

DARK CONSPIRACY

2201

TAMPETE



GDW

McClenaghan

Williamson



CREDITS

Design:

Scott McClenaghan and Alex Williamson

Front Cover Illustration:

John Zeleznik

Interior Illustrations:

J.M. Ringuet, Juan Pablo Cartasso, J.C. Grande, Joseph Zuniga,
Rodolpho Langhi, Borosaur, Luca Cicchitti

Maps:

Norm Fenlason

Stories:

T. Mike McCurley, Scott McClenaghan

Typesetting and Layout:

B Simon Smith

Proofreaders:

Tim Snider, Phil Ward, Norm Fenlason, Adam Geibel, John Savage,
Chris Hitchingham, T. Mike McCurley, Dylan Shaw

Content Contributors:

Adam Geibel, Norm Fenlason, Lee Williams, Tad Kelson, T. Mike McCurley,
Eric Fabiaschi, Richard Haydon, Tim Bisaillon,
and all of the folks at the Dark Conspiracy and Protodimensions
(and more recently Dark Times) Facebook groups.

Playtesters:

John Savage, Chris Hitchingham, Jason Hitchingham, Paul Prose,
Steve Till, Dylan Shaw, Pam Panagopoulos, Jason Saice,
Kevin Smith, Ruth Ducko, David Cauffman

Special thanks for their encouragement:

Adam Geibel, Norm Fenlason, T. Mike McCurley, Lester Smith





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword (and 666 Words to Open Tampete)	4	The Outlaw	76
		Oldsmar	81
		Town 'n' Country	86
Tampete Overview	8	Safety Harbor	87
Introduction	12	Bradenton	89
A Timeline	14	Brandon, Plant City, and Lakeland	90
Health and Disease	17		
Survivalist Communities	17	Waterways and Beaches	91
Weather in Tampete	17	The Gulf	92
Crime in Tampete	20	Beaches and Islands	95
		The Bridges	99
Old Tampa City	23	Tampa Bay	100
The Fremont Pyramid Emerges	27	The Underbay	101
Old South Tampa (and Bayshore Boulevard)	30	Hillsborough River	104
Hyde Park and Channelside	33	Factions and Personalities	105
Harbour Island	39	The Arranger	106
Dome 606	45	Cepero Family	106
Davis Islands	49	Crop Duster Guy	109
Old Downtown Tampa	52	Diablo Blanco Cartel	109
Centro Ybor	54	The Gardener	110
The Cannery	56	Meth Head	110
		Mueces Family	112
Historic St. Petersburg	58	Prescott Gents	113
Central St. Pete	62	Scisensationalists	113
The Grid	63	Spyre Inc.	116
Gulfport and South St. Petersburg	67	Tocobaga People	116
Vinoy	68	Viemen and Ultima Ignus	117
Pinellas Park	69	Wapner	119
Clearwater	72	White Light	120
		Zack Heights Posse	120
		101 Personalities	121





Dark Adversaries	142
Beasties	147
Darklings	150
Dark Lords	174
New Protodimensions	177
Genesis	178
Primitus Domus	180
Tesseract	182
Ch’Narr	184
The Soft Places	187
Appendices	189
New Career Paths	190
New DarkTek	195
Underglyphs	200
Urban Sprawl Encounter Tables	201
Demonground Patch Generation Tables	215
Dome 606 Structure Tables	222
Oldsmar Market – Stall Generation	227
Oldsmar Market – Supply and Demand	228
Oldsmar Gang Generator	229
Harbour Island Merchant Generator	230
“Whiz”	231
A Hundred and One Plot Seeds	236
Glossary	247
Index	249



FOREWORD

As of this writing, Dark Conspiracy has entered its 25th year in the gaming community. What follows are the thoughts and mindsets of some of its contributors in all of its editions. All of these people have indirectly or directly influenced the mythology of Dark Conspiracy and the direction of Tampete.

Norm Fenlason

(Founding editor of Protodimensions fanzine, license holder of Dark Conspiracy in its third edition, and author of multiple titles for that edition)

Dark Conspiracy was orphaned in 1996. In those days an orphaned game system, was death. Out of print, out of mind. But a strange thing occurred in the mid 90's that broke that tradition of orphaned-death. Non-proprietary access to the new-fangled Internet allowed physically separated individuals to come together in mind as well as spirit. An email-based LISTSERVE set up at a university enabled fans of the defunct game to discuss its rules and setting. Members submitted their ideas via email detailing new aspects of the game not covered in its printed materials. Those were heady days of raw creativity, inspired by shared fandom and passion for the game.

This core transitioned from the LISTSERVE to an AOL chatroom to a Yahoo group to Facebook; and in the process inspired an update or two to get published. Even original designers and authors participated every so often in discussions in the evolving channels where Dark Conspiracy lived.

Tampete, is a Dark Conspiracy supplement inspired by that coming together of fans. The authors and developers came together in their fandom, swapped ideas in their shared vision fired by fertile imaginations and a genuine love for the setting, and put words to virtual paper, drawings to virtual product. The result, through the sheer determination of the principle authors is a quality product, as good as any big-shop slick-page product, its vision for a Florida after the Greater Depression in the throes of an ever-increasing weirdness intruding on this universe is a great basis for any modern conspiracy horror campaign.

Tampete will prove as timeless as the game system itself. I am honored to have been a part of it, well, watching it grow anyway.

Lee Williams

(Founding editor of Protodimensions fanzine and key contributor for multiple titles of Dark Conspiracy in its third edition)

Having been into Dark Conspiracy from the very beginning, then over the years working on Demonground and Protodimension, and also being involved in a revamp I was very happy when Scott and the others started work on this book. During development it has grown way bigger than originally expected and may well end up as the largest Dark

Conspiracy work apart from the rulebook itself. Some serious time, effort and talent has been put into this thing and I truly think it's a valuable resource. There's also plenty that can be used in other RPG systems with little or no adjustment, so it's well worth the admission price.

In short: dig out your old Serengeti Vermillions, check your safety catch and watch your backs - it's time to clean up Florida while you still can!

Tad Kelson

(Founding editor of Protodimensions fanzine and key contributor for multiple titles of Dark Conspiracy in its third edition)

So Tampete lives. What a great creation it is. I was most fortunate to be able to be involved with Protodimension from the beginning, graciously invited by Norm and Lee. During that time we saw some great pieces created during our production. During that time the 3rd edition of Dark Conspiracy was finalized as well.

I am pleased and honored to have been able to play a part in both PDM and DC3. Then Scott started Tampete and it is great. After living in Central Florida for 16 years, I love his vision and version of the Greater Hillsborough area. So glad I was able to be a part of it all.

Mike Marchi

(Founding editor of Demonground fanzine and freelance RPG author including The Shadow Falls of the 2nd edition Dark Conspiracy system)

In the beginning, there was darkness. There was no sensation. There were no hopes. There were no dreams. Until one day, a spark burst like a flashbulb, bringing illumination to a tiny corner of the void. Vague shapes began to form. The shapes coalesced, and soon a small, dimly lit place shimmered into view where none had existed before. Whether it was a room, a spot on a map, a planet, or even a dreamscape, the place formed. Moment by moment details began to spring up, filling the place with objects, and artifacts. Shortly after that came sounds and smells – things that made the place seem more tangible. Then came the denizens who would call this place home. Some denizens were little more than window dressing – silent extras who would never go beyond the steady murmur of crowd sounds. Others would receive reasons and motivations – a history, if you will. Theirs were the stories that set off flashbulbs in other corners of the void. Thin, tenuous streamers of light, snaking through the darkness, spreading roots of backstory and details. Suddenly, new denizens sprang



up. These had no home or anchor. But they had a story, and motivation. They were more solid, and caused explosions of illumination to burst forth in other corners of the void. The world was forming. Soon it would be ready. Soon it would become reality for another type of denizen – a character driven and controlled by someone else. They would look upon the world with fresh eyes. They would experience the world's subtleties, and through their words and actions, bring more portions of the void to life.

Deep inside every game master, at the heart of their imagination, is a god-like creator. Every game master builds a world in their head, and populates it with the stuff of legends. Eventually, those worlds become the playground for a unique, shared story-telling activity known as the tabletop roleplaying game. I personally have been a game master since high school when I was introduced to the LBB edition of classic Traveller. Traveller was amazing to me, because it defined a framework, and then left the rest to the imagination. I found similar inspiration in Dark Conspiracy. The GDW games in particular, always seemed to plant the seeds that inspired world building – and world building – or rather the result of it, is exactly what Scott and Alex have given us with Tampete. As someone who has dabbled in the creation of several 'worlds', I can attest to the sheer level of effort that had to go into the creation of this tome. The world building never stops. A tiny corner of your brain is always running the world's subroutine. I'm sure that for every idea you see in these pages, there were probably twice as many that Scott or Alex had flash into their collective consciousness, but evaporated before they could capture them on the page. I mourn their loss, and share their creator's anguish. As sad as that makes us, let us rejoice in how much has survived. I have always felt that the best way to build a world is to write stories within it. Even if those stories are brief and don't involve your main story line (especially if they don't involve the main story line). For Scott and Alex, I imagine that their superb comic, "Remnants" is one of many anchors that allowed them to flesh out the corner of the world that is Tampete (art from the comic is sprinkled liberally throughout) – and if their story is anything like mine, they owe a great debt of gratitude to the players in their DC campaign who drove them deeper and deeper into the details of their world.

This sourcebook is densely packed with everything you need to inspire adventure in the Tampete metroplex. Maps, history, backstory, plot seeds, NPC's. Section by section of the city is detailed and accompanied by vignettes, flavor text and illustrations. It reminds me of what the old Demonground editors hoped to accomplish with the DC 2nd edition Sin City series. My hat is off to these guys for seeing this through.

Marcus Bone

(Founding editor of Demonground fanzine and freelance RPG author including Of Gates and Gods of the 2nd edition Dark Conspiracy system)

Dark Conspiracy, a roleplaying game of horror, conspiracy and

an alternate 'now'; a world of eco-horror, liberally sprinkled with techno-noir, and a dash of monster hunting in a nightmare future.

From its initial release way back in the early 90s until today, Dark Conspiracy has been anything you've wanted it to be, a game of investigative mystery, confrontational terror, or even desperate resistance in the face of otherworldly invasions. A product of its age, from a time when it was up to you - the Referee - to bring the world alive in your own vision (and whoa betide any player who got in your way). But while Dark Conspiracy strived to be something a little different than its 'competitors', it always lacked one underlying cornerstone all those other games had. And that is what you have in your 'hands', a product that has been sorely missed by our favourite game, a setting in which your Minion Hunters can bring to life the very terrors they have promised to defeat - the metroplex of Tampete.

Here is a world that embodies not only the spirit of Dark Conspiracy, but does its best to bring the game to a new generation of would-be players. From near abandoned Tampa City to historic Old Pete, it is jam-packed with options and opportunities suited to any style of gaming.

So go ahead, breath in the harbour air, jostle against the packed masses of humanity, and get ready to hit Tampete running, because as they say in Dark Conspiracy 'what doesn't kill you... tries again a second time!'

Geoff Skellams

(Founding editor of Demonground fanzine and freelance RPG author including Masks of Darkness for the 2nd edition Dark Conspiracy system)

I'll admit: I've always been an atypical gamer. Mechanics and system "crunch" have never really held any appeal for me. I couldn't give a fat rat's about which gun does more damage, or how to squeeze an extra dice bonus out of any given situation. To tell the truth, all that stuff actually bores me senseless. It's probably why I ended up gravitating towards more "rules light" gaming systems.

I've always been far more interested in a system's setting, the "fluff" that a lot of gamers turn their noses up at. For me, gaming is about telling stories, and stories come from what people in the game universes care about, and what they're willing to do for it or about it. I get really excited when I can read something and have story ideas start crystallising out of thin air. So, as a freelance game writer, I've always aimed to give other people a solid framework that will start crystallising ideas in their minds.

When I first read Dark Conspiracy in late 1991, I was hooked by the setting. Here was a world where everything had turned to crap, and yet there were a few brave souls who cared enough to risk their lives to do something about it. The setting



had so many hooks that just got my ideas running off in all sorts of weird and wonderful directions. It volumes to me and I bought everything that GDW published for the line, and it's why I helped found DEMONGROUND and ended up writing one of the published adventures for DC's second edition. Stories about wanting to do something to make the world a better place were the sort of stories I wanted to tell.

Tampete is my kind of source book. Aside from being huge, it's unbelievably rich in story hooks. On just about every page is some little fact with enough potential to become either an evening's entertainment, or the start of a whole campaign. There's enough meat in this book to fuel an entire Dark Conspiracy campaign, from start to finish.

My congratulations go out to Scott McClenaghan and Alex Williamson for the sheer amount of work that's gone into writing this book. Gentlemen, you've done an outstanding job, and I sincerely hope that it will spawn hundreds or thousands of stories and a huge amount of enjoyment for people in the years to come.

Ted Kocot

(Author of Protodimensions sourcebook for the original Dark Conspiracy system)

I remember my first time. It was 1980 and I was at my friend Tim's house and B1: In Search of the Unknown was on tap. I can't tell you who else was involved, or what character I was playing or if anyone died, but I can tell you this - we maintained a careful map of that thing! And that was the way it was. Detailed maps of dungeons, of towns and cities, of continents, of entire fantasy worlds. Combat cartography was the rule of the day.

Later it was a friend of Bill's house, and we were doing something new. Something with space ships and laser

weapons. And, except for combat, no maps. "OK, you leave the spaceport and head over to Mr. Oswin's house to find out about this job he's offering." I had no idea where Mr. Oswin's home was other than "in a really classy part of the city" and it turns out that the University of Rhyllanor "wasn't terribly far away", which made it convenient to check on some of the details of his story, but where these places were in relation to one another, or the ducal estates, or the river, or if there even was a river - I hadn't a clue. And it all kind of made sense because in a milieu where long distance travel was quick, trying to maintain map of everything would have been insane. Big cities had big city things and small towns had small town things and roll against this or that skill to see if you can find what you're looking for. We just sort of kept journals of where we'd been and what we'd seen, and everything just sort of worked out.

Except when it didn't. Sometimes it seemed less like organic parts of a world and more like you were taking the monorail from Spaceportland to Wealth Patron's Square and after that you'd visit Gritty Urban Street USA to meet your black market contact for some special equipment you'd need. Which kind of ruined any sense of veracity.

Dark Conspiracy, coming out of the GDW stables, always seemed like a journal rather than map kind of game. And travel was quick in that universe. Hell, there was a SSTO space plane in the rule book! But it was also a game where having lots of contacts was important and being the guy who knew the city like the back of his hand was supremely useful. Only there wasn't really a city.

Now there is.

Sure. It's a sprawling crime ridden mess with neighborhoods full of street gangs who'd shoot you as soon as look at you, and some with massive police forces (who'd also shoot you as soon as look at you). And then there are the things that make the idea of being shot by indifferent cops or angry hoodlums feel downright wholesome. But, hey, I know this little place over in Hyde Park, a friend runs it, the food is pretty good and he was telling me about this problem he's been having...





666 WORDS TO OPEN TAMPETE

by Lester Smith

This preface is the last thing I will ever write for Dark Conspiracy.

It's not that I don't love the game. Dark Conspiracy was my first solo RPG design. I poured heart and soul into it, and into managing the line of adventures and supplements that followed—writing many, editing most, and overseeing all.

And it's not that I don't sincerely appreciate fans of the game. I'm humbly grateful to everyone who has supported it. That enthusiasm encouraged me to plunge into a design career, which in turn led to real-world adventures I couldn't have dreamed of as a blue-collar Midwestern boy who worked in the same factory as his father. I'm grateful to every person who has ever spoken to me about Dark Conspiracy. I'm humbled whenever someone asks for an autograph. I love to hear stories of characters played and adventures pursued. "It's a dark world," after all. Our lives can be a grind. So seeing other people have fun always makes me smile, and to somehow contribute to any of that fun gives me joy.

Which means I'm extremely grateful to the authors of the book you're holding, and to you for reading it. That the world of Dark Conspiracy is still alive in people's imagination, and in their memories, is extremely heartening. So, it's not that I don't love the game.

It's that I love it too much.

Allow me to sidle up to an explanation of that statement from an aside, if you will.

The Beatles were the most influential band in my lifetime. Their creativity and personal evolution gave voice and energy to a cultural revolution. But they didn't own their own songs. For awhile, McCartney and Lennon owned minority shares in the production company that held the rights, but as that company's stocks went public, and then it was purchased by another company, their percentage of ownership in the titles decreased even further. Eventually Michael Jackson bought up the catalog. In the end, the Beatles founders couldn't play their own songs in public without a fee being paid.

Novelists, on the other hand, own their work, and they legally retain that ownership for life. If they're of a mind, when a publisher lets a title go out of print, novelists can take it to another publisher, or in today's world self-publish it. My friend Michael Stackpole, for example, still owns the rights to the Fiddleback trilogy he wrote for Dark Conspiracy.

Similarly, painters and illustrators generally retain all rights to their original work, under contracts similar to novelists'. Even if their art becomes a permanent part of the property for which it was created (which is common in the game industry), artists generally own the original painting, along with the right to sell prints of it.

But game design is typically "work for hire." With very few exceptions, designers don't even receive a royalty. Which means it's sort of hard to make a living. And as with the Beatles, the thing you love, the child of your imagining, legally belongs to the publisher. They control its future, and they continue to draw any revenues from it.

I sincerely hope that explanation doesn't sound bitter. It's just a fact of life.

You'll understand however that it means a game designer has to move on, either creating new properties for new publishers, or self-publishing for the fun of it, as I do. I will always love Dark Conspiracy, but we've gone our separate ways.

Which explains why I've decided that this preface to Tampete is the last thing I will ever write for Dark Conspiracy. I'm doing it as a personal favor for Scott McClenaghan, because he asked, and because he and his fellow authors poured their own love into this book. And I'm doing it for you, in gratitude for your interest in this setting, and in the larger world of which it is a part.

Thank you sincerely,
Hugs and kisses,

Les

Lester Smith
www.lestersmith.com

19 June 2017

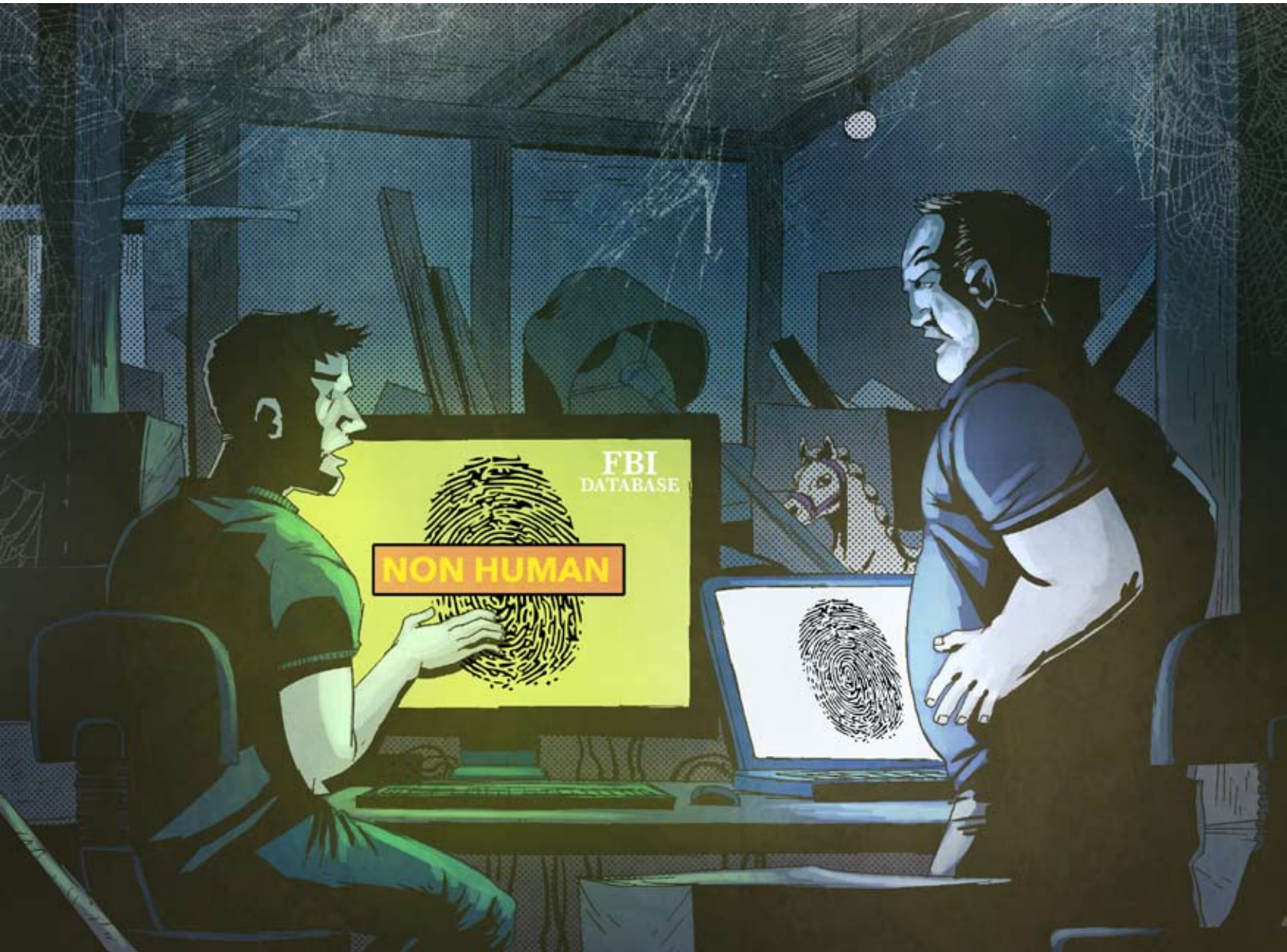




TAMPETE - OVERVIEW

Tampete (*noun*) *tam-peet*

1. 20th century city slang for the urban sprawl of Tampa-Saint Petersburg situated in W. Florida.
2. 21st century city name adopted for said urban sprawl.





LIKE IT OR NOT

(by Scott McClenaghan)

Sonny saw the blinking neon "Ootlow's" sign below some threatening clouds and thought it looked less like home than he'd expected. Tampete looked less like home than he expected. He elbowed his way through the crowd of gangers, pimps, hookers and Nukids on 7th Avenue. Nukids? Really? Time was he could flash a deagle and the riff raff would scramble. Now everyone has a piece. Even those mutant freaks.

Five years. It'd been five years since he'd seen the boys. If everyone was still alive, they'd be here tonight. He sauntered through Ootlow's threshold and one of the mutant freaks, a biggun to be sure, stuck its arm out to block him.

"The hell?"

"Tenner."

"Tenner? That cover my drinks?" he shoved a crumpled Hamilton into the bouncer's greasy, warty hand.

"Drinks extra. Close in forty minutes," came a forced, irritable reply.

Sonny stepped in past the chrome tables, floors and chairs to a metallic bar and scanned the room. There wasn't a piece of wood or glass here. Nothing to break except the patrons. It was hazy. Hard to see. But he could make out Jaret and Zag's heated voices above the drunken din. He made his way towards their table.

Jaret had dark red hair pulled back and wore a dark overcoat. He sat across from Zag, a brooding, wiry man wearing a gray hooded sweatshirt over a white tee and jeans. Jaret was articulating some finer point as Sonny approached.

"Listen to me, you rectal leech. Max is dead. It was on the air tram to the F gate and we had to be doing at least 50 when Sonny put him through the window and onto the tarmac because when he hit, he turned into mayonnaise. And I know he was wearing Serengeti's because these are freaking them," Jaret held up a pair of antiquated, beat up shades.

"Actually," Zag returned calmly, "it was the A gate because it was supposed to be an international flight, remember? Sonny put his bodyguard through the window, not him, and did it with a Stormcloud. That's why he was mayonnaise. Max slipped out before any of us took a shot. Those were the bodyguard's," Zag indicated the sunglasses.

"You guys screw this story up every time you tell it," Sonny chastised as he pushed a ganger out of the way and moved to sit down.

"The hell?" came a muffled outburst, probably the ganger.

"Sonny!" Jaret smiled.

Sonny continued, "Max was never on the tram. He sent his gopher, Prose or something, because Rodolpho always had a backpack of C4 on him and I'm pretty sure Max knew that."

"You shove me? In my city? Mofo, imma splatter your head like a terd inna blender," the ganger spat as he cocked the Wiley which seemed to leap into his hands.

The squishy sounds which followed between the Nukid bouncer's staccato rantings were very unsettling.

"NO! <squish> Told you, NO! <splat> Shut your.. <squik> NO!" The Nukid forcefully and repeatedly slammed the ganger's face into a corner of one of the chrome tables until nothing remained but a fleshy, pulpy, paste.

"Hm," Sonny looked, only slightly distracted, before returning to his story. "Anyway, those are Prose's glasses, and Max is very much alive and doing his liaisons in Tampete," he finished. "And what's up with all the mongos? Used to be no one would serve them. Now they work here?"

Zag said, "Like it or not, they serve anyone in Ootlow's. If you have cash. Good to see you, Sonny. We thought you might be dead."

"Dead? Why'd you think I was dead?"

"Come on. If someone was gonna die, it'd be you," returned Jaret. "You're crazy."





"He's not crazy," called a gaunt woman walking towards them.

"Heaven," all three gasped.

"You made it," Sonny said.

Heaven's skin was white and her hair, at least today, was dyed violet and blue. She wore a plain black frock and she walked over to their table with a few bottles.

"Crazy is this guy I knew, right? He drove a stolen van into the parking garage of a ten floor high-rise with a clipboard, and a briefcase filled with C4 and hardware nails," she continued.

"Okay, Heaven, we get it. We were there," snapped Jaret.

"No I love this story. I want to hear it again," Sonny prodded with a grin.

"Neo Lunar, right? All we had to do was get in. Maybe get some pictures. Maybe check out the lab, right? Six people, with clipboards, pizza boxes, cheap uniforms, and AK-74s, next thing you know, the place is a war zone. Remember that cyborg we busted outta there?"

"O-Ryzen, yeah, he drowned in the bay when we were trying to get out," Zag proffered.

"No, the other one. Montoya? They built him to fight on the surface of the moon or something and we put him on Zack Street to cover our escape. Right, Jaret? But yeah, Sonny's the crazy one," Heaven taunted.

"Sonny was there too," Jaret muttered.

"I wasn't there, that was Rodolpho," Sonny returned.

A din of angry voices near the entrance gave Zag cause to turn around. A group of Cuban gangers were hassling the help.

"Hey Sonny, I think you upset them," said Zag.

"What'd I do?"

Heaven sat next to Jaret, playfully touching his chin, "You. You're the crazy one," she smiled.

"TELL YOU NOOOO!!!" thundered over the spray of a Mac-10, peppered with screams and creative swearing in a Cuban accent. In five seconds it was over. The gargantuan bouncer nursed an arm riddled with flesh wounds as he walked toward a fire hose, away from three crumpled bodies left to lie in a bleeding heap.

"This place is out of control," exclaimed Sonny.

"Well. It's an uncontrolled zone now. All the business moved into Hyde Park. Out here is just gangers and muscle. This happens a few nights a week. Like it or not, Tampete has changed. The police don't come here anymore," said Jaret.

Multiple sirens could be heard in the distance. Some of the customers were looking around at each other.

"Well they usually don't," he amended.

Sonny laughed, "You want crazy? Rodolpho was the crazy one. Everybody loves a demolitions guy who's bad at math. Remember he tried to blow a hatch through the top of S&J Trust downtown? He was scrawling like square root symbols and stuff and still managed to take out the top two floors." He thought for a minute, "He was supposed to be here too, but as much as I love the guy, I kinda think his overzealousness caught up with him."

"He wasn't right," Zag muttered. "He wasn't right at all."

"No. He wasn't. But I'll drink to him and his crazy. What did he always used to say? Yeah, 'Stealth is not going full auto.'", Sonny mused. He swiped a beer from Heaven and started to down it.

Everyone looked up as the feral, Nukid bouncer blasted the front entry with the fire hose to push the mess out into the street. A minute later, they returned to their drinks.

Jaret changed the subject matter of factly, "Neo Lunar has another lab around here, in Largo somewhere. I think it's connected with that White Light group we keep running into. I'm telling you, things aren't getting any better around here. They're getting weirder. Zag was reading the reports on DarkNet and we're not the only ones noticing. I think they had a thing in New Orleans





for awhile but they set up shop again here.”

“I just got here, Jaret. I mean, I just got home. This can wait. Can’t it?” Sonny asked.

The sirens were getting louder. People were putting their drinks down. Zag shot a look at Jaret. Heaven closed her eyes, concentrating.

“I don’t know,” she finally uttered. “I’m not getting a Darkling vibe. I don’t know what that is.”

Sonny fingered the Desert Eagle in his vest but was careful not to pull it. There was some commotion near the front door as people were starting to file out and look into the street. A couple of guys came in dripping with rain which must have just started. One in a leather jacket and helmet peeled off towards the bar, the other towards the tables, wearing a trench coat and some gear he probably wouldn’t have gotten in with if the bouncer wasn’t seeing to his arm.

“Is that?” Heaven thought out loud.

“Over here!” Jaret called.

“Shut up, dude,” Rodolpho returned in a harsh whisper, eyes wide. “Oh. Hey everyone. That’s Gork. He’s good people. Hey we can’t really stay...”

The sirens were blaring right outside. Red and blue lights flashed through the metal slats in the front windows.

“I mean, it’s not a big deal or anything. But these guys are looking for me and.. uh, does Ootlow’s still have a back door?”

“Good to see you again, Rodolpho,” Sonny smiled, gathering his things.





INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s, the Greater Depression gripped the world. More than 80% of Americans lived in a handful of oversized metropolises. Most of these were already large cities before absorbing the fringe populations as they fled the countryside for the relative safety of the urban sprawl. A few formed as smaller cities in close proximity to each other merged for defense.

In many ways, Tampete is like any of these overpopulated cities. Unemployment and crime are serious problems. The government is only a figurehead, kneeling to corporate interests. Taxes are collected but never invested in anything. The environment has degenerated from disgusting to toxic. And the infrastructure, where it exists, is a poorly bandaged mess falling apart at the seams.

But Tampete has unique characteristics that set it apart from other cities.

The Bay weather is notoriously capricious. Heat waves are punctuated by hail and heavy snowfalls. Tornadoes and hurricanes are spontaneous; seemingly random. Dust storms and smog are regular occurrences.

The crime rate is no higher in Tampete than in other cities, but the nature of that crime sets Tampete apart. Cannibalism, serial

killers, incessant and lethal road rage, kidnappings by people in clown suits, drug-induced neighborhood disturbances, and civil disobedience that emulates terrorist activity – these things are Tampete's legacy.

Recently, an empathic drug called "Whiz" and dozens of variants have hit the streets of Tampete with bizarre, uncontrollable, and sometimes deadly effects.

And there is a dark influence that is closer to the surface here than in most cities. Stories are rife with rumors of abductions by creatures living in the Bay, Gulf, rivers, or other waterways of Tampete. There are whispers of portals to other worlds hidden within or beneath the city. Unidentified radio stations broadcast ominous and cryptic messages. Tampete's suburbs have become abandoned and subsequently infested with Demonground pockets (adopting the moniker "barbs").

Sinkholes are everywhere and while experts claim they are the result of lowering water tables and rampant excavation, some attribute them to races of creatures living beneath the ground.

These are some of the everyday concerns of the people who live in Tampete.





HOW TO RUN TAMPETE

Florida has always been known for the outlandish nature of its crime, and Tampete is a pinnacle of that phenomenon. For the craziest of these stories have traditionally been generated from the fringe element – those who shunned society – and in the throes of the Greater Depression, as that fringe element consolidated into Tampete to survive, this situation was exasperated.

Moreover, some of the Demonground haunted suburbs still house some of Florida's veterans and retirees, those who are too incapacitated, stubborn or insane to leave on their own. As the Darkling influence is channeled through these dementia-ridden peoples, the crazy begins to look pretty normal.

Maintaining this atmosphere – this crazy, fringe paradigm – during game play is imperative. Encumber the PCs with the relentless fear that here, in and around Tampete, literally anyone is capable of anything. It isn't just the evil people you have to fear, it's the bored people. The curious people. The crazy people.

Crazy is as crazy does. Amateurs are forever testing their inventions in the streets and accidents happen.

Hunters and scavengers on the outskirts of Tampete need to keep their marksmanship skills sharp, and they like to practice. Sometimes they'll peel off a few rounds in the inner city to do that.

If a power station starts humming for some reason, you can bet someone's going to check that out. Finding the mummified burnt body of some numskull good ol' boy toasted between a pair of transformers is not uncommon.

Traffic, crowds, sporting events, these things cause altercations. Altercations are lethal. No one likes to back down. It's hard to bluff in Tampete because bluffs get called.

And then there is the Dark influence. Here, more than most places, the conspiracy is sounding less like rumor and more like an invasion. The thin veil between denial and sobering realization is torn, tattered in some place. People are talking about the "underground men" who snatch children. The lizard folk who kill pets. A pyramid which, for no reason, erupted in the city block right inside Hyde Park. People are getting scared.

There is literally never a dull moment in Tampete.





TIMELINE

1984, September 17th	The portal to Primitus Domus is opened beneath Tampa Bay.
1993	Widely accepted beginning of the Greater Depression.
1994	Tampa and St. Petersburg begin gradually combining into a single mega-metropolis.
1995, March 18th	Red Thursday. First “suitcase bomb” detonated on American soil (“Zero Point Zack” in Downtown Tampa).
1995, April 1st	Dave Fischer, Mayor of St. Petersburg, assumes mantel of Mayor of Tampete.
1997, August 14th	Voting Rights Law of 1997, giving citizens the right to allow others to proxy their votes, is passed in Florida.
1998, April 1st	Aftermath 98: Terrorists detonate a “dirty bomb” in Hyde Park, prompting the re-zoning of the pending Dome 606 structure.
1998, May 15th	University of Tampete is founded as a private school and immediately acquires Teknogarden, a South Korean electronics company.
1999, December 5th	EMC/VMware and Oracle merge, basing their operations in Tampete.
2002, June 24th	Mexico asserts that it will defend the right of its corporations to dispose of waste into the Gulf of Mexico, refuting USA’s authority over the international waters. The EPA subsequently announces it will no longer enforce environmental controls in those waters.
2003, April 1st	Pam Iorio becomes Mayor of Tampete.
2003, December 17th	Sun Coast baseball arena retired and renovated for Tampete Jai-Alai.
2004, May 18th	JP Morgan, Chase, Wells Fargo and Citibank form the largest American bank, basing their operations in Tampete.
2005, October 14th	Hurricane Frances destroys much of Historic St. Pete, the beaches and Town ‘n’ Country.
2005, December 7th	Tampa International Airport closed.
2007, August 14th	Voting Rights Law of 1997 is reworded into the Voting Rights Act of 2007 and is passed nationally.
2011, April 1st	Bob Buckhorn becomes Mayor of Tampete.





2011, June 3rd	St. Pete-Clearwater Airport closed.
2014, January 22nd	Municipal street belts introduced to Central St. Pete.
2016, March 23rd	Harbour Island constructs a seven meter security wall around its perimeter.
2018, August 11th	Honeymoon Island secedes from Florida State and establishes its status as a commonwealth.
2018, August 14th	Honeymoon Island invaded by marine nomads and the island has been used as a base for piracy ever since.
2019, April 1st	Rick Scott becomes the Mayor of Tampete
2021, October 7th	Spyre Inc. purchases Taylor Park from the state and begins constructing unusual religious edifices within.
2021, December 11th	Tampete passes an ordinance allowing civil banishment from Tampete for a range of offenses.
2022, August 13th	Weedon Meteorite plummets into Tampa Bay. There is subsequent flooding in South Tampa, St. Petersburg and Town 'n' Country.
2023, July 18th	Dome 606 passes an ordinance requiring regular ground scanning and soil sampling to allay concerns of ubiquitous sinkholes.
2024, October 12th	The Skyway Bridge to Bradenton is officially closed and military checkpoints are established on the north side.
2025, January 7th	Months after its closure, the Skyway Bridge is subsequently demolished with no public explanation offered.
2027, March 1st	Two-term limit for Mayor of Tampete abolished.
2032, April 9th	Coast Guard completes a series of investigations into a Saucer-like object hovering over the Gulf of Mexico and reports no unusual findings amidst continued sightings from merchant marines and travelers throughout the area.
2033, November 16th	Ian McCollough kills nine people in University of Tampete (UTP) and destroys millions of dollars of telescopic and imaging equipment, claiming that aliens told him to do it.
2034, January 16th	Hurricane Marduke: Town 'n' Country flooding tragedy.
2034, July 1st	Present day.







HEALTH AND DISEASE

Health Clinics

State-funded health clinics no longer exist (funding for them was voted down repeatedly) and so all hospitals, urgent care clinics and vaccination points are now privately owned and operated. So no (legitimate) public vaccination process or epidemic response system is in place, although there are a few masquerading organizations.

The CDC operates within Tampete, but like most federal organizations, response is neither swift nor preventative. The CDC's priorities have shifted toward weaponizing biological agents. They respond to outbreaks primarily to collect virus samples or bacteria from victims rather than to curb the outbreak's spread. No one knows who benefits from any vaccines they develop.

Urban Disease

Vast numbers of Cholera and Dysentery cases are reported annually in Tampete due to the breakdown of central water systems and generally poor sanitation practices. Diseases associated with overpopulation also continue to thrive with the most common being Diphtheria, Measles and Tuberculosis.

Rampant dumping of bio-hazardous materials into the wetlands and outlying areas of Tampete, along with the cumulative build-up in the soil of fertilizing compounds and weed-killers used in agro-farming, have led to a vast increase in bacterial infections, cancers and other conditions difficult to diagnose.

Recently, Smallpox has been intentionally reintroduced into the population by an extremist organization representing the Tocobaga cultural interests.

Mosquitoes

Mosquito-borne viruses such as Yellow Fever, Encephalitis, Malaria, West Nile, and Zika continue to plague residents of Tampete, and things have worsened since the saturation of Town 'n' Country earlier this year with the subsequent roosting of millions of mosquito colonies there.

Real life "mosquito tornadoes" have been reported and sometimes photographed. On March 17 of this year, one of the worst of these touched down on the Courtney Campbell Bridge, causing multiple collisions and tossing four cars and a motorcycle into the waters. When emergency response teams finally arrived, bloodless corpses were said to litter the bridge. The death count was estimated at 45.

The mosquitoes have grown resistant to pesticides used by exterminators and crop dusters although these things still

discourage them. Commercial crop dusting is a profitable industry in Tampete, however no one will finance the dispersion of toxins directly into the mosquitoes' breeding grounds. Folks instead prefer to dust prominent residential and corporate parts of the city. Some districts like Harbour Island maintain misters attached to street lamps. Most areas maintain mosquito warning sirens.

SURVIVALIST COMMUNITIES

Clearwater, Town 'n' Country, and other abandoned areas far from inner Tampete have survivalist communities. Residents strive to be independent, rejecting outside services. They survive by farming, scavenging or raiding. Water is captured, filtered and then boiled. Power is limited to generators. Outsiders are not trusted, and some communities kill them on sight.

Police authority is not respected there, so the officers do not visit these communities.

In Palm Harbor and Safety Harbor in particular, many aging residents refused to evacuate or were physically (or mentally) unable to do so. Most of them are deranged. They eke out an existence but any ambitions are overshadowed by their dementia. Keep this in mind when reading these sections. If the events there seem bizarre, that is by design, though nothing seems amiss to the locals.



WEATHER IN TAMPETE

The weather in Florida is milder and warmer than in the rest of the United States, however summer months have always been violent and inclement.

Tampete shares these characteristics, but increased smog promotes warmer temperatures and higher humidity. Systematic gulf and bay dumping has had a cascading effect on the coastal areas, and erratic weather patterns have increased (year-round in some areas). Rampant monsoon-like rains





and flooding are commonplace with a distinct increase in hurricane activity. Summer sometimes sees tornadoes while the winter brings freak snowfalls and hail storms which sweep through (only to clear hours later). The weather has grown so erratic that Tampete residents have adopted and modified an old Berlin saying about their April weather:
"Sommer oder Winter, er macht was er will."

All the rain and humidity causes coastal flooding and flash floods near lakes and rivers. The flooding is usually temporary but exceptions exist.

In 2014, Town 'n' Country was hammered with torrents of rains and storms for nearly four weeks until problematic

sewage systems and continued rains prompted evacuation. The area never truly recovered and was eventually rezoned as an outlaw "camp"; a place to round up undesirables. And in 2034 (earlier this year), Hurricane Marduke tore through the place again. Emergency response teams were slow to act, and surrounding communities exacerbated the situation when wild rumors of undead creatures amongst the survivors of the devastation began to circulate. Many would-be survivors were found shot in the head by zombie-hunter reactionaries (see Town 'n' Country, p.86).

The rains have exponentially increased insect activity, mosquitoes in particular.

WEATHER CHARTS

Roll 1d100 every 12 hours modifying by +20 during summer months and -20 during winter months (cumulative with Next Check modifiers).

	DESCRIPTION	HIGH TEMP	LOW TEMP	NEXT CHECK
-20	Blizzard, Heavy snow	-15 C (5 F)	-25 C (-13 F)	-20
-18	Blizzard, Heavy snow	-10 C (14 F)	-23 C (-10 F)	-20
-15	High winds, 1d4 cm of snow	-5 C (23 F)	-15 C (5 F)	-20
-10	1d4 cm of snow	-2 C (28 F)	-10 C (14 F)	-20
-5	1d4 cm of snow, flash coastal floods	0 C (32 F)	-5 C (23 F)	-20
0	Heavy rain, thunderstorms, wide area flooding	5 C (41 F)	0 C (32 F)	-10
5	Overcast, light rain, flash hail storms	10 C (50 F)	2 C (35 F)	
10	Partly cloudy, moderate rain	12 C (53 F)	5 C (41 F)	
15	Overcast, light rain	15 C (59 F)	5 C (41 F)	
20	Partly cloudy, Freak Event*	18 C (64 F)	5 C (41 F)	
25	Overcast, moderate rain on and off	20 C (68 F)	5 C (41 F)	
30	Clear skies, high winds, low smog, low humidity	22 C (71 F)	7 C (44 F)	
35	Clear skies, afternoon thunderstorms	24 C (75 F)	10 C (50 F)	
40	Overcast, all day lightning storms, scattered light rain	26 C (78 F)	12 C (53 F)	
50	Overcast, late afternoon thunderstorms	28 C (82 F)	15 C (59 F)	
60	Partly cloudy, moderate rain	30 C (86 F)	18 C (64 F)	
65	Overcast, light rain, high winds	32 C (89 F)	20 C (68 F)	
70	Hurricane (high winds, heavy rain, flooding, heavy structural damage)	26 C (78 F)	18 C (64 F)	See below
75	Overcast, high humidity, heavy sustained smog	32 C (89 F)	20 C (68 F)	
80	Partly cloudy, high winds, late afternoon thunderstorms.	35 C (95 F)	22 C (71 F)	
85	Clear skies, high humidity, heavy smog	38 C (100 F)	25 C (77 F)	
90	Sweltering Heat	40 C (104 F)	28 C (82 F)	+20, See below
95	Sweltering Heat	45 C (113 F)	32 C (89 F)	+20, See below
100+	Sweltering Heat, Freak Event*	48 C (118 F)	35 C (95 F)	+20, See below



Flooding: When moderate or heavy rains are rolled 3+ consecutive times, flooding may occur near coastal areas and near rivers and lakes. Roll 1d6. Flooding occurs if a roll equal or less than the number of consecutive flood checks is rolled.

Hurricane: If this result is rolled, then treat the next 1d4 weather checks as a result of Hurricane and check for flooding immediately (# of consecutive moderate or heavy rain results rolled counting this one or less rolled on 1d6). After the last of these weather checks, roll as normal. On any weather period with a hurricane, there is a 25% chance that one or more tornadoes will develop in the area (usually originating in coastal areas).

Afternoon Thunderstorms: These generally last 1d2 hours, and although rain is heavy, overall daily result is considered light unless otherwise noted. Treat these as pre-dawn thunderstorms for AM checks.

