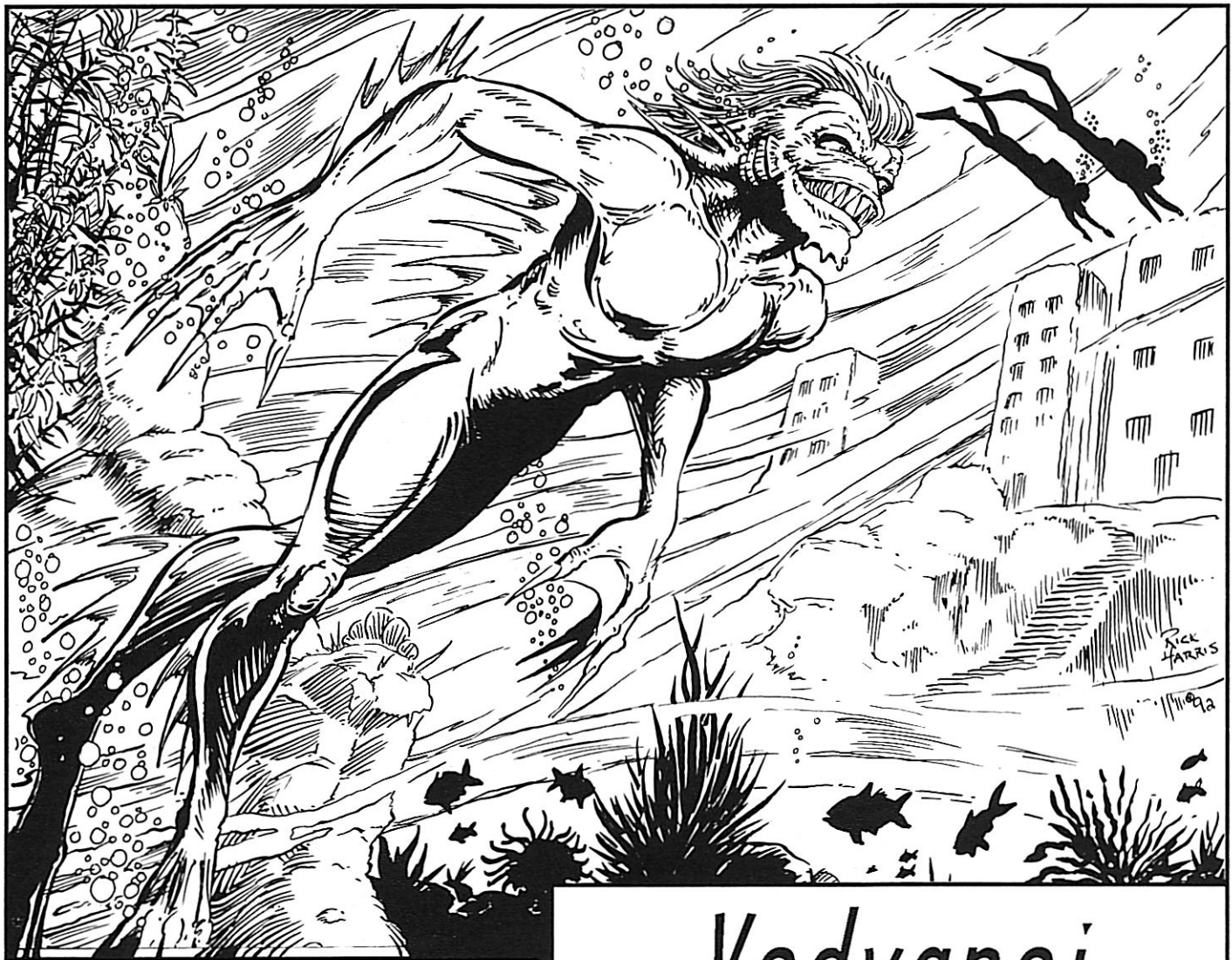
Move: 3/10/20/35
Skill/Dam: 6/2D6
Hits: 15/30
#Appear: 1-2

Special: Long unarmed melee range, Plant Empathy, Plant Animation.