High Winds: Smog is lighter and gunfire at medium range or farther is one stage of difficulty harder.

Sweltering Heat: Any time that Sweltering Heat is rolled 3+ consecutive times, the chance for prolonged drought occurs if a result equal to or less than the number of consecutive Sweltering Heat results is rolled on 1d6. If a drought happens, treat the next 1d4 weather checks as a result of Sweltering Heat with a temperature of 40° +1d10° Celsius. During each weather period with Sweltering Heat, there is a 25% chance of uncontrolled fire consuming a rural or adjacent wilderness area 4d10 acres in size.

Freak Event: Sample events are below but details are left to the referee. Weather patterns should occur without warning but return to normal within 1d6 x 10 minutes.

D8	WEATHER	EFFECT
1	Hail storm	Building windows and cars are damaged. People caught outside take 1d6 to a random hit location per minute exposed.
2	Tornado	A tornado originates without warning. On coastal areas or near a lake or river, there is a 50% chance the tornado is a water-spout. 1d4+1 structures will be destroyed by the tornado unless the area is an urban sprawl (increase the number to 2d4 but 50% of these buildings are severely damaged rather than completely destroyed).
3	Earth Quake	A giant shift in the land where no fault lines were known to exist, tears 2d100 meters of space beneath the ground. Roll 1d10. On a 1, damage is minimal and limited to panic, car alarms and a few broken glasses. On a 5, damage to roads and lots is evident and windows break. On a 10, entire buildings collapse.
4	Lightning Blasts	Incessant lightning strikes, sometimes repeatedly. There is a 2% chance per minute that exposed individuals may get struck.
5	Flash Flood	Either due to storm activity, plate shifting, or tidal surge, the nearby rivers, lakes or bay has regurgitated d100 cm of water, flooding nearby areas.
6	Twisters	2d4 twisters form and tear through the immediate area. They are strong enough to move small cars or garbage dumpsters but will not cause severe structural damage (beyond broken windows and such).
7	Tidal Wave	Coastal or bay areas are subject to flash floods and experience 2d100 cm of water. Most beach areas are evacuated.
8	Rolling Dust Storm	Often originating from central or north Florida, these storms rip through rural areas causing structural damage to wood or stucco buildings. Anyone caught in the storm suffers 1d6 damage to a random hit location per minute exposed.





CRIME IN TAMPETE

Tampete is renowned for its outlandish criminal activity. Compensatory legislation is similarly outlandish. A few of these policies are detailed below.

Traffic Laws

The City of Tampete authorizes the police to charge filing fees to citizens who lodge complaints. This is now the department's primary source of income. As pursuing speeders and reckless drivers has become more and more dangerous (and often fruitless), the police now dole out fewer moving violations (though parking violations are still a big income generator).

Road Rage ordinances are an exception. Tampete is known for the violent altercations of its citizens, but when they disrupt major traffic arteries or jeopardize the safety of Tampete's elite, action must be swift. Tampete provides harsh penalties for overly aggressive drivers who cause property damage or bodily injury. These are worse for drivers without insurance or valid driving credentials. (The Tampete City Council disputes claims that this latter clause favors the privileged).

Excavation Ordinances

Residents require excavation licenses before drilling or digging deeper than eight feet in any part of Tampete. Using unregistered well-water is now illegal (most of the water table is contaminated anyway). This legislation was passed amidst concerns that rampant excavation throughout Tampete is contributing to the destabilization of the region and the subsequent increase in sinkhole activity.

Clowns

This one raises eyebrows. It is currently illegal in a controlled zone to dress in clown apparel without a license or prior consent from the district. This stems from the countless criminal acts ranging from disorderly conduct to terrorist activity committed by people in clown suits since the late 1990s (see Historic St. Pete, p.58). Locals occasionally share weird tales claiming that the suits are not suits at all, but some kind of "clown creature", but these tales have not been confirmed.



Hyde Park and Channelside Districts

Citizens living in the dreamland fringe areas are deathly afraid of sliding into squalor. Therefore, the district invests in a strong police presence augmented by private security. The ordinances and their enforcement are particularly strict in these areas. For example, littering or vandalism can carry fines of up to \$1000.





TAMPETE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Approximately 1200 uniformed officers comprise the Tampete Police Department, which is divided into eight districts, each having 10 to 14 police squads (with an average of 12 officers per squad). The current Chief of Police is Reginald Merrick.

Police precincts vary, but the one described below on South MacDill Ave. (on the cusp between Hyde Park and South Tampa) is representative of many throughout Tampete.

South MacDill Police Precinct

The South MacDill Precinct has 35 officers and is run by Police Captain Emil Danilowicz, who is assisted by Lieutenant Maxwell Blitz.

The precinct keeps 24 cruisers in rotation, and all are in good running order although many have scratches, dents and the like. They keep two additional vehicles on the lot (one is waiting on engine parts, and both need extensive body work). City-funded automotive repairs are slow-coming and

so Lt. Blitz barter for these repairs with local chop-shops (see Ballast Point Butchers, p.30). Blitz handles many such negotiations for the precinct.

South MacDill Precinct keeps a well-stocked armory. Thin state funding and meager revenues are enough to provide Glock 22s, .40 S&W ammunition for training and a handful of Kevlar vests. However Lt. Blitz procures most of the weapons here through shady dealings with the Cepero Family (p.106). The precinct gets AKMs, Mossberg shotguns, miscellaneous submachine guns and body armor. Meanwhile, the Ceperos operate without fear of law enforcement intervention, as long as they stay discreet.

The main building has rooms for records, communications, computers and several interview rooms. The squad rooms are adjacent to prisoner processing and the various holding cells.

The facility also has a simple fitness center with showers and lockers, with several off-duty officers here.



Emil Danilowicz

STR 7, CON 8, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 8, PSI 1, SOC 7, INIT 3
Skills 2, Slug Weapons 4, Law/Admin 4, Observation 4,
Streetwise 3, Interrogation 4

Maxwell Blitz

STR 7, CON 8, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 8, PSI 1, SOC 7, INIT 3
Skills 2, Slug Weapons 4, Law/Admin 3, Bargain 3, Streetwise
5, Act/Bluff 3, Interrogation 3

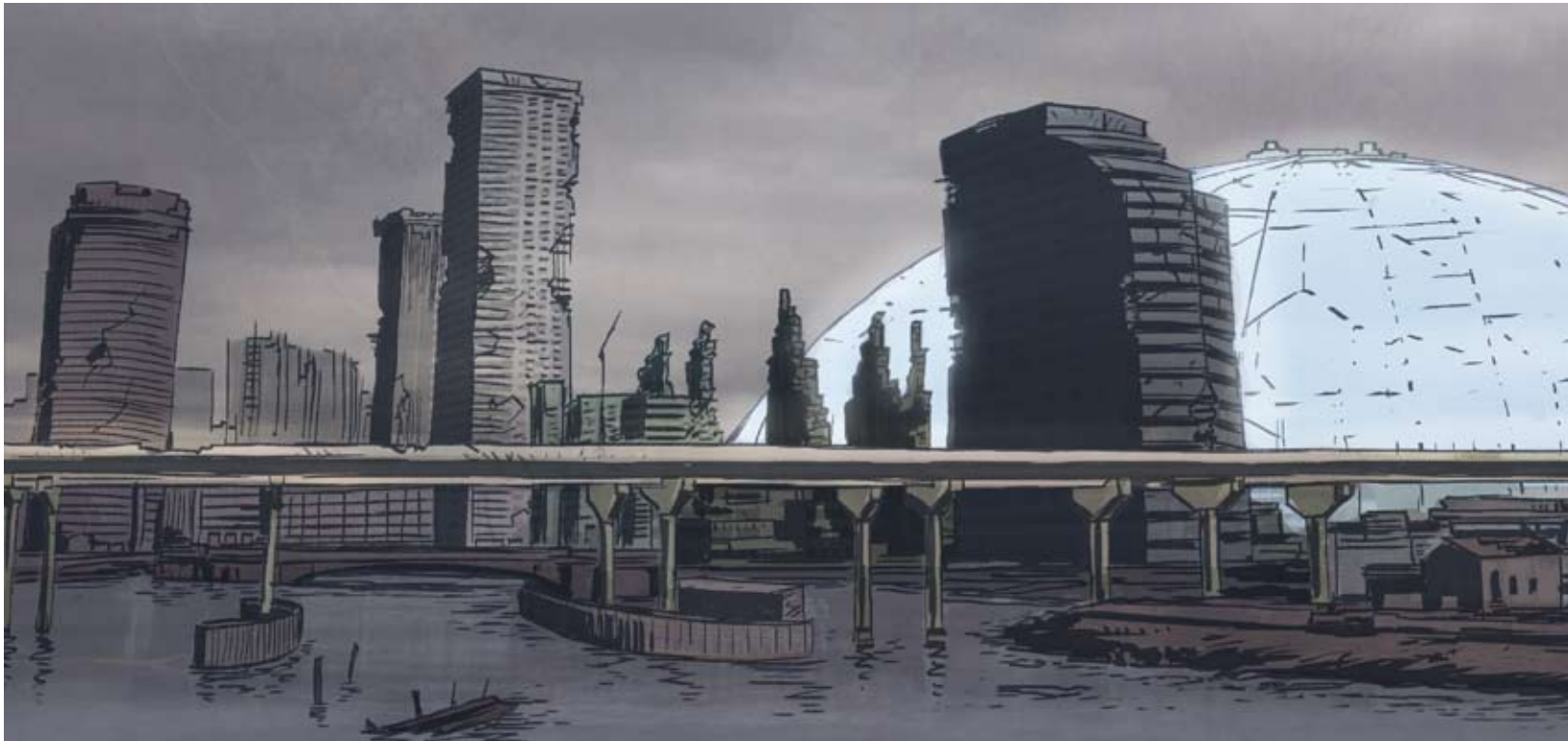




TYPICAL CIVIL AND CRIMINAL PENALTIES IN TAMPETE

Offense	Average Penalty
Adorning clown apparel, unlicensed	Fines between \$100 and \$5,000 Up to six months in prison.
Aggressive driving	Fines between \$1,000 and \$10,000
Aggressive driving while unlicensed or without insurance	\$10,000 fine Up to a year in prison
Burglary	3 to 5 years
Drug offenses (misc.)	1 to 5 years
Drug smuggling	5 to 10 years
Excavation, unlicensed	Fines between \$1,000 and \$10,000 Confiscation of equipment.
Intentionally blocking traffic in the Grid	Fines between \$100 and \$1,000
Intentionally blocking traffic in the Grid during rush hour	Fines between \$500 and \$5,000 Up to six months in prison.
Manslaughter	1 to 5 years
Murder (if victim cannot be identified, use Manslaughter)	25 years
Parking violations	Fine between \$50 and \$1,000
Robbery	5 to 10 years
Sexual offenses	10 to 15 years
Tampering with mosquito sirens	Fine of up to \$1,000 Up to a year in prison.
Trespassing/Loitering (Mike-Town or Bot-City)	\$500 fine
Trespassing/Loitering (Dreamland)	\$5,000 fine Up to six months in prison
Weapon offenses	1 to 5 years





OLD TAMPA CITY

MEMORIES OF LILY

By T. Mike McCurley

His shoes were clean, but just worn enough that no one tried to rob him for them. It had become commonplace among some of the gutterfolk of late, and Markham had no desire to be left in his stocking feet in some of the areas he worked. The shoulder bag was the other thing that posed a theft risk, but as with the shoes, none believed that the black nylon duffel with its faded and stained See Historic St Pete! motto was worth the effort. Those who had things worth stealing carried them in better bags, after all.

"Where do I go next?" he asked in a voice that barely carried beyond his own lips. No one would have answered had they heard him, save for the unwashed street vendor two doors down who would have suggested Markham enter his establishment to check out the skin on display within. He did that anyway, as the confused-looking man wandered past the perch the vendor had established. Markham ignored him, too caught up in his own thought to pay attention to the kind of thing that was a common sight on every street these days.

Markham threaded his way through the morning crowds with little care for those around him. A pickpocket tagged him, only to come away with a handkerchief rather than a wallet. A street preacher waved poorly-copied pamphlets at him,

promising the most dire of fates if Markham didn't convert to whatever new faith the papers described. It was just so much background noise.

When he turned down the alley things changed. The sounds of the street muted somewhat, becoming more of a steady thrum of sound rather than individual phrases and calls. Ahead of him by two buildings and on his left was his destination. He wasn't quite certain how he knew, but the knowledge was there and he followed it. It was becoming that way more and more of late. When pressed, his memory was spotty at best, but at random moments he was as lucid as the best.

He dug in the bag for a ring of keys. Thirteen unmarked keys for only three locks. He fumbled with each one, testing it against the lock until he found the correct one to turn the deadbolt. A wave of discomfort washed over him as he heard the grating sound and he remembered why this was always the last one of the buildings. He knew what awaited him and his hands began to shake as he moved to the next lock. By the time he reached the third, the keys were making a rattling sound and he had difficulty fitting the correct one. At long last he opened the door and stepped forward into a near-total darkness. When he sealed the portal behind himself and twisted the bolts closed once again, he blocked out what little light there had been coming in.





From the bag he pulled a small electric lantern and switched it on, surrounding himself with a stark white light. He was in a small room that seemed to be little more than cinder block construction. Only one way forward was visible, and it was down a beckoning stairway. The light showed it to be at least two stories deep. He slung the bag over his shoulder and used the thin, rust-flecked metal rail to support himself on the long descent. Every step down filled him with an ever-increasing dread, a sense of foreboding tying with dark memories that gnawed at him. He tried to keep up the shields over his emotions. However, rather than the solid bulwark they should be, they felt like tissue before the psychic onslaught. The barrier was thinning.

He struggled to remember the lessons of control taught to him so many years ago, but they eluded him. He sat on the stairs, pulling the bag into his lap and burying his face in the stinking nylon. In a sudden rush of peace, the sense of terror vanished and the stairwell became no more than a walkway.

"Is that you, Markham?" murmured a voice. Although somewhat distorted and muffled, it was a soft, sultry thing, with every word a seduction in its own right. "Has it been a year already?"

Markham smoothed back the fringe of white hair, unconsciously covering the balding patch. He stood, fisting the handles of the duffel, and marched the rest of the way down the stairs. The long, narrow room was low of ceiling, and Markham's skull nearly brushed it as he walked in.

The walls, floor, and ceiling were covered in interlocking circles, triangles, and other geometric forms. Each join, each point, each cross, all had words written in them. It looked like the world's best graffiti artists had come together to create a single room masterpiece.

"And what should I call you?" Markham asked. He looked around himself for any indications that the seals had faded or been breached. He placed the lantern in the middle of the room to light the walls around him.

"Do not pretend you have forgotten me. We are beyond those games, you and I."

"Lily," he breathed as he approached the eastern wall. Every step was made with care, lest he smudge

or erase the lines on the floor.

"I do so like hearing that name cross your lips, Markham," the voice said. The words were soft and deep, evoking images of smoky liquor and dim bars. It was the voice a singer would sell their soul to possess.

"Glad I could help," he said. He scanned along the wall lines. He drew a jar of paint from the bag and gently shook it. Inside, the white liquid sparkled with suspended bits of silver. A brick there was crumbling. Bits of it had fallen as a reddish dust to the floor, and tiny fragments of the lettering were going with it. If the words were destroyed, the seal would be jeopardized. It was possible, he knew, that this was why Lily seemed stronger than ever.

"You know what would really help?" Lily asked in a tone that somehow sounded innocent.

"I won't let you out."

"Still the faithful one. Speaking of, how is she, Markham? How is Jennifer?"

He paused and took a slow breath through his nose, feeling the sting behind his eyes. The brush trembled in his fingers.

"Is she still rutting with that corporator?" the voice snarled in a sudden rush of syllables. Gone was the seductive aspect, and it spat raw hate his way. "Does she laugh at thoughts of you while she abases herself before him? Does she even remember you when she is in his bed?"

"Stop."

"Aww, did I strike a nerve?" asked the voice, and Markham silently cursed himself for giving it yet more power over him.

"I can help you get back at them," purred Lily, and a flood of graphically violent images assailed Markham's senses. They were so strong he could taste the fear, smell the blood. He fought to keep from vomiting, concentrating on redoubling his shields.

"Take down the seal," Lily whispered in a voice that was the susurrant of breeze on a still ocean, the





babble of a cold stream on a steamy day.

"What do the people of this city matter to you?" Lily continued. "You've grown old and they have need of you only to keep my kind at bay. We're already getting through. Look around and see it to be true."

"I know."

"They will discard you soon. Help us. We can make a god of you. Think of it."

The images he was seeing were making tears flow down his face. A suite in Harbour Island, with dozens of servants at his beck and call, with no limits to the behavior he could command. Men and women surrendering their wealth to him for his favor. He felt the yearning in his heart. It would be so easy to say yes, to accept it, and to let Lily reward him. Surely he had not considered the offer this long before, he thought. He swallowed and steeled himself for what was to come when next he spoke.

"I can't," he forced himself to whisper aloud.

In an instant, the visions became dark. Humiliation and degradation at the claws of creatures he could not even recognize. Sanity-bending thoughts delivered by barbed tendrils that burrowed into his brain. His body shredded and torn, then reassembled and the process begun again.

He screamed in pain and terror, lurching back from his place at the wall. He was halfway to the foot of the stairs when he remembered the seal. Marshaling his defenses, he stacked a wall of beautiful thoughts and images to protect himself long enough to revitalize the seal. He could feel Lily as it casually tore down one brick after another in his shield.

He called for the protection and channeled energy into the glowing wards. It would last for a minute at best, and he needed to hurry. He used a rag covered in a sharp-smelling spirit to wipe away the fading words. A fresh rag to clear any of the spirit that might distort the replacement, and he picked up the brush.

His mind was blank.

He stared at the space where he had just stripped away the protection beneath the old Hyde Park

brownstone. He couldn't recall what the words had been.

Lily's laughing voice sounded from what seemed like a mile away. "Having issues, Markham? Getting senile in your old age?"

"Shut up!" he yelled, screwing shut his eyes and trying to recall the words.

"You'd think memory would be important for someone like you. What was that letter again? It was a 'C', wasn't it?"

The voice was strengthening as the protective charm waned. The heat in the room grew, and Markham noted sweat pouring from him.

"Just let me in, Markham. My rewards will be great. Deny me, and I will not be so nice next time."

He paused, hesitating even as the words returned to him. He felt a sudden rush of expectation from beyond the wall and he shook his head violently in response, dipping the brush into the paint and applying it to the wall.

"Et hoc factum est quod non pertinent," he chanted, the brush dancing as he inscribed the words on the brick.

Lily screamed. The sound was the mental equivalent of standing in a tornado, and Markham dropped to his knees. A moment later, and the ward glowed with a light all its own. Markham felt a weight lifted, and his personal shields seemed intact and clean once again. He was able to breathe. No fear crippled him.

He looked at the words he had painted there. Such a little thing, but Lily and its kind had eternity to tap at the veil of reality and shift grains of sand. In the span of a year, it had moved enough to weaken the protection in the room and would eventually have torn into Hyde Park with a vengeance.

He gathered his equipment and returned to the stairs. As he took them upward, he could distinctly hear laughter behind him. He struggled to recall if there had been anything other than the letters of the ward that needed work, but nothing came to mind.





OLD TAMPA CITY

Old Tampa City is the area of Tampete most associated with the City of Tampa in the early nineties and is loosely bounded by Old Tampa Bay to the west, both Hillsborough Bay and Tampa Bay to the south, Centro Ybor in the east, and North Hyde Park and Tampa Heights in the north.

Not much has happened in Old Tampa City that hasn't happened to the rest of the world... eventually.

But the changes around Old Tampa City are best characterized by how drastic they were and how swiftly they occurred. In the mid-nineties, the real estate market collapsed nationally after cities like Tampa severely corrected market irregularities (property value was grossly over-inflated despite the decline of the USA economy, resulting in people defaulting on improperly secured mortgages). It was a nationwide phenomenon, but homeowners and banks in Tampa and a few other cities were hit the hardest.

Affluent properties like Bayshore and Hyde Park spiraled downward in safety and value as residents were forced out of their homes after missing mortgage payments. As transportation costs rose and public transportation faltered, people moved deeper into the urban districts, squatting in abandoned housing and sometimes in vacated skyscrapers.

After Red Thursday (the detonation of the first atomic weapon on American soil by terrorists), the plans to build a consolidated Tampete were escalated, and the names of Tampa and St. Petersburg began to lose meaning except to nostalgic locals who now think of them as subdivisions.

Old Tampa City comprises the original downtown Tampa and neighboring districts:

Old South Tampa and Bayshore: Urban Sprawl filled with outsiders and Demonground pockets.

Hyde Park: The area immediately south, west or north of Dome 606: mostly a Mike-Town.

Harbour Island: An island dreamland community upon which few non-residents are permitted to visit.

Dome 606: A covered dreamland centered in Hyde Park and bordered by Hillsborough Bay to the east.

Channelside: An affluent tourist attraction north of Harbour Island.

Davis Island: Mostly city infrastructure services including a hospital, airport and correctional facility.

Old Downtown Tampa: Originally known as downtown Tampa.

Centro Ybor: Ybor City's main strip; the only part of Ybor frequently visited by other Tampete residents.

The Cannery: An industrial district populated mostly by robots, security and delivery personnel.





THE FREMONT PYRAMID EMERGES

Nearly six months ago, in the middle of SoHo (one of the more prominent neighborhoods of Hyde Park just west of Dome 606), the residents literally shook in terror in the wee hours as massive quakes shredded the eastern-most section of West Azeele Street near South Fremont Avenue. Vast sections of that intersection and the adjacent southeast lot collapsed as the uppermost 15 meters of an alien, pyramid-like structure erupted through the ground.

Gas and water lines ruptured. Power, telephone and cable systems snapped. Traffic within a mile of the site was completely gridlocked, while the residents of the adjacent buildings and apartment complexes fled long before any police or emergency response teams investigated.

A nearby bungalow park was completely swallowed by the earth and, despite the first responders' best efforts, there were no survivors nor bodies recovered.

The confirmed death count was in the dozens. A later count revealed another almost 80 missing residents.

The authorities' response was not swift.

Although the police cordoned off the area for a three-block

radius and emergency teams attempted some recoveries, a concerted investigation wasn't attempted until two days after the quakes. Prior to that, media helicopters flew into the affected area, but experienced a loss of control of their vehicles and video equipment once they came within a hundred meters of the strange pyramid. Their wreckage was never recovered, either. GNN reported nothing of the event and aired none of the footage reporters were able to upload prior to the pyramid's effects, although news of the event was later leaked to Minion Hunters nationwide via DarkNet channels.

Nearly 48 hours after the quakes, but well before power or utilities to the area were restored, the Pentagon organized a ground and air response to what was considered a foreign attack on American soil. Coming from SOUTHCOM at MacDill Air Force Base, six AH-64 Apache attack helicopters were dispatched while a ground team consisting of a dozen and a half MRAPs followed.

Although the details are classified, the net effect was negligible.

Two Apaches got too close and spiraled into the ground, while three of the MRAPs remain rusting to this day within a hundred meters of the obelisk, having never been destroyed or retrieved.





The remaining vehicles halted outside of the perceived area of effect, and a few began firing on the structure. Infantry units were subsequently deployed. Reports vary but no damage on the structure (beyond that which was suffered during its emergence) was noted. Speculation persists of sonic weapons targeting aerial vehicles and strange vibration weapons sending shocks through the earth to combat ground vehicles. Most of the infantry collapsed from exhaustion and nausea before getting within fifty meters of the pyramid. Not all of them were able to escape. Those that did exhibited symptoms consistent with severe radiation poisoning and died within a few weeks.

Two days after the initial assault, a concerted military strike against the structure was attempted. Three F-22 Raptor fighters were deployed, armed with a series of thermobaric and chemical weapons. One of the fighters was drawn directly into the pyramid where it was destroyed. Although the pilot ejected prior to impact, his body was not recovered. The other two escaped unscathed. Air Force Bomb Damage Assessment teams later reported no damage to the structure.

Subsequent official incursions into the area were not attempted, and the media blackout of the event was never lifted. Surrounding communities were evacuated, sometimes by force, and make-shift security walls were erected on the perimeter. GNN has limited its reporting of these events to a few veiled references of the "downtown construction project".

THE STRUCTURE

The structure is a gigantic stone-worked pyramid with 15 meters exposed on each of its four sides, seemingly constructed of a single massive slab of stone. Not easily discernible from a distance, all of its surfaces are marred with strange bas-relief runes and pictograms, as if an entire six-inch layer of stone were peeled away to leave the carvings beneath. It is rumored that these reliefs slowly contort over time, although photographs and video show nothing more than a washed blur of the structure.

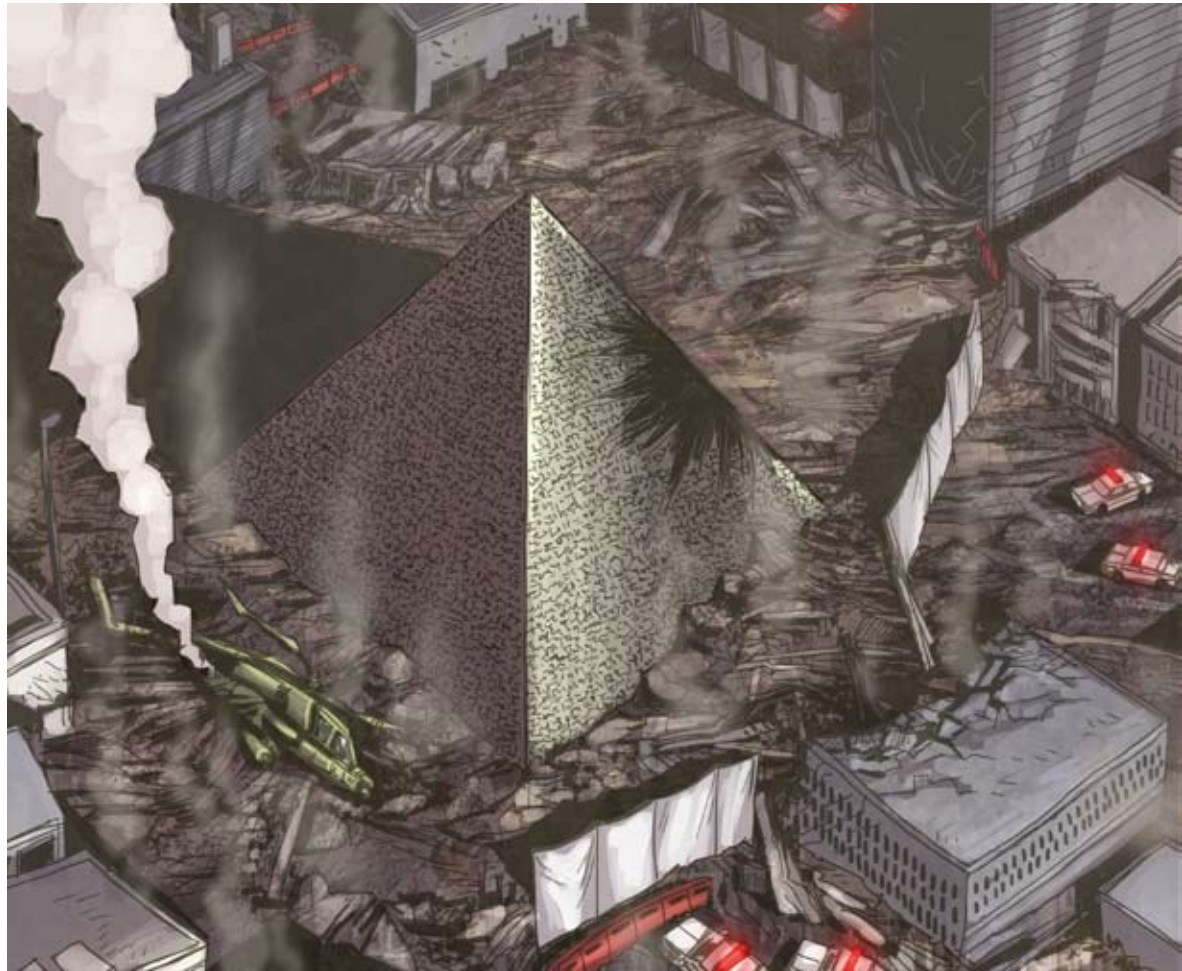
The stone itself is dark gray with massive green patches of lichen and algae, indicative of the humid environment which housed the pyramid for eons.

No obvious means of entry is evident; no doors, windows or seams. It is speculated that an entry may exist beneath the surface. Some believe there may not even be an entry, surmising that the entire structure is solid stone.

Electronics will not work within a hundred meters of it. Any light waves (including radio, infrared and ultraviolet) or even sound which passes the area becomes distorted; visible light is blurred or diluted. Sound takes on a hollow, dry, flat and muted tone. It is nearly impossible to distinguish anything transmitted from one side on the other.

There is no plant life within a hundred meters of the pyramid. The vegetation isn't dead. It simply isn't there and seems incapable of growing within this perimeter (not that many have tried). It is a strange but reliable demarcation point for the effects of the pyramid.

Although Geiger counters detect no trace radiation beyond the norm of Tampete soil, those who wander within one hundred meters of the obelisk experience radiation sickness symptoms including nausea, hair loss, internal hemorrhaging and aggressive forms of skin, blood, and bone cancer.





WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED

Many millennia ago, an ET vehicle passed through a nebula anomaly, suffered temporary system failure and subsequently collided with space debris of unknown origin. Many of the crew were killed or wounded including their chief Spacial Empaths. Unable to use dimensional transport, the ship navigated its way into our solar system and established a drift within Earth's orbit while their medical crew attempted to revive their incapacitated empaths.

Learning that the atmosphere was completely inhospitable to them, they maintained this orbit until all of their resources were exhausted and their life support systems failed.

Systems powered down one by one until the ship became a massive, drifting graveyard. A stable orbit was maintained for awhile longer but without power, the ship eventually sank into Earth's gravity well and crashed deep into the surface of Central America.

Although the ETs were killed, a microscopic enzyme released into the ET vessel when it collided with fragments in the nebula survived and it infected the long dead ETs. This enzyme of Darkling origin is far more sophisticated than specimens previously known to have created mindless zombie masses.

These animate ETs, now utterly deranged and perverted, started up the array of still operational, terra-forming machines. Over many centuries, a subterranean pyramid-like monument was formed using materials gathered within the Earth's crust and accreted around the ship via nanite constructors (microscopic terra-forming machines). Over the next millennia, continental drift shifted the pyramid as leaks from the ship's fusion engines oozed Radon-222 and Thorium-232 at a slow but steady rate. Unable to do much except wait, the possessed ETs hibernated as this process continued.

That is until recently, when they were awakened from their eons of inactivity by untrained empathic beings in the Tampete area where the construct settled. These hapless empaths felt "presences" and blindly reached out to them. Each of them was driven insane by the contact. Some still wander the alleys babbling. Some are incommunicable. A few are completely possessed by the Darklings.

PRESENT DAY

The evening before the eruption, reports were received around the city of philosophers, teachers, artists and even prisoners who disappeared, never to be seen again. The most prominent of these people was Dr. Richard Bullard, a language professor at University of Tampete (UTP) who ranted for nearly six hours to his students in his lecture hall before stripping off his clothes and walking into Hillsborough Bay.

Tampete Penitentiary inmate Joshua Wall, a mild-mannered former real estate agent doing five years for Debt Remuneration, announced one evening that he'd "had enough of this boring prison and was going home." He then smacked the edge of his lunch tray into the throat of "Tiny Jones", a 6'4" behemoth doing time for manslaughter, and dragged the gasping convict to a nearby 50 cup coffee boiler. As a supine Jones screamed beneath the stream of scalding caffeine, Wall announced to a few cowering inmates, "Also, people should steer clear of Interstate 4 because the Egyptians are coming."

None of the witnesses could recount what happened to Wall after that or where he went.

Now awakened, the Darkling-dominated ETs have resurfaced. Their exposed and powerful fusion generators (which, though currently offline, have continued all the time to ebb high doses of radiation: alpha particles, undetectable to most Geiger counters) have contaminated the surrounding area. The dominated ETs have also reactivated sonic weapon systems and nuclear electromagnetic pulse emitters.

Contrary to belief, plant life can grow within the boundary. However the ETs perceive it (and all life) as a threat and take steps to stop it. The dominated ETs have collected many such rodents, plants and even humans within the perimeter for study and experiment within the pyramid.

Beneath the pyramid, the nano-machines created a vast and complex system of tunnels spread out like infected roots, leading into the Bay, into the Earth, perhaps even into Hell.





OLD SOUTH TAMPA (AND BAYSHORE BOULEVARD)

Bayshore Boulevard has been a tourist attraction and epicenter for activity in the pre-Tampete municipal area for decades. The boulevard claims to have the longest continuous sidewalk in the world. Joggers and bicyclists were regularly seen exercising along the bayside trail at sunrise and sunset; the drive was considered one of the most scenic in America. In fact the Bayshore Boulevard of the late 1990s isn't so different from the Channelside district of 2034.

During the Greater Depression, over-inflated land values on or near Bayshore Boulevard were sharply corrected. The notable exception was an area between West Platt and Swann, which continued to concentrate wealth and would eventually become the domed Dreamland known as Dome 606, Tampete's version of the northern arcology.

The area soon teemed with squatters and remnants of the struggling middle class. Wages declined and as public transportation lost funding, residents endured continually rising transportation costs. Many Mikes moved closer to the municipal district but many remained, settling or squatting in the ever-diminishing properties between Hyde Park and MacDill Air Force Base. After passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1997, companies bought up some of the older buildings and continued to foot the utilities to house their ballotmen.

Now virtually all the land within Old South Tampa has deteriorated into urban sprawl. The Hillsborough County Police Department occasionally patrols the area but makes no attempt to secure it; subsequently, refugees from the outskirts of Tampete and organized crime syndicates have moved in.

Today Bayshore Boulevard is a major artery to and from Hyde Park, Davis Islands and surrounding areas. Maintenance on the road has deteriorated such that massive potholes and cracks in the pavement or collapsed columns inhibit vehicles with multiple axles or loads that are too wide, tall or heavy. Most of the traffic is pedestrians or bicyclists although the road can still accommodate compact cars.

Most trucking is done via Interstate 4 or 275.

A recent development on the north end of Bayshore Boulevard (between West Morrison and West Swann) is the bricking up of the eastern, channel-facing windows as well as new legislation prohibiting loitering on

rooftops adjacent to the boulevard without notifying officials on Davis Islands or Harbour Island in advance (and then only if accompanied by property owners or an appointed site administrators). This is the result of repeated, seemingly random and vindictive attacks by mainland residents from the windows and rooftops onto the islands with gunfire. The recently erected security wall on Harbour Island could not adequately protect against attacks from this trajectory.

Ballast Point Butchers (BPB)

The BPB is the prominent South Tampa gang made up of about 90 Hispanic teens and some adults. Led by Celso Porras, a 22 year old Hispanic native of Tampete, the gang specializes in robbery and extortion, car thefts (including car-jackings) and chop shops for their primary income sources. Muggings and abductions are frequent, as are store robberies and home invasions. Sure, the gang may cause a lot of problems, but this also means they can do something to stop it. The Butchers subsequently supplement their income with "home protection" and "retail insurance" rackets.

The Mueces family sometimes uses BPB members for heists or as enforcers for similar extortion rackets in Hyde Park. Sometimes BPB sits on shipments for the Cepero family. DarkTek is sometimes smuggled and leaked to the public in this way (see *Factions and Personalities* p.112 and p.106 for more about these crime families).





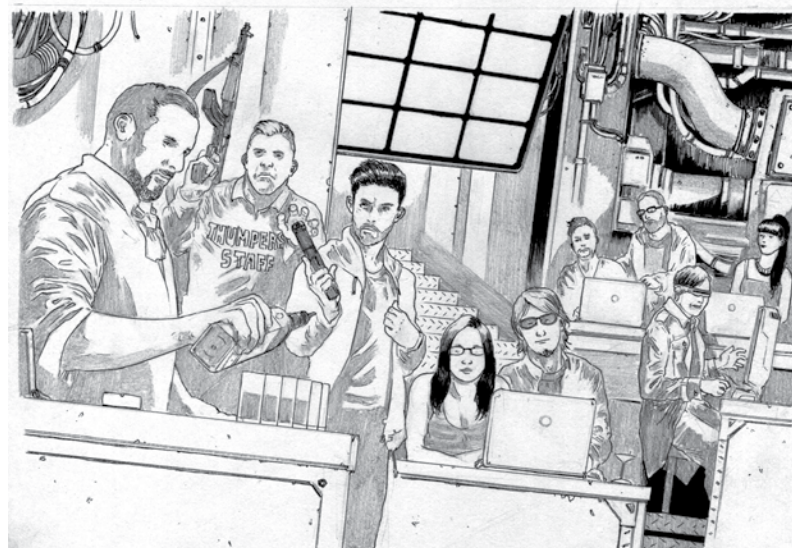
Prescott Gents

This African-American gang of nearly 200 represents the worst of the worst in violent crime in Tampete. Led by Xavier Cole, they move drugs and weapons and frequently tangle with the Cepero Family (see Factions and Personalities, p.106). They maintain drug labs including one purporting to manufacture the new empathic drug Whiz (see p.231). The Gents are armed like terrorists, and the police rarely start fights with them.



Thumpers

Thumpers is a wage slave bar in Old South Tampa run by a pale-faced wiry man currently going by the name Miles Haddock. The bar is known for its peculiar custom of permitting low-paid white-collar types and discouraging blue-collar and "tough guy" types. The bouncers are deceptively meek but are expert shots with AK-74s hidden in the security booth (and these are used regularly to deter gang activity and drive-bys). Wage slaves come here as well as empaths and hackers; they know they can drink in relative safety even if they're not allowed to bring in anything bigger than a handgun.



The Academy of the Holy Word

Not to be left out when opportunity knocks, pervasive Darkling activity exists within the sector west of Bayshore Boulevard. Here, pockets of newly-created "churches" appeal to the masses in their hours of despair. One such cluster near the southern end of Bayshore Boulevard is called the Academy of the Holy Word. Men, women and even children are encouraged to become "priests" of the order.



On the surface, the Academy's teachings sound great; tolerance and community, and they preach against class separatism. The sermons are open to anyone and are held in roads, parks and other public places in order to grow their congregation. Priests accept cash donations at the church but are unusual in that they request very strange items during these church sermons. It is not uncommon for priests to ask their congregations for quantities of paint, glue, alcohol, or unusual minerals.

The priests hold secret meetings with Niles McMillian, the church's archbishop. McMillian and his trusted bishops gather the priests and disseminate messages from spirits (which they refer to as Elders) to be delivered to their parishes. These messages are invariably perverse, toxic and inciting to the public and so, must be adequately modified in verbiage and theme by McMillian and his bishops in order to properly manipulate the congregation.





McMillian and his bishops receive their orders from a small band of five completely insane Tentacular ETs. A drug the ETs have been making and using (and are now addicted to) causes hallucinogenic toxins to be secreted through their sweat. These toxins are subsequently transferred to McMillian and his bishops when the ETs interact with them (this involves “head reading” which is usually done by ETs after their demands for salt water baths and systematic massages by the bishops are met – something the bishops now look forward to as the toxins are similarly addictive to them). Prolonged exposure to these hallucinogens in humans is similar to lead poisoning.

These Tentacular ETs have gone rogue from their better organized brethren and seek to cause strife in humanity, using them to obtain the tools and chemicals required for the continued manufacturing of the drug. The ETs usually only speak to their bishops. However the Viemen, strange water creatures from within Tampa Bay, have visited with them on several occasions, bringing large tanks of unknown substances (see Vieman, p.167 and Primitus Domus, p.180).

MacDill Air Force Base

Established in 1939 in the southern tip of Old Tampa, MacDill Air Force Base is approximately 15 square km bounded by the aptly named West and North Boundary roads (and by the bay to the east and south).

The host unit is the 6th Air Mobility Wing, which provides support to more than 2500 personnel in its immediate command. About 14,000 people work on the base, many of whom live on the base with their families in military housing.

The United States Strike Command was established on MacDill AFB as a crisis response force, a unified command center which draws manpower and equipment from all branches of the military.

MacDill AFB hosts flights of Navy F-18 Fighters, KC-135 Stratotanker refueling jets, Lockheed WP-3D Orions (P-3) “Hurricane Hunters”, Boeing 747-200B jetliners (for dignitaries), Boeing Poseidons (P-8), AH-64 Apache attack helicopters, and other classified aircraft on an as-needed basis.

The main gate of MacDill AFB is at the southern end of Dale Mabry, which leads into the base. North Boundary, West Boundary and the southern part of Bayshore Boulevard are regularly patrolled although the schedules are frequently varied (1d6 circuits an hour). Video surveillance is prevalent.

General Martin Leeds runs CENTCOM, which is headquartered here and which controls the actions of the joint services in the Middle East and North Africa.

Admiral Mason Brady heads the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) which provides command, control and training for all special operations forces in the United States. Admiral Brady recently contracted a private company called Neo Lunar to do high-G and zero-G training. Neo Lunar provides this training as well as cybernetic augmentation although most of this is off the books.

Colonel Marcus Kennigan is a liaison to ISAAC. He oversees the monitoring of Ultima Ignus and Viemen activity on Terra Verde, working closely with ISAAC operatives in Fort De Soto.

Quick and Dirty Plot Seeds:

- Under the cover of drug trafficking surveillance, Kennigan uses P-3s and P-8s to gather intelligence on the storms surrounding the Genesis protodimension portals and to track unidentified sea craft emerging from there.
- Several of the F-18 fighter pilots have been fitted with Obedience Bugs (see DarkTek, p16) by a cell of Insectoid ETs based out of Oldsmar. The cell has been tangling with the Brakemen of the Market in the Shade and may rely on an air strike (and all that entails) if more subtle tactics fail.
- Admiral Brady permits a small private facility on base, run by Neo Lunar, which hand picks servicemen for special operations training. One of these men, Jason Corrigan, received multiple cybernetic experiments and was widely lauded as a success in the next generation of combat infantry technology. However Corrigan became unstable after his exposure to steroid compounds and he eventually fled the facility, attempting to return home to Plant City. Attempts to recapture him have resulted in a trail of bodies.





HYDE PARK AND CHANNELSIDE

Hyde Park Village and nearby North Hyde Park are commerce centers for the middle class. Convoluted network of roads, alleys, trails and lots are filled with people, bicycles, shops and apartments. Shops vary from retail chains and privately owned live-in stores, to tented markets, kiosks and street carts. Permanent structures have barred doors and windows. The rest are emptied nightly by their owners who return with their wares each morning.

Residents fear a cultural slide into the adjacent squalor that is South Tampa and so police presence is moderate to prominent in areas known for gang activity or petty crime. These efforts are financed by fees levied onto local businesses and residents in order to support the Hillsborough County Police Department. Vigilante groups are also active here and merchant guilds often take out contracts with private security firms. So-called "nuisance crimes" such as vagrancy, littering, and vandalism are not tolerated and spur hefty citations or severe beatings.

Wares offered in these districts tend towards the legal end of the spectrum. One finds groceries, fast food, hardware, cheap electronics and appliances, jewelry, original art, music, clothing, less-exotic weapons, urgent care clinics, veterinarians

and most other things, although transistor electronics tend to be harder to find. Cybernetics, robotics or VR and the like are unheard of.

Food quality varies from typical chain fare and over-processed street vendor meats to authentic ethnic cuisine and near-gourmet meals. Grocery stores occasionally get fresh meats, fishes and eggs, although these aren't always safe to eat. Some of the fast food chains are downright disgusting, yet are an integral part of Tampete dining culture. Dirty J's is a local favorite.

Power and water can be flaky but are usually in service. Some roads are maintained by private construction crews (paid by merchant guilds), others, as in residential areas, not so much. Health care is expensive and can be unreliable; education is mostly public, so not very good and getting worse every year, although the North Hyde Park UTP Campus is considered a good college. There are a few after-school programs but they are mostly daycare-oriented and even these are expensive. Most of the youth are either latchkey or loose on the streets though a few work or play at family-owned businesses after school.

DIRTY J'S	
VALUE MEALS	
(served with one side and beverage)	
J-Burger (premium ¼ lb. beef-paste melt with seaweed garnish and butter-cheese on Dirty Rye)	\$8.00
Krabburger (premium ¼ lb. krab meat, mostly de-shelled, served with seaweed garnish)	\$9.00
Bridge Shrimp (deep fried, glow in the dark, popcorn shrimp fished directly from our bay)	\$10.00
Gecko Fingers (chewy delicacies, bucket of seven)	\$7.50
SIDES	
(yum?)	
Three Layer Potato Straws (deep fried over several days for that chewy/crispy/juicy perfection).	\$2.75
Bridge Shrimp Tails (waste not, want not)	\$2.75
Nachoreos (crème filled cookies dipped in cheese)	\$2.75
Funyitos (nacho cheese flavored onion crisps)	\$2.75
Circus Combos (cheese filled pretzels embedded in Circus peanuts)	\$2.75
Side of Beef-paste or Chicken-paste	\$2.00
DIRTY-J GAMBITS	
(signature Dirty-J's challenges, served with two sides and beverage)	
Little Freezers (sourdough beef-paste melt sandwiched between two slices of pepperoni deep dish pizza all smothered in Frisco sauce)	\$11.50
Big McBuford (triple beef-paste sandwich served on sourdough bread with two strips of baconite and thousand-island sauce on a sesame seed bun)	\$10.50
Bloomin Fondu (sliced onion wrapped in baconite, deep fried and filled with nacho cheese, jalapenos, beef-paste, chicken-paste and krab)	\$11.50
ON THE LIGHTER SIDE	
(À La Carte items)	
Pushi Bites (raw, gulf-fished mackerel and other indigenous favorites wrapped in pizza crust)	\$5.75
Gecko Thumbs (extra chewy)	\$5.75
Bowl Pigeon Stew (daily "bridge catch")	\$4.75
Seaweed & Potato Salad (sort of Greek, sort of seafood, sort of healthy)	\$4.75
BEVERAGES	
(even better than acid rain)	
"The Dew" (or other flavored sugar waters)	\$1.75
Lovebugjuice	\$2.25
Tarpon Sponge Water	\$1.50
Beer	\$3.50
Boone's Strawberry Hill	\$4.50



HYDE PARK VILLAGE MARKET

Hyde Village Market is a huge open air market taking up four city blocks just south of Dome 606. It is near one of the Dome's southern gates so security is tighter than in the rest of Hyde Park.

The Market thrives on traffic to and from Dome 606, catering to residents who want an outside experience but do not want to travel too far to get it. There are tattoo and piercing shops, drug paraphernalia shops (and drugs for the discreet buyer), fortune tellers and palm readers, legal weapons and sometimes shady ones (though nothing that will get vendors in trouble with the occasional Harbour Island Response Operatives (HIRO) security walkthrough) and knockoff HiTek toys like laptops, palmtops, compu-pads or compu-navs, though the quality of these items can be dubious. Radiation suits, gasmasks and other survival gear are also common here.

Camelia's Teas

Camelia Gabor, the proprietor, sells teas and performs palm readings and similar services. She claims her teas cure various ailments and charges exorbitant fees for them. Camelia is a witch whose self-imposed mission (or curse) is to bring Dark Minions into the world. She offers free teas and readings to pregnant women to this end. A woman who drinks the tea becomes sick in 48-72 hours and must pass a Formidable [CON] test to resist the tea's effects. Failure indicates her embryo will become infected with Daemon Brood: the seed of Darklings which result in Darkling-spawn and human-Darkling hybrids.

Dr. Abramov's Gadget Clinic

Dr. Abramov is one pseudonym of one of Tampete's most notorious hackers, Boris Zotov, a Russian who emigrated in the early 1990s and now is a major contributor to the archives on DarkNet (the online network of underground news and bulletin boards used by other hackers, empaths, and Minion Hunters). Despite being a literal graybeard in his seventies, Zotov continues to write cutting edge, elaborate software with predictive DNS and DHCP algorithms that other online members can use to find the relevant DarkNet forums after they inevitably change addresses.

Zotov earns cash by repairing electronic devices and reselling any interesting information he finds on them. He's careful not to meet his online contacts at his tent, but it is common for hackers or computer empaths to frequent the shop, unbeknownst to them that he works there. After all, who would suspect the old codger of being so sharp?

Boris Zotov

STR 4, CON 4, AGL 5, INT 9, EDU 8, CHR 5, PSI 1, SOC 5, INIT 1
Skills 2, Computer Operation 8, Streetwise 4, Research 4,
Electronics 6, Act/Bluff 4



Master Bronowski's Tarot Readings

Eryk Bronowski is a talented empath who makes his living telling fortunes and giving advice to those who pay for it. Eryk harbors a family of sane Gray ETs in his North Hyde Park apartment. One of them is a Navigator (and commands a steep Darkling bounty) and they have small children. So they are too paranoid to consider leaving. Exiled from their ship of Dark Lord-dominated Grays and horribly isolated after decoupling from the Gray Group Mind, these desperate creatures were fortunate to encounter Bronowski. In return for housing them and meeting their unusual feeding demands, the Grays have helped Bronowski develop his latent psionic skills. Since they have been cut off from the Gray Group Mind, Bronowski is now their only eyes and ears to the world.

Eryk Bronowski

STR 4, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 6,
CHR 7, PSI 10, SOC 5, INIT 1
Skills 2, Foreboding 7, Human Empathy 7,
Project Thought 4, Streetwise 3, Act/Bluff 3





CIGAR TOWN

The Cuban influence of Ybor City and surrounding areas cannot be denied, but in the early 2000s as people migrated toward municipal areas, Old Downtown Tampa and most of Ybor began to empty. Many Cuban businesses made way for Centro Ybor, which still persists as an active nightspot for adventurous youths, but which can't provide the sort of customer base these businesses thrived on (see Centro Ybor, p.54).

Most customers now seek the relative safety of Hyde Park, and businesses have moved to accommodate them. Rows of tobacco and cigar shops are here, as well as Cuban cuisine, bars, liquor stores, clothing and antique shops. Safety is assured by two prominent crime families that moved in with the businesses.



The Ceperos are an organized bootlegging family dating back to the 1880s. They move weapons, drugs, and black market goods and can get their hands on some hard-to-find tech. Silvio Cepero is the current boss, and he also operates casinos and brothels in the area (see Factions and Personalities, p.106).

The Meuces are responsible for the rest of the organized crime (including robberies, car boosts, union infiltration and similar schemes) but protect merchants in their own way with their extortion rackets (see Factions and Personalities, p.112). At least they offer their fellow Cubans a discount.

NORTH HYDE PARKING GARAGE

This parking garage backs up to the west side of Dome 606, and much of the space within is for people who work or live there.

Security is handled by Burgonet Security, one of the many private security companies in Hyde Park. They monitor the cars, maintain patron safety, and respond to calls from nearby residents in Hyde Park. HIRO security from Dome 606 also does regular sweeps in the parking lot and nearby market but their primary focus is protecting the dome access points.

Lower levels are mostly bicycles and infrastructure parking while the upper levels house the sea of expensive luxury cars and secured access points into the dome. Near the access points are rows of vending machines with various and sundry items (food, toiletries, phone cards, uniform accessories, etc...)

There has been a rash of suicides reported in the tabloids which isn't so unusual except that many of the jumpers choose to plunge from the North Hyde Parking Garage. What escapes reporting is that the deaths are not suicides at all, but the work of stealthy and crafty Mediterranean Gargoyles (see Dark Races, p34), imported by Nico Barbus, curator of nearby Tampete Museum. The gargoyles usually blend into the front façade of Tampete Museum; however they occasionally perch atop the garage, diving on lone walkers or just hunting at night.



UNIVERSITY OF TAMPETE (Hyde Park Campus)

Technically just north of Hyde Park, the University of Tampete was founded in 1998 on the site of the old University of Tampa. Dormitories on the campus house up to 2,000 students and the college registers up to 10,000 more per semester. Parking is limited, expensive, and rigorously enforced.

Although an excellent school and campus, the university has had its share of notable incidents, many of which have been blamed on natural phenomena or the recent surge in use of the drug "Whiz" (see Appendix: Whiz, p.231).





unorthodox practices (he encouraged his students' development of a new language called "G'Thyxul" which he insisted all their classes be conducted in). He arranged a psionic interview with a cadaver in his class and subsequently performed an exorcism on a student interviewer. Three days after he was let go, he and the majority of his Ancient Communications class met anyway at Old Tampa City near Zero Point Zack for a previously scheduled field trip. Neither he nor any of the attending students has been seen since.

On November 16th 2033, Jamie Daniels, an astronomy student researching Cydonia and the so-called "Martian face", murdered two astronomy professors and eight students with a fire ax and destroyed millions of dollars' worth of telescopic and imaging equipment. The ten decapitated skulls of his victims were left in a pyramid in the middle of a laboratory table. When he was apprehended by police, he said in defense of his actions only that the Martian face

kept repeating "*forget us*".

On August 15th, 2032, a sinkhole inexplicably filled with seawater opened beneath the Building of Marine Sciences, completely destroying the facility and causing the cancellation of many biology and marine science courses for the school year.

On October 31st, 2032, unknown costumed assailants attending a Halloween party hosted in one of the dormitories used machetes to slaughter seventeen students. Detailed manifestos in Latin were written on the walls in their victims' blood.

On February 13th 2033, psychology student Mark Tufel used the university radio station to broadcast an unauthorized program. Based on his thesis research into the use of audio stimuli to induce antisocial behavior, he used a child's toy xylophone and castanets to attempt to instill in his listeners feelings of intense paranoia and hatred for all life. The broadcast (luckily) was unsuccessful. It terminated with an elaboration of his notes (spoken in Latin, which Tufel supposedly could not speak). The first twenty minutes is, by all accounts, unintentionally hilarious. The show appears to have been recorded and regurgitated by other "pirate radio stations" in the area. There have been sporadic reports of people tuning into these radio stations and behaving erratically (although these are mostly urban legends).

On May 11th, 2033, Professor Robert Winthrop was fired from his position as Communications Department Head when concerned parents and teachers complained of his

CHANNELSIDE

Channelside is the area north of Harbour Island and south of Old Downtown Tampa bordering the Ybor Channel. Apart from Dome 606, Vinoy, or the islands, this is as posh as it gets in Tampete. There are tourist attractions for gnomes and the more affluent mikes including the Tampete Aquarium, Tampete Forum and the Tampete City Convention Center as well as miles of Channelside shopping and dining.

Tampete police presence here is heavy, and crime is much lower than in most of the Mike-Towns near the dome. Public transportation from Hyde Park exists but is unreliable, and traffic is heavy, particularly on weekends or whenever there are sporting events in the Forum. Bicycles are common but bicycle racks are for locals only (to discourage commuters from South Tampa) and lockers are expensive.

Tampete Forum

The Forum is where the nationwide sport of Kapp is televised. Kapp is a full-contact, arena-based, team vs. team capture-the-flag contest where contestants often sport cybernetic enhancements or are juiced up on performance-enhancing drugs. Although contestants wear battle armor, and automatic timeouts are generated if they lose their footing for more than five seconds, the games can still be lethal (a severe injury is called a D-Kapp, a term coined shortly after the league officially tolerated player deaths).





Events open with arena fighting (which may include “volunteers” from Tampete Correctional Facility) followed by a few rounds of Dodge-Brawl or elaborate Gauntlet Runs. The public is encouraged to participate in these, and there are prizes for doing well, but contestants must meet physical and equipment eligibility standards and sign lengthy waivers. Ticket prices aren’t cheap but the Forum is a major draw to Channelside and is a source of income for the locals.

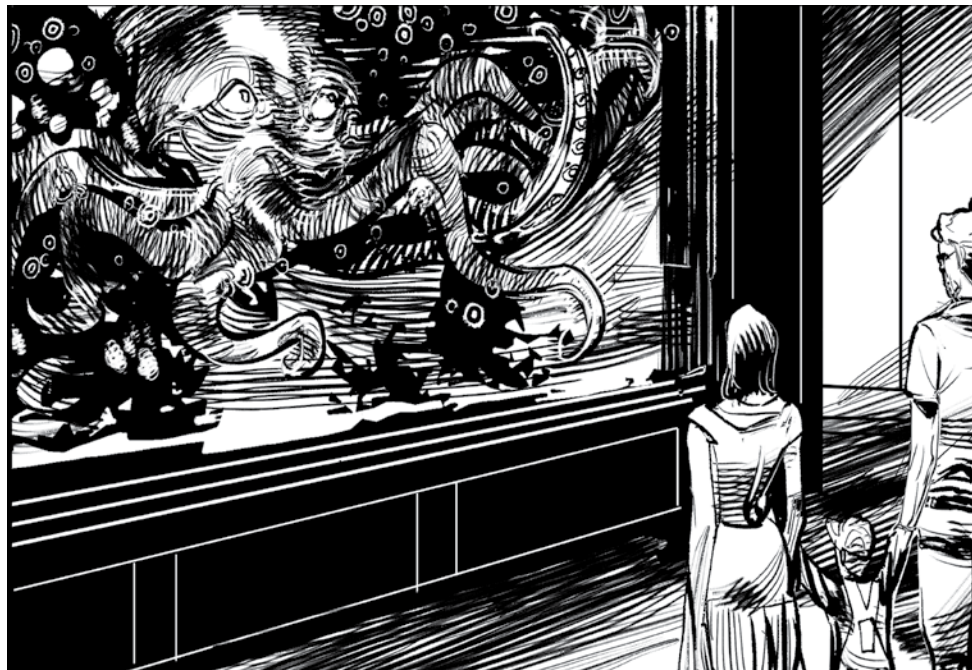
Tampete Aquarium

“When you gaze into an abyss, the abyss also gazes into you.”

- Friedrich Nietzsche

The Tampete Aquarium, operating under various names and incarnations, has educated and entertained the public on marine life since 1977. It features large collections of fish, turtles, eels and sharks mounted by taxidermists (most of these species are extinct) with some live exhibits including the popular “chum feeding” in Ybor Channel. A few species defy classification. Even expert marine biologists cannot agree on what these things from the deep might be.

The Environmental Awareness wing was recently renovated and now offers a series of displays regarding the recently discovered meteorite in Tampa Bay (see Weedon Meteorite, p.100). A group of Igor curators (serving a cell of Tentacular ETs) use pieces of the meteorite to detect latent and otherwise undeveloped psionic abilities in guests and to instill in them the dark seed of insanity before those abilities can take hold. Such guests are offered trinkets, impregnated with fragments of the stuff to facilitate empathic corruption after they leave.



HYDE PARK AND CHANNELSIDE BUSINESSES

Happy Time Pharmacy

When beer and TV won’t cut it, nothing helps the oppressed endure the unendurable like pharmaceuticals. Happy Time Pharmacy is a Hyde Park-based chain providing an exhaustive menu of legal prescription medicines which can be prepared while the Medicine Request and Diagnosis Unit (MR. DU) writes the necessary prescriptions. The chain is well protected by private security but due to the high insurance premiums these companies charge, Happy Time Pharmacies flourish only in affluent areas like Hyde Park, Channelside and the islands.

There is also an ancillary chain called Happy Time Brewery for the more depressed areas...

Dowling Funeral Home

This family-owned company has been comforting grieving families in Tampete for over a century. Catering to affluent communities such as Hyde Park and Channelside, Dowling Funeral Home offers extravagant funerals and trappings such as theft-deterrent caskets and tombstones. They even offer drive-through service for incinerations. One of the newer caretakers, Benjamin Cross, is actually an Igor for a cell of Insectoid ETs, the influence of which is pervasive in the Hyde Park area. Cross knows very little about his employers except that they pay well. So he routinely switches the cadavers for replacements made of an organic compound the ETs provide and which only retain their shape for 12-18 hours before returning to protoplasmic goo. The ETs use these corpses for some awful purpose.





Bite Back Pest Control

Alright, these guys are a problem.

On the surface, they're a prominent, reputable pest and rodent extermination service, and historically they've had an excellent track record of doing exactly that. Sometime in the past few months, the management was infiltrated by a group of Insectoid ETs who have refocused the company's purpose in an entirely different direction. Under the guise of removing pests, these ETs (clothed in environmental protection clothing resembling Hazmat suits) test a variety of chemicals on humans and insects alike and record their subsequent behavior. Recent experiments have included contaminating the water

lines to Hyde Park and Channelside residences, using growth hormones and psychedelic drugs on insects and rodents, and most recently, tenting an entire apartment complex overnight and gassing its residents with a hallucinogenic compound which induced a catatonic state into its victims.

These ETs get their chemicals from the Coors-O'Doul's Brewery in the Cannery (see p.56) and are hatching a scheme to modify Dome 606's filtration system. They want to attach generators capable of pumping enough gas to induce a state of permanent docility and compliance to all within the Dome, thus transforming the place into a massive Hive over the course of a single evening.





HARBOUR ISLAND

Within Tampete are a few scattered gems of centralized wealth and beauty; vast skyscrapers amidst artificial gardens and enclaves of technology and entertainment. They exist both to entertain the rich and to taunt the mikes whose place it is to keep these paradises running.

The richest of the nomenclatura have concentrated their wealth into 177 acres that are Harbour Island.

Even before the Greater Depression, the island always catered to the affluent. Developed by an early 20th century railroad baron as a major tourist attraction and commerce center, Harbour Island later shed its trendy cafes and middle class appeal in favor of private residences, condominiums, yacht clubs, premium restaurants and nightclub entertainment.

When the Greater Depression set in, real estate on the island was largely unaffected. Pockets of nearby Hyde Park degenerated into slums as wage slaves, working for lower and lower pay, had to move closer and closer to their enslaving corporate conglomerates. But their conglomerate owners were unaffected and thrived during the Greater Depression, continuing to enjoy tranquility on Harbour Island.

HARBOUR ISLAND SECURITY

Road and Channel security are handled by the Harbour Island Response Operatives (HIRO), a nation-wide paramilitary security firm which primarily employs American veterans. They have been rumored to assist the government in offsite military training and covert operations abroad. Although HIRO is Albuquerque-based, owner Winston Steele maintains a complex as well as a small but elaborate training facility for the local force complete with its own garrison here on Harbour Island, boosting confidence in the island's residents.

Security is paramount and infiltration of the island is, for the most part, unheard of. HIRO personnel are organized into Island Security or Tactical Response groups.

Island Security Personnel

HIRO Island Security operatives manage internal security and law enforcement within Harbour Island.

Island Security presence is ubiquitous although pressure from the residents has caused Steele to make protocol changes which would be considered unusual elsewhere.

They do not wear battle armor or carry automatic weapons, instead wearing aesthetically pleasing uniforms which vary by season. In addition to their combat and tactical training,

they are also trained in customer service and public relations skills. They will immediately report code violations but also balance rules enforcement with residents' convenience unless a real threat is perceived.

A force of 300 of these men police the island in pairs during the day (less at night), usually on foot or by use of the Security Unit Island Transport Engines (SUITes) which are Segway-like vehicles manufactured by Mitsubishi-Ferrari which have been modified to hover off the ground, coast at high speeds and make very tight turns. They are fitted with bullet-resistant windshields and are well maintained and habitually detailed.

Island Security often is seen directing traffic or moving crowds through the entertainment district, and they will swarm on potential threats or service disruptions within moments.

These security personnel are warm, friendly, and helpful, and are numerous enough to warrant the occasional suspension of duty when assisting residents with whatever personal matter they may need. They truly provide a service in addition to security. Of course, if you are not a resident, your medical coverage had better be paid up...





Tactical Response Personnel

Over 200 HIRO Tactical Response operatives sporting HIRO lightweight battle armor and automatic weapons manage the perimeter security and emergency response efforts. They operate in squads of six to eight men and can be deployed with very short notice from various covert bunkers, the island perimeter or their training facility.

Stationed units on the perimeter and bridges operate out-of-towers or access control checkpoints. Most are on foot although each squad has access to a handful of Heavy SUITE vehicles, (similar to those used by Island Security but with upgraded armor and armaments).

Mounted squads deploy from facilities distributed across the island and have access to various tactical vehicles; Cadillac-Gage Commando V-300P APCs are housed near the bridges and piers, RamTech P-320 APCs, Joint Light Tactical Vehicles and Heavy SUITE vehicles are housed in bunkers and training facilities, Defender class motor boats are housed on the pier and patrol the channels.

HIRO Tactical Response (Force Leader):

STR: 9, CON: 8, AGL: 8, INT 8, EDU: 4, CHR: 4, PSI: 0, INIT: 5, Move: 3/10/20/35, Skills: 6*, Hits: 13/25

*Slug Weapons, Autogun, Unarmed Martial Arts, Small Blades (Martial Arts) and one of Grenade Launcher, Heavy Artillery, Heavy Guns or RCV Ops are at Skill Level 8.

Gear: HIRO lightweight battle armor, weapons appropriate to specialty, combat knife

HIRO Tactical Response (Operative):

STR: 9, CON: 8, AGL: 8, INT 6, EDU: 4, CHR: 4, PSI: 0, INIT: 5, Move: 3/10/20/35, Skills: 6*, Hits: 13/25

*Slug Weapons, Autogun, Unarmed Martial Arts, Small Blades (Martial Arts) and one of Grenade Launcher, Heavy Artillery, Heavy Guns or RCV Ops are at Skill Level 8.

Gear: HIRO lightweight battle armor, weapons appropriate to specialty, combat knife



HIRO Island Security (Overseer):

STR: 8, CON: 8, AGL: 8, INT 9, EDU: 8, CHR: 7, PSI: 0, INIT: 5, Move: 3/10/20/35, Skills: 5*, Hits: 13/25

*Slug Weapons, Unarmed Martial Arts, Small Blades (Martial Arts), Autogun, Carousing and Act/Bluff are at Skill Level 7.

HIRO Island Security (Operative):

STR: 8, CON: 8, AGL: 8, INT 7, EDU: 6, CHR: 7, PSI: 0, INIT: 5, Move: 3/10/20/35, Skills: 5*, Hits: 13/25

*Slug Weapons, Unarmed Martial Arts, Small Blades (Martial Arts), Autogun, Carousing and Act/Bluff are at Skill Level 7.



Wall Security

The island is walled to deter swimmers and projectile fire from the mainland. The wall provides excellent surveillance of the three channels surrounding it.

The wall is seven meters high and about a meter thick. It is built from reinforced concrete (smoothed and polished to deter climbing) with some sections of ballistic glass so the residents don't become claustrophobic. Towers are placed every 100 meters or so with motion-activated cameras and search lights mounted outside every 25 meters. Elaborate scaffolding on the inside of the wall accommodates patrols of HIRO Tactical Response officers by foot or by shuttling by way of the Heavy SUITE vehicles.

Towers are armed with water cannons and M2HB Heavy Machineguns. A few near the bridges even house Armington Heavy Lasers (though the reams of paperwork associated with firing such an expensive weapon deter itchy trigger fingers from its rampant use).

Submerged sheets of jagged steel protruding from the wall base deter mooring or navigation too close to the wall.





Road Security

South Harbour Island Blvd. and South Beneficial Drive are the only roads onto the island. Both are reinforced drawbridges which cross Garrison Channel. The drawbridges are generally up, although South Harbour Island Blvd. is more likely to be down for extended periods of time. Residents may have their assistants call ahead to avoid the typical one to two minute delay associated with lowering the bridges, and there are secured holding areas for waiting residents.

The checkpoints on both sides of the bridges have fortified guard towers which can withstand small arms fire and are resistant to vehicular assault and bomb blasts. They are otherwise equipped as the Wall Towers. Attempting to cross one of the bridges without authorization is often enough cause for the HIRO personnel to eliminate apparent vagrants and criminals. More than one entrepreneur has secured business by having hackers remove his rival's travel authority.

Channel Security

The Garrison Channel, its neighbor, the Seddon, to the west, and the Sparkman on the east are rigorously patrolled by eight-meter Defender class boats that also patrol Hillsborough Bay. The channels are also monitored by HIRO units patrolling the wall. Subsequently, Harbour Island does not endure the level of trespassers which plagues Cigar Town.

Shortly after the Wall went operational in March of 2016, residents received a presentation of a novel security protection mechanism from Total de Proteção Incorporado, a Brazilian

sister company of HIRO. After the successful presentation which turned into a 5-day bacchanalia, the residents approved populating all three channels near the Island with a highly aggressive species of piranha genetically-modified for saltwater environments. Subsequently, HIRO coordinated the installation of Chum Conduits in the northwest, northeast and southern tips of the island. Here, various meat by-products are distributed into the water to attract the thousands of fish introduced into the channels.

Underwater cargo nets have been deployed across the Seddon, just south of Harbour Island, to deter piranha migration south. The netting does not protect the uppermost two meters to allow ship passage, and some piranha have escaped over the netting with reports of attacks off of Sunken Island, Pine Key and as far south as Mariposa.



Alabama Meat Packing, a company headquartered in the Mobile Complex in lower Alabama, provides chum products to the Island with weekly deliveries to the Harbour Island wall conduits. Alabama Meat Company has been accused of harvesting indigent humans from the Florida panhandle for use in livestock foodstuff and applications such as chumming. Federal and local investigations have not resulted in charges against Alabama Meats, but the rumors persist that they harvest from those residents in lower Alabama, Georgia and Florida who cannot afford permanent housing in Mobile, Panama City-Eglin Conclave, or further west in New Orleans...





Video and audio surveillance is total while in the public (and often within the infrastructure housing). Subterranean bunkers house dozens of HIRO personnel ready for emergency or tactical response. There is a moderately sized hospital here and a fire station in the center of the district, although the latter is generally for exhibit with fires being rare, and when they occur, handled efficiently by HIRO personnel.

THE VINEYARDS

The central district of Harbour Island is the Vineyards, owned by Kierdorf-Hedonism Wein GmbH. Rows of hydroponically grown vines are here, mostly for display since the winery can barely sustain island demand. Industrial lighting and biotechnology augment vine growth while giant dishes and antennae atop skyscrapers direct a recently deployed, localized weather control system called Klystron 12. There is a secure pen which houses a few of the more exotic vines including one rumored to consume blood, producing special grapes for an exclusive vintage of wine.

Klystron is a trusted name in meteorology. Klystron 12 is a new system designed to actually modify the weather. It is still undergoing testing but has been deployed in Harbour Island with success. Heavy rains and high winds can be affected by satellite systems capable of chemical cloud-seeding and “bay polishing”, a process by which the bay is sprayed with oils to reduce precipitation. Still, island gear is safe housed when hurricanes or tornados move through.

Kierdorf-Hedonism Wein is owned and operated by Jasper Bierling, a German entrepreneur residing in a palatial nine-story resort in the Vineyards with a private helipad. Jasper entertains and often brokers deals for the world’s most prominent personalities. Major corporations and sometimes governments finalize their transactions here amidst the amenities that Jasper provides. He is therefore a wealth of information concerning finance, politics, and economics.

THE PRIVATE DISTRICT

Harbour Island is filled with expensive condominiums, pervasive high-rises, palatial mansions, and yes, some moderately priced apartments for the infrastructure staff and HIRO security personnel. Mirroring the arcology stratification found along the New BosWash corridor, dedicated floors are turned over to the various classes of mikes needed to support their gnome clients. While robots are available for most of the functions in the gnome Private District sub-enclave, the preference is for human servants. Access to gnome floors is strictly controlled through biometric controls on the elevators and stairwells.

Security is paramount although resident convenience is a serious consideration. For example, HIRO personnel in this area take deliveries from the two inlet roads for the residents and occasionally make runs to the mainland for the rare commodity which cannot be acquired on the island. All deliveries pass through the HIRO processing center.

Rent for residential housing starts at \$25,000/month. HIRO operatives and infrastructure staff are given apartments as part of their wages and are usually expected to share residence.

The only markets in the Private District are grocery stores, convenience stores, petrol stations and coffee shops.

THE YACHT CLUB

On the east side of the island are a series of docks mostly used for recreational sailing. There used to be fishing boats here, but intense bay pollution and the introduction of several species of genetically modified piranha have made that impractical (see Channel Security, previously discussed).

Still, here is a place where the masses can gather outside of the safety of the wall for an adventurous evening of debauchery. High-end restaurants and nightclubs line the inside of the wall with patrons being permitted to bring their beverages and food to the Marina. On the docks themselves, well protected kiosks and food carts stand by offering drinks and finger foods. Most of this is catered by HIRO Island Security and is free of charge to residents.

Here, an exception to the standing security rule is in place. Well armored HIRO Tactical Response operatives are prominent. One or two Defender class motor boats are usually cruising or moored nearby. It is not uncommon for security to be heard shouting through megaphones at vagrants on the other side of the channel, or for this to occasionally escalate to gunfire. The wall gates to the docks are rarely closed though since residents enjoy the raw experience of witnessing skirmish fighting across the channel. Kevlar vests are available for those who request them.





Prominently situated on one of the larger docks is the Harbour Island Yacht Club, founded by Jonathan Curci who also owns Farmer's Select, a popular chain of seafood restaurants across Tampete. Membership is exclusive, limited to those of appropriate lineage or status (although members often bring guests) and carrying a hefty \$10,000 monthly fee. Within the Yacht Club, members enjoy the finest dining and hospitality. Escorts from the prestigious Hyde Park's Castle (q.v.) are brought in and a full entourage of staff and HIRO security is on hand to cater to all needs.

Wall gates are rarely sealed but the docks are closed to all visitors, even boat owners, whenever Curci anticipates the delivery of anything best left outside of public scrutiny. During these times, the Sparkman Channel is awash with HIRO vessels, escorting trade vessels across Hillsborough Bay and ensuring no interference from the shores.

It is rumored that Curci has access to some strange bio-technology but it isn't known where he gets it or what he does

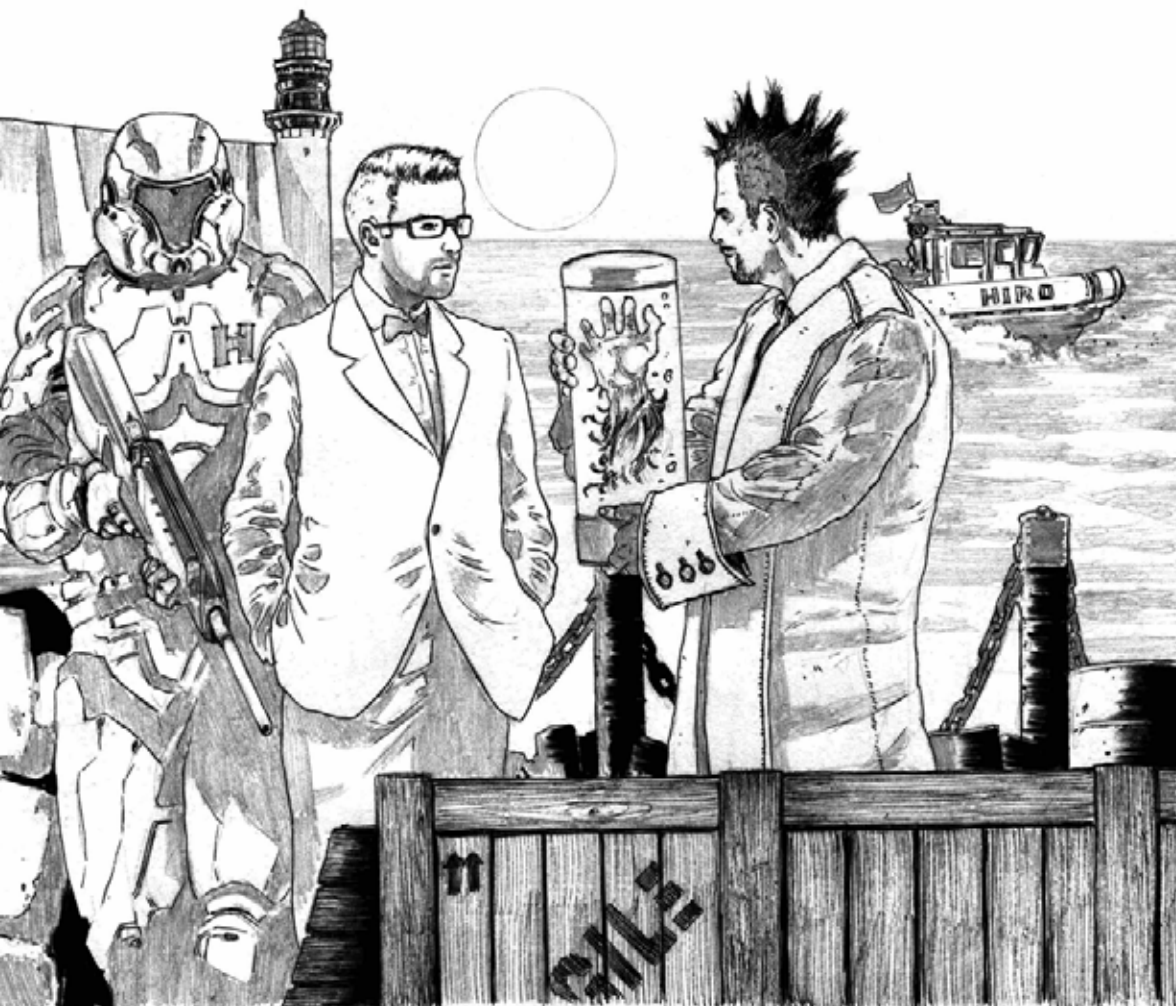
with it. Unscrupulous vessels can be seen docked here during these transactions. Curci also maintains a helipad atop the Yacht Club facilities.

MERCHANT DISTRICT

Here is the meat of Harbour Island; the litany of shops selling the bizarre, the rare, the trendy and the exotic. The Merchant District is comprised of restaurants, night clubs, clothing and fashion shops, grooming, massage parlors, technology outlets, VR clubs, escort services and novelty shops of every imaginable fancy. Table X in Appendix X lists a randomized sampling of shops which the GM can assign to buildings on the map or can disseminate with his own ideas as he sees fit.

BOTANICAL TEKNOGARDENS / UNIVERSITY OF TAMPETE (HARBOUR ISLAND CAMPUS)

*"Sweet tortures fly on mystery wings
Pure evil is when flowers sing"*
Coil – Love's Secret Domain



In 1998, the University of Tampete (UTP) became a privately owned corporation, and its first action was to acquire a small South Korean electronics company called Teknogarden. The acquisition resulted in Tampete University becoming one of the most prestigious universities for electronics, R&D, electrical engineering, artificial intelligence, biochemistry and radio astronomy. It surpasses most Ivy League schools in these fields and is a forerunner in business and economics.

Dormitories for this campus accommodate 2,000 students, with other campuses in Tampete educating a total of 12,000 students annually. Acceptance into the university is highly competitive.

In front of the university, open to all Harbour Island residents, are the Botanical Teknogardens; an immoderate and lavish display of the cutting edge of technology that





Teknogarden (see p.46) has to offer. The perimeter of this two-acre garden is veiled in cybernetically enhanced vegetation. These literally are gardens of technology.

Root, stem and leaf are flesh and chloroplast, but flower petals are augmented to perform dazzling displays of light and sound. Banana and orange trees defy season, providing year-round fruit. A series of carnivorous plants (some previously extinct for centuries) entertain passersby behind glass walls as insects, butterflies, and small lizards try in vain to escape the plants' cybernetically enhanced reflexes.

Deeper within the gardens is a showcase for the technological wonders of the company (and no small number of student science projects). Twenty-four hours a day, residents can interact with exhibits such as riddle contests with androids, virtual time travel immersion, insect-eviscerating robotic spiders, and semi-transparent hovering laser screens designed to dissipate rain.

Within the Teknogarden facility, bio-technology of the most invasive kind is rumored to occur. Speculation persists of

technology obtained from an alien crash site that has been researched and subsequently modified to produce these giant leaps in technology. Jonathan Curci regularly arranges cargo transfers between Teknogarden and firms who remain nameless. Any of these shipments contains a wealth of cutting edge technology and no small amount of DarkTek.

In the university, in one of Teknogarden's laboratories, is the gateway to a protodimension that executives refer to as Tertiary. In this extra-dimensional pocket is a subatomic particle unique to the dimension called a hatron. A thorough discussion of the particle is beyond the scope of this text, but its existence in molecules acts as an attractive force to both protons and electrons (responding to both nuclear and electromagnetic forces). The significance of this is that ternary systems (compared with binary systems in our own plane) can be created to facilitate processing and the production of electronics. Although the hatrons will not survive prolonged exposure in our dimension, in most cases, the items created in Tertiary will continue to exist on Earth without these particles. This has given Teknogarden a decisive advantage in speed-to-market.





DOME 606

The Hyde Park historical district has always been renowned for the quality of the neighborhood and housing, its aesthetic scenery and old money. During the economic collapse of the 90s, zip code 33606 (where the Dome gets its name) became a kind of proving grounds. One either lost his net worth in the tanking stock market and real estate investments, or he got richer – much richer.

The have-nots found themselves pushed farther south and west from the district epicenter while northern and central property values defied the bursting of the housing bubble and continued to soar as the haves sought desperately to retain their status. The area bordered between West Platt Street and West Swann and also between I4 and Bayshore Blvd. became one of the first national Dreamlands, later to be named Dome 606 although outsiders derisively referred to it as the “Hyde Out”.

Dome 606 residents refer to it as “The Eye” because the aperture at the dome’s crest makes the entire structure look like the sclera and iris of a giant eye. This portal opens to permit helicopter and other vertical lift-off aircraft (of which, there are many inside of the dome). The liberal video surveillance and ever-present HIRO security agents chartered from Harbour Island also give the dome its nickname.

Ironically, most of the original Historic Hyde Park falls outside of Dome 606. This is due to Aftermath 98: the terrorist detonation of a dirty bomb in Hyde Park. That area remains one of the more affluent Mike-Towns with many residents retaining access to the dome for work or delivery.

SECURITY IN DOME 606

Perimeter security is extensive. Squads of six to eight HIRO operatives man a dozen entry gates into the dome. Most of these are on Platt Street or Swann Avenue but two are accessible from Bayshore Boulevard (the HIRO agents monitor a wide area in front of the entry gates here). Internal security squads (also HIRO) are occasionally complimented by spider-like Trackers (see DarkTek, p81) if they’re looking for someone.

The area just outside the dome is particularly impoverished, and there are no natural defenses (for example, the channels surrounding Harbour Island) so there have been break-ins. Dome 606 houses a Big Foot (see DarkTek, p68) which has been unleashed several times in recent history, most notoriously against the Town ‘n’ Country refugee uprising earlier this year.

Forgery is a problem. Many perpetrators have valid access to the dome and so can easily obtain the required information and security codes. To combat this, visitors with new passes are frequently fitted with Shreek’N’Shok devices (see DarkTek, p37) set to activate if they deviate from their assigned paths.

Rumors persist of a network of underground tunnels under the dome (within the foundation) but if this is true then they are well-camouflaged to evade the invasive earth-sampling processes instituted in 2023 after a rash of sinkholes in the Tampete area.





DREAMLAND COMMERCE

Dome 606 is crowded with soaring skyscrapers owned by the world's largest corporations. Principle industries include software, cybernetics, robotics, entertainment, banking and law. Some buildings are detailed in the following paragraphs; others are briefly described in the tables.

The streets are also blanketed with tasteful kiosks offering gourmet foods, the latest technological breakthroughs, live entertainment or information about the various factions and businesses within the Dome. These kiosks are financed by the multi-billion dollar companies nearby and the hefty Dome 606 taxes. Vendors do not charge for these services.



Teknogarden

The single most prominent business within Dome 606 is the deeply rooted American presence of the South Korean-based electronics company: Teknogarden.

Teknogarden owns all of the property in the city block fenced in by West Horatio Street, West De Leon Street, South Boulevard and South Magnolia. The northwest and southeast corners of this lot house the two tallest buildings in the dome, each offering an unparalleled suite of sound and theatre equipment, telecommunications devices, Holowebs and other hologram generation devices, cybernetic implants, home and corporate security solutions, monitoring and personal defense.

The lot also contains the oldest operating school in Florida; John B. Gorrie Elementary School, which was privatized and purchased by Teknogarden in 1996. Admission is competitive although it is granted to Teknogarden executives and some partners.

Calvin Krendel is the CEO of the American leg of the electronics giant and goes by the moniker "Hal" (a reference to *2001: A Space Odyssey*). His residence is the entire top floor of the northwest Teknogarden tower. Most of his executive staff lives in spacious apartments in the floors beneath his. Hal is said

to have almost two dozen cybernetic devices implanted in his body; from augmented lenses, to blood thinners, to data ports and memory aids.

Although Hal looks about as American as can be (he looks like a game show host), Hal is not even from Earth. He is an ET who has been completely dominated by the empathic backlash of the Darklings when the seal on Io was ruptured and the initial wave of ETs was possessed. Hal wears a Face Dancer (see DarkTek, p14) which he personally modified to emulate human hair and bone structure and subsequently bleached and dyed his skin to match the color of a healthy Florida tan.

Hal is very active in promoting and presenting Teknogarden wares in Tampete. Although no one can fault his uncanny business intuition, Hal has taken some particularly risky ventures like researching the locations of other protodimension portals and unsealing those portals. While some of these protodimensions facilitate the engineering of new technology, others seem to provide no obvious advantage to Teknogarden. Hal simply wishes to open them.

EMC-Oracle

This merger was formed in 1999 after EMC's purchase of VMware (an overnight success in American Dreamlands). After the implosion of the internet during the Greater Depression, Google's business model of using its users as its product failed. This left EMC-Oracle as the largest source of software development, data housing (and mining), and system management for the elite.

However, the company also secretly develops software and firmware for biotechnology; designing interfaces to DarkTek of seemingly no plausible function. Non-disclosure agreements are standard for employees and violation of these agreements is not handled with lawyers.

EMC-Oracle's current CEO, Daniel Rutilege, and many of his immediate staff are long-time Igors serving an entity posing as a corporate investor by the name of Mr. Glass. Although he resides in the EMC-Oracle facilities, Mr. Glass is never seen entering or leaving. His residence is strictly off limits to everyone, even Daniel Rutilege, and is filled with the most alien of biotechnology.





Mr. Glass obsessively drives the company to research and produce invasive biotechnology, focusing on micro-organisms and adaptive, organic coverings which provide seemingly little value, but which also control motor actions, emotions, brain activity, and critical health functions. Typical projects include living garments which exude psychologically addictive enzymes; tongue sheathes which cause all food and drink to taste like raw and rotten meat; or blood platelets that expand to restrict blood flow when exposed to a particular frequency.

Kinetic Consultation Services

The charter of this firm is clearly scrawled on its buildings and printed on all of its literature: “Business, political and life consultation services, not for entertainment purposes.” The CEO, Dr. Arturo Vargas, has firm connections to the Clearwater Scisensationalist resort. He trains his staff to in an overarching philosophical concept he calls The Weave. His 40-floor high-rise uses its vast amount of space for seminars, business team-build exercises, testing facilities (the firm prides itself on customized consultation services based on a detailed customer profile), live-in quarters for long-term consultation, lavish fitness and health spas, medical facilities including blood work laboratories, and entire floors dedicated to private consultations, meditation, yoga and an actual library.

Dr. Vargas instructs trusted consultants (whom he calls Guides) on the use of a modified Esperlink (see DarkTek, p13) which he uses to facilitate idea transfer between customers and their Guides. A prominent figure within the Scisensationalist organization, Dr. Vargas uses these opportunities to introduce suggestions into the minds of his customers to the ends of that organization.

McCoy Prosthetics and Cloning

This is the worldwide renowned manufacturer of prosthetic limbs and graftables, i.e. body parts which adapt to the biology/physiology of the recipient organism (see DarkTek, p14) as well as human cloning.

Since the Greater Depression and the establishment of Hyde Park’s Tuhao (“new rich”), a bizarre grafting subculture has established itself. Pianists have extra fingers. Athletes have extra arms or legs. For the more imaginative, virtually any limb replacement, enhancement or duplication is possible. The CEO, Jonathan Croom, negotiates with Darkling-dominated ETs through their Igor intermediaries to acquire the technology and production schematics. Croom then incorporates this technology, no questions asked, into his own designs. The result has allowed an expansive domain of influence for Darklings to grow amongst the Tuhao.