The *leshy* is a powerful Dark Minion of the forest. In Slavic myth, they reflect the danger of the unknown, the menace lurking beyond the fire-light. Few in number, they look like large, green-pelted apes, with clumsy, three-fingered hands and a shaggy, leonine mane. For their size, they can creep silently, and they like nothing better than coming upon unwary travellers or a remote campsite. Their victims are rent limb from limb,

their blood splashed all about, their bones crunched, and their brains eaten. *Leshy* lack subtlety.

Leshy have the ability of Plant Animation, a rare and specialized form of telekinesis. *Leshy* can use this skill (individually, or combining their powers) to make the limbs of trees strike out like arms, vines entwine an enemy and other forms of plant life act in an unnatural way at their behest. Basic success means movement, which may be frightening but not have any major effect. Each level thereafter generates an effective Strength equal to the stage number squared. In other words, while a stage two success may make a branch snap out with a Strength 4 blow, one of stage five generates the equivalent of Strength 25—enough, perhaps, to have a small tree topple on an opponent or for creepers to wrap around a victim's limbs, holding them tight and helpless.



Vodyanoi

Strength: 6 Education: 7 Move: 3/10/20/35
 Constitution: 8 Charisma: 10 Skill/Dam: 6/3
 Agility: 7 Empathy: 8 Hits: 12/25
 Intelligence: 9 Initiative: 4 # Appear: 1

Special: Project Emotion, Project Thought.

Where the fuath tricks its victim underwater, the *vodyanoi* seeks to persuade. This most urbane and dangerous of water creatures derives intense satisfaction from using its powers to induce mortals into situations where they will drown—from selling them obviously defective “Ruhr export” scuba gear to inviting them to join in a merry dance on the treacherous banks of a storm-swollen torrent. The more ridiculous or bizarre the situation, the greater the satisfaction.

A *vodyanoi* usually appears human, often middle-aged and jovial. But it often leaves some clue to its identity “to add savor to the game”—wet shirt-tails, a pocket full of little fish, something as subtle as a fish tie. In its real form, the *vodyanoi* is a pallid, smooth-skinned humanoid, with long talons and a perpetually maniacal grin.

Vodyanoi often live for extended periods at the fringes of human society, also relishing other pleasures of the mind like crossword puzzles and income tax frauds, to while away the time between “great games.”



Oboroten

Strength: 8
Constitution: 6
Agility: 7
Intelligence: 6

Education: 4
Charisma: 6
Empathy: 9
Initiative: 5

Move: 3/9/17/32
Skill/Dam: 6/2D6
Hits: 11/22
#Appear: 1D6

The *oboroten* is the Russian equivalent of the werewolf. The humanoid ETs have recreated them

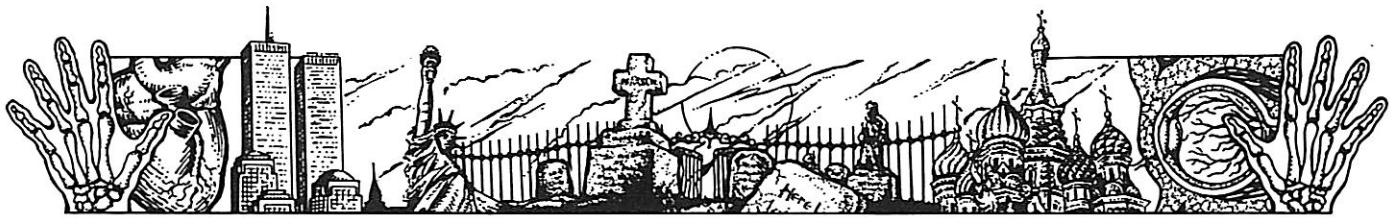
I saw on TV where some Russian scientist claims to have found a horrible monster living in a shallow lake out on the steppes. I have a shallow lake out on my steppes, but that's because the storm gutters are broken....