Croom is particular about his executive staff. If he likes someone, he will arrange to have him or her cloned. Several duplicates of an employee may exist, and it is something of a novelty to his customers.

Seminole Hard Rock Café and Casino

This casino towers above most buildings in the dome at 60 floors of theatre, dining, shopping and gaming. Relocated from its former location in East Tampa in 1994 (as part of the conglomeration process of Tampete), the Seminole Hard Rock retains a crew of descendants of the Seminole Native American population. As it is Native American land, In order to prevent scrying, Seminole shamans have conducted certain rituals over the property.

JM-CFC Banking

The best way to track an organization’s activities is to watch its cash flow and so JM-CFC is rife with undercover agents from ISAAC and organizations like it, including some Minion Hunter cells and Darkling-influenced shadow organizations. CEO Roderick Pauley has avoided such ties but some of his direct reports are Igors to Dark Minions in the area. One of them, Justin Coletti, is an ancient vampire who keeps an apartment in the upper levels, posing as a program manager for a series of JM-CFC’s domestic portfolios. Justin uses his position to finance various unspeakable projects in the Tampete area.

Car Wharf

A beach motif with complimenting vehicle simulators programmed to emulate test drives on the dockside, beach, and even Tampete bridge races give this place its name.

Car Wharf fills the lot space between W De Leon Street and W Bay Street east of S Brevard Avenue with rows of the world’s most prestigious automobile dealership storefronts including Rolls Royce, Mitsubishi-Ferrari, General Dynamics Motors and Mercedes-Benz. Smaller companies like Ford and Mazda maintain kiosks in the lot and keep only demonstration models here. Many of the automobiles ordered at Car Wharf are built in factories within the Cannery, Hyde Park’s Bot-City district.

DHL-Fedex Private Shipping and Storage

DHL-Fedex maintains a warehouse that hides a secured bunker with a subterranean railroad. The bunker contains about fifty meters of track leading into an extra-dimensional gate into Tesseract (see Tesseract, p.182). This is the protodimension that ISAAC operatives use to quickly and covertly transfer supplies and personnel. ISAAC tolerates DHL-Fedex usage of the protodimension in return for transit security and maintenance of rail stations here and in off-world sites.





Dade Care

This once Miami-Dade-based preschool and daycare facility provides specialized child care needs for corporations, overseeing construction of child care centers within the various Dome 606 skyscrapers and staffing and maintaining those installations.

CEO Kelly Deaton has long been under the influence of Darkling control after frequent trips to Ybor's Castle (see p.54). Over the past two decades, Kelly has overseen the implanting of Darkling micro-organisms into thousands of the children left in her company's care. In some cases, she directed the substitution of Changeling babies for the originals, which were turned over to a mysterious Dr. Vera Yaga, an eastern European woman who is a witch in the service of a Dark Lord. Parents of her former charges often had snowballing problems after their little darlings had 'graduated' from Dade Care.

Deaton looks exactly as she did when she started the company, but no one notices due to the emotionally-transitory nature of society (best described as "out of sight, out of mind"). Deaton owes her body's living stasis to Yaga.

DOMES 606 TYPICAL HIGHRISE

Lower floors house reception rooms, restaurants, security checkpoints and delivery docks. Mid-range floors are used for general business and operations, occasionally housing low-level management and company fitness centers or daycare facilities. Many of these include current Spassmacher models (see DarkTek, p81) provisioned by Dade Care. Higher floors are reserved for executive suites, sensitive research and development, and lavish spas and entertainment. Rooftops may contain helipads, pools, resorts or even small theme parks.

The standard automated security package includes pervasive video surveillance but usually not audio surveillance (to prevent disclosure of proprietary information). Likewise, most computer terminals are locked down with security and auditing software, but the monitors are configured with refresh rates designed to conflict with typical video surveillance. Video surveillance of the upper floors is usually limited to hallways and elevators.

All floors are frequently fitted with hallway apertures designed to seal in the event of intrusion and will sometimes disperse gasses, sonics, or electromagnetic pulses to neutralize intruders. A standard corporate facility deploys armed and armored guards who usually stay out of view of the general public.

More prominent firms hire HIRO security trained to blend into and assist the public. These facilities may also include expensive intrusion deterrent systems such as Watchdog non-vehicular robots (see DarkTek, p85) or sometimes even Snoobots (see DarkTek, p80) if the firm has any ET connections.

Dome 606: Quick and Dirty Plot Seeds

- Re-Deux, a popular cryogenics company in the dome sells packages of frozen stasis for customers wishing to prolong their lives until a cure for some terminal disease is found or perhaps just until a less depressing period in history rolls around. However the company is secretly run by a cell of the Pale (see Dark Conspiracy, p226) who aren't actually putting anyone into cryostasis. Rather, they regularly feed off of their customer's body heat; never actually killing them, but certainly not prolonging their lives.

- There have been a dozen recent incidents of people returning home, killing their loved ones and then taking their own lives, usually by shooting themselves. Investigation reveals that many of the perpetrators, at one time or another, visited A Head Above the Rest, a massage parlor surreptitiously run by a group of Penanggalans (see Dark Races, p74). The Darklings inhabit masseuses at the parlor and will infest clients, sometimes retaining these hosts for weeks or even months before eventually turning on those closest to them, such as family and co-workers. After committing these travesties, they leave the host for a new one, usually by exploding the host's head on their way out, something which can be made to look like a gunshot wound.

- A band of Dark Elves (see Dark Conspiracy, p221) run Grands Penseurs, an elite club for the dome's artists and thinkers. They host elaborate plays and magic shows where live participants are tortured on stage and eventually murdered (sometimes involving audience volunteers who assist in the killing). They host complex art contests with submission varying from blood work compositions to studies in decomposition to grisly mass murders. Whenever it is discovered that someone has learned the secret of Grands Penseurs, the club will invite him to an upcoming event, usually to eliminate them but occasionally to indoctrinate them.

- A disgruntled employee at EMC-Oracle has stolen canisters of hair follicle regrowth serum and sold them to the Ceperos. The serum has made its rounds throughout Hyde Park, Channelside, and to the Market in the Shade. The formula works, however it infects anyone with O+ blood type (about a third of the population) with psionic flu. Symptoms include nightmares, anxiety and intense paranoia. Those affected are 25% likely to resort to violence to resolve conflicts. The flu lasts 15 days and is transferrable by blood transfusion (to those of any blood type).





DAVIS ISLANDS

Davis Islands house the most elite of Tampete outside of Dome 606 or Harbour Island. Police presence is pervasive with some exceptions (private properties and the La Familia-operated moorings in the small peninsula just west of Davis Island Yacht Club).

Residences and roads are well maintained, and the only power or service disruptions occur during violent storms. Some of Tampete's few remaining (secure) golf courses are on the north end of the island, and the best hospital outside of Dome 606 is on the northern tip.

DAVIS ISLANDS AIRPORT

This is the only commercial airport within Tampete after the shutdown of Tampa International Airport and Clearwater/St. Petersburg airports in 2005 and 2011 due to lack of revenue and federal assistance. Hangars house private and commercial cargo planes. Large warehouses are available for cargo storage, and these are sometimes leased by boat owners at Davis Islands Yacht Club if extra security is desired.

Private security handles routine problems while a U.S. Army Infantry troop of 35 soldiers led by Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan Starr is on hand to deter terrorism and to ensure that gun fights that occasionally erupt on the southern end of the island don't splash too far north. However, these soldiers are primarily here to defend Hangar 7 (see below).

Hangar 7

Hangar 7 is registered to the U.S. Army but is an extension of the Tesseractail protodimensional transport system operated by ISAAC and maintained by DHL-Fedex. Fifty meters of railroad track extend from the protodimension gateway, and the locomotive periodically arrives or departs with various cargos from other cities, countries, planets or even universes. Twenty DHL-Fedex personnel operate the facility. HETs (Heavy Equipment Transporters) in the hangar move anything of a sensitive nature. Other military assault vehicles are housed here as well, including an M1126 ICV, an LAV-25 APC, an M1114 Humvee and even an M343 Bradley for the uninvited Tesseractail visitor.

TAMPETE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (TCF)

Warden Joel Greenstreet, possibly the most sociopathic man in Tampete, runs this for-profit, 16-floor, maximum security prison to house the State of Florida's worst criminals. They all fit in this single complex thanks to a few projects underway at Greenstreet's prison.

In 2002, when the federal government could no longer afford to support its own prisons, TCF was purchased by Rotek, a private security company managed by Thorsten Klaus. Klaus assigned Greenstreet to run the facility. Most levels house prisoners and rehabilitation tools such as exercise rooms, chapels, group therapy. However four floors (12-15) are off-limits to all personnel, even Greenstreet!





Klaus and a few other Rrotek executives are the Igors of a cell of Tentacular ETs. Rrotek uses extra-dimensional technology acquired from the ETs to incarcerate prisoners in closet protodimensions. These closet dimensions are hellish in origin and behavior. Not everyone gets out; many are simply forgotten to time and space. Those who emerge are raving mad.

There is a special infirmary on the 15th floor where inmates are taken for observation. Here, under the supervision of Klaus himself, surgeries from the mundane to the unspeakable occur; patient sterilizations, lobotomies, cybernetic implants, or exposure to alien chemicals or hostile environments.

The prison also houses a secret basement with underground conduits into a web of subterranean tunnels which connect to the Underbay Tunnel network and even to Demonground tunnels.

Greenstreet is vaguely aware of unseemly activity here, but he's paid well enough to ignore it. Rrotek uses these tunnels to receive strange equipment or to move prisoners for various nefarious purposes; moving them underground to foundries in the Cannery for labor or raw material, sacrificing them to Darklings as part of some awful pact, sometimes exposing females to horrific creatures which impregnate them and return later to collect their offspring.

TAMPETE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Despite its checkered past, Tampete General Hospital has a reputation for efficiency, practicality, and a very low patient mortality rate. Of course this leads to creative (i.e. last minute) checkouts and lengthy wait times for check-ins to ensure that if someone's going to die, that they do it in the waiting room. Still, they provide the best medical care in Tampete outside of Dome 606.

Tampete General disposes of their biological waste the same way that most facilities do. They contract the responsibility to a third party. In this case, TGH hires Radicycle Environmental Services, a hazardous waste disposal company whose employees are comprised of Zack Heights Posse gang members.

A Wrench in the Works

Recently there has been a string of unexplained accidents throughout the hospital, sometimes leading to death in even the most innocuous cases. So far, the medical and accounting teams have kept this from affecting health care statistics or becoming public knowledge, but these accidents are occurring with increased frequency.

So what's happening? A moderate-sized group of Dwarf Gremlins (see Dark Races, p42) have moved into the hospital complex, hiding within the ventilation shafts and engineering rooms. A few resided in the Ford automotive factory (see The Cannery, p.56) before they were driven out. They've been hell-bent on causing as much mischief as possible. Incidents include:

- Tampering with tubes, seals and respirator housing resulting in oxygen and intravenous leaks.
- Exposing sterile equipment to bacteria and hazardous waste.
- Disabling backup generators and causing power disruptions in ICU.
- Using pea shooters to introduce foreign objects into patients during open surgery.
- Rewiring the voltage in power adapters, defibrillators or ultrasound equipment.
- Stenciling of rude messages or pictures on imaging equipment.
- Rewiring of the on/off button on X-Ray equipment and disabling audible alerts.
- The cross-wiring of the ECG equipment of adjacent patients.





The Infectious Janitor

When some patients check out, they are never heard from again. A Plagueling (see Dark Races, p76) has taken the uniform and identification from hospital janitor, Milton Wallace (and subsequently eaten Milton). The creature uses his access and likeness to infect hospital patients whom it suspects of living alone. Milton notes which patients are due for release and where they live and then infects them just prior to release so that he can visit them later when they have begun to show symptoms. Milton usually binds his victims, checking up on them periodically until their eventual liquefaction.

DAVIS ISLANDS YACHT CLUB

This once posh resort has been reduced to moderately maintained docks used local for shipping rather than for recreation. Some yachts are moored here but most are older boats in varying states of dilapidation. Some of the piers are also noted for shady traffic (drug runners and such) and there tends to be a lot of traffic at night.

There is enough of a police presence to deter all-out fire fights and violence crime but these things do occur. The Coast Guard or HIRO-piloted Defender class boats sometimes board and search vessels moored or operating here although this only happens if a specific threat has been uncovered.

There are many warehouses in and around the club. The ones inside are well protected (with a rapid police response time). Warehouses outside still have security, but are not actively patrolled.

Yates' Storage Facility

One club warehouse is leased by wealthy entrepreneur Caleb Yates. Amidst the more garden-variety wares like produce, coffee and tobacco, Yates maintains a refrigerated cargo container with a hunting prize from a recent trip to Central

America; a sedated Weretiger kept in cryostasis. The beast is periodically awakened and fed (produce when in human form or raw meat in feline form) and then returned to stasis. Yates pays a premium to ensure privacy and uninterrupted power to the warehouse. If either of these were lost, even temporarily, a tragedy is likely.

La Familia

A multigenerational Latin-America gang in South Tampa called La Familia maintains a group of boats and a warehouse just outside Davis Island Yacht Club. A former drug smuggling gang, they crossed paths with the Diablo Blanco Cartel (see Factions and Personalities, p.109) who muscled them out of distribution in Tampete. Now they handle the transport of narcotics from across the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea and any Gulf Pirate entanglements, while leaving distribution to the Cartel. It is not as lucrative a trade as they once enjoyed, but they are no match for Diablo Blanco. The gang is led by Tomás Medina who has made it his mission to restore his organization's place in the criminal undercity of Tampete. To this end, it is said that Medina has been importing strange devices of mystical power and technological levels beyond anything in the Dreamlands.

Island confrontations with La Familia are rare but usually lethal and so they have initiated informal negotiations with the Hillsborough Police. La Familia ensures any violence is restricted to their moorings and will surrender to police upon request. The Hillsborough Police minimize harassment of the gang and expedite processing of gang members they do arrest (after short debriefings). It's a tense but successful arrangement (so far).





OLD DOWNTOWN TAMPA

When Tampa and St. Petersburg were separate cities, Downtown Tampa was the center of commerce for the Bay area. As the masses of people from surrounding areas of Florida migrated to the Tampa/St. Petersburg area, this changed. Then when the Tocobaga people detonated a low-yield W54 nuclear warhead in Old Downtown Tampa, forever irradiating the soil there, everything changed.

Terrorism from Within: Reemergence of the Tocobaga People

Downtown Tampa was never resident-friendly. The nearest housing was across the Hillsborough River north of Columbus Avenue (which has always been a slum). There was no incentive to beautify the city or draw in tourists. Public bussing, while it still operated, brought lots of transient traffic and crime. When the Greater Depression set in, more of the have-nots arrived and eventually began living in the streets, making it very unsafe for daytime workers.

Tampa-based internet and data processing companies folded, and those buildings became vacant. The utilities to some of these buildings were left on for weeks after they were closed and so large groups of homeless moved in. Hillsborough County sheriffs shooed away the vagrants but they usually returned by nightfall. Water and power to the empty buildings were cut but this did little to discourage occupation. As the growing masses began to disrupt traffic and commerce with their daytime activities, Mayor Sandra Freedman was forced to authorize an operation to remove them.

On March 15th, 1995, S.W.A.T. and riot teams were dispatched to N Morgan Street and E Zack Street to clear four of the high rises in that vicinity. Unfortunately some of the vagrants were armed and a bloody fire fight ensued. Three county police detectives were killed and a hostage situation developed which lasted for three days (described below).

On March 17th incendiary devices were simultaneously detonated at a nearby Police Precinct, the Hillsborough Courthouse and at the Mayor's private home. A group called the United Front for the Reclamation of the Tocobaga Lands (UFRTL) claimed responsibility and threatened that the blasts would continue until the police withdrew its forces from Downtown Tampa. The Tocobaga are a Native American tribe previously thought to have been extinct since the 17th century (see Tocobaga, p.116).

On March 18th Freedman ordered the demolition of four buildings inhabited by squatters, who were ordered to leave immediately. Although some left, most didn't. The buildings were subsequently destroyed with occupants inside. The

death count was estimated at 300.

That evening, amidst a heavy police presence, a spokesman for UFRTL walked into the intersection of Morgan and Zack. After a lengthy, televised tirade criticizing the leadership of Tampa and threatening continued attacks until large sections of Florida were vacated and returned to the Tocobaga people, the man detonated a portable nuclear device. This was the first "suitcase nuke" detonated on American soil which leveled nearly four city blocks of Downtown Tampa and irradiated an area of several square miles. The initial death count was over 400 people with 2000 more resulting from the sustained radiation effects (which will persist for the next 1000 years).

The Exodus

Old Downtown Tampa was evacuated and plans to move the commerce center to the Hyde Park community began while plans to merge Tampa and St. Petersburg into a single megametropolis were escalated.

Mayor Freedman solicited contracts from various chemical and nuclear power plant companies for the decontamination of Downtown Tampa. Initial estimates indicated an area nearly three kilometers radius from "Zero Point Zack" would need to be leveled, and that all pavement and eight cm of topsoil beneath would need to be excavated and disposed of in order to bring radiation levels anywhere near safe thresholds. Federal funding was virtually slashed in 1993; FEMA was an organization in name only; and the City of Tampa did not have the multi-billion dollar purse to pursue these plans.

Instead, compensating remedial plans were thrown together and implemented by local construction companies and unskilled day laborers. These men demolished complexes surrounding Zero Point Zack and disposed of that material at the original blast site. A larger area was then permanently quarantined, fenced off, and marked with bio-hazard signs. The overall effect on the environment was to cut radioactivity in half over the next 5 years. Workers were paid well and given radiation suits and masks; still many of these men died of radiation poisoning or cancer.

Old Downtown Area Today

The fences are broken at almost every place it crosses a drivable road, and the place is a magnet for any company with chemical, biological or radioactive waste to dispose of. The still-standing tenements are a haven for the homeless and deranged who have created their own communities despite the health risks. The police no longer discourage traffic, and the City of Tampete no longer repairs the fences.

There is no legitimate reason to visit the area and so those





who do choose to reside here are relatively undisturbed, although gangs of teens do occasionally visit to harass the denizens. Darkling and ET activity is pervasive, and there is a strong Morlock presence as well.

Temple of the Exulted

At the perimeter of the mountainous pile of toxic waste at “Zero Point Zack” is a relatively recently fashioned structure composed of adobe bricks. These bricks and a similarly crafted altar at the epicenter of the dump were made by delirious men who labored feverishly to reproduce images projected to them in dreams by a Dark Lord calling itself Ammemet (possibly after the so-named Egyptian demoness also referred to as the “Eater of Hearts”).

This being appears in the dreams of these men, whom it instills with empathic powers and grants the title of hem-netjer. These cannibalistic priests seek out human victims but always deliver their hearts to Ammemet (upon its adobe

altar). Ammemet has also granted dominion to the hem-netjer over the Spectrals: shadow-like beings who are expert spies, guardians and servants (see Dark Races, p16-19).

The Morlocks

These blind, cannibalistic humanoids lair within the wreckage of demolished buildings and in underground nests connected to them. From here, tunnels wend their way miles into graveyards, suburban back yards, the basements of homes in Seminole Heights and even as far as Clearwater and Largo. They generally do not interfere with other factions near “Zero Point Zack” as conflict has historically gone poorly for them, and they do not wish to be driven out. Still, they will attack trespassers too close to their lair or lone travelers at night.

Zack Heights Posse

(see Factions and Personalities: Zack Heights Posse, p.120).





CENTRO YBOR

Centro Ybor has historically been a source of entertainment and nightlife, and it retains this reputation. Here are city blocks of cinemas, comedy clubs, nightclubs, casual dining (predominantly Spanish, Cuban, Italian, Greek and French) and a few remaining cigar shops (most having moved to Hyde Park decades ago). These are exaggerations of the darker edge which has always existed here; gambling, kiosks offering drugs of every kind, raves, teenage (and in some cases preteen) gang activity, and ubiquitous petty crime and prostitution. One of these places is described below in detail, followed by a short list of ideas to spark the GM's creativity.

No expense is spared in fulfilling fantasies. Escorts are trained in gaining their clients' unreserved trust. They get their clients to talk, to come back often, to bring their friends and their contacts, and to look for clients who meet specific criteria: hosts suitable for ET and Darkling breeding.

When a client is no longer useful and will not be missed, the escorts will prepare him or her for impregnation by the ETs. It works like this: the client overindulges in food, wine and sexual debauchery until he (or she) finally collapses of an often drug-induced exhaustion whereupon they are sedated.



The Castle

Owned and operated by Tentacular ETs subverted by the Dark Ones, this club caters to gnomes who wish an adventure outside of the dome (or island). Rates are contracted with companies in advance of employee visits. However, walk-ins by wealthy patrons are always welcome.

There are many rooms in this elaborate facsimile of a Medieval Scottish castle; a collection of vast bars, each separately themed; a massive dining hall as well as smaller, more private dining rooms and booths; there is even a theater. Finally, there are Roman, Greek, Egyptian, Indian, Japanese and Syrian-themed prostitution galleries. It is here that the Castle concentrates its investments.

Once prepped, an ET proprietor reveals itself and through certain unspeakable rites, impregnates the client with the seedlings of Dark Minions. Invariably, the victim wakes up in his or her own residence with no memory of the previous night's events due to drugs and anesthesia-induced amnesia. For the first couple of days, the victim is disoriented and paranoid, babbling incoherently or preparing cryptic journals chronicling obscene insights which may or may not make sense. For the next day or so, severe headaches and abdominal cramping set in accompanied by a maternal need to "nest" and increased feelings of

paranoia and disorientation. Finally a twelve-hour period of fever, chills, sweats and amplified symptoms previously exhibited continues, culminating in the victim's death which occurs as the newborn minion literally claws or eats its way out of the victim's body.

The newborn minion nurses in this sanctuary for awhile; sometimes hours, sometimes days or even weeks. Then, the minion retreats into the night to live out its existence.

The Green Iguana

Once a casual outside eatery providing live music, the Iguana now partakes in live animal fighting on which customers can bet (and which the house takes 10%).





Ootlow's

This is the only bar in the district known to condone Nukids, if they have money. Most of the furnishings are stainless steel, and the bar areas can shut with steel curtain blinds in the frequent cases of escalated bar-fighting. At the end of any night (usually daybreak), the staff seal the bar and use high pressure hoses to flush the trash out of the main entrance and into the street.

Ecias' Hookah

It is known both for its excellent selection of cigars and shisha and for the notoriously ruthless clientele including mercenaries, hit men, information brokers, cartel executives and organized crime bosses; security for Ecias seems like a half-thought-out, unnecessary afterthought. The shopkeeper, Jason Ecias presents himself as a friendly, if slightly pretentious host, normally dressed in a collared shirt, dark pants, many adornments of African origin and a fedora. In addition to running his shop and managing introductions between his customers, he is rumored to be a skilled hacker.

Ritz 2020

During the day, this historic concert venue presents notable hard rock acts from the 90s and 2000s at reasonable prices (if the clientele can stomach leftover trash from the previous evening). When the sun sets the acts shift to metal, techno-punk and Viking rage music. The venue and the surrounding lots are alive for the next twelve hours with moshing, stage-diving, fighting and raving. Ritz 2020 is an unofficial gathering spot of many Minion Hunter cells, trusting to the incorruptible sincerity that is musical rage. The owner, Lucien Berger, is sympathetic to the plight of anyone fighting the Dark Ones.

Artist Alley

The name for this place (15th Street between 8th and 6th Avenues) comes from a popular comic and gaming convention concept: a concentration of the best creative minds and energized and inspired amateurs, all with ideas to circulate and wares to sell. More empathic humans live here than in other districts, though none use their abilities overtly. The wares offered vary from disconcerting and alienating to downright offensive but very little, if any, is Darkling in origin. Only the most surreptitious Darkling plans would go unnoticed amidst all this empathic activity.

Quick And Dirty Plot Seeds

- Fiora is a tattoo artist whose tattoos animate when they come into contact with empaths. She isn't aware this is happening and it has caused some unexplained disappearances as tattoos of snakes and spiders and such turn upon their wearers. More, she has been having strange visions of symbols she doesn't understand and has been incorporating these into her tattoos.
- A hacker using the moniker "Revenant" agrees to meet the PCs in Ecias' Hookah to show them a video taken from a traffic light cam in Largo. He obtained it by intercepting a wireless transmission but those transmissions have since been encrypted. The resolution on the video is high enough to provide retinal scans of most of the drivers through that area, which is concerning to Revenant.
- A half-man, half-salamander (some Darkling-inspired experiment upon a TCF inmate) has been prowling the Ybor streets at night, abducting animals and vandalizing the few functional fire hydrants in the area for moisture. One of the street vendors in Artists' Alley has seen it and fed it a few times. It has subsequently been protective of the artists in the area.





THE CANNERY

The east Ybor district (between 22nd and 34th Streets) is a Bot-City called The Cannery. Most of the buildings in the Cannery are factories and foundries, with some cheap residential housing for the handful of maintenance men and private security personnel. Video surveillance is absolute and police response times are reasonable; usually 20 to 30 minutes.

The exports of the district are beer, wine, tobacco (including the premium cigars sold in Cigar Town of Hyde Park), canned goods (for which this district gets its name), small arms, heavy weapons and ammunition. Most of the denizens are androids and robotic couriers. The eerie quietness of the city, save for the underlying hum of its factories and automatons, is a hallmark of the Cannery.

Most factories operate around the clock with automatons welding, boxing, canning or otherwise processing an endless flow of product. Massive and elaborate conveyer belt systems may originate in one factory and then branch out through portals on the higher floors to other nearby buildings. These belts are usually sheathed in filthy, bullet-resistant glass or plastic tubes. Most have automated defense systems such as cameras, electrified mesh, gasses and AI-operated firearms.

Coors-O'Doules Brewery

Coors acquired many breweries in 1998 as demand for alcohol sky-rocketed, however it plummeted for non-alcoholic beer and most O'Doules factories were permanently shut down.

However in 2004, operations mysteriously resumed in the old Coors-O'Doules lot in the Cannery. The lot was quietly sold

to private investor Jake Barnaby, and subsequently removed from Coors' books although the signage is still there. It is unclear what Barnaby's original vision was for the property and he soon disappeared although the factory continues to operate to this day.

At first, it churned only at night. Now the hum of its machinery is heard around the clock. Only automated couriers and delivery services frequent the place, and only under cover of night as they speed away with truckloads of unidentified product. DarkNet is rife with allegations that dangerous and toxic chemicals are made here for some unspeakable purpose.

Minion Hunters digging into the factory's operations may discover surreptitious dealings with Raygone, a Darkling influenced firm posing as a local ground-sampling company; Mos-Quit, a similarly Darkling-influenced pesticide company, and many others.

I-Beam

I-Beam was a girder and beam production plant, and the epicenter of a complex web of elevated conveyer belts leading to other foundries in the Cannery. It has since terminated all contracts with these properties although the belts were never removed. Its oversized yard and adjacent factories are now quiet except for irregular bouts of midnight activity as it churns out strange metal components unsuitable for most commercial purposes.

The company is registered to owners Charles Finley and Lexington Cockswine although that information is as impossible to find as the men themselves. Shell corporations have traded

it so many times recently that it is impossible to tell who ever really owned it. A series of fly-by-night construction companies bring the parts made here to local factions controlled by the Dark Ones. Day-to-day operations are automated but overseen by various Igors that Finley and Cockswine have partnered with in the past.

An underground company called Eradica, which fronts as a radiation detection and nullification crew, acquires components from I-Beam for their ultra-powerful incarceration systems and testing chambers.





A Plant City based band of Dark Elves use materials from I-Beam to test a device capable of murdering people with sound (see Brandon, Plant City, and Lakeland, p.90).

Smith & Wesson Manufacturing Plant

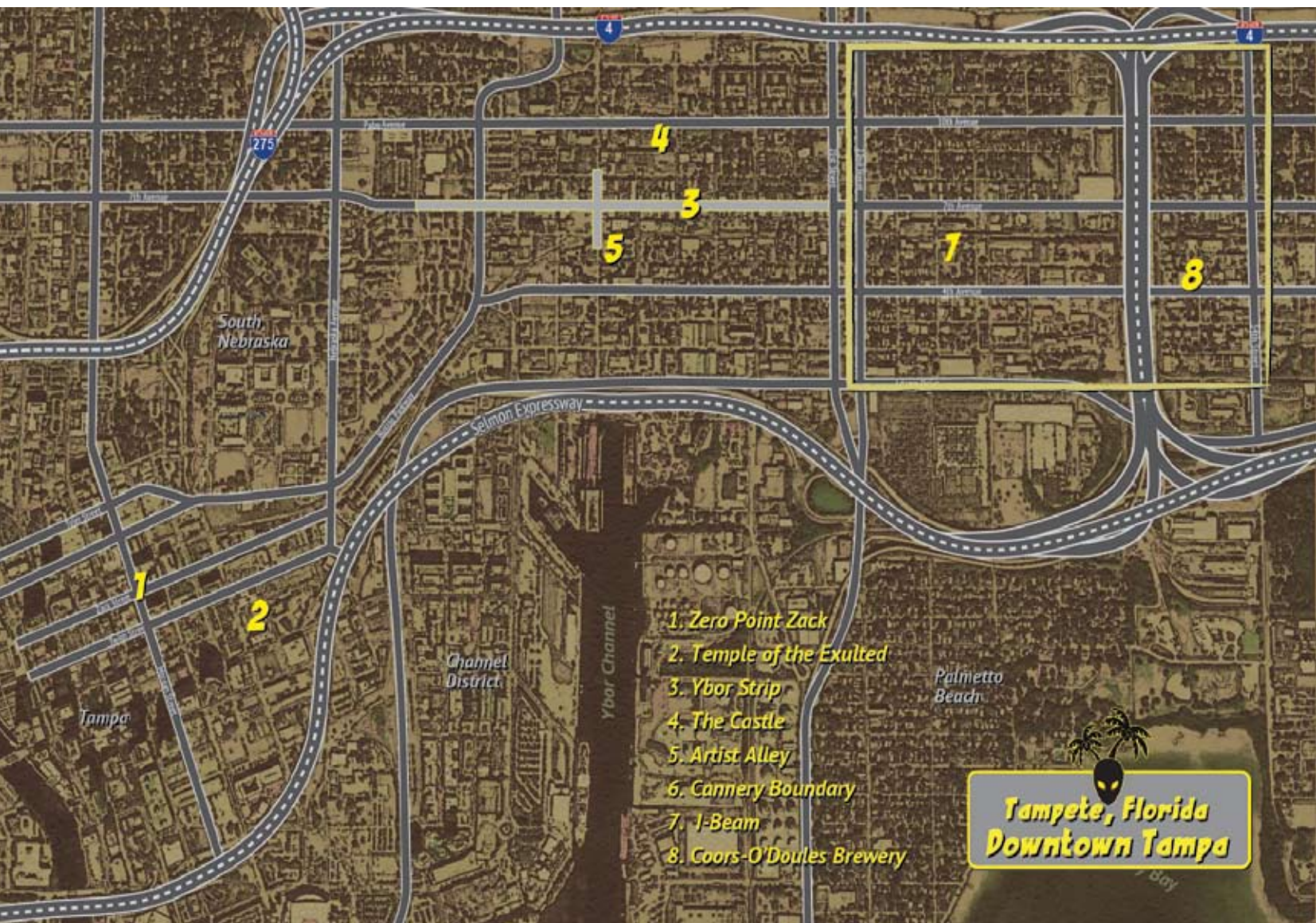
Smith & Wesson operates several secure manufacturing sites within the Cannery, mass-producing ammunition and vast quantities of small arms for distribution around the nation, and they have some new offerings.

Frequent break-ins resulted in S&W contracting contingents of HIRO security. Thefts still occur but are less frequent and target the transports rather than the facility itself.

Ford Automobile Factory

One can hear the grinding and thumping of robotic assembly droids and hydraulic power equipment here day and night. An elevated conveyer-belt feed from I-Beam to the Ford factory exists but no longer operates. Ford now receives its steel from other sources.

Last year, a Minion Hunter cell discovered a group of Dwarf Gremlins here. All were killed or driven away but not before sabotaging an untold number of vehicles during production. GNN has reported many subsequent brake failures and "fireball" collisions since then.





HISTORIC ST. PETERSBURG

DYLAN'S RUN

(By T. Mike McCurley)

"Nobody tells you how hard it is to kill your boss," Dylan said. His voice was a weak thing, far beneath the usual confident tone with which he spoke. Across the room, the rhythmic clicking sound of Jansen loading ComBloc ammunition into a curved steel magazine didn't falter even for a second, although the grizzled man did sigh at a volume that carried in the small room.

"They ain't your boss," Minka responded. "We've been over it."

"I know it," Dylan snarled, and just like that, the old Dylan was back. His eyes went from glazed to laser-focused in a heartbeat. He spoke through clenched teeth. "I know it all too well."

"You wanna walk?" Jansen asked. He stacked the magazine atop two others of its kind and picked up a new empty. A plastic punchbowl sat on the table before him, brimming with a pile of ammunition. Dylan didn't answer.

"Kid, I asked you a question." The statement was sharp and delivered in a low tone by a man used to being heard.

"Do I want to walk? You're damned right I do. I know the final outcome here better than you do. I've lived it, remember? I know what happens up there."

"That's the point," Minka said, her voice much softer than that of the old soldier. "You know what happens."

"I just..."

"We can change the attack parameters if you want," offered Jansen. "Siobhan can reschedule."

"No, J, I'm ready for it," Dylan said, shaking his head. Jansen nodded in a tight motion and the clicking sound continued as his fingers returned to feeding ammunition. "Merrick would have wanted it."

Dylan looked down at his own hand, flexing it and studying the way the muscles moved. He looked at it as if he had never seen it before. He watched the way the wrinkles thickened and grew as he closed his fingers. As he opened the hand again, his attention was drawn to the lines on his palm. Like roads, they stretched out and he could see himself walking their length, wondering where they would take him. His feet moved in a gentle cadence as he walked along the Life line, following the gentle curve set up by the Mount of Venus. The plump hill stood to his right and he glanced up at its height. Somewhere up there, he knew, was a vast plain from which he could see to the end of -

"Dylan!" Minka shouted, and he was jarred back to reality. The hotel room swam into view as his focus snapped away from his hand. The little woman was standing, her hand drawn back in preparation for





a slap. He could feel the stinging heat on his left cheek that indicated she had already connected with at least one.

"Sorry," he said. "What happened?"

"You glassed again. We lost you."

"I need my meds."

"I know," she said.

"It'll get worse."

"Wasn't too bad this time," Jansen said. "Memories of marching."

"This time was fine," Minka said. "One day you're gonna -"

"No I'm not," Dylan interrupted. "After tomorrow I'm not gonna do anything."

The voices fell away, and the only sound was the clicking.

Sunrise found the trio outside the towering structure of steel and polycarb marked for Infominer Inc.. Dylan was in line with the other employees, his eyes cast toward the ground. One at a time, the security guards checked ID cards and ushered them through a door.

Minka and Jansen were to Dylan's right, at the security station that monitored the contract employees. Both wore white coveralls with the bright blue logo of VenTech stenciled on the back. Their equipment bags rested on a cart. An industrial-grade vacuum cleaner with a coiled hose joined the bags. The pair was present ostensibly to deal with a ventilation issue on the eleventh floor. The security officers were assigning them temporary identification cards. One uniformed guard knelt by the cart and reached for the zipper of the first white-and-blue bag. Dylan stared at the guard, watching his hands as they dragged down the metal zipper to open the duffel. After a brief look inside he closed it and moved to the second. Dylan watched, his heart thundering in his chest, as the closure opened almost in slow motion. His eyes were on the guard throughout the whole process. The man

leaned back on his heels and zipped the equipment bag closed. Dylan sighed in relief. His head was throbbing in pain and he rubbed at the bridge of his nose while presenting his credentials to the security at the door.

Minutes later and he was crammed into an elevator with a dozen other employees. His breathing was coming faster now, and more shallow than ever. The walls felt as if they were closing in.

'There are too many people in the elevator,' he thought. His bag was slung across his back and the bottle full of pills was inside it. As much as he wanted it right now, even if he could take them, he couldn't reach the bottle. He looked up to the bank of numbers above the doors. They seemed to be shimmering, like a candle flame in a breeze. The sounds of conversation rose around him to the level of a roar, though he couldn't see anyone speaking. He closed his eyes and tried to force it all to stop, to become just background hum once again, but it was so loud inside the tiny box.

After stopping at numerous floors, the doors finally chimed out the alert for floor eleven, and Dylan staggered out. The overhead lights were blinding.

"Mister Dylan?" he heard a woman's voice ask. She sounded bored. He shielded his eyes with the palm of a hand and turned to see who had spoken.

Minka stood there with Jansen and a security officer. The brunette had a metal clipboard in her hand and the grizzled merc was playing on a cell phone of some kind.

"We were contracted to examine the vents in your office," Minka said.

"Something in there is killing my allergies," he said, playing along.

He nodded to the security guard and pointed down past a row of cubicles toward the other end of the walkway. "It's down here," he said. The guard took the first step toward leading them to the office.

Jansen switched from the game on his screen and pressed a series of keys. A moment later, the power





went out in the entire building. All the lights went black, computers failed, even the elevators locked in place. Several people screamed aloud or cursed in shock. Swinging the device up, Jansen aimed for the side of the guard's neck. The man moved, however, turning toward the mercenary, and took the stunning jolt from the microtaser directly under his nose. His limp body struck the floor a second later, followed by the clipboard Minka had been holding.

"Go," Jansen said, and pushed open the elevator door. He followed Dylan and Minka into the space, dragging the unconscious guard with them. They abandoned the vacuum cleaner in the hallway, but the blue-and-white bags went with them.

Overhead, emergency lighting flickered to life, bathing the elevator in orange light.

Jansen opened both zipper bags. A pair of AK-74s sat in one of them, with pouches of spare magazines. The other had stacks of body armor, and each of the three donned a vest. Jansen plugged a microphone/earbud combination into his right ear.

"You did good at the gate," the merc said, slinging one of the AKs over his shoulder. He handed the other to Minka. "I figured we were done for a minute."

"Damn near melted my brain," Dylan said. "Emotions are easy to play with but actually making him see what I wanted? Not so much."

"Ready?" Minka asked. Dylan nodded, swallowing hard at the thought of what was to come.

"Siobhan, we are go," Jansen spoke into his microphone. The elevator powered to life and the floor marked '70' lit. A moment later, when it still had not moved, Jansen pressed at the ear bud and listened.

"Got it," he said, crouching by the fallen security officer. He removed the ID from the man's shirt and flipped it over to display the magnetic stripe on the back. He held it up and swiped it through a recessed reader beside the panel of floor buttons. With a hum, the elevator began to climb.

"Siobhan can get us to 70, but after that we're on our own," he said. "There's an internal elevator that's not tied to the sec grid. She can't access it."

"I don't want to hurt any of them," Dylan said.

"I know."

"They're just workers."

"I know, Dylan," Jansen said. "I'm not here to hurt anyone except for the freaks who took Merrick."

They rode in silence for the remainder of the ascent. The doors opened at floor 70 and Jansen was out through the gap before they had finished spreading apart. He swung the AK up in a vicious arc as the uniformed guard on duty reached for a holstered pistol. The steel plate of the rifle butt impacted under the man's chin and his head snapped back. Minka was on him before he could recover, ripping free the man's sidearm and throwing it back into the elevator.

Dylan hefted the two bags with a grunt of effort as Jansen and Minka pushed the bloody-faced guard ahead of them toward a separate elevator in the north wall. They seemed to ignore the screams of the office staff, although a few of the louder ones looked down the barrel of one rifle or another. Siobhan would be blocking the telephone lines, so no reinforcements would be called.

Together with the guard, they boarded the smaller car. Jansen prodded the man with the barrel of his rifle. Prompted by the threat, the guard slipped his ID through the reader and pushed the '77' button. Minka peeled the backing from a slap patch and placed it on the man's neck. As his vision swam she whispered in his ear to assure him that he would not be harmed any more. She lowered him to the floor with caution.

"Softie," Jansen said. His smile indicated there was no malice to his words.

"This is gonna get messy," Dylan whispered. He readied a patch of his own, this one in a bright red wrapper. As he opened it, the other two gave him room. He took in a long, slow breath and then pressed the sticky, slick, delivery side to the right side of his own neck, above the carotid artery. In seconds, his eyes were rolling back in his head as the potent pharmaceutical load hit.

By the time the '76' light sparked on the panel, Dylan was holding on to the handrail for support.





In his vision, everything was moving and melting. The colors flowed like liquids and the sounds around him alternately amplified and muted. He looked at his hands again, flexing what looked to be long rubbery tentacles at their ends. He kept his eyes forward, refusing to look at his partners. The distorted images in the polished fittings of the elevator were enough. If he could hold on for just another minute, they would be in the heart of it, in the midst of what Merrick had explained to them as a group of empathic leeches, all ready to drain the contents of his mind.

He intended to give them something to think about.

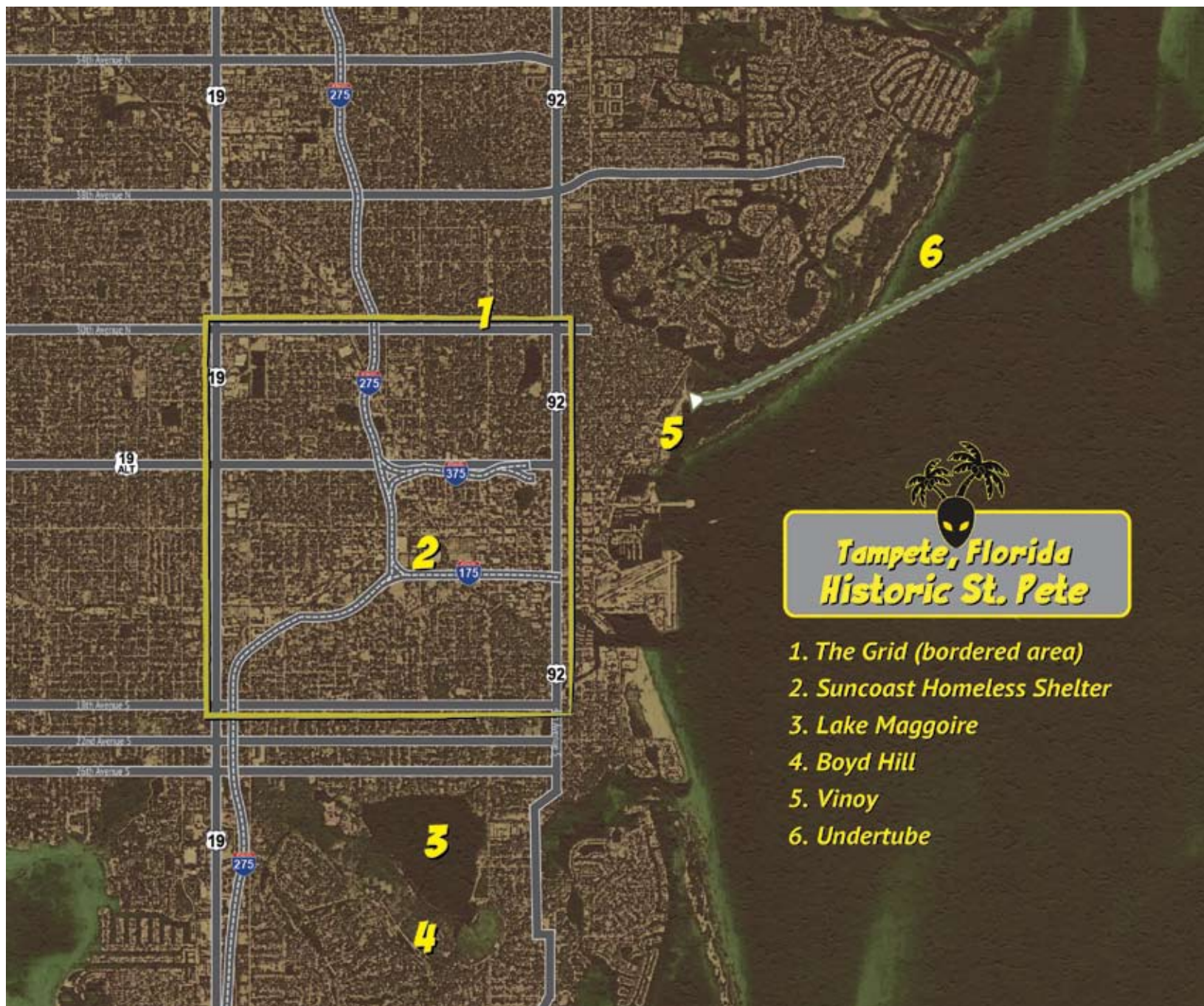
Even with the hallucinogens running thick in his system, he could feel the other meds at work. Adrenal enhancers, emotion boosters, memory recall agents, and empathic amplifiers all tore open the defenses

in his mind and laid it bare. He clenched his teeth hard enough that they cracked, but held back the outpouring of fear and pain that was blooming hot in his brain. When the door opened, he would unleash the raw terror and agony in his thoughts, the trauma he had absorbed and sealed away from the troubled teens and the victims, the horrors of war he and other vets had relived thousands of times. Amplified by the medications, twisted by the hallucinations, and focused by his own abilities, Dylan would become the psionic equivalent of a live grenade. The monsters of Infominer would regret the day they had taken Merrick from him.