Canadian Humorist Anton Wilson Peale

for their own purposes by rounding up vagrants and strays and turning them into a specific form of Moreau were.

Still humanoid, they are hunched and covered in mangy, short, bristly fur. Their skulls are now halfway between human and wolf, with longer jaws, but less fur. They can pass for humans at a distance if they cover their faces.

The process shortens the victims' life-span substantially and provides few advantages, but *oboroteny* can trigger an adrenaline overload in themselves, increasing Strength, Constitution and Initiative by 2 for one minute (two combat phases), though these statistics are then decreased to two below the original figure until the were has at least five minutes rest to recover.



Rusalka

Strength: 8 Education: 4 Move: 3/10/20/40
 Constitution: 5 Charisma: 7 Skill/Dam: 5/1D6
 Agility: 8 Empathy: 8 Hits: 13/26
 Intelligence: 6 Initiative: 4 #Appear: 1

Special: Automatic Human image projection, tends to appear as an attractive woman. Leech heat from victim per **Dark Conspiracy**, page 226.

The *Rusalka* is a Russian form of the pale (see

Dark Conspiracy, page 226), albeit a more specialized variety that tends to take the form of an attractive female and is largely found near rivers, giving rise to the folk-myth that they are the spirits of drowned maidens seeking to lure others to a similar doom.

WEAPONS AND VEHICLES

PM Makarov

PM Makarov (Semiautomatic): The standard military sidearm of most Eastern European states, widely used by police and internal security forces.

Ammo: 9mm M
Wt: 0.5 kg
Mag: 8 box
Price: \$150 (S/V)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—			
						SS	Brst	Rng	
PM Makarov	SA	1	Nil	1	8	3	—	10	

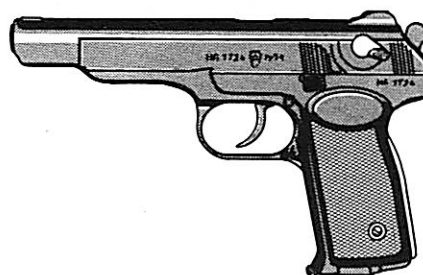


Stechkin

Stechkin (Submachinegun): The Stechkin is a fully automatic pistol used by Warsaw Pact undercover agents because of its small size. The stock is a necessity for controlled fire.

Ammo: 9mm M
Wt: 1.8 kg
Mag: 20 box
Price: \$750 (R/S)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—			
						SS	Brst	Rng	
Stechkin	5	1	Nil	1	20	5	13	12	
stock	5	1	Nil	3	20	3	8	20	



M1933 Tokarev

M1933 Tokarev (Semiautomatic): Formerly in widespread use by Eastern European military and police, the M1933 Tokarev has now been widely supplanted by the Makarov. Due to the large numbers produced, they are still found in use by some police and are widely used by militias. They are notable for their lack of a safety catch.

Ammo: 7.62mm T
Wt: 0.5 kg
Mag: 8 box
Price: \$100 (R/C)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—			
						SS	Brst	Rng	
M1933	SA	1	Nil	1	8	4	—	12	



Vz-61/62 Skorpion

Vz-61/62 Skorpion (Submachinegun): Commonly referred to as a machinepistol, the Skorpion is small enough to carry in a shoulder holster. Its short range and underpowered ammunition make it of limited combat value, but its ease of concealment has made it very popular with Warsaw Pact covert agents. It is also frequently carried by Czech airborne forces, particularly by officers.

Ammo: .32 ACP
Wt: 1.6 kg
Mag: 10 box or 20 box
Price: \$250 (R/S)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—			
						SS	Brst	Rng	
Vz-61/62	5	1	Nil	1	10/20	3	7	4	
stock	5	1	Nil	3	10/20	1	4	12	





SVD

SVD (Sniper Rifle): The standard Eastern Bloc sniper rifle (except in Czech service), the SVD is a semiautomatic, clip-fed rifle with a telescopic sight.

Ammo: 7.62mm S

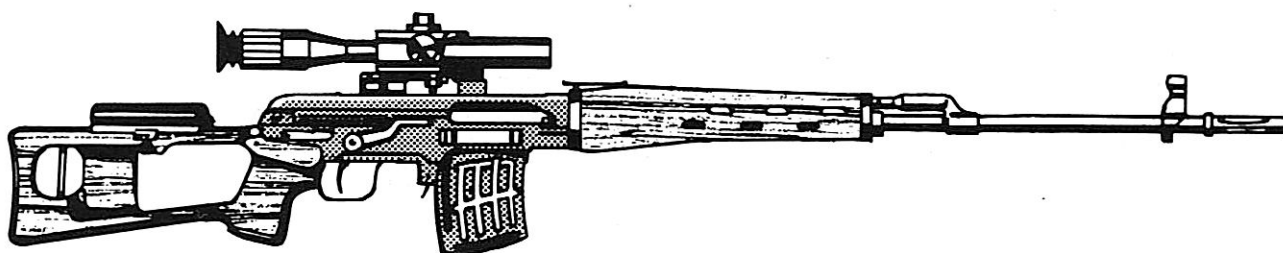
Wt: 4.6 kg

Mag: 10 box

Price: \$500 (R/S)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—		
						SS	Brst	Rng
SVD	SA	4	2-3-Nil	6	10	4	—	75

All sniper rifles come with a scope. With the scope, add 15 meters to the basic range for *aimed* shots. If the scope is later damaged or lost (or for quick shots) this modifier is not added.



RPK-74

RPK-74 (Automatic Rifle): The standard, Warsaw Pact, light automatic support weapon, the RPK-74 can accept either the same magazine as the AK-74 or an oversized magazine.

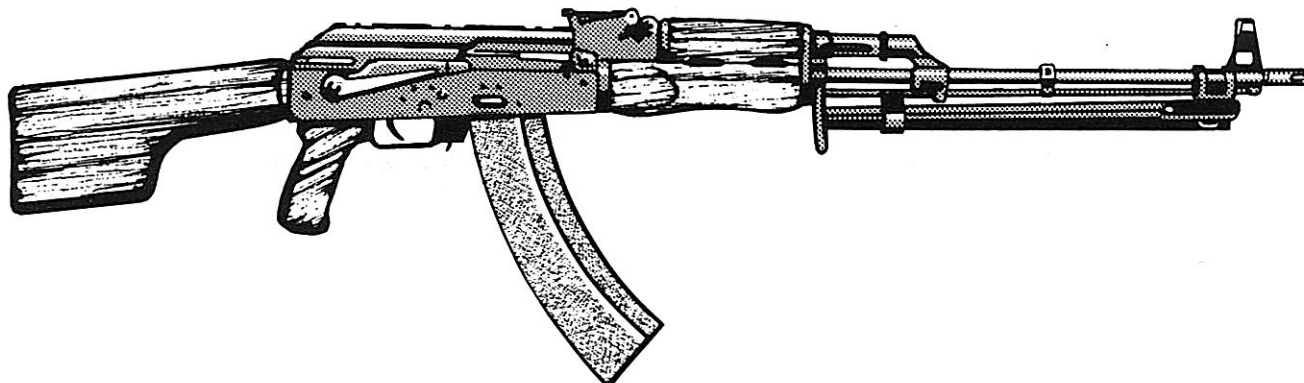
Ammo: 5.45mm B

Wt: 4.5 kg

Mag: 30 box or 40 box

Price: \$1000 (S/C)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—		
						SS	Brst	Rng
RPK-74	10	2	1-Nil	5	30/40	1	6	50
bipod	10	2	1-Nil	5	30/40	1	3	75