The elevator chimed.

"Show time," Jansen declared.





**Tampete, Florida
Historic St. Pete**

1. The Grid (bordered area)
2. Suncoast Homeless Shelter
3. Lake Maggoire
4. Boyd Hill
5. Vinoy
6. Undertube

CENTRAL ST. PETE

Central St. Petersburg is as inner city as inner city gets. The tallest buildings in Florida stand here with no visible horizon and 1.4 million people live within its confines. During commuter hours, the city is a blur of pedestrians, bicyclists, skateboarders, and the Grid, a human conveying system fashioned from the inner city roads in 2014.

There is a moderate police presence which seems inconsequential when compared with the amount of traffic. Security cameras are installed on most streets but their maintenance and monitoring is uneven.

Things are more bizarre in the inner dreamland community. Since the residents could not build outward, they've built upward. Towers stretch over a half a mile into the sky amidst self-propelled land masses housing parks, portable offices and residences for the ultra-rich.

Ordinances restricting the obstruction of another building's top floor view of the Bay have resulted in rows of stair-stepped buildings, staggered lots, elevated roofs and structures with cavities spanning several floors. Narrow crosswalks sometimes connect the higher levels of these buildings.





THE GRID

Central St. Petersburg's most defining Ant Hill is the Grid, a four-square-mile area bordered by US19 and 4th Street (west to east), and from 18th Avenue S to 30th Avenue N (north to south).

Prominent features of the Grid are described in the following text.

MUNICIPAL STREET BELTS

In January of 2014, over-sized human conveying belts known as the municipal street belts were deployed throughout 50 kilometers of central St. Petersburg's Grid streets. Similar to airport moving walkways (but wider), the belts use a simple motor and fixed pulley system. Despite that, they are unreliable and break down frequently. When they work, they do aid traffic flow in the Grid. Installed in pairs (one in each direction), they usually span a single side of streets and avenues but wider ones will span both. Meter-high guard rails protect people from falling onto or off of the belts and are supposed to deter fare evasion but aren't really practical for that. Monthly fare bracelets are cheap and are checked automatically at Grid entry scanners (when they're working). Privacy advocates have taken issue with that but most citizens have more pressing concerns. The police don't regularly address rail hopping but they're vigilant about discouraging the homeless and other vagrants.



CAREER CAMPS

Three city blocks within the Grid are made up of secured labor farms touting themselves as all-inclusive career camps. The lure for the underprivileged is free room and board, training, security, health care and a few basic niceties in return for a standardized labor contract which is offered in two-year increments. In practice, the camps are hybrids of secured community college campuses and labor factories.



Trainees cannot bring personal items in with them and must adhere to strict behavioral guidelines and rigid schedules. Penalty clauses in the contracts result in contract extension if the rules aren't followed. Trainees are usually not permitted to leave camp (unless work requires it) until their contracts are up.

SUNCOAST HOMELESS SHELTER

Tampete's landmark Suncoast Homeless Shelter is technically just north of the Grid. Once a popular baseball arena, it was purchased and renovated in 2003 by private investors Jeremy and Marcia Huston to accommodate a surge in Jai-Alai enthusiasm in Tampete. It was briefly used for both sports until 2005's particularly vicious hurricane season that devastated most of Tampete.

With many insurance companies bankrupted, the Hustons (known for unscrupulous investing practices) executed an obscure sub-clause of their contract with the City of Tampete and forced them to repurchase the ruined stadium at near full value.





With no money to renovate the place, the City of Tampete covered the arena with tarps and opened it as a temporary triage for storm victims. Homeless masses soon migrated to the dome, turning it into a permanent residence which has endured for decades.

Irregular donations of food and medical supplies help to support the dome which is only loosely policed. Residents have created a sustainable community and established processes to feed, clothe, treat and educate each other. Residents do not tolerate violent crime but drug production and trafficking, arms dealing, smuggling, prostitution and various petty crimes go unpunished here.

URBAN RESIDENCES

Housing in St. Petersburg varies in design but not utility. All of it is compact, efficient and offers little more than the bare necessities. Most residential structures have utilities but not all are connected to municipal sources. A few residential structures are described below to give an overall feel of the city.

Fishing Poles

The Fishing Poles are clusters of residential towers surrounding a central column and connected to it (and sometimes to each



other) with walkways. They are situated on the north and east banks of Lake Maggiore in south St. Petersburg. The moniker is a reference to the fishing of that lake during the late 20th century when it was still feasible. These towers stretch over forty floors and house proles and wage slaves. Often entire towers are leased out by corporations to house labor or ballot-men in their employ.

Recently disease has been spreading amongst Fishing Pole residents. Often dismissed as radiation poisoning possibly acquired from the neighboring (toxic) Lake Maggiore, there are many similar symptoms including fever, nausea, hair loss and bloody vomit; however victims also suffer massive internal hemorrhaging and the liquification of internal organs. More, the disease seems to be airborne. Some suspect parasites or bacteria possibly originating from the lake which has somehow traveled to the Fishing Poles.



Stackable Mobile Homes

For those who can afford them, stackable mobile homes are a wise investment. Each container is designed for placement into any of dozens of mobile home towers within St. Petersburg and is transportable between towers.

They come in standardized sizes and support a variety of building plug-ins and utility/ventilation connections. Most towers can interface with any container however the nicer ones limit support to high-end interfaces to weed out riff-raff. Container amenities include soundproofing, insulation, electrical wiring, wall screens, replaceable window/skylight sections and real-wood floors.

The Cages

Vast towers of secured housing exist throughout the Grid. Each tower is a hundred meters on a side and can stand up to 80 floors high. Most structures are supported by three to five super-dense support poles which also provide counter-balances for the elevator systems.





The exteriors tend to be wrought iron or dense plastic barring (with lockable panels for windows and balconies) which gives the structures their name. Interestingly, this makes the exterior climbable, and owners have recently tested legislation allowing them to use this property to circumvent costs in designing fire escape routes.

INDUSTRY

Central St. Petersburg is made up of the financial and business entities which support commerce in Dome 606 and Vinoy dreamlands; accounting, sales, advertising, data collection (and mining), law, insurance and shipping amongst other trades.

The vast majority of employees perform menial white collar work like data entry, claims work, creative writing or illustration, editing, computer operation or software development/support. The upper echelons have slightly better paying jobs in management or specialized technical functions.

to the reduced price cafeterias, fitness centers and on the higher floors, free medical care and administrative services. Supervisors and management have access to the residence floors; their room and board paid for by the company. And so it goes with the amenities improving until they become competitive with dreamland amenities in the mid-forty levels. Most employees attaining this level lose their desire to ever leave the premises

But the firm harbors a secret. The 77th floor of the building is the permanent domicile of a colony of ETs called Hippocampusites by the humans who originally encountered them the 1970s (see *Dark Adversaries*, p.142). These vaguely humanoid ETs have oversized, exposed lobes and brain stems, and continually strive to add to a shared information pool. To this end, employees serve to gather this information and some train for eventual use as hosts when one of the Hippocampusites (collectively referred to as the Brain Trust within the company) requires a transplant or wishes to reproduce.

RETAIL

Shops in the Grid trend towards efficiency. They cater to Grid residents who want to spend as little time in transit as possible. There is a limited tourism industry as well. Most diners won't deliver (the risk generally isn't worth it). Of the restaurants that have table service, wait times are long as space is at a premium. Most diners only offer takeout.

U-Cook-Its

A recent trend in efficient dining is the U-Cook-It; small kitchenettes offering access to microwaves, deep fryers and grills. Many of these places don't even stock food, the rationale being that, for a single low price, a customer can prepare whatever food he's brought, and the entire business can be operated by one or at most two people.

Speakeasies

In homage to the century-old illegal bars of Capone's time, today's speakeasies are bars or adult clubs offering backrooms with reasonable expectations of privacy, for a fee. The unwritten rules are: "don't draw attention to yourself" and "if you get caught, we don't know you." Most of these places offer protection from surveillance, encrypted cell phones, internet access, and suites with Trader-Suzies (secured turntables to facilitate the secured transfer of goods).

Muster'd

Awful food at terrible prices. (It says so right on the sign). However most people aren't here for the dining. Muster'd is owned and operated by Malcolm Hope, an old-school minion hunter who literally "mustered out" in the early nineties and survived the subsequent 45 years to tell the tale.



Infominer Inc.

Established in 2022 as a small research company, Infominer Inc. is now the most prominent data collection, organization and mining industry in Tampete. The company employs an unusual incentive system for its employees. Promotions translate to access to higher levels in the company's 77-floor tower. An employee's pay grade translates to the highest level his badge permits access to.

Entry and part-time workers access only the first few floors which contain training centers, cubicles and some vending machines. More experienced workers gain access



CRIME IN THE GRID

Empathic Drug Trade

Historic St. Pete is filled with mikes trying to eke their way into the upper echelons. They have a lot to gain or lose. And this creates a unique opportunity for empathic drug distributors who make claims that their products to enhance the mind, skill sets, motivation and intuition of anyone willing to pay for the opportunity. What's more? Everyone is doing it. If you want to get ahead, it isn't a matter of whether you're willing to risk it. It's how far you are willing to go.

Entertainment drugs are available too and these can be rolled on the Whiz charts in this book (see Whiz Tables, p.231). However St. Pete has a niche for drugs intended to bestow business advantage. It is suggested that the GM tweak his Whiz concoctions accordingly.

Cannibalism

A strangely persistent problem, mostly blamed on the homeless who somehow make their way here from the Suncoast Homeless Shelter, the tradition of cannibalism in St. Petersburg endures.

Wealth Reform Terrorism

Many people are covertly united under the common banner of redistributing private wealth. The names vary from anti-capitalists, to grassroots communism, to eco-terrorists, to anarchists. Membership is similarly diverse and includes the homeless, survivalists, "moles" (mikes or wage slaves by day, operatives by night) and members of religious or political factions. Many see themselves as Robin Hood-types, stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. However most of these folks count themselves among the poor.

Tactics vary. To spread their message, members scrawl graffiti in prominent places or sabotage signs, screens or video equipment. Broadcast radio and television transmissions have been hijacked on occasion by pirate broadcasts.

To enact change, terrorists kidnap prominent financial figures and threaten their families in order to extract promises of policy reform. This is rarely successful but this doesn't deter them from trying. They routinely sabotage infrastructure services like telephone or power. They detonate powerful bombs in the parking lots and atriums of some of the city's more prominent credit agencies. This has even happened in the Vinoy Dreamlands though no reported cases (yet) within Dome 606.

The response is characteristically uncreative by St. Petersburg law enforcement; cameras on every corner and routine profiling. Not surprisingly, this has yielded few results.

Clowns

Clowns are a strange and terrifying phenomenon in central St. Petersburg, so much so that ordinances have been passed likening the unlicensed wardrobe and behavior to terrorism and allowing for prosecution in those terms. While many of these are pranks or simply the misguided sycophancy for clown-inspired villains and monsters, there is sometimes an underlying Darkling influence.

First, there are the so-called masterminds of these deranged people. They instill abject terror into anyone who sees them. Stories of one such ringleader, the Poppetmeister, chronicle the perplexing citywide abductions of dozens of plastic surgeons and the rewiring of the traffic light control and municipal street belt systems (the latter of which caused several dozen deaths and disrupted transit in the Grid for weeks). All of these masterminds are thoroughly irrational and demented entities whose motivations are so alien that they cannot even be guessed at.

The origin of all this is hard to pinpoint but most remember a time in the 1990s as college pranksters began scaring nightclub patrons after closing hour. Sporadic incidents of stalking and voyeurism to assault and battery have since plagued St. Petersburg for the next several decades. Extreme cases have included serial killings and terrorism. There are literally hundreds of stories of clown-appareled perpetrators committing various acts from the mischievous to the unspeakable. Consequently, there is little tolerance for them by either the police or the residents.

Weepers

Central St. Petersburg, like all urban areas, has a prolific sex trade. Amidst the hundreds of escorts, exotic dancers and street walkers are a handful of Weepers, Darkling females who prey upon men and women, luring them with their wiles (see Dark Adversaries, p.142).

The weepers are so named because of their tendency to bleed from their eyes and mouths. Many have a penchant for self-mutilation, and their exposed blood contains pheromones which arouse their prey. The weepers have a communicable disease ("the Bleeds") which is transferred with exposure to their blood. It affects males and females differently; males are mostly carriers. Their sperm mutates in a way that will infect anyone he has sex with, and his sex drive is greatly increased. Females develop similar symptoms as the weepers themselves and some gestate a weeper within them (a process taking about three months before the newborn is delivered naturally).





GULFPORT AND SOUTH ST. PETERSBURG

This area (primarily Lake Maggiore and the areas west and south to the bay) is a collection of high crime Mike-Towns, Ant Hills, uncontrolled zones and Demonground pockets. There is little infrastructure here, even in the Ant Hills which are mostly bicycle trodden.

LAKE MAGGIORE (World's End)

Lake Maggiore has been a convenient dumping ground for chemical companies and power plants since the late 1990s. Most companies dispose of their waste surreptitiously at night via Boyd Park. Others maintain buildings near the lake and work unabashedly in broad daylight. Subsequently, the lake is now the most disgusting and toxic cesspool in the Tampete area.

The shores stink and are covered with sludge, industrial castoffs and medical waste. Many sections of the lake boil of their own accord. Deeper, the remnants of trees and drifting flotsam are singed with ash or glow with radiation (a real problem in this area). Rumors of mutated scavenger-birds, gigantic cockroaches and other hellish species are rampant. The area is known as "World's End" due to the post-apocalyptic conditions and abyssal denizens within.

Adolescent Dragoons

Urban legends persist of species of lizard-like scavengers (sometimes winged) which roam the area within and surrounding the lake (see Dragoons, p.155). The tales vary from mysterious sightings to abductions of pets or children. The truth is that many dragoons once roosted in the area, depositing nests of eggs which are now hatching.

BOYD HILL

Boyd Hill Park is one of the most dangerous areas in all of Tampete. Gang activity is rampant. There are drug labs of all kinds (including empathic drugs), chop shops, black markets, prostitution rings and countless other organized criminal activities.

Despite the area being an uncontrolled zone, the police would routinely raid the place in a proactive effort to reduce crime in the Grid and neighboring Ant Hills but a few things occurred to change this: terrain near the south shores of Lake Maggiore has is now nearly impassable to police vehicles; the Boyd Hill residents have been stockpiling heavy weapons; and the rumors of beasts which emerge from the lake and attack the police sound less like crazy talk and more like a pattern. Add in the regular loss of units from recent raids into the area, and it's easy to see why the police have changed tactics.

Phrenic Zeta

Phrenic Zeta (or the "phrenzies") is a psychic crime syndicate based out of Boyd Park. Most are empaths although a few are cybernetically enhanced thieves and hackers. As the only known psychic crime organization, Phrenic Zeta enjoys a distinct advantage in crimes involving social engineering or espionage. Blackmail, extortion and credit fraud are all common tactics of the group.

The Phrenzies bolster their numbers with developing empaths. They are recruited at a young age and exposed to an immersive curriculum of training and ethical deprogramming. By the time their skills are honed, they have lost compassion for their fellow man and the ability to distinguish right from wrong.

The Phrenzies cooperate with surrounding criminal elements, at least in defense of Boyd Park. They make excellent security operatives and provide advance warning during police raids.





VINOY

Vinoy is the dreamland territory emerging from historic Vinoy Park and surrounding waterfront properties. Vinoy Park has always been an affluent area, however when Tampa and St. Petersburg merged into a single metroplex in 1995, the wealthy invested in land as far north as the Coffeepot Bayou and as far south as Bayboro Harbor. The central-most areas, particularly those east of Beach Drive, became the dreamlands which exist today. The beauty is an artificial one. The bay shores are chemically died green and blue. Most of the grass is synthetic. Even the outside air is filtered and conditioned.

A recent trend in Vinoy is a return to Victorian Era culture. Frock coats, waistcoats, dresses with wide-puffed sleeves or flower trimming, vests, top hats, and lace are everywhere. An even newer trend is SteamTek augmentation to this Victorian wardrobe.

Architecture has adopted a Gothic Revival feel, and art, literature and science are the topics of the day. Parks feature weekend Shakespeare or serenades after dark. Museums and libraries (particularly private ones) are the latest rage.

UNDERTUBE

The Bullet Rail (or the Undertube as a nod to England and the recently revived Victorian fad lifted from there) is a trans-bay subway system which can make the trip from Vinoy Park to Dome 606 in less than ten minutes. It even looks the part with exposed cogs, pistons, pipes, and rails coated with brass.

VINOY SKERRIES

Small floating mesas of ferric materials and a layered artificial turf orbit the skyscrapers in Vinoy Park, guided by SteamTek powered repulsion lamps. These floating "Skerries" tend to be corporate resorts, hotels, or private residences but they also host companies which provide specialized services to firms on a contract basis.

Magnetic shielding of iron, nickel and cobalt is apparently required to avoid some side effects of the repulsion lamps, but this really only goes so far. Power disruptions and generally undefined behavior of electronics is typical on the Skerries.

VINOY SECURITY

Vinoy has long resisted pressure to use the HIRO security teams used in Dome 606 or Harbour Island. Naysayers cite the expense and risk associated with training and using human security, but many Vinoy residents are vocal in their "pearls before swine" philosophy; that the art and culture of Vinoy is wasted on the unrefined, even the staff. (In their defense, there

have been cases of social revolt by day-laborers resulting in the damage or destruction of priceless works of art).

In any event, Vinoy security is primarily android and drone-based. Androids are bipedal and are easily identified by their dress (although they otherwise look human). They provide security wherever it is impractical for the drones to do so. Drones are aerial vehicles (usually less than a meter in diameter) responsible for the surveillance of most of Vinoy. Residents are routinely scanned. Biometric information such as hand prints, optical scans and hair samples are used, though most residents opt for a chip-implant to reduce the inconvenience associated with frequent scanning.

Where tactical decisions and judgment are required, Vinoy Organic Security will assist. VOS operatives (as they are called) undergo extensive tactical training in addition to intense emotional deprogramming. The rationale is that, during a crisis, the lives of the wealthy cannot be risked due to a mental defect such as envy or fear. The reality is that Vinoy citizens consider emotions to be base and primal in the unrefined; vulgar and destructive to culture. They simply are not tolerated.

INDUSTRY

Tourism dominates in Vinoy and is a major source of income here. The coast is populated with hotels, theaters, concert halls, museums, galleries, fine dining and entertainment. Set back a little farther from the shores is the commercial district; increasingly elevated tiers of buildings, architected in compliance with an unusual policy dictating the maximum altitude of a building depending on its proximity to the water. Subsequently, the taller buildings are farther inland.

Appreliance Underground Museum

Walter Montgomery is the CEO of Appreliance, a prominent electronics company that also houses an enormous, underground, ET technology museum. It isn't open to the public, but with the right connections and the right price, folks can finagle an invitation.

Within the hermetically sealed bunker are exhibits dating back to the 1960s. Some were acquired in gratitude for generous donations to the U.S. government. Others more surreptitiously. Bulkheads from extraterrestrial vessels, weapons, armor, drilling rigs, dozens of cadavers of ET origin, ancient tablets with alien (reportedly sentient) writing, and more recently, Viemen SteamTek (see Viemen in Factions and Personalities, p.117).





PINELLAS PARK

Pinellas Park is comprised of vast patches of abandoned area, uncontrolled zones, Mike-Towns (with commuters who work in either the Grid or the Seminole Ant Hills) and many small (and xenophobic) communities trying to be self-reliant. The law (where it exists) is corrupt, and it is often hard to distinguish between the criminal and Darkling elements.

TRAILERHOODS

Pinellas Park is known for establishing the “trailerhood” as a modern domicile. These are rows and rows of trailer parks, some with working utilities, and some without. Most of these are racked into stacks of twos or threes, accessible by rolling stairways or dumb-waiter systems.

Trailerhoods have the well-earned reputation for harboring some of Tampete’s worst criminal and Darkling elements. Police often refuse to patrol such areas due to the proximity within or near uncontrolled zones. There are rarely schools, hospitals or emergency response, and most of the residents will not be missed should something befall them.



KENNETH CITY

In the pre-depression times, Kenneth City earned a reputation as a speed trap. Times have changed but this small province within Pinellas Park has stayed the same: independent, strict, and highly xenophobic. Outsiders are habitually harassed by an overzealous police force and are arrested and jailed without provocation. Rails and barbed wire fencing run along railroad tracks, Tyrone Blvd., Park Blvd., U.S. 19, and along the bayous to the west. Residents can come and go but outsiders are often interrogated as to their purpose (usually automotive repair or trading) and length of stay.

The community is mostly greenhouses, agricultural farms and the various businesses to support that (soil refinement, automotive servicing, distribution, etc...) and a handful of infrastructure services. There is a single hotel that backs right up to the police station.

There is a city-wide curfew (which is generally overlooked for residents) from dusk until dawn, and tampering with the perimeter rails or fences (in or out) is a felony offense.

Police Chief Dennis Rossi runs his department as a bandit outfit. His deputies detain outsiders for any imagined infraction in order to confiscate their valuables. They won’t bother outsiders who have longstanding business contracts with residents (if the residents are current on their protection tariffs).

Some of the greenhouses house more than just vegetables. Rumors persist of new species of insects genetically engineered to vaccinate livestock against various ailments. Other rumors imply the purpose of these insects might actually be to distribute these plagues.

Dennis Rossi

STR 8, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 6,
CHR 7, PSI 1, SOC 5, INIT 3
Skills 2, Slug Weapons 4,
Autogun 4, Streetwise 3,
Scrounging 3, Interrogation 3

SAWGRASS PARK

The once-pleasant Sawgrass recreational park is now the stuff of Halloween-inspired nightmares. Criminal activity is high, as in all parks, but Sawgrass breeds a special caliber of sociopaths for which the words “mercy” and “empathy” have no discernible meaning. Most of them kill for the sheer fun of it. Groups of these maniacs have organized entire academies to hone and promote their trades.



Monuments to their disdain for mankind are displayed prominently outside the park and on neighboring roads. These include skeletal remains suspended from trees or power lines; dismembered corpses strewn into neat little piles; foreboding, hateful graffiti written in blood; pyres of dead animals and sometimes children; or chains of severely mutilated victims left to the elements with mortal wounds.





Garden of Peace Cemetery

In the heart of the Sawgrass is probably the worst patch of Demonground in all of Tampete. No resident has laid eyes on it in the past 10 years. Stories of the place are wild and unbelievable. The dead walk again. Giant mausoleums house murderers and cultists. The trees themselves harbor the ability to command mankind with their demonic magic. And there are portals to places that will rend the mind if seen by mortal eyes. It can only be guessed whether the criminal element residing in Sawgrass lives here despite this Abaddon or because of it.





Tampete, Florida
Largo/Pinellas Park

- 1 Kenneth City
- 2 Seminole
- 3 Pinellas Park
- 4 Bellaire (Wharehousing District)
- 5 Walsingham Park (Florida Botanical Gardens)
- 6 Taylor Park (Ziggurat)
- 7 Sawgrass Park
- 8 Wild Acres Armed Trailerhood Compound





CLEARWATER

Clearwater is a mixed bag of Mike-Towns, small Ant Hill areas, uncontrolled zones and abandoned space. It encompasses Seminole, Bellaire, Largo (or Larghetto, as it is fondly called) and Palm Harbor. Some of these places are “barbs” (abandoned suburbs housing only the deranged and sociopathic amidst Demonground patches). Clearwater is not a nice place to be.

SEMINOLE

Seminole is interlaced Ant Hills and abandoned areas. Commerce tends to be franchises but much of the remaining government infrastructure is here as well: state courthouses and prisons, bureaus of various licensing, water and waste management centers, military recruiting offices, and the like. There is a reasonable police presence but crime is still high.

Morlocks

Seminole is rampant with Morlock activity. Something has driven them south from their underground lairs in North Clearwater. They emerge from sewers outside of restaurants or grocery stores and rummage through the trash or see what they can loot from freight trucks. They don’t eat this foodstuff, but rather they feed it to those they keep underground, which they use as cattle.

Strange tunnels have been discovered within prisons and in abandoned shopping malls. Darkling resistance cells suspect Morlocks, and there are rumors of some new enemy that the Morlocks have encountered and greatly fear.



The Ziggurat

In 2021, a company called Spyre Inc. purchased the rights to Taylor Park and constructed a 15 meter-tall ziggurat in the center of Taylor Lake after claiming tax exemption for religious purposes. The thing is constructed of obsidian and at least 10 tiers of it are visible above the water line.

For awhile, joggers could run the Taylor Park trails (despite a litany of reasons not to) without too many incidents, but they started returning with stories of men in silver suits (or androids, depending on who you listened to) conducting strange exercises outside. Some experienced overwhelming flashes of light before losing consciousness for hours. Some

suffered strange health effects: unexplained rashes, withered limbs, extended spells of blindness and/or deafness. Some were never seen again.

BELLAIRE

This area is vacant except for some warehousing facilities near the western bluffs. Most of the warehouses are no longer used but a few are well secured and carefully watched.

Echo Wisdom

One of the earliest resistance cells to the Darkling invasion is Echo Wisdom, which has its roots in the Delta 7 Protodimension (see Protodimensions, p81). In a seemingly abandoned storage





facility near the beaches, Echo Wisdom keeps a portal to Delta 7 and a moderate weapons arsenal. Advanced surveillance technology is installed in and around the area, and there are enough stationed soldiers and men-in-black monitoring it to respond quickly to threats.

Other warehouses house relics deemed too dangerous to pass through a protodimensional portal. Some of these things include empathic or magical relics, alien technology, the corpses of ET and Darkling creatures, unknown chemicals compounds suspected of being fuels or pharmaceuticals, and the list goes on. These things have not yet gone through the lengthy process to research and classify them as “low risk for transit”. Many will never undergo that testing.

survive in a low-gravity, low-atmosphere environment of up to -100° C. He wants biological options on Io. The plants aren’t ready but he has made great strides.

Foolish explorers sometimes make their way into the park. Their loss is Dr. Evans’ gain. He certainly can’t allow tales of walking, carnivorous, and energy-resistant (or generating) plants to circulate. So he lets his pets eliminate the problem.

Some regions have grown out of control and are off-limits even to staff. Rather than clear these areas out, Evans keeps them as “proving grounds” for his latest creations. Some of the deadliest neurotoxins and hemotoxins of the 21st century have originated from Evans’ gardens.



LARGO

Largo is abandoned save for a handful of survivalist communities, criminals, and covert government operations whose purposes can only be guessed at. Many of the structures have crumbled, and what remains isn’t particularly stable except for few well-designed infrastructure buildings.

Florida Botanical Gardens

At the north end of Walsingham Park in Largo are the Florida Botanical Gardens. In the 20th century, these gardens showcased exotic flora and fauna. Now, they’re simply overgrown, unkempt, over-sized plots of cordoned-off land; at least until Dr. Maurice Evans demonstrated to the U.S. government that he could adapt the plant life for military applications.

Evans and his team established residence in the gardens and have been experimenting with the plants’ utility versus various threats. He’s mutated strains of kudzu which can





Wild Acres Armed Trailerhood Compound

Pinellas Park Trailerhoods have crept into Largo but haven't endured due to being so far from the Ant Hills. However one community thrived and eventually grew into a military compound led by retired army Lt. Colonel Hank Bodine.

There are about 70 stackable trailers sorted into defendable rows, all cordoned off with barbed wire. Its residents are veterans and their families. Forgotten by the government, most have become adept at scavenging for food and supplies. There are few carrot, tomato and potato beds between trailer racks as well as water barrels (used for filtering and boiling of rain water).

On the north end of the camp is the Largo Armed Forces Military Museum. No one lives here but it has become a kind of shrine and everything is well cared for. Many of the displays still stand. The back rooms house the community's munitions, an impressive array of weapons and demolitions.

Lt. Colonel Bodine promotes an atmosphere of discipline. All families participate in security drills and supply runs. Each trailer monitors a radio so response is swift.

Near the camp are ramshackle buildings (former DMVs and similar) which Bodine's men use as forward camps during field patrols. The patrols deter occupation of the surrounding structures.

Many, perhaps most of the people who live here harbor secrets. Some participated in unsanctioned military operations; some were test subjects at military training compounds; a few have headed up such operations (certainly unbeknownst to their neighbors). Minion Hunters looking for military contacts who've gone underground could do worse than check here.



White Light Operations

White Light is a clandestine government organization operating under the guise of a non-profit medical company for low income residents (see Factions and Personalities, p.120). They operate out of Largo because it offers easy access to undocumented people. Subsequently, Largo has become the testing grounds for numerous covert operations.

For example, White Light offers free flu shots and physicals. They use the opportunity to expose subjects to pharmaceuticals intended to resist diseases previously administered via any number of related operations: free cookouts for the needy, bottled water distribution, and even environmental misting. Operatives pose as drug dealers, moving engineered Whiz into the area. Some batches implant post-hypnotic suggestions into subjects. Some are mind-altering. Many are inadvertently lethal.

I-Lights are another Largo-ism. You can't easily tell by looking, but many traffic lights (the ones that work) are affixed with cameras to obtain retinal scans from drivers in the area. Only major intersections are installed with the technology, and success is uneven, but this is only a pilot.

PALM HARBOR

Palm Harbor is the first community to coin the term "barbs"; abandoned suburbs infested with Demonground pockets. But if Safety Harbor is the spoilt inner city, withered in its burgeoning infancy into its current hellish state, then Palm Harbor is its aging cousin; the collection of retirement communities now abandoned, save





for those too helpless to leave. And those who remained (in their insanity and dementia) have been a conduit for Darkling activity. Palm Harbor seems to be the unspeakable channeled through the insane.

Mannercare Assisted Living Facilities

Mannercare is a national chain of assisted living facilities. Its headquarters is in Dayton, Ohio but most of its franchises are in Florida's Gold Coast and here in Tampete. Accidents and negligence complaints have dogged Mannercare for decades, and one of the worst franchises was its Palm Harbor facility.

A \$90 million dollar lawsuit levied against the company forced the closure of that location. However no one told the employees that this meant finding homes for the residents, who continued to eke out an existence as long as the food stores would permit. And when those ran out, a few began eating each other, until the Caretaker arrived.

It may have been stress which awakened the dormant empathic abilities of the residents in their twilight years. Perhaps certain items of power were carelessly left in the hands of the inept. Whatever the cause, Palm Harbor Mannercare has become a haunted carnival of suppressed and pent-up rage.

Caretaker and gardener Aarol Friedman (known to residents as simply "the Caretaker") has stayed on even though no one pays him. He teaches the residents to use their latent abilities. He teaches them to live, to find out what they want, and to take it. But he teaches them in their sleep.

The Caretaker is a Dream Master (see Dark Races, p26) and he found this bed of repressed rage and empathic ability and nourishes it as a garden for empathic energy. He freely feeds from this energy each night. He has taken a perverse joy in empowering his food to commit the unspeakable acts that they have dreamed of since being incarcerated in this institution.



Beacon Groves Civil War

Once a yuppie community, Beacon Groves aged into retirement suburbs. Like most such communities, Beacon Groves is fraught with not-so-neighborly bickering amongst residents. Rather than grumble about each other's lawns or someone's music, these residents are literally at war with each other.

A generations-old home in Orange Pointe (North Beacon Groves) has housed a group of empathic Mesmers (see Dark Races, p66) for nearly a century. Aside from inciting an occasional irrational resident (which Palm Harbor has come to expect), they didn't generate any attention until a rival group moved onto Hill Road in South Beacon Groves.

The neighborhood was immediately divided. Conflict was subtle and furtive at first. Each cell sought to defend its own territory. But as people abandoned the area (leaving only the survivalists, the very stubborn, or the very deranged), the psyches of those that the Mesmers tapped into were old veterans, retired police officers, and a few war heroes.

Now the subdivision is in a perpetual state of war. Home Owner Association meetings, recently replaced by scavenging and hunting parties, were replaced again with War Room strategy meetings. Gunfire and artillery shelling are a daily occurrence. Most residents wear colors (blue for the north, gray for the south) and have taken to hoisting Union and Confederate battle flags. Fatalities are high but both Mesmer groups and even the residents are resourceful in mustering support for the front lines.





THE OUTLAW

DOWN IN THE PARK
(By Scott McClenaghan)

"Just empty the register!" I heard Jayce scream at a terrified cashier, waving a Beretta 9 mil in front of him.

That's why you hit a Dirty J's. They take cash, and the four of us needed cash.

The pale-faced, skinny kid practically threw the money at Jayce, who scooped it up as fast he could, but it wouldn't amount to much.

Golem chimed in, "Hey, you. Yeah, manager guy. It's time to open the safe," covering him with another Beretta. He was monitoring the other wage slaves as they filed out of the plastic security cage that Howley had forced during the shift change. Golem was a beast of a man, towering over everyone in the restaurant at six foot six.

"Ok, ok. It's in the back office. It's a combination, but there isn't much in it," Manager-guy pled, almost through tears. He wasn't much older than the pale-faced kid. His uneven facial scruff didn't make him look any older; just less hygienic. (The other reason you ate at Dirty J's).

"The hell there isn't," Golem boomed. "Your drop's tomorrow morning. We checked. That thing better be loaded!"

"No, well... go back and look for yourself," Manager-guy whined. "They changed the day on us, because, well..." he trailed off, indicating Golem's gun.

Howley cackled with laughter. "They changed the drop because of us! I told you five in a week and they'd make changes."

Golem was getting angry. "It's not funny," he barked. "Empty what's there, and then... then... then your wallet too! All of you. All of your wallets, now!"

Howley, Jayce and I looked at him.

"That wasn't the plan, man," I started. "You can't rob them. There's too many of..."

THOOM! THOOM! THOOM!

Then dead silence.

Howley sat, partially protected by the plastic cage doors, with a smoking Desert Eagle held steady. An older patron, a heavy-set man in his late forties, slumped down the wall opposite him; three .44-sized holes in his chest. Just out of his reach was a Colt Krait which clattered to the ground as he closed his eyes.

"I told you, Golem. You can't rob the customers. They fight back!" I said. Oh my god. What did I do? What did I just do?

Everyone began screaming.

"Shut up!" screamed Golem. Then he began firing. We all did. For the next 90 seconds, human screams diminished, punctuated by irregular staccato Beretta, Colt and Desert Eagle explosions. Eight people in all: five employees and three customers. If they hear your name, even a nick-name, that's the





way it has to be.

"Howley? Jayce?" I looked around.

"I'm good," Jayce replied.

"Good too," spoke Howley. "Golem went to the safe. Tyler, that was really stupid."

"Don't put this on me, Howley. This went south when Golem started going for wallets," I replied weakly. I knew it was on me and me alone. My stomach roiled.

Golem came back. He was furious. "It's locked and nothing's written anywhere in the office. Let's get their wallets and get out of here."

I heard a noise. A muted clang. From the back.

"What was that?" started Howley.

Then we all heard it; a thundering clatter of something falling all over the floor.

"I didn't see anyone back there," came Golem. "The walk-in?"

"I'm leaving man. The cops'll be here like any second," Jayce said nervously.

"This will just take a second. I said get their wallets," Golem spat at us, but Jayce wasn't interested. He dashed out the door into the parking lot.

"It's alright. He doesn't have the keys," I said.

"I don't wanna hear squat out of you, Tyler," he meant it. I went about collecting wallets as Golem made for the walk-in.

Howley nervously peeked out the windows and then he helped me pick up wallets and collect jewelry.

"What the hell," called Golem. "Get in here."

I had four wallets, a necklace and two rings. Howley had some wallets and was pulling a pair of earrings out from an employee's ears.

"I'll go. Finish up. Shout if you see anything," I called as I ran through the cage doorway.

THOOM! THOOM!

Two more pistol explosions. At least I didn't have to do it. I rushed back to where I saw Golem, in a walk-in cooler amidst a fallen metal shelf rack and buckets of condiments splattered all over the floor. It should have been hard to tell where the ketchup ended and the blood began, but it wasn't.

Sprawled across the floor was a guy who must have slipped past us after we herded all the employees into the front. Well, he was bleeding but his blood wasn't red. It was... blue.

"What's wrong with his face?" Golem asked angrily. "He had that... non-expression when I found him. Like he didn't feel fear or anger... or pain. Why won't his face change?"

Blue blood. What the hell. And the face. Golem was right. His eyes were closed now, but the guy had this kind of half-placid, half-serious expression which should have relaxed into nothing but didn't. And what was that light?

I reached towards a bag the guy had behind him. It was already half opened and a pale blue light filtered out of it. Maybe the light made his blood look blue to us? I lifted the top of the bag to get a better look. It was bowling-ball sized. Maybe a little smaller.

"Guys! It's time to go!" sailed Howley's nervous voice and he didn't spook easily.

Golem grabbed the bag and dashed towards an emergency exit. I looked at the man again. He was no older than 30, trim with blond hair. And that face. How can you die and maintain an expression like that? I wanted to be sure the job was done but couldn't risk the noise in case Howley saw more customers. It was time to go.

I dashed out the emergency exit after Golem. Howley was already waiting at the Zil. The driver's side door was open and I jumped in as another car sped towards the drive-thru. I just thanked God they wanted carry-out. You could wait for five minutes at a Dirty J's before someone came to the drive-thru window.

I turned the ignition and heard the familiar knocking of the engine block. I peeled the tires





and headed down the street to John Chestnut Park where Jayce almost certainly would have run. All the time, I felt that chill. The one that tells you: there's no getting away from this. There's no running or driving or hiding that'll let you off the hook this time.

The park gates were closed at night. They were mostly closed during the day too since the county stopped funding the place, but we knew a dirt trail off the neighborhood adjacent to it. It led right to a shelter which backed up against Lake Tarpon. It was a good place to rendezvous after a job and we could even dump the guns and masks in the lake if we had to.

No lights in the park. That was a good sign. I knew the trails well enough to navigate without headlights and we rolled down the windows in case we saw Jayce. Eventually, I coasted up to shelter 13 and killed the engine. Howley, Jayce and I grew up around here and used to hang out there all the time. Not Golem though. Golem was Howley's friend.

Howley raced out the back passenger door and ran towards the picnic tables. In a few seconds he came back. "Jayce isn't here yet," he said.

"Way he ran?" Golem said firmly. "No. He should be here. We'll give him a few minutes but we split the take now. Teach him to run off in the middle of a job," that last comment was muttered under his breath more to himself than for our benefit.

I tossed four wallets to Howley who'd already pulled the billfolds from the ones he'd taken. He started emptying these as well.

Golem looked inside the bag again. The eerie blue light crept across his face; across the trees and the water behind us. He was mesmerized by it.

"Three hundred and forty," Howley announced.

"Three forty?" Golem barked. "But there had to be at least that in the... damn it... Jayce has the take from the till! That's why he ran off. He had the easy cash and didn't want to split it!"

Something fell into the water behind us. Maybe a pine cone? Or whatever passed for pine cones in the rotted, wasted remains of the John Chestnut pine trees.

"Jayce?" Howley called. Nothing.

Then an even, sluggish scraping sound; like a rotten, drenched log dragged across the mud and brush, but still dripping with whatever it was soaked in.

Golem drew his Beretta and loaded a fresh mag. Howley was nervously fidgeting with his Desert Eagle as well.

The sounds stopped. Was it an animal? Was the light from Golem's bag drawing it?

The sheer overwhelming loudness of a piercing screech panicked all three of us. Golem fired twice at nothing. Howley ran for the car just as I started it, creating a surreal transition from animal howl to mechanical roar as I shrieked for Golem to get in.

Golem grabbed his bag and clambered into the front passenger seat. I immediately screeched the tires and having no nerves for the dark, poured the headlights onto the path in front of me. Shadows and wasted tree branches reached at us and past us as we sped out of the park but there was no trace of whatever was in the water. And no trace of Jayce.

The next twenty minutes passed silently as I dropped off Golem and then Howley. There was nothing to talk about that couldn't wait until daylight.

I awoke with a sweat and felt for the Colt Krait on my nightstand. You can't be responsible for the death of nine people and not expect to have nightmares about it. But this one. It was so real.

I remember waking up in a cold, cold room. I crawled on hands and knees across a red tile floor. A kitchen floor? Yeah. The Dirty J's back room floor. My hands were sticky, soaked in something warm and blue but I wasn't in any pain. I steadily made my way outside, into the trees. Into the park. I needed to be in the park.

Wispy rays of white fell on the sheets beside me. I lurched forward, stared at the clock. 2:14. Almost eleven hours! Was Jayce okay? I needed to get a hold of the others. I called Jayce first. Nothing. Then Howley. Still no answer. I didn't want to call Golem but he was the only one left.





"Yeah?" came a sleepy reply.

"Golem? It's Tyler. Have you talked to anyone this morning? I still can't get a hold of Jayce or Howley." I said.

"Howley better not be missing too. He's got the rest of our take." Golem grumbled. "Come on over and pick me up. We'll drive over together to see him."

I showered, dressed and jumped in the Zil. I was at Golem's within the hour. I parked in front of his, well, someone's beat down duplex. Golem had been squatting for the past month or so. It didn't have water but Golem found a way to leech power from one of the neighbors without his noticing.

I leaned on the horn. That would irritate him, but frankly, I didn't want to walk in there. I didn't know Golem too well and I didn't like his demeanor. I definitely didn't trust him. I'd rather deal with him out in public.

I let ten or twenty seconds go by before honking again. Still nothing. Damn it.

I checked the mag in my Krait for the tenth time and walked towards the front door.

"Golem!" I pounded on the door which fell open, apparently forced. A slimy trail of mud was caked around the inside of the jamb and all over the floor inside of the duplex. I cocked my pistol and looked inside. I could hear it again. A rhythmic scraping sound. No, I was imagining things. That was a ringtone. That was Golem's ringtone.

I called out again, "Golem! It's Tyler. Come on, let's go."

I walked into the room with Golem's phone. Golem was nowhere to be found but mud and water and even some seaweed were caked all over the place. The ringtone stopped but I could still hear that scraping! Like it had faded into the distance. I rushed to the phone sitting next to Golem's now empty bag.

I opened his phone and saw a missed call from a number I didn't recognize. I ran to the kitchen, also caked with mud and weeds and stared out the back window. The overgrown weeds were beaten down into the woods. Muddy deposits were visible

here and there.

Sweating, I mashed the number on my cell phone to call Jayce again. Nothing. Then Howley. It rang five times but he finally picked up.

"What?" he sounded a little annoyed.

"Howley! Where were you? I've been trying to get you all afternoon! Hey, I'm at Golem's house and something isn't right here. He's gone and there's like this mud all over the place," I started to stammer.

"Tyler? Hey, I'm sorry man. I actually just woke up. I had this really weird dream about John Chestnut Park," he said.

I felt the chill again; that chill which reminds you that no amount of time or distance between you and what you've done is ever really going to exonerate you from it.

"The Park?" I asked simply but I wasn't really listening. I kept hearing that scraping sound. Not here. No, this time it was in my mind.