RPG-16

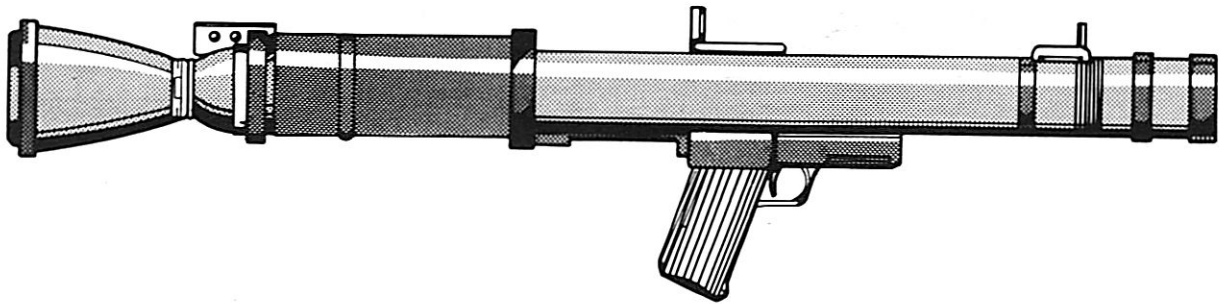
RPG-16 (Rocket Launcher): A shoulder-fired launcher for rocket-propelled grenades. The RPG can fire HEAP (high-explosive, antipersonnel) or HEAT (high-explosive antitank) grenades.

Ammo: 58.3mm HEAT rockets

Wt: 10 kg

Price: \$1000 (S/S)

Type	ROF	Rld	Rng	Round	Damage	Pen
RPG-16	1	2	100	HEAT	C: 6, B: 6	65C



Nagant M1891/30

Nagant M1891/30 (Battle Rifle): This was the primary weapon of Soviet soldiers in WWII and can still be found in service in some central Asian militias.

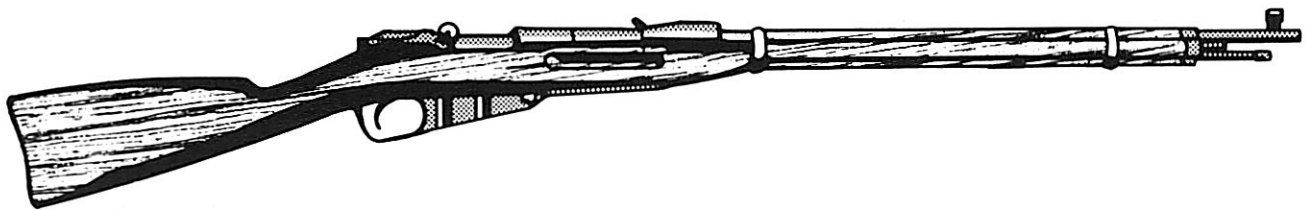
Ammo: 7.62mm B

Wt: 4.6 kg

Mag: 5 box (really uses a stripper clip to reload)

Price: \$275 (—/S)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—			Rng
						SS	Brst		
M1891/30	BA	4	2-3-Nil	6	5	3	—		75





DSHK

DSHK (Machinegun): The standard heavy machinegun in use by Warsaw Pact nations. It is usually used on a vehicle mount, but can also be used on a wheeled carriage (PHC) which is treated as a tripod mount.

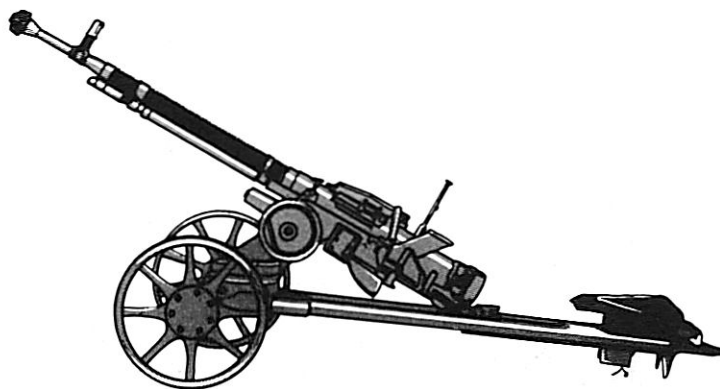
Ammo: 12.7mm B

Wt: 128 kg (Weapon: 46.7 kg Tripod Carriage: 81.3 kg)

Mag: 50 belt

Price: \$2000 (C/V)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—		
						SS	Brst	Rng
DSHK	5	9	2-2-3	8	50B	7	17	65
tripod	5	9	2-2-3	8	50B	3	8	150



PKM

PKM (Machinegun): This is the field version of the PK machinegun, usually used on a bipod or tripod mount rather than a vehicle.