"Tyler, I'm going back to the park," Howley said.

That woke me up. "What? Why?"

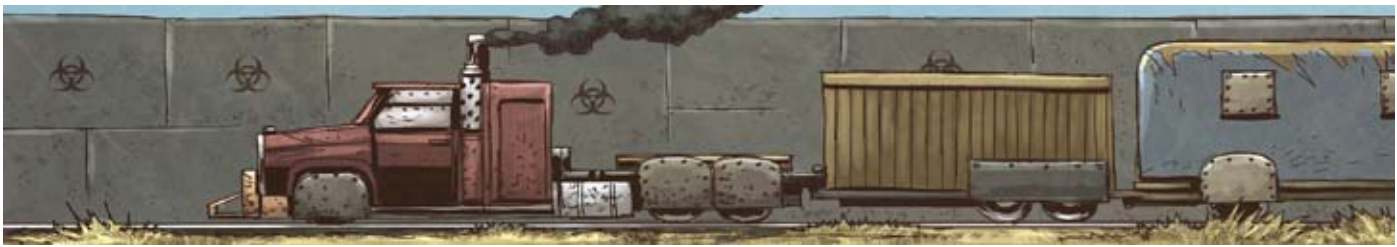
"Jayce went missing there. I had this crazy dream about the place. You said there's mud all over Golem's place? It's all kind of pointing there," he said.

I didn't really care about Golem but I'd known Jayce and Howley forever. "Howley, I had a strange dream about the park too. About that thing we found. About whoever or whatever was carrying it." I said.

"We should go. Meet me at shelter 13," he hung up before I could answer. I took a last look around the room; at the mud; at Golem's empty bag. Then I backed outside towards my car, got inside and tore off.

The engine knocking was getting worse. It was so loud that it was getting hard to be sure that it came from the engine block and it was keeping a steady rhythm with my heartbeat. I was speeding the entire way to John Chestnut Park and all it accomplished was to make the knocking louder.





I felt the chill again; a deep pit in my stomach. I wanted to be sick. I wanted to stop the car, run as fast and as far from it as possible, and forget everything that happened. Forget everything I'd done.

No amount of running. No amount of hiding.

The main entrance to the park was still shut. Some days they never bothered to open it at all. I guess this was one of those days. I drove through the same dirt trail as last night. I thought that with the sunlight, things would seem better; safer. They didn't. The sun shone cold as I drove. It left a chill.

I parked at shelter 13 and looked for Howley's bicycle. He wasn't there yet. Or he chickened out. No, he's here. It was his idea! I stepped out of the car and left the engine to continue its knocking as it cooled.

I walked to the shelter and waited. My heart was pounding in my throat. What was I doing here? Where was everyone? I heard the splashing and the scraping again over the knocking of the car. Was it in my mind? I had no way of knowing anymore. I froze for a few seconds, and then sprinted back to the car. It wasn't the splashing and scraping that was terrifying me now. The knocking. It should

have stopped by now. And it should be coming from the front of the car. From the engine.

It was a solid, steady banging like someone punching the inside of the trunk. The splashing stopped but the scraping was getting louder. Closer, yet somehow distant. Like a radio. Like I was three rooms away from it. I pulled the keys from my coat pocket and opened the trunk to my Zil.

Where a jack and water bottle should be, I saw Golem. He was neatly arranged in tidy rows, fresh blood soaking into the trunk carpet and flowing across the matted hair of a dismembered and slightly cocked head which looked up at me; eyes rolled back in its sockets.

The scraping sounds behind me had increased to the dull roar of a feral beast but I couldn't hear them. All I could focus on was the thumping engine, the trunk, my chest; it was too loud; too pervasive.

My hands hung limply at my sides as I waited; the knocking still hammering into my mind.

THOOM! THOOM! THOOM!

The cold gun fell softly to the grass. There was no chill. When you finally embrace what you have coming to you, you don't feel the chill.





OLDSMAR

Oldsmar is a rundown uncontrolled zone on the northwestern side of the greater metroplex. Few legitimate organizations stake any claim in this region. As the populations of the metroplex swelled, suburban areas became vacant and sparsely policed. Neighborhoods, apartment buildings and countless strip malls soon became attractive to squatters, gangs and worse. Small communities carve a difficult existence out of the forgotten shambles of suburbia. The status quo consists of the daily struggle for food and fuel interspersed with inter-gang conflicts. Violent incursions by private corporate security forces or rag-tag bands of minion-hunters are common.

THE MARKET IN THE SHADE

The central attraction and primary means by which inhabitants eke out a living is a sprawling tent city combined with an open air market, known to the locals as the Shade Market or Market in the Shade, a play-on-words identifying the illicit market as a black market and the fact that it lies in the thin shadow of a long-abandoned communications tower that erupts from the center of an old wildlife preserve. Ironically the tower provides no real shade at all in the intense Florida sun, and it is common for the weak and old to die of stifling heat stroke while wandering through the confines of the massive market.

and train station at the epicenter of the Market. This hub, and by loose association the Market itself, are controlled by the largest and most organized gang, the Brakemen.

Many other gangs own stalls and run their own operations from within the Market. Roaming gypsies set up seasonally here as well. But all must pay some sort of levy to the Brakemen to operate here in addition to whatever fees they pay to make use of the railroad system that Brakemen control. The gangs have a long-standing non-verbal agreement to keep the peace here in the Market; its continued existence is too profitable to risk its ultimate destruction if all-out warfare spilled over into it.

That is not to say it is a safe place; every day dozens meet their untimely ends here. Whether from the oppressive heat and stench of the place, eating something that wasn't cooked quite long enough, or a switchblade to the ribs, the result is the same; the Market continues to churn and commerce rules above all other concerns. Weapons are carried openly but rarely brandished. When someone is foolish enough to start a gunfight inside the confines of the Market, they are swiftly dealt with by well-trained marksmen of the various gangs.

Typically riflemen with hunting rifles or occasionally mil-spec sniper rifles are placed in shifts on top of old railway cars or wooden towers with the express purpose of putting down anyone who fires a weapon. Fist fights and knife fights break out with some frequency but typically end quickly. If the combatants can't discern a winner within a few minutes, local gang toughs will break it up. Outsiders who make trouble in this way may find themselves dragged into a stall or backroom and their possessions removed as a tax, sold into slavery, or worse.

Commerce

The Market exists for one purpose, the buying and selling of absolutely anything. Barter is the most common transaction here, although undercover corporate

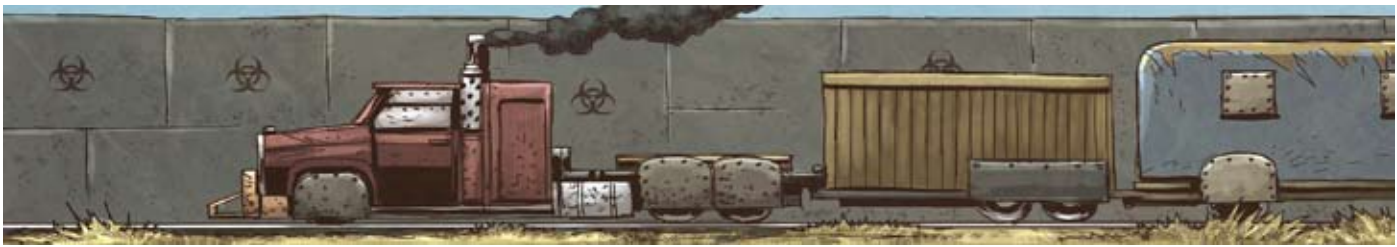
agents and well-to-do Minion Hunters will use cash or gold and silver bullion to pay for the illicit items they seek. The Market caters to all manner of highly illegal tender; slaves, drugs and weapons are relatively easy to come by as long as you can pay the price. As a general rule, items can be bartered based on their price value. If the PCs do not have a contact they are dealing with, treat items they are using to barter with as half printed value and items they are looking to buy as half



Market Grounds

The Market itself is roughly five square kilometers. It is bisected into north and south regions by a railroad track. This is commonly used to differentiate areas of the market as Northside-west or east and Southside-west or east. The east and west designation correlates to where a stall or group of tents falls in relation to the series of small buildings, shipping containers and old railway cars that make up a central hub





again as expensive. This simulates the natural inclination of market vendors to fleece outsiders. A solid contact can reduce the value penalties by 20-30%.

Treat illegal items as having an availability code of one letter grade better for the purposes of locating a possible purchase in the Market. Only high-grade mil-spec weapons and gear have the same availability codes. Any mil-spec or rarer gear will easily be asking double or triple printed value for barter.

SAMPLE MERCHANTS

Tommy Rockets

The proprietor of this large stall is an equally large man with a bushy moustache and dark tan that goes by the assuredly fake name of "Tommy Rockets". He dresses in old military regalia that is one size too small, and he is missing his left thumb and good portion of his tongue. Still, Tommy is the local expert on all things that go boom. He mostly deals in homemade explosives using gunpowder or common chemicals but occasionally has legitimate explosives like dynamite, some hand grenades and the rare RPG round or two. His prices are typically double the listed book price for such items. For the exchange of a very dangerous favor, he may barter something like a claymore or half-dozen grenades. This favor will likely entail stealing something dangerous from a local megacorp or similar.

Syndra's Slophouse

This stall is actually an old school bus on blocks flanked by a large tent with a series of old cafeteria style tables. Syndra Vogel is a 40-something ex-cop who now runs one of the largest cookeries in the Market. After two back-to-back nearly fatal shootings forced her to retire early from the Tampete police force, she used criminal contacts she had made via her time on the force to set up a semi-retirement running protection for the Brakemen. Over time her tolerance for violence waned, and she ended up taking over the cookery that now bears her name. She employs a throng of orphaned children and teenagers to help her run it. Meals are cheap and traded for things like bottled water, canned goods, tools and gasoline. Typical fare includes squirrel, rat, pigeons, some fish and sometimes alligator.

Duty, Honor, Service

These words are painted over an old American flag that hangs above the open door of a shipping container. Two grizzled men well into their 70s operate this stall offering a variety of hand weapons and some pistols and rifles. Knives, batons, brass knuckles and the like are readily available as well as at least one .38 caliber revolver or autopistol and one or two 9mm automatic pistols. There is a 40% chance any given week that a hunting rifle, shotgun or larger caliber pistol will be on display in a case. Standard pricing rules apply to any purchase

made here. Any time someone buys something, the two seniors who introduce themselves gruffly as Lucas and Red, regale the unlucky shopper with a long-winded and much-nonsensical tale of a grand clan full of wizards in which their fathers used to be important men who ran things in Florida. Nothing they say makes much sense and most regard them as mildly senile.

Gypsy Caravans

The gypsies of today are a far cry from the breed that graced Europe a thousand years ago; trading headdresses for shemaghs, wagons for Hummers and tractor trailers, and whips and swords for AK-74s.

Bands vary but the setup is the same. Wares are available from the backs of trucks and vans and usually consist of spices, seeds, preserved fishes and meats, clothing and the like. Games of chance and phylacteries abound (ask the locals, some of those potions work). And there are fortune tellers, dancers, cooked food and drink, and thieves galore. Dogs, wolves and even trained bears are common.

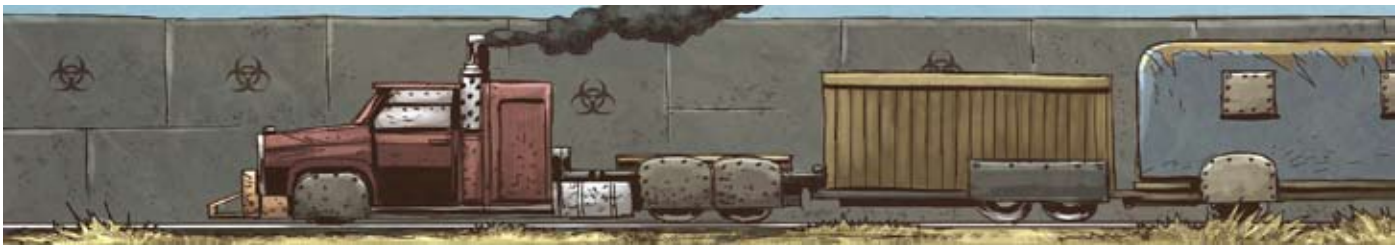
Caravans can be small, with only a dozen gypsies, or can be multi-generational, with 50 or more. Large groups are 50% likely to have empaths among them. Gypsies are vindictive and will kidnap or murder those who provoke them. Crossing them can result in curses, dark pacts, and similar witchcraft.



THE RAILWAY

Bisecting the Market into two semi-circular areas is the other main attraction of this locale, a working railroad track. This track and all traffic that moves on it are controlled by the largest and most organized gang known as the Brakemen. They adopted their name from old railroad terms for workers who assisted train conductors in slowing down old trains





when coming to a stop. The existence of a few working trains and a railroad that was relatively safe once the Brakemen began protecting it brought about the commerce that could sustain the Market as it grew. Many of the stall proprietors receive shipments of goods via the working trains run by the Brakemen. Goods are loaded by a proprietor's field agents at a distant station, and transported back to the Market for sale.

No one knows how many loading stations exist. Those hired to find and load goods at a loading station typically only know of the one they are instructed to use. Stations also change location or become abandoned and replaced over time. The Brakemen sometimes erect new stations seemingly overnight to adapt to losses from corporate attacks or losing a station to Demonground. The reach of the working railroad is also unknown to all but those on the inner sanctum of Brakemen leadership. Rumors claim there is working and guarded track all the way to North Georgia, but no one knows for sure.

BRAKEMEN ORGANIZATION

The Brakemen are a hybrid of urban gang and para-military group. They are better equipped than street gangs, so they draw more skilled recruits and capable members. They always recruit skilled mechanics, metal fabricators, and electricians to keep the railway and their fleet of modified vehicles working. Many top tier leaders are ex-law enforcement or military but the prevalent rumor is that a former NASA electrical engineer runs the operation from a mobile headquarters that is part train, part fortress.

Market Hub

Few have seen the inside of this fortress, but most would consider it the center of Brakemen control. It consists of a few remaining concrete buildings and several decommissioned train cars and shipping containers. A crude but functional barbed wire topped fence rings the hub, save where the railway enters from the east and exits in the west. At both points, a wooden watch tower is manned 24 hours a day. Fleet vehicles arrive and leave at all hours, and the hub generally never quiets down even in the late night/early morning.

The Fleet

Most of the vehicles that use the railway are not actually trains. The bulk of the fleet is made up of modified trucks and sport vehicles; their wheels replaced with railway wheels. Many vehicles also sport armor plating, battering rams and the occasional pintle mounted weapon emplacement. The Brakemen keep a working fleet of 25 to 40 of these vehicles which are responsible for the bulk of the import and export of the Market. In addition to the smaller transport vehicle fleet, there are two working trains. Each carries 3 to 5 cargo cars per run and always hosts a heavily armed defensive caboose car with gun emplacements, armor and a typical cadre of 6-

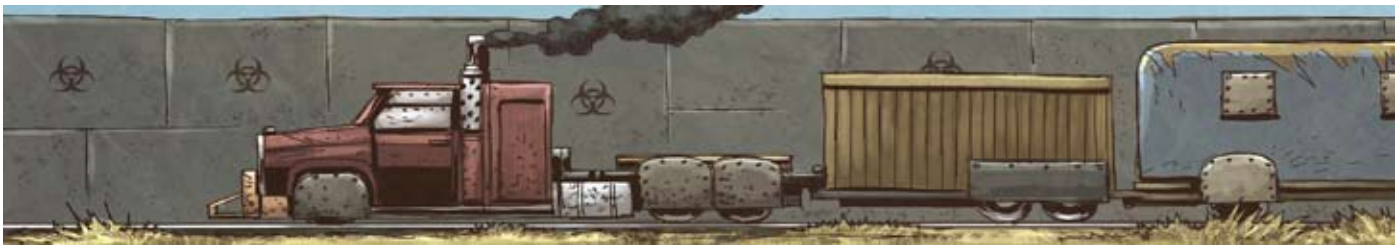
10 gunmen protecting the shipment. These trains handle the critical Market shipments; guns, food, and fuel.

Getting something into or out of the Market with one of the smaller vehicles comes with a 2-3 man armed escort and typically runs a flat fee of \$500 for normal wares but can run up to \$5,000 for in-demand weapons and technology. Moving goods in one of the actual trains is by invite only or for a very high fee in rare goods. For example, the two prominent gun runners who ship weapons into the Market via the trains always "donate" a case or two of rifle ammunition along with a dozen or so of the rifle du jour to get their goods moved safely. Having the right skills always helps in a bartering situation; PCs skilled in mechanics, electronics or willing to get their hands dirty may be able to trade work for travel or shipping of something via the railway.

Origin and the War

It is no secret to anyone spending more than a few days in the Market or its surrounding camps that the Brakemen are waging a guerilla war against a chemical manufacturing corporation called HyDrix. This clandestine battle of attrition has been one of the primary goals of the Brakemen since they organized and enforced their superiority amongst the gangs of the Market a few years ago. Seemingly overnight the Brakemen appeared with vehicles that could traverse the old railroads, with well armed groups of soldiers that could ensure goods made it to their destination. It was not long before they established dominance over the barter and commerce of the local area, and the Market grew rapidly around their way station. What no one could explain was where the original founding members came from and how they were so well equipped. The truth is a well-guarded secret only known to a few high-ranking members and the surviving agents of the original founders. Shortly after the Grays opened the gate on Io, one Gray science officer named Xal'Xatick watched in horror as his companions were possessed by the Dark Lords. He jettisoned an escape craft and crashed to Earth. His ship touched down deep in the Ocala National forest in central Florida where he remained in suspended animation for some time, until a small but well-organized group of Minion Hunters led by an ex-astronaut named Cal Dickson located and exhumed his craft. Dickson had some knowledge of the ETs' manipulating presence on Earth and tracked the location of the crashed ship using stolen data from his time at NASA. Although shrewd and distrustful of humans, Xal'Xatick had no other allies. Scavenging the working technology from his crashed ship and auctioning pieces to raise funds, Xal'Xatick and Dickson worked together to forge a resistance against the Grays who had sided with the Dark Lords. The first evidence of corrupted Gray activity the pair came upon was a pesticide manufacturer called HyDrix Chemicals.





HyDrix

HyDrix Chemicals is publicly known for the production of chemical pesticides and to a lesser degree industrial cleaning and degreasing products. The reality is that HyDrix Chemicals was infiltrated by Insectoid agents 5 years ago and is now testing and producing chemical weapons for use against humanity. HyDrix came to Xal'Xatick and Dickson's attention after an apparent crop dusting disaster left dozens dead and hundreds horrifically mutated near Jacksonville. The mutations caused by the toxic pesticides "mistakenly" dumped on a main street parade celebrating a high school football championship caused Xal'Xatick to call for Dickson and team to investigate. After stealing a sample of the same compound, Xal'Xatick's analysis proved non-terrestrial chemicals were in use. Since then Dickson and his team have been waging a guerilla war to disable HyDrix's capability to produce these weapons for their corrupt masters. The Brakemen serve as cover and a means to acquire funds and weapons for this crusade. HyDrix has two large chemical manufacturing plants that are constantly harried by Brakemen guerillas and demolitions teams. A third smaller plant was completely destroyed when one of Dickson's lieutenants, who had been terminally exposed to some of the chemical weapons during a night raid, drove a cement truck full of explosives into the plant. Brakemen raiders also attack and burn shipping convoys of HyDrix Chemicals' vessels, sinking boats laden with cargo owned by the corporation. HyDrix Chemicals continues to ramp up defense of their local interests. Recently funds have been allocated to allow the hiring of heavily armed HIRO security personnel (see Hyde Park, pg XX) to secure the local chemical plants. Small shell companies also spring up and disappear overnight to facilitate the chemical weapons testing. Companies like Bite Back pest control (see Hyde Park, pg XX) are able to setup quickly, run

several tests and then disappear before garnering too much public attention.

The Command Wagon

Dickson and Xal'Xatick continue to plot and scheme against HyDrix from the relative safety of their mobile command station nicknamed the Wagon. The Wagon is actually a pair of heavily modified 6000 horsepower diesel-electric freight engine cars connected back to back. Enhanced with the remains of Xal'Xatick's crashed ship, the Wagon is capable of travelling either direction on the railway and bristles with gun emplacements. Dickson rarely leaves the Wagon anymore after several near death injuries leading raids against HyDrix. Xal'Xatick is far too paranoid and distrustful of anyone else to ever leave the small laboratory he has aboard the Wagon. The Wagon rarely stays in the same place overnight. It is capable of laying and removing track on its own with specialized robotics developed by Xal'Xatick. This lets the Brakemen create new secret railways for their use and then abandon them when no longer needed or they become compromised.

Tracks to Nowhere

Occasionally intrepid explorers or gangs of brave youths will find small runs of track that spring up overnight in unpopulated areas. These runs are always shorter than 100 meters and both end and begin with no buildings or even a switching station. Rumors swirl that these tracks are haunted and being plied by some manner of ghost train, but this is false. In reality they are the product of a new venture by Xal'Xatick. These small track runs are used by vehicles that can cross into a small number of protodimensions. Recently Xal'Xatick's experiments have lead him to the discovery of a handful of protodimensions and the means by which to travel back and forth between

them. Modified vehicles use the tracks, charged with intense electrical currents and vibrating at specific frequencies, to move from Earth to these protodimensions. A small cadre of the Brakemens' top leadership is chosen by Dickson to make these journeys. The hope is that they can use these dimensions to effect raids deep into the heart of HyDrix's main manufacturing plants by skipping from one dimension to another and then into HyDrix's backyard.





NOTABLE NPCS

Maliq

Here is a dour and bookish man in his late 50s who is responsible for the arduous task of bookkeeping all the shipments and payments for those shipments to and from the Market. His office consists of two old shipping containers stacked near the center of The Hub itself. Some whisper that he is the ex-NASA employee who runs the gang but this is untrue. Maliq was a retired logistics and shipping expert operating for a naval shipping company, living out his retirement as a prole selling his vote to HyDrix. When he noticed a pattern of lesions welling up on his arms and legs as well as those of his neighbors', he suspected that the tenement building's water supply was being used to test chemicals on their occupants. During his investigations, he was approached by the Brakemen and recruited to aid in their crusade against HyDrix. Although he is mostly free of the skin lesions he still walks with a cane and a pronounced limp. Maliq can serve as a good contact for one of the PCs if the GM wishes to bring the Brakemen and their war into the campaign. He is also the source for getting things moved into and out of the Market should they need to do so.



Maliq

STR 4, CON 4, AGL 4, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 7, PSI 1, SOC 5, INIT 1 Skills 2, Navigation 5, Swimming 5, Streetwise 3, Act/Bluff 3, Observation 5

Cal Dickson

Dickson is a graying tower of a man, his face scarred from recent shrapnel wounds. Serving as one of the last NASA astronauts to walk on the moon before private corporations and military concerns carved it up amongst themselves, he left NASA bitter and distrustful of a renewed military interest in space exploration. He was later approached by a small group of younger would be conspiracy theorists claiming they had evidence of a secret alien invasion of Earth. Reluctant but curious Dickson used old contacts to help his new friends discover a series of shocking secrets, ultimately leading to their unearthing of Xal'Xatick's crashed escape pod in Ocala. Although their relationship is rocky, Dickson and Xal'Xatick understand that neither can accomplish their goals without the other; Dickson wishing to protect humanity from the

impending war and Xal'Xatick seeking a way to escape Earth and destroy the companions he saw corrupted.

Cal Dickson

STR 7, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 8, CHR 7, PSI 1, SOC 5, INIT 2 Skills 2, Navigation 5, Starship Architecture 5, Astrogration, Observation 4

Quick and Dirty Adventure Seeds

- PCs notice a cyborg escapee among the crowd after brushing into someone with a metal arm or hands.

- PCs are approached by a rival gang for recruitment in a turf war against the Brakemen

- PCs are approached for mission against HyDrix Chemicals by a Brakemen lieutenant seeking some cheap muscle for a raid against HIRO secured convoys.

- PCs are hired by Tampete law enforcement or another group to investigate claims of railroad tracks leading nowhere

- PCs have evidence of Dark Minion activity. Using the Market as cover, these minions have human agents aiding their infiltration and corruption of powerful Market gangs.

- A young contact or child of a PC contact goes missing after recruitment by a small local gang.

- A rash of poisonings breaks out among the populace. Syndra's Slophouse is the first epicenter of many poisonings that have strange hallucinatory effects that lead the afflicted to commit strange and sometimes violent acts.





TOWN 'N' COUNTRY

The Outlaw Oasis

Town 'n' Country was a social experiment; a lure for criminals, unemployed and other undesirables to a centralized location in the outlands for a cost expected to be less than that of law enforcement and welfare. The area became one of the worst blemishes on the history of Tampete.

Town 'n' Country is a flood zone that becomes a disaster area during sustained rains. During the second half of the 20th century, the population rose to 100,000 prompting investment in infrastructure to match the projected growth. In the early 2000s as Tampete centralized and its fringes emptied, Town 'n' Country remained an attractive oasis in the Outlaw due to those investments.

Fortified water pipes and utility cabling remained operational; there were simply no water or power sources. If those could be turned back on, they would work with the still-functioning sewage system to make the place habitable.

In 2020, the City of Tampete authorized reinstatement of power and water (but not telephone) to the area, subject to throttling and daily limits. Have-nots were rounded up and put here as one of the few outlaw zones with still-working or near-working infrastructure.

The following year, the City of Tampete passed ordinances permitting banishment to Town 'n' Country for some offenses. They established perimeter security, more to keep criminals in than others out, although only those with valid trading licenses were allowed in and out.

White Light, the Bleed, and the Flood

White Light (see Factions and Personalities, p.120) operated here and enacted quarantines for any epidemic, real or imagined. And they sampled heavily from the population.

In January of this year, there were rumors of a mysterious plague called the Bleed. Victims were said to be blinded and/or deafened, secreting a red/black blood-like substance from their eyes, noses and mouths. Some attained a zombie-like state, and it was even said that some of the dead returned to wreak their vengeance upon the living. Although plagues in the area were common, White Light requested assistance from the CDC for this one. In a tragic coincidence during the same month, Hurricane Marduke rolled through Tampete prompting the worst flood in Town 'n' Country's history, utterly devastating the area.

The catastrophic results were that those fleeing Town 'n' Country were murdered on sight by security, police and even

civilians who feared the plague. When the storms abated a few days later, it was discovered that less than 5% of the casualties were affected by any disease. Most that remained in Town 'n' Country were consumed by plague or drowned.



Town 'n' Country Today

Town 'n' Country is a literal ghost town. Power and utilities are cut and most of the fortified infrastructure is ruined. A few junkyards remain and some buildings still stand. They say the bodies from Hurricane Marduke are still here to be reclaimed (or looted) but none risk the journey here. Rumors of the plague persist as do whispers of worse things.

Quick and Dirty Adventure Seeds

- The place is heavily overgrown and people tell stories of strange reptilian creatures living here; some bipedal, some flying, a few even breathing fire.
- Last month, a mosquito fogger helicopter was downed with no known cause. The last radio transmissions made mention of dozens of men in pressurized SCUBA suits engaging in some kind of drilling exercise.
- A supposed heir to the Mueces family line (see Faction and Personalities, p.112) going by the moniker El Espectro who abandoned his responsibilities and pursued an occult calling has been seen in the fringes around Town 'n' Country. Some say he speaks with those who have died there. Some say he commands them. Some say he brought both the plague and the storm.
- A coven of Weepers (see Dark Adversaries, p.168) inhabits the area. They pose as survivors of the recent storm who have taken refuge in a wind-blown shanty which has somehow survived the elements. A few are nesting and the rest are in heat which doesn't bode well for any male PCs.





SAFETY HARBOR

Safety Harbor is the abandoned area northwest of the bays. Once an upper, middle-class community with good schools, libraries and public parks, it declined during the early 2000s as people migrated to inner Tampete. By 2020, it became nearly barren.

Now the area hosts only squatters, survivalists, gangs, drug dealers and the mad. A few stores remain open but these are of the gasoline and convenience store variety. Power must be generated and the water boiled or filtered. A few major roads (McMullen-Booth and SR 580) have some traffic but this is diminishing. The roads are drivable, but dangerous. The parks have since all closed.

The oldest settled lands in Florida (being inhabited since the Stone Age), Safety Harbor has an enduring mythology regarding native Tocobaga Indians, ghosts and haunted residences, and more recently, a good number of Demonground areas. One such legend chronicles Hernando de Soto's search for the Fountain of Youth.

MOBBLY BAYOU

This nearly 400 acre area at the north end of the bays was once a nature preserve but became a popular dumping site for corporations in the 2000s. Dumping continues via SR 580 from inner Tampete though it is primarily done via the bay itself.

The inhabitants of Mobbly Bayou are mostly highly mutated beasts with Darkling activity amidst many patches of Demonground. The most common of these are a species seemingly unique to Tampete called Bog Trolls (see Dark Adversaries, p.151) which thrive in the toxic wetland.

PHILLIPPE PARK

Phillippe Park was the oldest park in Pinellas County. It featured a mile-long shoreline walk, a boat ramp and typical park amenities although its major attraction was an historic Tocobaga Indian mound until the mound's mysterious desecration in 2023, after which the park was closed to the public.

The once-paved roads are now dirt or gravel paths with only traces of blacktop remaining. The fields are overgrown, and the shore waters are dark with bay pollution. The park is frequented only by gangs, various mutated beasts and the largest remaining Tocobaga settlement in Tampete.

The Tocobaga are led by Chief Neucoxi, rumored to

have risen from the dead, clambered from his burial mound to once again lead his people. None of this can be substantiated because no outsider has seen the Chief and returned. What is known is that the Tocobaga are prominent and very territorial. Some say their shamans animate trees to harass trespassers and that the stones themselves cry in protest at intruders. They hold secret rituals to speak with spirits from other worlds, and they make unholy pacts promoting the downfall of civilization.

Gang activity is limited to the boat ramps where drugs and contraband are traded, ultimately making their way to the Diablo Blanco cartel (see Factions and Personalities, p.109). The Tocobaga do not interfere so long as it stays near the ramps.

An exception of note is the so-called Darwin's Creed gang that is based in the park and is on unusually good terms with the Tocobaga people. The gang is comprised of outcasts, criminals, anarchists, Nukids and ordinary men who see humanity as a parasite upon the earth. As such, the gang deals with mankind on that level; stealing from them, selling drugs to them, using them for their various schemes and exterminating them at their leisure. In this, there is philosophical overlap with the Tocobaga.

Darwin's Creed uses the boat ramp for their drug trade. Although subservient to Diablo Blanco, rumblings persist that this will soon change, and they confront other gangs who do business here. They are active in their park surveillance and, in a mutually beneficial relationship with the Tocobaga, have aided and been aided by them.





CAMP SOULE

Fifty acres of wilderness served as campgrounds for the Boy Scouts of America since 1930. When the organization disbanded in 2016, the grounds were bought up by Corn Trust, an agro-farming company.

In 2017, heavy construction equipment uncovered unidentifiable but highly radioactive mineral deposits while excavating drainage fields. Within hours, the crew that uncovered it died from acute radiation poisoning. NEST (Nuclear Emergency Support Team) and the CDC were immediately dispatched but none returned, sending the death count to over a hundred. Amidst reports of severely mutated humans, the camp was quarantined and permanently closed.

What Really Happened

The radioactive material is the remnant of a prehistoric meteor strike that likely caused many cancers and mutations within the camp grounds and surrounding area before the material was every discovered.

The radiation attracted a Bhuta and its children (see Dark Races, p8) who inhabited nearby Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park, a 25-acre cemetery, until a group of locals doused the graveyard with gasoline in order to drive them out. When the workers uncovered the meteorite, they stumbled upon the Bhuta tunnels.

Death was swift and absolute. Worse, the Bhuta and the Darbas (its children) were mutated by the radiation. Some Darbas, already enjoying intelligence beyond typical zombies, gained radioactive melee attacks or the ability to survive for an extended periods without its parent. Some developed empathic powers, sex drives, or the ability to spawn other Darbas, which could combine into other Bhutas.

MEESE HOSPITAL

Meese, the area's largest hospital, shut down after the mass exodus toward inner Tampete. When that happened, a local German gang calling themselves Die Mond Ritter (literally "the Moon Knights") invaded the hospital and drove out remaining staff, claiming the place and its equipment for themselves. The well-armed gang deterred looters and even police for awhile.

One night, scouting for refrigerated blood for his brood, a vampire found the place and feasted upon all within in a ritual blood bath horrific enough to convince Tampete S.W.A.T. teams to declare Meese and its environs Outlaw. Within days, the vampire returned with his brood to establish residence there. The vampires have taken to using the gang's clothing and moniker as they terrorize those foolish enough to wander too close. They keep a few Igors to guard the place during the day. To this end, the hospital equipment has been useful.





BRADENTON

No one goes to Bradenton anymore. The mist that shrouds it can be seen from the north side of the Skyway Bridge and sometimes the noises can be heard too. Everyone knows the rumors; animals as big as houses, birds as big as planes.

More likely it was the Outlaw motorcycle gangs who repeatedly rolled over the bridge to pillage South St. Petersburg which precipitated the construction of National Guard-manned check points on the north side of it, and its closure on October 12th, 2024.

The next months were a steady stream of automatic gunfire and explosions on the bridge and subsequent GNN coverage blackouts. On January 7th, 2025, the bridge collapsed with no official explanation offered.

It is said Bradenton is now home only to survivalist communities amidst vast patches of Demonground. These aren't the "barbs" of Palm Harbor or Safety Harbor or the little groves of terror which dot some of the Pinellas Park woodlands. Murmurs persist of an entire terraformed region, dozens of square miles in size, the terrain of which looks completely alien to Earth.

DarkNet forums boast that the whole of Myakka River State Park is a massive nesting area for beasts both extraterrestrial and demonic.

Quick and Dirty Plot Seeds

- Lake Parrish, Lake Manatee, the Manatee River and parts of the Gulf have all been gratuitously drilled for oil during the past decade, long after these areas were deserted. Recently, due either to the thinning veil between our plane and other protodimensions, or due to the rampant drilling born of oil fervor, companies have inadvertently breached extra-dimensional seals into unknown and terrible protodimensions. The waterways are now filled with Bog Trolls, Mud Demons, Water Wyrms and Dragoons. The drilling rigs were subsequently abandoned, however some Darklings have tried to use these things to breach more portals.

- Tesseract Navigators mapped a series of rails that would lead to Bradenton as a contingency plan. However, due to the work of misguided investigators, one of the trains barreled through a portal from Tesseract into Bradenton carrying an Interrupter (see Protodimensions, p53). The device should have destroyed the portal, but due to an unforeseen malfunction, a permanent conduit between the two planes was created. Since then, the awful, post-apocalyptic beasts from Tesseract have been pouring into Myakka River State Park.

- The mist that Bradenton is now renowned for seems to seep from the ground. On water, it is gray and thick; on land, it is a yellow/green, sickly miasma. This haze is born of Zenon technology which converts natural gases in the Earth's crust into the caustic fumes. The mist provides cover from satellite and air surveillance of the elaborate lairs, hives, and nests that the Zenon are building in Bradenton.

- Once a year, the Tocobaga travel here to conduct a ritual which demands the sacrifice of nine young, pure maidens. The ritual culminates in a downpour of bloody rain that is said to call forth a demon; a weapon of vengeance to use against the American masses who have taken their land (see Morrigan in Dark Races, p72).





BRANDON, PLANT CITY, AND LAKELAND

These Outlaw areas to the east of Tampete are a mixed bag. A few survivalist communities linger, but the area is widely renowned for its danger and its unpredictability.

Brandon

Brandon has been looted, re-looted, combed over with metal detectors, and then monitored for anyone passing through with anything of value. A few bands of raiders reside here. The largest is a group of scavengers and criminals known as Boone's Boys.

The Boys have a fleet of reinforced trucks, off-road vehicles, and an arsenal of weapons to protect them. They patrol the area for gear, food, and slave labor. They set up base in the old Brandon Mall, which they fortified and protected with barbed wire fencing and makeshift IEDs. Not all the Boys know how to read a landmine map though and accidents happen.

A little north of Brandon, in the abandoned Colson Elementary School, the Brakemen keep a secret rail station that houses a portal to Tesseract. They run midnight trains between here and Oldsmar; treks which take less than ten minutes. They also store cars of innocuous materials here, which can be substituted for special cars intended for transit to Tesseract.

Plant City and Lakeland

Plant City and Lakeland are mostly undeveloped areas and abandoned road-side structures. A few agricultural farms are here but they frequently relocate when the soil becomes chemically poisoned beyond any potential for re-use. The crops and fertilizer compounds also draw the largest insects, worms, and pests in the area.

Darkling influence is pervasive with Demonground patches spreading for miles west of Fort Meade and north of Fort Meade (with the latter of these spawning murmurs on DarkNet of graves in Rogers Cemetery being used as nests and cocoons for some extraterrestrial race). There is also an influx of problems from Manatee and Bradenton ever since the Skyway Bridge was demolished in 2025.

Quick and Dirty Plot Seeds

- A band of Dark Elves has been experimenting with sound frequencies and found one that is lethal to humans; it causes internal bleeding and nerve damage with concentrated exposure. Naturally, the Elves have constructed satellite dishes capable of transmitting the frequencies at extremely high ranges and decibel levels. Abandoned cars filled with bloody messes have subsequently been found in the area with little to no explanation offered.
- Route 60 through Brandon has long been a popular fishing hole for Insane Grays looking to abduct isolated travelers. However, last year, an ET saucer targeted the wrong ATV with its tractor beams as one of its passengers returned fire with an M136, sending the thing spiraling into a pond near Hopewell. The Grays survived the impact but their communication array was damaged. They now continue their abductions on foot, bringing their quarry back to their submerged craft for experimentation.
- Years ago, while stalking investigators in Sydney Dover Trails, Bart and Otis Hollister stumbled upon a nest of Braineaters (see Dark Races, p14). Luckily for the Hollisters, Junior was returning from a fishing run with a truckload of drunken muscle; luckily for the Braineaters, Junior thought some of them were cute. Fast forward a decade or so, and the Hollisters have holed up in an abandoned church with a few of the domesticated things and a litter full of little spiky young-uns. Adapting to children's diet wasn't easy, but they converted one of the church transepts to a generator-powered walk-in cooler; the meat hooks of which were used to store the bodies of travelers and poachers for their young.





WATERWAYS AND BEACHES

Florida (and in particular Tampete) is known for unpredictable and often destructive weather. Nothing better demonstrates that than Tampete's waterways.

These areas include:

- The Gulf
- Beaches and Islands
- The Bridges
- Tampa Bay
- The Underbay
- Hillsborough River





THE GULF

Ever since the American EPA declared in 2002 that it would no longer enforce environmental controls in the Gulf of Mexico, it has become a green and brown graveyard created by repeated oil drilling accidents, toxic dumping, red tide buildup and other environmental disasters.

Marine life is sparse near the shores. Deeper in the Gulf, it exists but is highly mutated. Nature has selected species with yellow or brown mottled colors as they tend to blend better with the Gulf waters. Many species' sight organs have devolved to simple depressions capable of detecting only the presence or absence of light. Many new, gigantic species of eels, snakes, sharks and mammals have been observed, however it's hard to separate legitimate species from the ubiquitous fiction of fifteen-meter leviathans and floating, tentacular cephalopods. But commercial ships assume the worst and arm themselves with high-caliber automatic weapons.

MERCHANT TRADE IN THE GULF

There are trade routes to New Orleans, Oil Bay and Texamoros (in Texas), Mexico, Yucatan and Cuba, although due to a few of the natural (and unnatural) phenomena described below, these routes vary. It is becoming more common to trade with Florida's eastern Gold Coast by ship rather than overland although it is debatable which is truly safer.

Ports exist in Clearwater, Seminole, Indian Shores and South St. Petersburg. Most of these are desolate beach properties with well-defended warehousing and transport facilities to inner Tampete.

Domestic trade is typically handled by medium motorboats for smaller companies (Cris Croft Foamdancers) or by oil tankers, bulk carriers, and container ships for larger companies and international trade.

Drug smuggling continues to be rampant throughout the Gulf area. With the Coast Guard spread thin and the DEA virtually unfunded, drug running is accepted as a nearly risk-free practice, at least as far as legal ramifications. Smugglers are still vulnerable to pirates, vigilantes, rival drug runners, and natural phenomenon. Runners used to pilot small motorboats with single machineguns or grenade launchers fitted but, due to the escalating risk of combat, many have switched to the Foamdancers that some of the merchants use. (See South Tampa and Factions and Personalities subsections for more information on the various drug running factions in Tampete).

Pirates

The Gulf is rampant with piracy. The flashier of these guys, the Wickermen (see Honeymoon Island, p.96), tend to use katanas and convincing pirate garb although they arm themselves and their boats with automatic weapons.

Then there are the drug runners. La Familia (see Davis Islands, p.51) and other smugglers who supplement their income by harassing smaller, defenseless boats and take whatever they can loot.

When pirates attack commercial liners, the Coast Guard may dispatch RB-Ms (15-meter medium response boats) or Sikorsky MH-60T Jayhawks but the pirates usually slip away before they arrive.



THE MAELSTROM

Within the Gulf is a gigantic and persistent electrical storm originating from a nebulous gloom hanging over hundreds of square miles of roiling waters. It has the meteorological pattern of a super-massive hurricane that never makes landfall or leaves the Gulf. It is dangerous and unpredictable, and at its center is a gargantuan churning whirlpool.

It has consumed many vessels and aircraft. Assumed casualties of lightning or heavy winds, most are never seen again. A few have returned weeks, months or years later; sometimes historic ships (old steamboats and the like) and stranger, alien vessels. Their crews: dead or gone or replaced with surrogates of a more sinister nature.





Genesis

"You know nothing. Hell is only a word. The reality is much, much worse."

- Dr. Weir, Event Horizon

Although few know this (not even ISAAC), the maelstrom hides a roaming portal to a terrible protodimension of unceasing ionic and energy storms. The inhabitants are incorporeal, inherently evil, and dominated by a Dark Lord who refers to himself (in his own language) as the First Wraith and to his world (again in his own language) as "Genesis", a sick joke as the protodimension is completely inhospitable to all forms of carbon-based life.

The inhabitants of Genesis are wraiths, specters, ghosts, haunts, and similar evil spirits. They cannot live in our universe without a corporeal host. Therefore, they wait for the careless to pass into their dimension and then they dominate those forms. Most visitors have died before passing into Genesis, but those who are not are irrevocably driven from their bodies and left to haunt Genesis of their own accord, destined to be driven insane in their drifting.

Any corporeal thing may be possessed; bodies, objects, even large vessels like ocean liners or aircraft carriers, for which possession is simply a question of mass. Vessels that do return to Earth are often sentient (possessed by multiple wraiths and specters) and motivated toward providing their Dark Lord with more corporeal life forms and to committing evil in all of its forms.

Genesis has portals to many other protodimensions. Sometimes Earth vessels have been navigated to these places. Sometimes vessels from these places have been sent to Earth. The First Wraith exploits any opportunity to send his minions into dimensions he perceives as ripe for infestation. For more information on Genesis, see the New Protodimensions section in this supplement.

THE SAUCER

Deep in the Gulf of Mexico, 300 miles south of New Orleans (and about as far north of Merida), lays one of its most enduring mysteries. Reports from traders, travelers, and captured drug smugglers describe a massive, dark gray, disk-like object hovering nearly a quarter mile above the waters. It is over a hundred meters in diameter (the size of a sports arena), made of reflective plastic or a high-sheen metal, and it spins (sometimes clockwise, sometimes counter-clockwise depending on who you listen to) at speeds rapid enough to churn water into a vortex sending off small water-spouts.