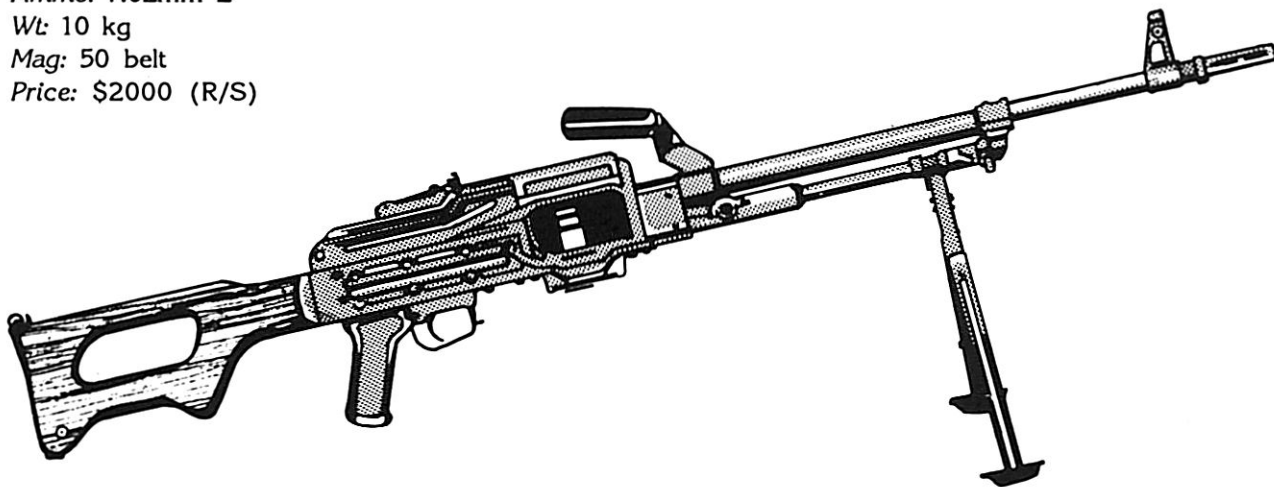
Ammo: 7.62mm L

Wt: 10 kg

Mag: 50 belt

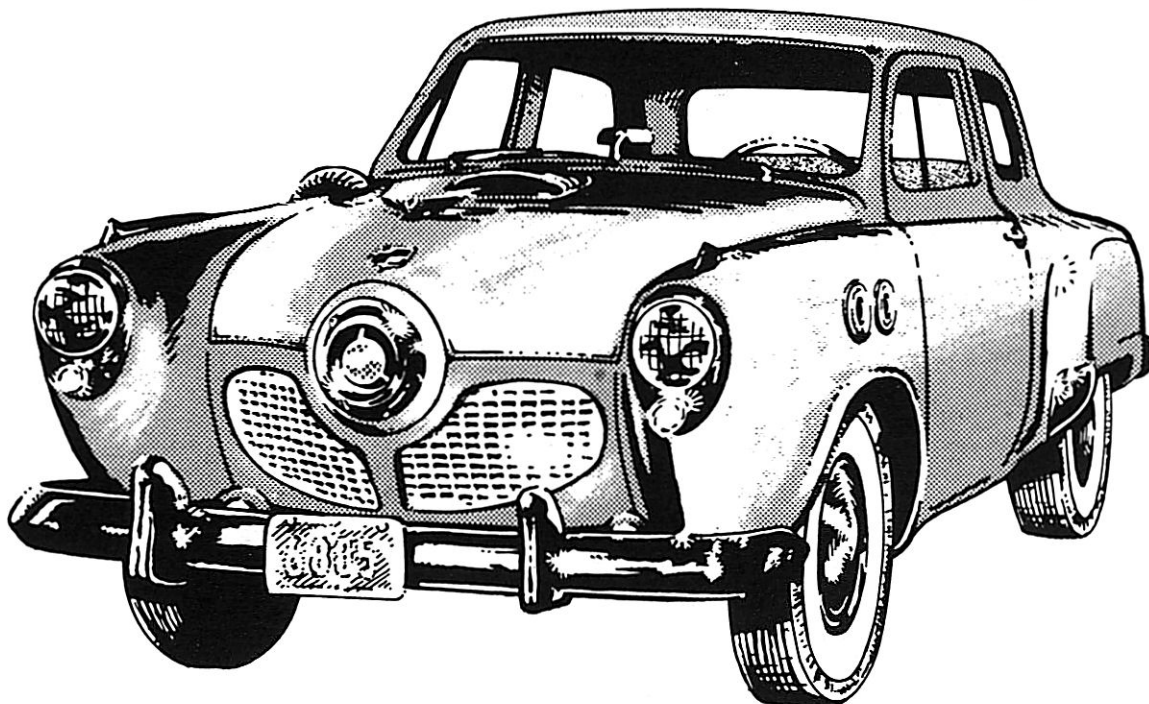
Price: \$2000 (R/S)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—		
						SS	Brst	Rng
PKM	5	4	2-3-Nil	6	50B	2	5	65
bipod	5	4	2-3-Nil	6	50B	1	2	90
tripod	5	4	2-3-Nil	6	50B	1	1	125





Volga Sedan



Price: \$100,000 (S/C) (\$200,000) (—/S)

Fuel Type: G

Load: 0.5 tons

Veh Wt: 1.3 tons

Crew: 1+6

Night Vision: Headlights

Damage Record

Crewmembers: Driver ☐

Passengers: 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐

Sight/Vision: Night vision equipment ☐

Engine: ☐

Fuel(% Consumed or Destroyed): ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Suspension: Minor damage ☐ Immobilized ☐

Volga Sedan (Unarmored Cargo Vehicle): A car whose time has come, *again*. With its shark-fins and chrome radiator, the Volga is an old Soviet favorite so dated that it is right up with the latest RetroTek. Police and security officers often use a special model with a more powerful engine; statistics for this version are given in parentheses.

Cruise Speed: 100/17 (110/17)

Com Move: 60/10

Fuel Cap: 100

Fuel Cons: 7(8)