In April of 2032, after six months of related reports, wild speculation typical of things like this prompted the Coast

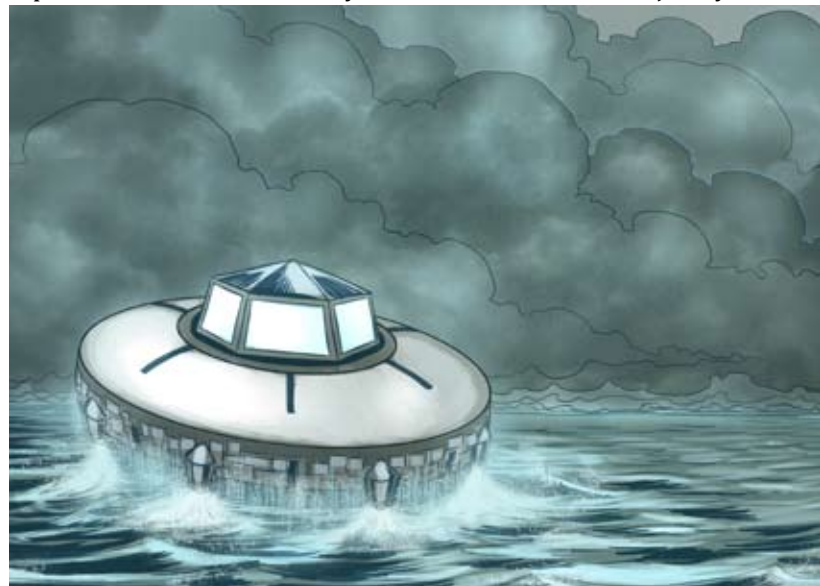
Guard to investigate the phenomenon but without success. A few original witnesses returned to the location and also saw no evidence although a few failed to return. The rumors and stories were officially classified as a hoax.

Now, although the vast majority of travelers report unremarkable trips, new reports regarding the saucer circulate, particularly on DarkNet. Government, military, and private analysts continue to investigate, performing geological surveys and sonar tests, but they routinely fail to find evidence. Tabloids of lesser repute affirm these organizations have simply masked their findings.

The hacker community dedicates entire newsgroups and web sites to uncovering the truth of the "Gulf Saucer" as it is called. Occasionally, meteorological reports and satellite photographs reveal anomalies that would seem to warrant further investigation, but most claim these images are digitally altered. And while reports are similar in their details, speculation as to the Gulf Saucer's purpose varies greatly. Some suspect the testing of secret military aircraft by the United States, Cuba, or Mexico. Some claim it is a naval base of some kind. Others say it is a nuclear power facility, conveniently set up to dump its wastes into the Gulf. Some think it is a remote Dreamland whose residents desire privacy. And of course no few amount of people suspect aliens, Heaven, or some similar outlandish explanation.

The truth is that many of these people are right.

In August of 2031, ISAAC discovered portals to Primitus Domus within Tampa Bay and immediately perceived its mysterious denizens as a high-risk threat (see Primitus Domus, p.180). ISAAC subsequently sought options to navigate the protodimension, indefinitely if need be, but could not justify





the enormity of the resources required to finance such an operation.

After embarking on a lengthy and massive social engineering campaign amongst some of North America's most wealthy individuals and companies (offering incentives from tax breaks, to contracts, to access to classified technology), ISAAC was able to provide clandestine direction to build and test a kind of self-sufficient, mobile bio-dome.

External solar panels and internal nuclear reactors provide heat, which powers the pervasive steam-based technology that ISAAC has learned of and is piloting here. This technology (see *Primitus Domus*, p.180), powers onboard navigation/operation devices, communication, food production and virtually all operations except for a handful of emergency systems.

Elaborate heat retention and insulation systems allow longer-term operation of the vessel in environments absent of solar power or radioactive material.

The saucer is the first recent example of self-sufficient energy and food production in the Americas. It can submerge to depths of over 10,000 meters (deeper than any ocean) and can freely roam about the Gulf although the water traps, which harvest energy for it, are directly beneath the location it has been most often seen. Filters within these traps and in the saucer itself remove contaminants from the Gulf and break them down into more energy.

The Gulf Saucer has not escaped notice of the Dark Lords or their dominated ET pawns, although most of them don't consider it as a threat yet. For now, they seem content merely to watch and perhaps plan some over-elaborate but distant demise of the thing.

PIRATE RADIO STATIONS

Radio enthusiasts in the Gulf or on the coast sometimes intercept AM or short-wave radio broadcasts of unknown origin similar to the widely publicized "number stations" of the 1960s used by smugglers and less scrupulous groups. These transmissions are frequently electronic noise and synthetic speech and may contain lists of numbers and letters, nonsensical but foreboding anecdotes, or undecipherable codes. Voices tend to be female, child-like, or robotic.

Triangulating the brief and bursty broadcasts is difficult because they are mobile, leading many to believe that the transmitters are aboard ghost ships navigating about the Gulf.

Rumors abound of listeners whose behavior have been radically altered after hearing the broadcasts. Cases of catatonia, internal hemorrhaging, and even death also have been reported but never substantiated.

What complicates this mystery is that there are many unrelated sources of these "numbers stations". Historically, governments did use them to facilitate the transfer of information obtained covertly. Now they are often used by drug runners from Mexico and Central America to circumvent law enforcement.

Several groups of insane Tentacular ETs are piloting stations like these as triggers to induce sociopathic reactions in people who have been previously exposed to certain drugs or chemicals. The idea being that the subjects enter a state very similar to the empathic vulnerability the ETs once endured when they were overpowered by the Dark Lords (see *Coors-O'Doules Brewery*, p.56).





BEACHES AND ISLANDS

Florida beaches aren't the pristine dunes of white sand and waves of aquamarine that they once were.

Now the sands are sickly yellow/brown and sometimes green, smothered by thick gray/green smog, which rolls off of the Gulf. The waters are brown and gray. Pollution reaches epic proportions and the majority of the coast is at toxic levels of radioactivity due to chemical and nuclear waste dumping.

Amidst this poisonous terrain are a handful of well-protected trading ports, a few privately owned and operated islands and the occasional stretch of "Bubbles" which are surreal resorts of elaborate and palatial pods, protected from the elements and contaminated environment.

BEACH ENCOUNTERS

The Drowned, The Sand Wights

Amidst the dunes and countless unmarked graves on the Gulf Coast linger the unburied dead and stories of those beyond death; stories of beach chasms defying the typical Florida terrain in their depth and vastness. They whisper of winding trails through impossibly deep sand barrows, perhaps the very maws of Hell. And there is some truth in these stories.

In the 2010s and 2020s, Tampete's chaotic climate spawned a seemingly endless series of hurricanes from the Gulf. They pounded on smaller communities still dotting the coast as well as drifters, survivalists, and anyone else mad enough to travel the beaches. Add a steady stream of Cuban and Latin American refugees risking the Gulf waters and washing up on beaches, and the more irregular but plentiful bodies from commercial liners destroyed by Gulf storms.

The beaches are now a literal graveyard.

The Gulf waters and coasts have long been known for the thin veil between our dimension and those of a more supernatural design. "Soft places" so to speak; where conduits to other dimensions exist not by any portal, but by rite or by process. The Tocobaga natives who once practiced their ancient rituals upon the Gulf shores (and who have returned to do so) could speak volumes to portals that only open under certain phases of the moon; to trails that appear when the dunes are crossed against the paths of the planets and stars; to valleys revealing themselves to the dying as they whisper their prayers.

Sometimes the dead visit these valleys and return. Sometimes they die before making the journey and their bodies are inhabited by something already there.

The Sand Wights are these angry souls though others wander the Gulf shores too. They hate life and all it represents, seeing it as an unfair opportunity for the still-living to avoid a fate such as theirs. Although Sand Wights speak, it is no knowable language. Their whispers drive sanity from men as their touch drives life from them (see *Dark Adversaries*, p.163).

GULF BOULEVARD

This is the primary access to Clearwater beaches. Once an active, touristy through-way, Gulf Boulevard is now a ghost town bereft of water or power. Abandoned hotels, stores, condos, and some of the creepiest ghost stories imaginable are all that are left here. Sand Wights are said to lair in the beaches, and many a careless traveler have fallen victim to Nukids or the ubiquitous snake pits that infest the areas beneath creaky floorboards and within the coastal overgrowth.

Any still-operating facilities (mostly secured warehouses or Coast Guard facilities) have generators and bring in their own food and water.

COMMERICAL GULF BEACH PORTS

Companies that can't afford dock rates at Harbour Island, Davis Island or Channelside typically receive and store their cargo in the well-fortified Commercial Gulf Beach Ports. The two largest secured docks are the Clearwater Docks at the west end of Gulf Boulevard and the Seminole Docks at the western end of Park Boulevard. Smaller ports dot the Gulf Coast too.

Much of the area between the docks and inner Tampete is simply quiet, vacated long ago and with no real infrastructure to make revitalization worthwhile. Veer too far away from the docks, though, and you'll find yourself in one of the many Demonground pockets lining the shores and abandoned beachfront property.

Clearwater Docks

Most of the docks and warehouses are here. Security is prominent on the shore and within the coastal waters. Most of that is private security but those vessels are complimented by U.S. Coast Guard ships. Still, between deployments in the Gulf and Bradenton Skyway, the Coast Guard is spread thin.

Seminole Docks

This moderate-sized set of docks, warehouses, and attached shipyard is collectively managed by M-Power Enterprises. This company also manages properties within the Old Tampa City Cannery, and many of the same automated processes are in place for security and maintenance.





THE BUBBLES

Small pockets of Dreamland are sprinkled across the Gulf Coast as well. These are small, domed structures of strong, translucent plastics of less than a kilometer-diameter with private security and contracts for supply deliveries from inner Tampete.



Belleair Mists

This resort, located just south of Sand Key Park on Belleair Beach, houses about 50 prominent families and business leaders who use it as a second home although there are a handful of timeshares here too.

An oval dome with adjustable opacity covers the community. Although rare, there are sometimes clear skies when Belleair Mists residents are treated to a staggering (UV filtered) sunrise or sunset, or breathtaking views of the moon and stars. The rest of the time, the dome's visual filters display the surrounding environment more aesthetically. At night, there are planetarium or laser light shows sometimes augmented by music and fireworks.

The dome is a kilometer long and a quarter of that wide (stretching partially into the Gulf). Filtration systems installed into the dome make the water swimmable and even drinkable.

There is less security than in the larger Dreamlands but it is prominent and concentrated in complexes outside the dome entrance. The southern edge has access to S. Belleair Causeway, a secure conduit into Tampete.

The property is owned and maintained by Di-Tek Industries which is also the manufacturer of the plastics used in the dome. Di-Tek Industries CEO Felix Herrmann makes his principle residence here although he is rarely seen. In actuality, he maintains an elaborate underground complex where he oversees testing of a strange new heat-based technology. Nuclear waste, the by-product of this testing, is routinely dumped into Sand Key Park, just north of the dome.

HONEYMOON ISLAND

Honeymoon Island has always been a vacationers' paradise, drawing the nation's elite to move here in the 2000s and 2010s before gulf and beach pollution was as bad as it is today. As the population grew, the cost of road maintenance and security for the island became overwhelming. The state levied hefty taxes on the island to fund this, however residents could not rely on law enforcement or administrative services despite these new taxes, so they financed their own security and property management teams.

On August 11th, 2018, the residents successfully petitioned to secede from the State of Florida and became known as the Commonwealth of Honeymoon Island.

On August 14th, 2018, days after its secession, Honeymoon Island was overwhelmed by large bands of pirates. Rumors of the attack leaked to the mainland, however it was now out of Florida State's jurisdiction. Within days, thousands of nomadic pirates had migrated to the island, leaving no evidence of the community's former occupants.

A military strike was anticipated but it never happened. The area is now an uncontrolled zone and is not monitored in any official capacity. Dens of naval marauders are now firmly established upon the island, which has no remaining infrastructure services. Strife among the marauders is rampant but conflict is limited to the Gulf rather than on the island itself. The rogues show an uncanny willingness to maintain island security through collaboration.

The Wickermen

Of the many so-called pirate dens in the Tampete waterways, the Wickermen are the most renowned due to their numbers and methods of attack. They number around 400, and they have an uncanny knack for detecting valuables among thousands of ships in Tampete each month, leading to speculation that the Wickermen have infiltrated local businesses in Tampete.

Many choose to wear poofy red or white jackets and leather pants over Kevlar and often sport pointy black boots and even cutlasses. The props they wear or decorate their vessels with were actually stolen from the once-traditional Gasparilla Invasion, which was an annual parade in Hillsborough Bay. The Wickermen often reenact this "invasion" (firing live cannons while forcing folks to "walk the plank") if they encounter uncooperative prey in the Gulf. Yet they are merciful to a fault with vessels that offer no resistance.

Captain Gregory Amish leads the den. Amish is the unlikely product of a ten-year career in real estate turned sour during the Greater Depression. His charisma and leadership skills earned him the trust and capital of many still well-to-do





investors. He invested this into a prominent Tampete shipyard in a dubious scheme to cheaply import produce from Latin America.

Within a year of opening the yard, Amish's true plans came to fruition. Under the guise of importing produce and coffee, Amish smuggled vast quantities of narcotics from South America and, during one such run, the Wickermen earned their name.

The story goes something like this. Some time ago when naval law enforcement was still a concern, Amish's ships were fitted with industrial mixing and dispersion systems that mixed narcotics with standard fuel to disperse it into the Gulf in the event the authorities tried to board them. This hampered evidence collection and incidentally made the surrounding waters flammable. After the D.E.A. boarded Amish's vessel, finding no hard evidence, they interrogated the crew. Tempers

flared and it escalated into a gunfight. A stray round set the surrounding waters ablaze. Amish's men overpowered the D.E.A. and seized their vessel. Amish's own ship, having been padded with South American outdoor furniture, burned as if in effigy.



Now the Wickermen focus on piracy and extortion. Their ships are well-armed, and their intelligence is top-notch. Some have even speculated that Captain Amish is empathic.

Gregory Amish

STR 7, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 6,
CHR 9, PSI 1, SOC 7, INIT 3
Skills 2, Navigation 5, Swimming 5,
Streetwise 3, Act/Bluff 3, Observation
5, Autogun 4, Slug Weapons 4

TERRA VERDE

In October of 2024, the Skyway Bridge was closed and was subsequently demolished a few months later. Much of the rhetoric as to why had to do with Tampete's inability to maintain the bridge or enforce border security, however one real reason the bridge was closed was to stop the influx of unexplained phenomena (see Bradenton, p.89).

When the Skyway was demolished and the related toll roads closed, the entrances to Isla Del Sol and Terra Verde were blocked off. Abandoned long ago due to decades of increasing storm activity, the City of Tampete eventually condemned the area.

Ultima Ignus

After the access to Terra Verde was eliminated, the area was purchased by a clandestine string of puppet and shell companies, all giving indirect allegiance to a relatively new company called Ultima Ignus. Initially, these shell companies seemed to have little to do with each other (except for their common interest in Terra Verde), but as they developed the land, patterns began to appear.

Stromm Incorporated develops subterranean drilling and extraction equipment. Celeriputo Enterprises has developed a proprietary microprocessor that uses heat instead of alternating electrical current. Scienta Terram constructs aquatic probes used in oceanography and ocean cartography. Calornavitas produces energy via a propriety method of harvesting the water in the Bay.

Ultima Ignus is a secretive company that publically invests in petroleum, but which has yet to distribute any significant volume of the stuff. The company buys up the drilling rights in the Gulf and the Bay Area (areas unknown for their petroleum richness) and then invests in research and security for these areas. So what's actually happening?

Ultima Ignus was founded by entrepreneurs who were approached by denizens of the Primitus Domus protodimensions in Tampa Bay. These silent and utterly mysterious individuals communicated their desire for certain parcels of land and access to certain resources. In exchange, they were provided with advanced technology that promises to make them all billionaires virtually overnight. The only thing holding them back is scalability (no one has figured out how to mass produce the stuff yet).

What the Primitus Domus denizens get out of this isn't quite clear but questions on the topic are not welcome. Even a little information about Ultima Ignus is a very dangerous thing, and Franklin Lott, Tampete resident and CEO of the company, has made willful ignorance part of the company credo.

Ultima Ignus (and its subsidiaries) have prioritized security on Terra Verde, and it is common to hear tell of ships gone missing in the area. Many are believed wrecked by the indigenous storms but some believe that they are intentionally sunk if they have come too close or seen too much.

Now the island and surrounding waters are covered with a thick, omnipresent, seemingly sourceless fog generated by a series of industrial misters powered by the Primitus Domus's steam-based technology. Few travelers entering the mists return with tales of the trip.





FORT DE SOTO

Long ago, the Tocobaga Indians of North America made their home here. Whether by plague or by war, these early Americans were thought to have been eradicated. Nearly 300 years later (a little before the American Civil War), the islands were surveyed by Robert E. Lee who recommended that they be fortified. Ironically, it was Union troops who were stationed there during the war. Soon after, the place was abandoned until the Spanish-American War in 1898.

The Marine Hospital Service took over jurisdiction of the station in 1901, and it was used to inspect ships arriving from foreign ports until 1910. In 1923, Fort De Soto was officially closed and abandoned except for a single caretaker. The area changed hands several times after this, becoming a bombing range briefly, and eventually in 1962 a toll road was completed, allowing visitors to arrive to the island by car. It subsequently became a popular park and campgrounds for the remainder of the 1900s until the toll roads and bridges were demolished in 2024.

The ISAAC Navy Base

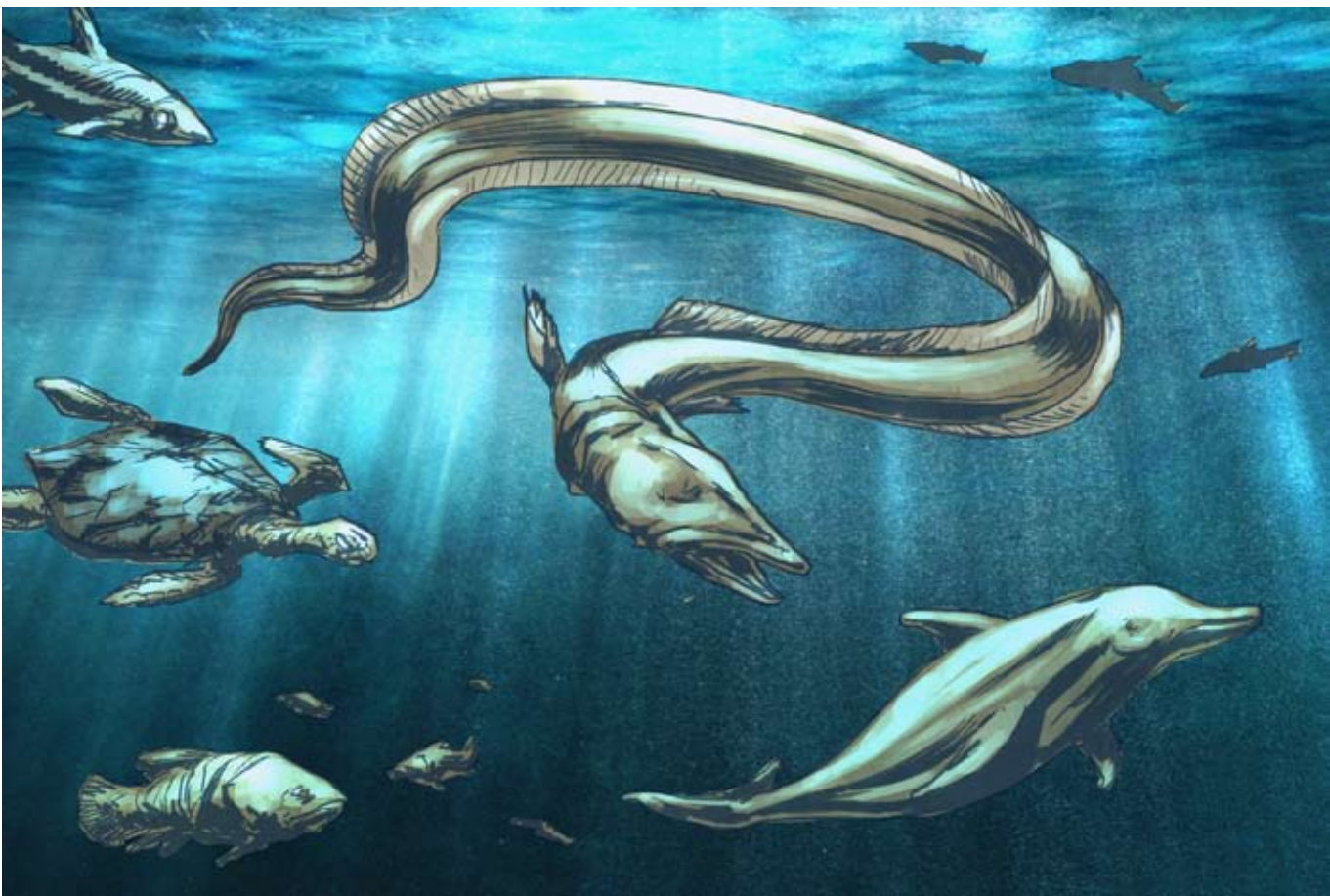
Out of the sight of prying eyes and with no easy residential access, Fort De Soto is an attractive site for an ISAAC directed Navy base. Here, scientists experiment with technology discovered in the Primitus Domus protodimension, and with the funding and guidance of local entrepreneurs, major sections of the Gulf Saucer are developed (see Gulf Saucer, p.93).

Private contractors have also established residence within the Fort De Soto Navy Base and in surrounding buildings. The base and an ever-expanding sub-aquatic shipyard produce scores of war vessels and submarines, many of which include technology based off of SteamTek research at Terra Verde Navy Base. Fort De Soto is said to be the modern “Area 51” of the Navy. Ships produced here are used for exploratory purposes within the Gulf and protodimension portals discovered there.

The Fort De Soto Navy Base also explores the Bay Area and monitors seafaring traffic into the Tampete area. They actively monitor the Terra Verde ship facilities however they have so far been unable to unearth much information, partly because of the endless fog banks that roll from there but mainly due to the intense security, which is notoriously unselective in its targeting procedure.

The Tocobaga People

The Tocobaga people (see Tocobaga People, p.116) have maintained some small residence here within the undeveloped portions of the island. They are actively hostile and regularly sabotage the Fort De Soto Navy Base in any way possible.





THE BRIDGES

GANDY BRIDGE

The Gandy is a poorly maintained residential bridge that connects the mostly abandoned Largo and Pinellas Park areas with the South Tampa Ant Hills. It is currently condemned although some fishermen and travelers insist on bicycling over it or using small A.T.V.s. When wrecks occur, it is deemed too dangerous to rescue the vehicle so they are allowed to fall or are pushed into the Bay.

HOWARD FRANKLIN BRIDGE (Interstate 275)

The Howard Franklin Bridge is a commercial bridge that connects Old St. Petersburg (via 275) to Old Tampa (Hyde Park and Dome 606) and is the only well-maintained bridge in Tampete. Drivers pay hefty annual fees to use the bridge (in January 2034, an annual pass was \$2500 with daily passes running around \$75 each).

COURTNEY CAMPBELL CAUSEWAY

This former residential bridge technically still connects Clearwater with Old Tampa but is poorly maintained and always busy (since tolls are not collected for it). Sections of the bridge are missing and the supporting structure sags. Tampete has condemned it, but hasn't destroyed it or sealed it off.

SUNSHINE SKYWAY BRIDGE

This bridge to Bradenton has been permanently collapsed after repeated incursions by bikers, raiders, and rumors of far worse (see Bradenton, p.89) who would habitually overrun police checkpoints. Now the Coast Guard patrols the southern coast of St. Petersburg and mans coastal stations near where the bridge used to be.

BAYSIDE BRIDGE

This is another poorly maintained bridge which connected Highport with the abandoned Safety Harbor. It is an underutilized and unsafe bridge that is only frequented by racers and fishermen. The bridge is technically condemned but so far, there are no serious structural issues with it.

Bridge Racing

At night, many gangs and groups of racing enthusiasts meet on the Courtney Campbell or Bayside Bridge to race. The police don't intervene and there is virtually no civilian traffic; travelers at night are aware of the risks. Sometimes more

elaborate runs are set up, perhaps starting at the Courtney Campbell, taking back roads through old South Tampa toward the Gandy and completing the circuit across the Bayside Bridge. It is not unusual for cars to veer (or be careened) off the bridges during these races.

Gauntlet Runs

The Gauntlet is an ambitious and extremely hazardous 65-kilometer course that includes South Tampa, the Clearwater docks, and most of the bridges. It started as a gang initiation but has grown popular among all racing enthusiasts.

Racers start in South Tampa, deep in the Prescott Gents neighborhood, which is considered part of the fun. From here, they race to the Gandy and travel west across that toward the Howard Franklin, taking that bridge back east across Old Tampa Bay.

This stint can be chaotic as drivers maneuver around civilian traffic, and it guarantees police intervention (some racers use valid bridge passes but most don't). The bridge is 25 kilometers long and police response time is 3-4 minutes. Drivers make the run in excess of 300 kph in order to beat that time.

Racers evading collision or arrest then veer back west over the Courtney Campbell Causeway all the way to the Clearwater Docks where there is typically a waiting block party numbering in the thousands.

Some of the most lethal collisions in the history of Tampete have occurred during Gauntlet runs. Drivers defend themselves with high-caliber weapons and sometimes target tollbooth operators, police, and civilians. Most vehicles have been heavily modified with armor and/or weaponry for the race.

Merely completing the Gauntlet is worthy of accolades. Some gangs still use the event as an initiation or promotion rite. Winners earn cash prizes in excess of \$100,000.





TAMPA BAY

Tampa Bay is divided into three regions. Tampa Bay itself is the area between the collapsed Sunshine Skyway Bridge and the cape of South Tampa. Old Tampa Bay is the area to the west of South Tampa and Hillsborough Bay is the area to the east of it. Anything west of Tampa Bay is the Gulf of Mexico.

WEATHER

The weather in the Bay Area is violent and unpredictable. There are usually storms visible somewhere in the bay on any given afternoon. No reliable tide schedule exists due to the veracity of these storms. Flooding of South Tampa and Town 'n' Country is common, and the water stays consistently choppy.

In recent years this worsened, particularly after 2022, when Weedon Meteorite crashed into the bay, causing flash flooding and seismic activity and becoming the catalyst for strange phenomena since then.

Within a month of impact, thousands of dead mackerel, grouper, tarpon, and snapper were beached; sometimes superheated or covered with blisters and lesions. The water a few kilometers east of Weedon Island, where the meteorite hit (and where it gets its name), often becomes superheated and has even boiled. This creates a virtually impenetrable and pervasive fog in the area.

Water-spouts are a bay novelty although they rarely beach. Scientists believe they are caused by seismic activity beneath the bay which has increased since the meteorite impact.

WEEDON METEORITE

In 2022, a meteorite of unknown origin plummeted into the center of Tampa Bay, surprising every science and astronomy group on the planet. Weedon Meteorite, at over 15,000 kg, was dense enough to flood South Tampa, Town 'n' Country, and the bay front property in St. Petersburg before entrenching itself into the floor of the bay.

Emergency services cleaned up the initial flooding and tried to investigate the meteorite but were turned away by an offshore drilling company called Ultima Ignus which bought up all of the drilling rights in Tampa Bay. Deeming an imminent threat to public safety, Rick Scott, Mayor of Tampete, ordered the U.S. Coast Guard to escort a team of scientists to monitor radiation levels seismic activity in the area. After it was determined that

the meteorite posed no danger to Tampete, Scott honored the drilling contracts of Ultima Ignus and withdrew his people.

So what actually happened? Members of the shadow government warned Mayor Scott of the possibility that the meteor's trajectory had been intentionally altered by "forces unknown", portraying the threat as domestic terrorism. When catastrophe struck, the Mayor permitted ISAAC's hand-picked scientists to investigate. Although tri-county contracts with Ultima Ignus prohibited it, the scientists recovered hundreds of kilograms of ore from the meteorite.

The extracted material consisted mostly of silicates but included unusual elements like Unbibium-292 and Livermorium-293 (super-dense elements or isotopes that decay within minutes or seconds of exposure) and a few that defied conventional classification. A completely alien crystalline structure now referred to as Chronoton Calcium Carbonate was also discovered. Like all crystals, Chronoton Calcium Carbonate exhibits geometric atomic patterns. However scientists now suspect that these patterns radiate through all of space-time and not just the three conventional dimensions. They believe that interpreting these patterns could allow the prediction of their growth and even alter their genesis. Scientists agree that a relationship exists between Chronoton Calcium Carbonate and the high-atomic-number elements found within the meteorite, but the details of it are speculation.

Ultima Ignus, of course, is the clandestine puppet corporation of the Viemen, Primitus Domus inhabitants who have invaded our home dimension (see Primitus Domus, p.180). Ultima Ignus helps the Viemen conduct their operations in relative secrecy, and they are rewarded with advanced SteamTek which they use to maximize their profits in other endeavors.

Ultima Ignus is the liaison of Primitus Domus in all things, even reaching out to groups of ETs as directed. With guidance, they located a group of Tentacular ETs with ties to Darkling-dominated Grays within our solar system. After undisclosed promises, the ETs found and navigated a meteor of specified composition into Tampa Bay. Now the SteamTek-operated Primitus Domus vessels work to extract ore from the meteorite, which is used to provide the heat that powers the Primitus Domus technology.





THE UNDERBAY

Beneath the 2,200 square miles of Tampa Bay is a series of structures, mining facilities, passages and Demonground tunnels collectively referred to by those in the know as the Underbay.

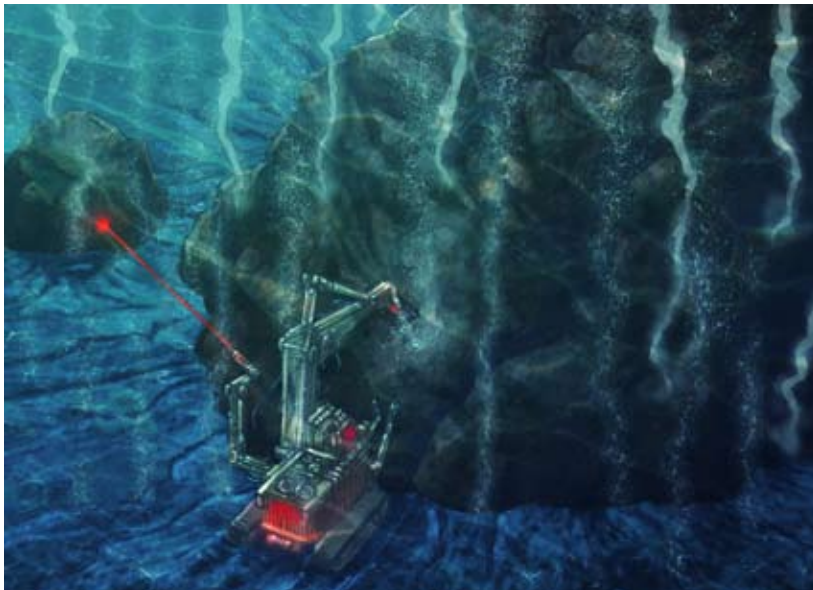
PRIMITUS DOMUS PORTAL (AND SURROUNDING STRUCTURES)

The Gateway

Amidst some subterranean buildings within a deeper recess of Tampa Bay is the submerged portal to the Primitus Domus protodimension (see Primitus Domus, p.180 and Viemen and Ultima Ignus, p.117).

The portal resembles an oversized washer made of nickel, chromium, or similar alloy that surrounds a series of concentric rings made from the same material. When the rings align, the portal reveals an impenetrable wall of darkness that pours into our own plane.

Primitus Domus is a super-pressurized dimension filled with a caustic liquid called Xid (see Primitus Domus, p.180). Whenever the gate is opened, some of it pours into the bay causing a murky, acidic cloud around the portal. The portal's rings can be configured so that when it is opened, no gate opens. Rather, a subterranean passage into Earth (a supposed oil prospect) is revealed.



Ultima Ignus, a petroleum company in Tampete, has been buying up drilling rights to the bay and parts of the gulf and affirms that the portal is merely an oil well of proprietary design. The E.P.A. and various consumer protection agencies have lobbied the government to enforce inspection of the area

but Ultima Ignus' legal team has been notoriously adroit in thwarting those efforts.

Calornavitas Refinery and Foundry

Deep below the bay floor, in an artificial crater about one half kilometer east of the Weedon Meteorite impact, is an underwater oil refinery and an adjacent foundry. Both facilities are owned by Calornavitas, a subsidiary of Ultima Ignus, but operated by the Viemen, their constructs, a gratuitous amount of slave labor, and a handful of paid human engineers.

The refinery cultivates crystal growths collected from the Weedon Meteorite. These produce dense, radioactive metals that yield exorbitantly high amounts of heat when exposed to water vapor and so they are used as fuels for Viemen SteamTek produced by Calornavitas' sister companies.

The foundry encases the refined crystal by-products into brass canisters suitable for transport. The exoskeletons of many SteamTek inventions are also created in this undersea factory.

The menial labor is handled by construct drones (see Dark Adversaries, p.152) and slave labor liberally pulled from the surface. The sick, the elderly, and even children are forced to work amidst cogs, pipes, boilers, and lightning rods in these hellish factories, usually to the point of exhaustion or death.

Accidents happen; explosions, seal breaches, reactions severe enough to boil large sections of the bay. Most bodies are incinerated in the foundries but a few escapees have floated to the bay surface.

Scienta Terram Research Plant

Adjacent to the Primitus Domus portal is the Scienta Terram cartography and oceanography research plant, a subsidiary of Ultima Ignus that supposedly produces aquatic sensors and probing equipment and monitors the bay for seismic activity. In fact, the E.P.A. has come to rely on Scienta Terram's safety reports since before the company was officially acquired by Ultima Ignus. Of course no significant cartography or sensory development is done here anymore, at least not any that benefits mankind.

Instead, Ultima Ignus conducts its R&D into the SteamTek offered to them by the Viemen and they host a few of them here in an advisory role. These Viemen are actually here to ensure that Ultima Ignus' R&D progress does not exceed permissible levels. Ultima Ignus would be surprised to learn that there is a very large Viemen colony situated below the plant; hundreds of them in fact. The Viemen harbor advanced submarines and





airships here. If they are stockpiling them for a coming war, then they are planning to fight the gods.

Underbay Tunnels and Mine Shafts

Tunnels built of pressure-resistant, chromium-alloy or from organic Xid-Born secretions (see Earthworm, Xid-Born, p.171) connect the Underbay refineries, foundries, and power plants owned by Ultima Ignus to each other, to the Primitus Domus portal, and to the surface. These grant the Viemen the stealth they need to trade SteamTek gadgets and raw materials for slave labor and cadavers.

Tunnels also run to a handful of discreet laboratories near Bayshore, and to the foothold on Terra Verde that Primitus Domus has established, and all over the under city of Tampete.



Underbay mines bore deep into the Earth. Here, the Viemen send their constructs to retrieve raw materials for use or trade. Structural integrity of the mine shafts is assured by Scienta Terram, which develops the automated security systems that police the tunnels based on this SteamTek. These constructs are known for their over-enthusiasm and judicious review (see Viemen Constructs, p.152).

THE SHADOW GOVERNMENT UNDERBAY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Bunker

ISAAC maintains an Underbay rail station which connects to a protodimension called Tesseract (see Tesseract, p.182). The bunker has existed for decades as a contingency for nuclear fallout situations in order to facilitate communication and movement through the Gulf of Mexico if needed. The portal to Tesseract was a recent addition in response to the developing Primitus Domus threat.

The topmost level of the bunker is 200 meters long and 100 meters wide and is camouflaged with faux fractured rock panels on the surface. It houses a standing army of 200 Navy SEALs and about a dozen amphibious assault vehicles (typically AAV-P7/A1 and its successor the AAV-P12).

The level below is a motor pool, shipyard, and rail. Here, probes and submarine drones are assembled and deployed. At the north end are vast rails into the newly constructed Tesseract portal. The portal is maintained by DHL-Fedex but employees are generally not privy to their whereabouts, usually arriving from Hangar 7 on Davis Island Airport (see Davis Islands, p.49). This is how supplies are delivered to the bunker and how personnel can expect to be transported in emergency situations.

Below the motor pool is the War Room and command center. Although fully staffed to monitor the Bay Area, this level was designed to accommodate the United States command structure in case a domestic threat warranted their evacuation from the surface. Communication is by sonar to other Underbay structures or wirelessly via antennae that are buried throughout the bay coast.

Neo Lunar Laboratories

Neo Lunar fronts as a private water purification and geological survey company but actually is under contract by the USAF on a lunar terraforming program. Part of the program includes cybernetic development and training programs that were so successful that the U.S. Navy similarly contracted them for possible incursion into Primitus Domus.

Testing of an undisclosed nature also happens here. The motives and conclusions of these tests are unclear, but rumors persist of a steady stream of volunteers from Tampete's poorer communities that are brought here and exposed to horrific drugs and diseases for some unspeakable purpose.

Glass reinforced plastic passages connect Neo Lunar (through the clay beneath Tampa Bay) to the U.S. Navy Bunker.

Note: More information on a New Orleans branch of Neo Lunar was detailed in "The Deals Men Make", published in PDM #11.

OTHER UNDERBAY TUNNEL SYSTEMS

In addition to the previously described network of tunnels beneath Tampa Bay, other tunnels and passages exist. Some are built by enterprising criminals seeking freedom of movement across waterways and into restricted areas. Some are made by clandestine corporations to obfuscate their research activities and supply conduits. Some are made by the Shadow Government as a way to transport and protect key members of ISAAC or NWO and their public figureheads or to monitor the Underbay activities of threats like Primitus Domus and other rogue minions. Though many tunnel networks stretch far onto the mainland, they are still collectively referred to as the Underbay tunnel network.





Some factions discretely use Underbay passages created by others, perhaps concealing that access via camouflaged doors, but no single faction has a map of the entire Underbay network. Some tunnels have been forgotten by all factions.

Criminal Tunnel System

Smugglers use the tunnels to transport controlled substances in relative safety (versus the bridges that are heavily monitored). These tunnels are usually burrowed well into the clay of the Bay floor but a few were engineered by clever criminals to connect existing Underbay passages. These are well-camouflaged and destroyed as they are discovered by other factions.

One shallow tunnel beneath the Courtney Campbell is known to a handful of street racers, folks who wish to stay off the radar, and a few brave commuters.

Demonground Tunnels

As expected, Demonground networks beneath Tampa Bay are as extensive as they are dissimilar. Some tunnels bore straight into the Earth while others lead to their own, as yet undiscovered, protodimension gates. Some lead to Bayshore or South Tampa. Some lead to far-off areas renowned for their pervasive Demonground (as near as Safety Harbor and as far as Plant City and Bradenton).

Quick and Dirty Plot Seeds

- The Deth Proze, a gothic, new wave gang based out of Ybor, is moving electronics, drugs, and SteamTek. They aren't trading them for cash, but for people. They camp near Oldsmar's Market in the Shade, which is just a circle of buses, trucks, and motorcycles surrounding a giant SteamTek telescope they use to sight for mortars. In the center of camp (of 20 or so gangers) is an entrance to an Underbay tunnel which runs ten miles to a Viemen foundry.
- Three female inmates from Tampete Correctional Facility escaped. Although all were incarcerated for minor crimes, GNN is touting the trio as violent offenders who are armed and dangerous. The three were operated on and subsequently exposed to a Boogey Man (see Dark Races, p12) where they were impregnated. The surgeons planned to hold the women full-term and then get rid of them (the offspring would be given to a Darkling contact) but the prisoners convinced one of the jailers to show them a secret Underbay passage leading to the surface.
- A sorcerer has used his knowledge of dimension walking to introduce Ch'Narr to Black Gold, a Tampete based oil refining company. With his direction, Black Gold drilled wells into the swampy area north of Mobbly Bay which are protodimensional portals into Ch'Narr's oil basins. This has been lucrative for the sorcerer and Black Gold. However, bands of Troglodytes (see Troglodytes, p.165) have begun using these conduits to reach us.





HILLSBOROUGH RIVER

In many places, Hillsborough River is a divide between the habitable and inhabitable. The area west of the river up to Town 'n' Country contains a few suburbs and the Tampa Heights Ant Hills. The east area is filled with abandoned slums and vast patches of Demonground, inhabited by Nukid gangs, small survivalist farming communities, and a pervasive Darkling presence.

HIRO boats patrol the river from the southern channels, sometimes up through Old Hillsborough Avenue although they usually don't go that far. They are chartered to secure this area, but they usually just go there for target practice.

RIVER DENIZENS

Troglodytes

Bands of reptilian men sometimes turn up around the river, often lairing into the sides or at the bottom of it. They generally flee from HIRO patrols or any motorized vehicles, but they have been known to creep into nearby settlements and steal people away into their cold waters. They mark their territory with sharpened stakes with human or animal skulls

placed atop them, and their weapons tend to be glass shards, sharpened bone, or just their own filthy claws.

There is an unknown relationship between them and the various mutated alligators now indigenous to the river. Often when one is threatened, the other will emerge.

Nukids and Morlocks

Nukid castoffs from Zero Point Zack and other contaminated locations of Tampete often find themselves on the east bank of the Hillsborough River. Sometimes mistaken for homeless druggies or alcoholics (or even zombies by the more imaginative), Nukids spread fear and disease throughout the east river Demonground. Similarly, Morlocks have made their subterranean lairs here, away from public scrutiny and close enough to the river to scavenge debris.

Snakepits

Hillsborough River, like the beaches, is known for its gratuitously oversized writhing masses of "snake balls". These horrific and unnatural displays of base snake behavior incite fear and loathing into the most hardened of Tampete residents. Most are venomous, and mutated species are rampant.





FACTIONS AND PERSONALITIES

The Arranger
The Cepero Family
Crop Duster Guy
Diablo Blanco Cartel
The Gardener
Meth Head
The Mueces Family
Prescott Gents
Scisensationalists
Spyre Incorporated
Tocobaga People
Viemen and Ultima Ignus
Wapner
White Light
Zack Heights Posse
101 Personalities





The Arranger

Max Taylor goes by the moniker "Arranger". He finds employment because of his reputation for discretion, efficiency, being impartial, and being hard to find unless he wants you to find him.

He delivers messages, parcels, and invitations. He'll secure an area and vouch for the safety of all within it so long as he's there. He can get into and out of maximum security prisons or Demonground, but he doesn't do extractions. Unless the price is right.

His hearing and memory are situational. He leans toward utter discretion during a job unless his sensory input and retention are requested, then one finds he's got a near-photographic memory. He is even-tempered. Unemotional. Business is business, and nothing is personal. Still, crossing him may get you categorized as a high-risk variable. And when all is said and done, Max Taylor is a risk manager.

One typically contacts Max by leaving a voice mail at one of his front companies. A certain sequence of selections in a menu or a message with the right verbiage or inflection will get you through to one of Max's handlers, usually within minutes. His screening process is lengthy and intrusive, and one of the reasons his fees are so exorbitant.

Max Taylor

STR 6, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 8, EDU 8,

CHR 7, PSI 12, SOC 8, INIT 4

Skills 2, Foreboding 7, Human & Computer Empathy 5,

Slug Weapons 4, Streetwise 3, Observation 5



The Cepero Family

The Cepero crime family specializes in smuggling and operates out of Cigar Town in the Hyde Park/Channelside area. They have traditionally operated out of historic Ybor City since the late 1800s but moved their operations with most legitimate businesses when Tampete began to centralize. However they retain influence throughout all of Old Tampa City.

The family is led by Silvio Cepero who emigrated from Cuba in 1986 with his parents. The Ceperos also retain a prominent Cuban presence in the tobacco and sugar milling industries.

Silvio Cepero

STR 6, CON 5, AGL 6, INT 8,

EDU 7, CHR 9, PSI 1, SOC 9, INIT 2

Skills 2, Business 5, Streetwise 4,

Act/Bluff 3, Observation 4, Autogun 4,

Bargain 5

Silvio continues the family's traditional direction of smuggling weapons, drugs, and black market items into and out of Tampete, but has modernized the family's approach and actively negotiates with other local organizations to supplement their own efforts. Once renowned for keeping their business close to the vest, now the Ceperos work with the Ballast Point Butchers, the Wickermen, the Brakemen, and even the Tampete Police Department. The latter is one of the Cepero family's best customers!