Combat Statistics

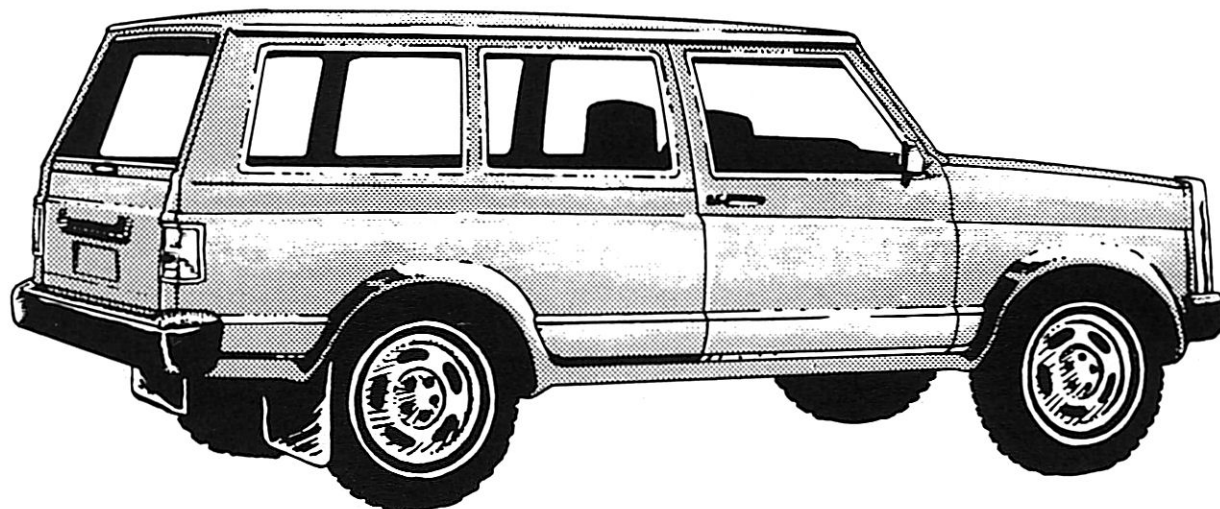
Config: Stnd HF: 1

Susp: W(4) HS: 4

Susp: W(4) HR: 4



GAZ Sportabout (UAZ 469)



Price: \$8000 (S/C)
Fuel Type: G, A
Load: 0.5 tons
Veh Wt: 1.6 tons
Crew: 2+3
Mnt: 2
Night Vision: Headlights

Damage Record

Crewmembers: Driver ☐ Cab passenger ☐
Passengers: 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐
Sight/Vision: Night vision equipment ☐
Engine: ☐
Fuel(% Consumed or Destroyed): ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐
Suspension: Minor damage ☐ Immobilized ☐

GAZ Sportabout (UAZ 469) (Unarmored Cargo Vehicle): The Warsaw Pact equivalent of the jeep or 1/4-ton truck, the Sportabout is a light wheeled utility vehicle. It has a weapons mount (P) on a post behind the front seat; however, no weapon is provided.

Cruise Speed: 200/40
Com Move: 50/10
Fuel Cap: 60
Fuel Cons: 20

Combat Statistics

<i>Config:</i> Stnd	HF: 1
<i>Susp:</i> W(2)	HS: 1
	HR: 1

More Than a State of Mind...



The Empathic Sourcebook™ contains expanded and refined rules for the Empathy attribute and its related skills, as well as entirely new skills, and information concerning Empathy skills practiced by humanoid ETs who remain free from the Dark. Also included are more combat-related Empathy skills and descriptions of numerous organizations important to empathic characters, from psychic test labs to empathic secret societies. GDW: 2108. \$12.

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AMONG the DEAD™

As the Earth slips further into chaos and despair, some places have far less to slide:

One of New York City's largest children's hospitals, funded by "private donations," is being used to provide orphans as human raw material for some unspeakable purpose. This could have gone on for a long time, had not one of the nurses stumbled on part of the secret. She vanished, just another victim of the city's lawlessness, but leaving a worried and suspicious uncle.

On another part of the globe, Moscow, amidst the ruins of a Russia blighted by pollution, war, hunger, and fear, there stands an age-old figure of unimaginable evil. Once he was called Koshchey Bessmertny, Koshchey the Undying, and he became the dark enemy of Russian fairy tales and folklore, a name to whisper when the moon passed behind a cloud. In the 1930s and '40s, they called him another name, and he became the sinister mind behind the deaths of millions in the Siberian Gulag.

What he does not know is that the disappearance of a simple provincial nurse threatens to bring these loose strands together into the noose that may at last catch him. If, that is, the players are able to face and overcome the horrors waiting them... **Among the Dead.**

DARK CONSPIRACY™

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