The Ceperos use the Brakemen as a





source of weapons and to export Whiz as well as any chemicals siphoned off from industries in the Cannery. Similarly, they work with the Wickermen to import drugs and other contraband including some DarkTek (basically, whatever the Wickermen have chanced upon and want to offload quickly).

Silvio's second hand man is Eladio Awray, a former Secret Service agent once chartered to infiltrate the Ceperos, but who has seemingly turned rogue and rushed headlong into the criminal organization. Eladio is a tactical and economic genius, traits that permit Silvio to tolerate his eccentric behavior and checkered past. Unknown to Silvio and the Secret Service, Eladio is loyal to a Minion Hunter resistance cell called Echo Wisdom, and while his actions seem erratic and to further the goals of the Cepero crime family, his primary objective is to gather intelligence on Darkling plots in and around Tampete.



Eladio Awray
STR 6, CON 5, AGL 6, INT 8, EDU 7,
CHR 9, PSI 1, SOC 9, INIT 2
Skills 2, Act/Bluff 6, Streetwise 5,
Observation 4, Autogun 4,
Slug Weapons 4, Investigation 5,
Stealth 4

The Cepero family's main muscle is Cleto "Mausoleo" Barranco, so named for his frequent proximity to dead bodies. Cleto has several cybernetic and DarkTek enhancements and has personally trained a cadre of men as bodyguards, assassins, and general bruisers. He outsources more muscle in the form of the Ballast Point Butchers, usually to sit on distribution points or drug labs.

Cleto Barranco
STR 11, CON 8, AGL 8, INT 6,
EDU 4, CHR 3, PSI 1, SOC 6, INIT 4
Skills 2, Streetwise 4, Autogun 4,
Slug Weapons 4, Interrogate 3, Demolitions 3

The family is often at odds with the Prescott Gents and Diablo Blanco (two local gangs also engaged in smuggling). Clear territorial lines exist at a high level between the groups, but reckless actions of the low-level soldiers result in frequent street warfare.



Martez Cuesta manages casinos and brothels for the Ceperos. Cuesta targets mainly the lower income residents since he cannot compete with the Seminole reservation or Centro Ybor's Castle. So his locales tend to be decrepit holes within and on the fringes of the Ant Hills. Security is tight at these places, but it isn't unheard of for the Prescott Gents or another Competitor to take a crack at them from time to time.





Ceparo Smuggling Tables

Goods	Cost	Time to Order	Mishap
Handguns or hunting rifles of -/C or better availability.	List + 5%	Immediately	0%
Handguns or hunting rifles of -/S availability.			
Shotguns or submachineguns -/C or better availability.	List + 20%	1d4-1 days	2%
Handguns or hunting rifles of -/R availability			
Shotguns or submachineguns of -/S availability.			
Sniper rifles or assault weapons of -/C or better availability.	List + 40%	3d4-3 days	4%
Shotguns or submachineguns of -/R availability.			
Sniper rifles or assault weapons of -/S availability.			
Machineguns or heavy machineguns of -/C or better availability.	List + 60%	2d6 days	6%
Sniper rifles or assault weapons of -/R availability.			
Machineguns or heavy machineguns of -/S availability.	List + 80%	2d8 days	8%
Machineguns of -/R availability.			
Grenade Launchers, Rocket Launchers, Flamethrowers or Mortars of -/S or better availability.	List + 100%	3d8 days	10%
Weapon Accessories, Explosives and Body Armor of -/C or better availability.	List + 10%	1d4+1 days	2%
Weapon Accessories, Explosives and Body Armor of -/S availability.	List + 30%	3d4-3 days	4%
Special order weapons (anything not listed above) including Antitank Missile Launchers, Surface-to-Air Missiles and HiTek weapons of -/S or better availability.	Varies	Varies	Varies
Electronics of -/C or better availability.	List + 10%	3d4-3 days	6%
Electronics of -/S availability.			
Medical Supplies or Tools of -/C or better availability.	List + 30%	2d6 days	8%
Drugs, items of -/- availability and DarkTek are all subject to availability and tend to be incidental (no requests).	Varies	Varies	Varies





Crop Duster Guy

Klement Edvard was a Czech farmer who has immigrated to the United States in the outskirts of eastern Tampete. Before the economic collapse of the 1990s, he turned a tidy profit with his citrus, vegetable, and chicken farms based out of Plant City (about an hour east of Tampete).

Even today, Edvard manages to break even with his farms and minimizes his use of automated harvesters or robotic assistance, relying instead on farm hands, which are a mix of human and Nukids. He supplements meager wages with food, shelter, alcohol, and occasionally drugs, and he even maintains a brothel on the estate, which is often the main draw.

A decade after the collapse, he became disillusioned with the virtual apathy the U.S. government has shown toward its rural farming communities while still subsidizing the agricultural mega-corporations. With no budgets for pest control, soil remediation, or even security, Edvard was left to his own devices.

First he began hiring private security bands to patrol Interstate 4. These are mercenaries who will rob literally anyone except Edvard, his farmhands, or his customers. Edvard is indifferent to these extracurricular activities but does encourage them to attack chemical dumpers on sight. There have even been altercations between them and the police, at night, when the mercenaries were drunk or high. (These mercenaries enjoy free use of Edvard's bars and his brothel).

To combat the mutant strains of locust and crop-destroying insects, he purchased a Grumman G-164 Ag Cat crop duster, that he fitted with all manner of chemical pesticides and more recently 50mm cannons (in response to organized assaults on his land by gangs or rival agro-farms). After years of patrolling his lands with this rig (and subsequently inhaling the fumes), Edvard has become a little unhinged.

He flies regularly in and around Plant City but also flies deep into Tampete to dump his chemicals there. He claims to target overgrown nests and hives of mutant insects or patches of area he calls Demonground but his flight patterns seem positively random. Once, he even gassed a 10 square kilometer Ant Hill community in South Tampa.

He recently purchased a second aircraft; a twin engine

Jetstream 30 small cargo plane. This implies possible forays into drug smuggling operations, but no one knows for sure what his plans for this are.

Amazingly, he has (literally) stayed beneath the radar of groups that should be dealing with him but that haven't had the time to do so.

Klement Edvard

STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 5, PSI 1, SOC 5, INIT 1
Skills 2, Pilot 4, Autogun 3, Slug Weapons 3, Navigation 4, Mechanic 4, Chemistry 4

The Diablo Blanco Cartel

The Diablo Blanco Cartel is a drug distribution (and more recently, drug smuggling) operation based out of South Tampa made up of mostly Cuban gangsters with a handful of Spanish-Americans. They number about 200 and make their income smuggling, selling, and stealing drugs.

The cartel is currently led by Monty Mayborough who bases the bulk of the cartel's accounting operations out of his palatial estate in South Tampa. His estate is definitely out of place in South Tampa and was built as a kind of flaunting "screw you" to those living near him.

Monty Mayborough

STR 6, CON 7, AGL 6, INT 9, EDU 6, CHR 8, PSI 1, SOC 8, INIT 3
Skills 2, Streetwise 4, Autogun 4, Slug Weapons 4, Business 5, Investigation 4

Diablo Blanco doesn't tolerate competition and drove most of the other large drug smugglers out of the distribution business including La Familia (see Davis Islands, p.49) who they now use as a smuggling operation for a modest cut while leaving distribution to themselves. Other competitors have similarly been retooled toward smuggling either by truck or by plane for Diablo Blanco.

They are a violent, unforgiving cartel. They train and utilize kill squads. They don't compromise on their business model, and any apparent compromises are often traps.

Many street level contacts tend to not know that they work for the cartel. (However, if they get their narcotics from another source, they soon won't be working for anyone). Other street





level contacts (pharmacies and drop house contacts and such) usually know a single link in Diablo Blanco middle management but not much else.

Cartel management tends to be insulated with street level contacts being run ragged to meet them in efforts to assure they aren't being followed. Many have seemingly normal day jobs that are fronts for their operations. Accountants, insurance firms, car garage, pawn shop or restaurant owners, and similar occupations are typical. They handle storage of the product, which is usually in various private warehousing or abandoned tenement housing areas. Security in these areas is pervasive.

Diablo Blanco keeps much of the Hillsborough Police Department in its pocket (and pays a hefty price to do so).

The cartel routinely gets into skirmishes with the Seminole Heights Posse who is too fluid and distributed for the cartel to strike much of a telling blow against.



The Gardener

If you want wet work, you call the Prescott Gents, but if you need someone vanished with no evidence of where he went or that he ever even existed, you call the Gardener. This is what he does.

Marcus Calderón was born in Nicaragua and immigrated as a child to the United States in a van crammed full of refugees. Many of them, including his parents, didn't survive the trip. Although promised good work upon his arrival, he was instead sold into one of the career camps in the Grid. He subsequently worked for three years on commission to one of the agro-farms in Plant City where he tilled the fields and repaired tractors and

harvesting equipment. At night, he would field strip and clean weapons and re-load spent ammunition until he eventually escaped with whatever stock he could find.

It is amazing how fast a man can make a niche for himself if he's got a well-maintained automatic.

Necessity forced Marcus under the radar, and he took odd jobs and placed "merc for hire" ads in local periodicals even though he didn't have any real military experience. For ten years he scraped together a living doing that, and eventually he got really good at it.

He worked as muscle for the Prescott Gents until he decided they were too high-profile, so he went into hiding again; an act that burned some bridges with the Gents.

Now the best way to contact him is via referral or an elaborate system of calls, voice mails, background checks, street tails, and eventually an inflated fee for the first job. Under the alias of Rafael Pavia, he owns Verdant Pastures, a landscaping company that is a front for the regiment of wage slaves on his payroll for messaging services and background checks.

The company does stock high-quality fertilizer. It is said to be the best and the freshest on the market. In addition to a variety of manures, Marcus uses a series of wood chippers to mix in the remains of some of his victims, increasing the stuff's potential. Marcus occasionally uses his compounds for demolition purposes too. Just ask Malik Bates, former lieutenant of the Gents who was pursuing Marcus, and who lost his tower and his life in an unexplained explosion in South Tampa later attributed to sinkhole activity. Since then, the Gents have laid off.

Marcus Calderón

STR 8, CON 7, AGL 8, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 5, PSI 1, SOC 6, INIT 3 Skills 2, Stealth 4, Observation 4, Investigation 5, Streetwise 4, Autogun 4, Slug Weapons 4

Methhead

A particularly violent drug trafficking gang calls the area near the St. Petersburg pier home. Rallied into loose organization for protection and turf defense under the banner of a leader referred to only as Methhead, very few of the gang's leadership circle has ever had an actual encounter with their glorious leader. Those who have are silent about meeting details. The gang deals small-to-medium-sized quantities of drugs, mostly confiscated from smaller gangs or distributed on behalf of the Diablo Blanco cartel (see *Factions and Personalities*, p.106). The membership count varies drastically for any given week as casualties to turf wars and violent run-ins with local law enforcement take their toll on manpower. Headcount can be anywhere from 35-60 regular members with 5-10 higher ranking leaders who take orders from Methhead directly.

Headquarters

Methhead runs his gang from the back of a heavily armored and modified box delivery truck or possibly an old ice cream truck. Whatever it once was, it is now a small mobile fortress with armor plating, a powerful engine, and a sliding side panel door for a door gunner to operate a pintle-mounted SAW. The entire back of the vehicle is a specially modified compartment full of strange medical equipment resembling an iron lung or similar body containment unit. This unit keeps the disembodied head of Yanaki Stomas, known as Methhead





to his underlings, alive. No one knows how this small-time local pot dealer ended up as a horrific medical nightmare with a penchant for violence, and if Methhead remembers he isn't volunteering up that information. The machines keep the head floating in a cylinder of slightly green liquid, circulating a chemical bath of experimentally synthesized amphetamines and preservatives that enable the brain to continue to function. His eyes still work but a special speech engine provides halting mechanical text-to-speech words when speech is needed. This regularly degenerates to broken expletives and eventually a dial-up modem-like machine screeching when the software cannot keep pace with the speed-addled brain. The chemical mixture that keeps the brain functioning also furthers its derangements, keeping it highly paranoid, violent, and petty. Only the highest ranking members of the gang and a personal detail of bodyguards know the truth about their leader. It is prone to regular fits of abject violence, ordering the deaths of anyone on a whim for even the smallest offhand remark or perceived slight. Executions vary from typical gang shootings to capturing offenders and strapping them to the hoods of

two stolen cars and then driving them, at top speed, into one another.

Adventure Hooks

Methhead requires the services of medical technicians from time to time to keep his machines working and from those with a chemist background to keep his stock of experimental drugs topped off. Typically this is done via kidnapping or extortion. Methhead could kidnap someone, and the PCs may be hired to find the missing medical student or local doctor. Or they could be contacted directly if one has Medical skill or Chemistry skill of 5 or higher. The contact will set up what looks to be a meet for some side job only to attempt to kidnap the character with the right skills (and kill any witnesses). Also if the PCs are already on the tail of the Blanco Cartel (see *Diablo Blanco*, p.106) then their leads and contacts may point them to Methhead as one of their prime low-level dealers. Dismantling his operation could be a way to get closer to the cartel.





The Mueces Family

The Mueces are an organized crime family who emigrated from Cuba to Miami, Florida, during the 1960s and eventually relocated to Tampete during the 2010s as the surrounding areas began to centralize. It is currently run by Yuniel Mueces if in name only. Yuniel is an aging veteran of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces expected to soon turn over the reins to Tumelo, his second eldest son.

Yuniel Mueces

STR 3, CON 3, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 5, CHR 7, PSI 1, SOC 8, INIT 1
Skills 2, Business 5, Observation 4, Streetwise 4



Tumelo Mueces

STR 7, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 7, PSI 1, SOC 8, INIT 2
Skills 2, Business 4, Observation 3, Streetwise 5, Autogun 5, Slug Weapons 4

The Mueces stick to what they have always done best; burglary and extortion. Most are skilled car thieves and able-bodied street soldiers. The family maintains a dozen auto “chop shops” and pawn stores throughout Tampete. They also target various industries, warehouses, residences, and some competitor safe houses.

Extortion varies from neighborhood “protection fees” to business and commerce disruption. Sometimes the family is hired out for odd jobs as in 2013 when the State of Florida was debating whether to legalize unionized strikes. The Law Offices of Kowalczyk & Taylor hired the Mueces family to infiltrate the labor unions in order to keep them fragmented during the deliberations.

They will do hits: regular assassinations or drive-by shootings. They will do security. They will do most anything requiring stealth or muscle as long as it pays well.

The Mueces occasionally hire extra muscle for larger jobs, frequently tapping the Ballast Point Butchers who run a similar racket in South Tampa. Although the two



organizations compete, they have thus far avoided any serious confrontations.

They also work regularly with the Brakemen to export high end cars and the Ceperos for weapons or drugs. They often tangle with the Prescott Gents and do what they can to stay beneath the radar of Diablo Blanco, although they have been known to fight back.



Higinio Mueces is Yuniel Mueces’ eldest son. Missing and presumed dead, Higinio is an empath who saw no future in the family business and so abandoned his responsibilities. He fled to New Orleans seeking both haven from his family and someone to guide his empathic training. Having recently returned to Tampete, rumors are beginning to circulate that Higinio, having taken the moniker El Espectro, has returned from the dead on a special quest known only to himself and perhaps his family. Some whisper that El Espectro speaks with the dead and can command them.



Higinio Mueces (“El Espectro”)

STR 6, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 5, CHR 8, PSI 9, SOC 5, INIT 2
Skills 2, Foreboding 5, Streetwise 4, Close Portal 5, Open Portal 5, Slug Weapons 3





The Prescott Gents

The worst of the worst of organized, violent crime is the domain of a band of 200 African American gangers based out of South Tampa who call themselves the Prescott Gents. They maintain clubs, warehouses, and drug laboratories in the area just north of MacDill Air Force Base.

Led by Xavier Cole, the Gents are involved in all illicit activities in South Tampa, taking substantial cuts of the action and driving out any organization too weak to defend itself with what amounts to urban terrorism.

Xavier is a ruthless leader with a long and violent rap sheet and numerous stints in Tampete Penitentiary, although a good number of the staff was in his employ at the time. Xavier respects only power and so he takes whatever he wants. His is one of the few criminal organizations feared by both the police and numerous covert ET groups.

He employs Waldo Banks, A.K.A "Fusion", a top chemist and tinkerer who has successfully modified Whiz as well as DarkTek. Xavier respects Fusion because he is a reliable and steady source of income, and he's got himself so wired into the Gents than any effort to opt out would be detrimental. Once, during a wage disagreement, Fusion intentionally released a bad batch of Whiz that caused its users to empathically seek out Xavier's competing cooks and execute them.

Xavier has his lieutenants in charge of drug distribution and so they occupy and protect street corners as they would a war zone. Competition is eliminated swiftly and without regard to collateral damage. Even competing tendrils of the Gents have been known to tangle from time to time.

The Gents are renowned for their grisly murders. They are usually not a practical hire because they'll rip off anyone they don't respect, but no one has mastered the art of sending a message as well as the Gents have.

Elijah Washington, A.K.A. "the Dentist" is Xavier's go-to man for up close and personal wet work. The Dentist works with power tools, surgical instruments, or just anything at hand to make prolific messages of his victims. He prefers to isolate and toy with them, cripple them in melee, and then torture them to death.

Car Bomb (no one knows his real name) is Xavier's tactical expert. Gang wars, rip-offs, police ambushes, and assassinations are his domain. Car Bomb keeps a cadre of six men close to him at all times. Many of them are armed with high-powered assault weapons and occasionally even DarkTek. Sometimes the boys get carried away, and their excursions make the news, say, if they pass through a crowded area or inadvertently (or

intentionally) knock down a building. These guys are bad news.

Despite getting ripped off repeatedly, ET cells frequently approach the Gents with jobs no other group will take; offering cash, empathic drugs, and DarkTek. The rip-offs and occasional bloodshed are seen as a cost of doing business with the Gents, and the ETs are assured absolute discretion and results.

Scisensationalists

Scisensationalism is a doctrine of religious beliefs authored by L. Gerold Davidson, originally a science fiction writer of small repute who lived from 1931 until 2006 when he died of a stroke. Davidson enjoyed moderate success with farfetched fiction involving interplanetary worms attacking the Earth and futuristic racing dramas but his sequels never repeated that success. A charlatan by trade, in 1995 he began writing self-help books with the inadvertently innovative gimmick of targeting the ultra-rich. Titles like "Why Everyone Who Knows You is Wrong" and "Competition: The New Morality" became overnight successes amongst the upper echelons and eventually gave way to the less subtle "Refinancing Your Soul" and "Who Cares What They Think? You're Rich!"

Davidson traversed the inner circles of cinema, politics, music, and art and gathered a following. Over the next few years, he channeled the faith of thousands of the world's wealthiest families into a complicated series of doctrines that he called Scisensationalism. The secret philosophy, in a nutshell, is that all people are actually immortal beings who have forgotten their divine nature, and that Gerald Davidson is, in fact, God.

Davidson's teachings offer rituals and processes by which people could learn about their previous existences. Such testing was deceptively accurate and, despite the outrageousness of Davidson's claims, people started to believe him. In 2001, he founded the Church of Scisensationalism in Clearwater, Florida. Its members include Earth's most rich and elite, generating an estimated \$4 billion a year.

When he died in 2006, his son Brin Davidson inherited his estate and renovated the Clearwater properties, transforming already lavish structures into palatial estates. He made Scisensationalism accessible to the middle and lower classes.





Money still buys you a membership, but so will work. Now all of downtown Clearwater is filled with Scisensationalist recruiters on street corners and in shopping plazas.

Brin Davidson

STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 6,
CHR 8, PSI 1, SOC 10, INIT 1

Skills 2, Business 5, Xeno-Biology 2, History 4

Behind the Scenes

So why was Scisensationalism so successful?

Brin Davidson might have been content to die a trillionaire but for the doting attention his organization received from unnamed “interested parties”. When Brin picked up the reigns from his father, he inherited his father’s secret; his science fiction novels were not science fiction. He had a muse.

Gerald Davidson’s high school friend and one-time roommate George Maxwell was an outcast of a salamander-like species of ET called the Zenon (see Zenon, p.173). The product of a Zenon soldier and a human mother who died in captivity, he was mistreated during his youth and grew to detest his father’s legacy. He fled their lair (a Zenon dome built within the Florida Everglades) and assumed the moniker of George Maxwell when he settled in Tampete.

Having learned several Earth languages, he met Gerald Davidson one afternoon after high school and the two talked and eventually became very close. Gerald assumed the boy was a refugee or even a Nukid. When Gerald went to UTP the following year, he allowed George to room with him. The two talked often and this sometimes happened when one or both of them were intoxicated. On those nights, George would relate strange tales of giant man-eating worms from space, come to nest within the Earth, tales of an elaborate plan of a strange and warlike race called the Zenon to plunder the Earth, tales of unbelievable space-faring vessels made more of biology than of technology.

Of course L. Gerald Davidson’s first book had a few too many suspiciously accurate details for the likes of ISAAC and some ETs to ignore, and by the time his second was half-finished, George Maxwell had disappeared, never to be seen again.

When Davidson could not repeat his past successes, ET and ISAAC attention on him began to wane, but when his “self-help” books began to generate interest in Hollywood, some of the Darkling-dominated Grays devised ways to exploit him. They approached him with validation of the wild stories he’d heard (and told) and with the lure of wealth and power if he would only work with them to channel his books into an empire.

Now Scisensationalism is the single largest money-generating church, and it is through and through run by the Grays. The Grays control who can be a member. The Grays then exploit their members to control various outlets within the media; movies, music, radio DJs, sometimes journalism. Money begets money and their ultra-rich members actively recruit and promote the church’s propaganda.

The Agenda

ETs guide the model of Scisensationalism to attract people with influence and power while exploiting the impoverished to assist in the menial labor of recruiting, maintenance, and investigations.

The Grays train dozens of human empaths who, in turn, train Scisensationalist assessment proctors and interviewers. In this way, a new recruit’s first experience with the church is often one of deep introspection and catharsis rooting from a highly detailed and accurate personality assessment. The ETs have found that humans in such a state are highly emotional and more prone to manipulation.

For the first few decades, the ETs bolstered their numbers with people of influence and wealth. By the 2020s, the church invested in espionage, para-military, and social control experts. As wealth accumulated to ridiculous levels, the Grays fortified and diversified their holdings, although they maintain a strong downtown Clearwater presence.

Now the church uses its influence to advance the ET, and indirectly, the Darkling agenda. Sure, no mention is made of any aliens or evil beings, but many machinations are made possible due to the strategic planning of those within the church.





The Hierarchy

Knowledge and power within the church is restricted in a tiered basis. Those in the lower echelons generally have little to no idea of the happenings within the higher echelons. These tiers are called Scisensationalist Operating Levels (SOLs) and each equates roughly with the descriptions and responsibilities set forth below. There are eight such tiers in the hierarchy:

- SOL 1 This is the introductory tier of Scisensationalism and is primarily a “meet and greet” phase. This period lasts a week or two and prospective members have no real responsibilities except to meet other members. Membership fees are conspicuously absent at this level, to combat the widespread (and well founded) impression that membership is expensive.
- SOL 2 Prospective members are given literature and access to videos explaining the benefits and ultimate goal of Scisensationalism. At this level, members pay for assessments that are supposed to detect latent memories and abilities from previous incarnations. Low/non-income members are sometimes given these tests for free if they are seen as exploitable.
- SOL 3 In a few weeks, members may test their knowledge of Scisensationalism and progress to this level where they qualify for courses to develop any latent abilities they may have or flesh out any suppressed memories from a former existence. Such training is costly. The “haves” simply pay an exorbitant fee. The “have nots” are handled case by case. Typically they are assigned a few weeks of maintenance or secretarial work before qualifying for their first course. After members have completed a few courses (and seemingly have something to show for it), they may be asked to recruit other members, receiving rewards when quotas are met.
- SOL 4 This is the first tier when secrets of the Scisensationalist doctrine are disseminated, so, stability in a member is sought before promoting him here. Members learn of a higher power that has returned to collect the faithful, and that Gerald Davidson is the emissary for that power; a prophet. Elaborate (and expensive) courses continue to be offered, but as before, members are sometimes encouraged to work off course debts with service to the church. Tasks at this tier tend to be more hand-selected for the member.
- SOL 5 Known amongst the higher echelons as the “hazing tier”, this is the proving grounds. Members are asked for large donations and to do things that may go against their personal creed (stealing from family or spying on an employer). The time a member spends in service here depends on how effective they are here versus how effective they would be in higher tiers. Some members stay here for months or years while others breeze through in a few weeks.
- SOL 6 Members promoted to this tier experience a personalized ritual called “The Becoming” whereupon secrets of Scisensationalism are revealed to them in ways that affect them personally. They are told of a key role that their spirit played in a previous incarnation and will be expected to play again; they learn their destiny as decided by the church. Members of tier six or higher are executed if they attempt to leave the church.
- SOL 7 Members at this level learn that the higher power that has returned is extraterrestrial in nature. The extraterrestrials supposedly created life on Earth and Earth itself. Gerald Davidson is revealed to be one of these aliens in human form. Members must prioritize the church above all else and are called upon to make great sacrifices in business or family. Members who reach this tier are actively monitored by other members and their agents.
- SOL 8 Members are introduced to the extraterrestrials and are sometimes biochemically and empathically modified by them. Most have served their purpose by then and are taken to protodimensions of varying levels of awfulness to be used as playthings or for food. A rare few show promise, receiving a gift from a Darkling, possibly creating a Dark Minion.





Spyre Incorporated and the “Greens”

In 2019, a man approached some local attorneys with a suitcase of diamonds and platinum bars and the detailed excavation plans for Taylor Park in Largo. The attorneys drafted plans for the purchase of the park from the State of Florida and created a startup company called Spyre Incorporated to handle the transaction. Spyre Inc. presented itself as a mega church (presumably for tax purposes) and staffed itself with dozens of undocumented workers who cannot be located even today.

The CEO is listed as Grant McMullen but no one knows who that is. He is French, but no papers in France or the United States acknowledge his existence because he does not exist. He is the creation of Lur Re’Let of the Greens, a race of ETs not previously encountered. These humanoid, green-skinned aliens have narrow yellow eyes, bulbous heads, and tend to be scientifically and mechanically inclined. They are mammals, but can survive for hours without oxygen. Lur leads the Tampete colony of Greens, but there are other colonies on Earth with their own plans.

The Greens build sophisticated equipment to harvest the geothermal energy from Earth and they use this energy to power their spacecrafts, which are often cleverly disguised as buildings, monuments, or other constructs. Two decades ago, they discovered Earth and its potential as an intergalactic gas station. As a rule, they are not empathic and so none have been dominated by the Dark Ones, however they harbor no love for Earth’s inhabitants either.

On October 7th, 2021, the purchase of the park was finalized and, overnight, a giant ziggurat appeared in the middle of Taylor Lake. The few joggers who still used the trails here were perplexed, but no one else really noticed. Now, however, strange things are happening.

Nearby residents see unusual lights in the park at night, and they hear weird, machine-like noises. They describe men with silver suits and skin on the shores of Lake Taylor. People who come too close during their investigations mysteriously pass out; sometimes for hours, sometimes overnight. Some don’t come back. Those who return have strange rashes or hair loss, or they are blinded or deafened; sometimes permanently. The water in the surrounding communities tastes funny, and people are getting sick. The lakes and creeks are churning out dead wildlife by the truckload.

So what’s going on here? The Greens are siphoning energy from the planet for fuel reserves. Some of the energy powers the various infrastructure systems inside their spaceship. This gives off a lot of radiation that the Greens are immune to, but Florida’s indigenous life? Not so much.

Some of their engine parts become superheated, and they use the park lakes and creeks to cool them. The old softball fields in the park were torn up by construction crews and converted into aqueducts to transport water from reservoirs along McKay Creek to Lake Taylor.

The base of the lake is a kind of staging area for engine parts and fusion tests; an artificial maze made up of a coral-like substance called cebricite (see New DarkTek, p.195). This originates from the ziggurat and makes up substantial portions of it, and the Greens have bored deep into the earth with it. It conducts the energy they use more readily than metal.

What is in the ziggurat itself is anyone’s guess. Based on the Greens’ collecting and cataloguing of Earth’s wildlife, there must be a comprehensive zoological garden. Extensive laboratories and detention centers should be expected as well.

The Tocobaga People

In the 1500s, the Tocobaga people lived in South Florida but were eventually destroyed or driven out. Long thought extinct, a few tribes have managed to carve out existences for themselves within Safety Harbor, Mullet Key Bayou, and other islands along the Gulf Coast. With the resurgence of military (and corporate) operations, the Tocobaga people find themselves yet again playing the role of the refugee.

Over the years, the tribes have refined their ceremonies and rituals, and some have honed their empathic abilities to commune with spirits from other worlds; sometimes malignant spirits. Generations of channeling these spirits may have diminished their sanity but not their cognitive abilities. The Tocobaga people have emerged as a serious, domestic, eco-terrorist threat, focusing their attacks against the throngs of refugees and wealthy alike who continue to overpopulate what is perceived as their land.

Currently led by Chief Neucoxi, the Tocobaga survive in scattered clusters and tribes through the Gulf Coast and within the abandoned lands of Safety Harbor. A few remain near Fort De Soto and regularly sabotage the place.

Chief Neucoxi

STR 6, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 3,
CHR 7, PSI 1, SOC 3, INIT 2
Skills 2, Observation 4,
Throw Weapons 4, History 6,
Persuasion 5, Recruiting 4





Chief Neucoxi consults with his shamans (and whatever malign spirits and demons they consort with) before developing his terrorist agenda. The Tocabaga people have organized assaults into schools and hospitals where death counts have been counted in the dozens (sometimes nearly a hundred, as was the case in Meese General Hospital in Palm Harbor before the facility finally closed). Of course the single act of terrorism for which the Tocabaga are most renowned for would be Zero Point Zack; the first domestic terrorist attack with an atomic device, which resulted in a death count into the thousands.

Attacks with guns or swords are routine. Victims have their throats slit, are clubbed to death, or are sacrificed to one of many unspeakable demons their shamans can summon. The few prisoners who were taken had their noses removed before releasing them (as a sign that they have crossed paths with the Tocabaga people – a nod to a similar practice inflicted onto them by the Spanish during the 16th century).



Safety Harbor

A larger settlement of the Tocabaga was established in the remnants of Count Philippe Park in Safety Harbor, and it is said that a few of the dead buried within the mounds there have been consorted with and returned to life. It is here where Chief Neucoxi makes his home.

Each morning the chief and his nobles meet at a temple for a sip of black drink and some smoke. Much of the menial labor is done by the Bardache, hermaphrodite men who've sliced off their genitals, grown long hair, and wear skirts of moss. They serve as squires or nursemaids, and assist the shamans in various rituals. Tampete vagrants and wanderers have occasionally been captured and killed for food or used as slaves. They clean and peel farmed shellfish, dig and discard

middens (garbage piles), or gather nuts and berries.

Their homes are typically round with thatch roofs supported by poles. They build mounds to bury their dead and for other spiritual reasons.

Shamanism

Tocabaga Shamans are oracular and rely on pact magic (the binding of spirits to gain knowledge or service). Shamans believe the Tocabaga people each have three souls: the shadow, the eye pupil, and the pond reflection. At death, two of these (the shadow and the reflection) would depart and travel into the body of a lesser being (such as a fish). The pupil remained with the body and can be consulted spiritually later.

Whether or not Tocabaga Shamanism was truly ever effective, modern shamans have certainly tapped into the Dark Lords and spirits from accessible protodimensions. They see themselves as the servitors of our universe and expect to be last to leave before locking it behind them.

The Viemen and Ultima Ignus

Primitus Domus is the Latin name for a protodimension beyond a submerged portal established in Tampa Bay in 1984.

The inhabitants of that protodimension communicate using unpronounceable noises similar to modem screeches, but when they initiated contact with various factions in our own dimension they communicated with us in broken Latin. It isn't clear if Primitus Domus is the name of their home dimension or their home world in that dimension.

The Viemen

The Viemen, denizens from Primitus Domus, developed a method of exploring extra-dimensional space with an engineered device called (in our language) an Interstices Worm (see New DarkTek, p.195). Billions of these worms were unleashed into the wild in the hopes that a handful would establish residence on water-rich worlds within hospitable dimensions.

In 50 AD, one of these billions of cross-dimensional tendrils lashed out from Primitus Domus and latched onto the (then Roman-controlled) island of Cyprus. After gathering 200 years of intelligence, the much-adapted Interstices Worm briefly re-established contact with the Viemen. A review of the intelligence at that time indicated that vacant portions of the Americas, in particular the Gulf of Mexico, would be the best settlement for the Viemen as they established residence and plans to dominate this planet.

For unknown reasons, the Interstices Worm again lost communication with Primitus Domus and so set upon





execution of the last established plan, the construction of a dimensional gate between Primitus Domus and a deep basin within Tampa Bay. Patiently, the worm waited, until the early 1970s when Earth's level of technology had finally advanced enough for the worm to communicate with its people.

The Viemen immediately overtook Omni-Tek engineering crews and both lured and coerced the owners of Omni-Tek to relocate to Tampa under the new moniker of Scienta Terram. Scienta Terram continues to provide R&D services to Primitus Domus via the umbrella company of Ultima Ignus.



In 1972, the Interstices Worm had located and infiltrated a local telephone central office and war-dialed commercial telephone lines in order to gather telephone numbers connected to computers or on a computer network. Although the worm had collected several leads on college campuses and within the scientific and banking communities, the worm's AI classified these as high-risk options since stealth was desired (though the banking contacts were later exploited). In 1978, the worm established connectivity with a private R&D company based out of New York City called Omni-Tek. The worm disseminated blueprints to Omni-Tek of advanced technology and eventually those of a massive dimensional gate.

The lure of such technology and substantial amounts of cash funneled through fictitious bank accounts was enough to motivate Omni-Tek to construct and place the dimensional gateway within Tampa Bay and on September 17th, 1984, the gateway was finally opened for the first time.

When the gate was opened, hundreds of Viemen, suited in special vapor compression suits, entered our dimension. Two millennia ago, it was the practice of the Viemen to master whatever language was used in any dimensions they wished to subjugate. This practice has since been abandoned as largely unproductive and unnecessary, but in accordance with the original plan, these convoys of Viemen were equipped with voice boxes that could simulate rough Latin speech. Although communication was difficult, it was successful in the end.

Ultima Ignus

The Viemen had anticipated centuries without interruptions but after a series of PR disasters in the 1980s, Scienta Terram CEO Benjamin D'Charro warned Viemen delegates of the need for diplomacy. With the Viemens' consent, Benjamin recruited teams of lawyers and lobbyists to buy up the drilling rights in Tampa Bay. These men are paid obscenely well to ensure the Viemen are not interrupted or distracted from their operations and to keep their name out of the news. Operatives are sometimes overzealous in enforcing this, particularly against Scienta Terram whistle-blowers. This arrangement has been in place for 50 years.

In 2019, Benjamin D'Charro passed on the mantel of Scienta Terram to his son, Vincent D'Charro, and spun off the legal team (with other local investors) to Ultima Ignus, currently led by CEO Franklin Lott. Within a few years, Ultima Ignus bought up local companies in and around Tampete and eventually Scienta Terram as well. Today Ultima Ignus retains ownership of Scienta Terram and dozens of related companies, which contribute to the Viemens' plans.

Other Ultima Ignus subsidiaries include Stromm Incorporated (which develops subterranean and deep sea drilling equipment), Celeriputo Enterprises (which develops microprocessor technology-based thermal dynamics rather than alternating electrical current), and Caolornavitas (an energy producer which refines Unbibium-292 and Livermorium-293 found within Weedon Meteorite).

Ultima Ignus fronts as a petroleum investor, but in practice it simply manages its subsidiaries and handles legal disputes between the Viemens' interests and Tampete.

The Plan

The Viemen, or the "delegates" as they are sometimes known to inhabitants of other dimensions (a tongue-in-cheek reference to the lack of communication and negotiation typically demonstrated by the Viemen), generally employ a small subset of strategies with a high degree of adaptability.

When a world is mostly or fully covered with water and if it is high gravity, they will plan to use it as a forward base for eventual invasion of the dimension. Terraforming is minimal and is limited to the collapsing of any remaining land masses and developing a complex subterranean infrastructure. Indigenous species are typically exploited to assist with





terraforming, resource gathering, and occasionally for other purposes and are eventually exterminated when they are no longer useful.

Worlds neither rich in water nor high gravity are retained temporarily as scouting colonies until a more suitable world can be discovered. Indigenous life is extinguished immediately in this case.

Earth is mostly covered with water but its relatively low gravity has generated concern for the Viemen who do not anticipate discovering a more suitable base in the foreseeable future. Terraforming has already begun with mutation and colonization of Earth's subterranean species (many of which are not native to Earth) and with strategic ground weakening and undermining of the Florida peninsula.

A strong Darkling presence has given pause to the Viemen who have encountered heavy resistance from their ilk before. The ETs are a new threat to them, but within they sense the tendrils of the Dark Ones and so the Viemen exercise caution here. Mankind's nuclear capability and recent technological advances (some prompted by discovered Dark-Tek) also trouble the Viemen. Swift and decisive action it seems must yield to careful and deliberate strategy.

Structural comprise of the Florida land mass is slow and deliberate, but miscalculations occur and sinkholes tend to be an extremely common phenomenon. Subterranean weakening is done by unleashing hoards (literally millions) of oversized boring cockroaches, moles, armadillos, and huge bulette-like creatures (land sharks). The Viemen grow densely plated, oversized worm-like creatures which can bore through the earth and nest in vast hives meters beneath the surface. Specimens can reach 25 meters in length, and the reproductive cycle is less than a week.

Unfortunately, due to warring factions already present on Earth, the Viemen have had to exercise discretion in their research and in their execution. Again, Ultima Ignus has aided them with a land grab of the islands of Terra Verde on the east shores of the Gulf of Mexico. It's a foothold. Within Terra Verde (see Terra Verde, p.97), amidst ceaseless and omnipresent fog, hum the SteamTek factories of Primitus Domus in whatever corporate guise has suited them. Shipyards, energy plants, factories focusing on missile guidance systems, and heat-based micro-processing, all of these thrive here.

The Viemen are secretive and hermit-like, but they have made alliances. Lawyers within Ultima Ignus have submitted bids for land in Bayshore on behalf of Tentacular ETs who use the land for their various schemes. In return, these ETs have acted as intermediaries between the Viemen and a space cruiser full

of Darkling-dominated Grays hovering just outside Neptune's orbit. These Grays have procured and delivered to Tampa Bay a massive meteorite filled with Chronoton Calcium Carbonate (see Weedon Meteorite, p.100) which the Viemen subsequently used to provide vast quantities of energy to the Grays and to power their own advanced steam-based technology.

The Viemen are known to ISAAC and the Shadow Government. A man-sized submarine slipped through the portal to Primitus Domus and returned with a wealth of environmental information about that dimension. Also, the wreckage of several Viemen vessels (and similar vessels created by Ultima Ignus' subsidiaries) have been collected and investigated. Some of the technology has led to developments at the U.S. Navy Base in Fort De Soto and has inspired the Gulf Saucer.



Wapner

Stefan Dragos is a Russian citizen who immigrated to the United States in 2004 with his sister and her family. A meager life savings was enough to open a grocery store in Hyde Park. He soon married and started a family of his own.

The Skittlz, a new South Tampa based gang, was testing the waters in Hyde Park, going after small businesses with extortion schemes and brute muggings. Things escalated when a bagman threatened Stefan and his family for "protection" monies. Stefan, a former Romanian veteran who was no stranger to violence, drove off the hoodlum and organized a neighborhood watch. Skittlz response was swift. The bagman returned with a crew of automatic-wielding teens and a cybernetically augmented gangbanger. Stefan was not there, but everyone else in the store, including his family, was killed.

Stefan was devastated. After a period of depression, he





liquidated his inventory and holdings and invested that capital into cybernetic enhancements to himself. After modifying his eyes and ears, adding body plating to his chest and arms, implanting a weapons guidance system, and phenomenally increasing his strength and agility, Stefan was ready to enact vengeance. In a week, the bloodshed meted out by Stefan received national attention on GNN as the entire Skittlz gang was decimated.

Now Stefan is a vigilante, patrolling South Tampa for crime, particularly gang activity. He assumes the moniker "Wapner", inspired by a favorite American television courtroom program which once aired in Romania, and has adopted the tagline "In Russia, take court to people!"

White Light

White Light is a clandestine government organization funded by money siphoned from the CDC but operating under the guise of a non-profit medical company for low income residents.

The goal of the organization is to prepare humanity's defenses against an inevitable alien invasion. They organize elaborate schemes to collect and catalog human DNA, test chemicals and chemical distribution methods, pilot surveillance and early warning systems, and probe for any ET presence.

There are perhaps 90 operatives who are mostly scientists with some temps and hired muscle. The leader is former CDC Director of Public Health Preparedness and Response, Colin Brink.

Brink keeps a main laboratory in Largo where all of White Light's physical evidence is cataloged and chemical testing is done (these are manufactured covertly in a paint factory in the Cannery).

Brink keeps freezer rooms full of preserved Gray and Insectoid ET bodies. His chemists work tirelessly to isolate chemicals that are benign to human DNA but lethal to ET physiology. To this end, he justifies the imprisonment and murder of countless human "test subjects".

Brink is responsible for the genesis and release of several lethal diseases in a misguided attempt

to exterminate ET life within Tampete.

White Light operates in out-of-the-way places with easy access to undocumented people, often abandoning projects when they generate attention. They use the Largo and Clearwater sewer systems to rapidly transport personnel, equipment, and vehicles. Sometimes they operate in high volume areas like the Grid or Channelside and then disappear into the crowds.

Other White Light operations include things like:

- Mass vaccinations and flu shot drives to collect DNA samples.
- Retinal scanning technology in traffic lights and crosswalk signals.
- Maintain bee apiaries and mosquito colonies within the Outlaw to distribute diseases or their cures en masse.
- Tampering of water heaters within isolated apartment complexes or prole camps with chemicals.

Zack Heights Posse

Zack Heights Posse (ZHP) is a group of 80-90 teens and young adults who reside within the ruins of Zero Point Zack. It is unclear where the founders of this Old Downtown Tampa gang came from but it is likely they were members of the Seminole Heights Posse in the slums north of Zero Point Zack who fled to the area and underwent physiological changes due to radioactivity.

Members from various gangs felt compelled to travel to the area by an outbreak of a highly empathic fungus known as psiomycota (see New Dark Adversaries, p.162). Most of them were teens experimenting with hallucinogenic mushrooms that the psiomycota colonies infected and mutated and eventually used to gather and infect others.

These people are used by the psiomycota primarily for protection and distribution. Many are now barely passable

as human and must go to great efforts to hide their faces and appendages if they travel outside of Zero Point Zack in order to avoid unwanted attention to themselves.

They are led by a 6'9" gangly, albino man (but with dark red hair) named Jamie Flood known as "the White Guy." Jamie is a highly empathic mutant and handles most of the gang's planning.





Jamie Flood (Neuropath Specialist)

STR 4, CON 4, AGL 6, INT 8, EDU 5, CHR 7, PSI 9, SOC 3, INIT 2
Skills 2, Business 5, Observation 4, Streetwise 4,
Foreboding 4, Human Empathy 4, Animal Empathy 4,
Telekinesis 6, Mind Blast 6, Compulsion 6

Though territorial, the gang is primarily concerned with feeding local psiomycota colonies and distributing their spores. Due to their mutated appearance, this can be tricky. Sometimes they are limited to abductions near Zero Point Zack.

A lucrative partnership with Radicycle Environmental Services gives them access to toxic (but nourishing) compounds and to restricted areas within Tampete as well as environmental suits to discreetly navigate these areas. The pay is just a bonus.

Gang armaments vary and include bats, poles or other debris,

small arms, or natural attacks augmented by their mutations. Some have empathic abilities. Most can drive and operate simple machinery, but a few are mutated so severely that fine motor skills are beyond them.

A majority of the current members of ZHP came from Seminole Heights Posse in the grounds just north of Zero Point Zack, and ZHP still has dealings with this gang. ZHP makes very few demands of them (mostly weapon or vehicle procurement, or getting into areas the ZHP would have difficulty infiltrating), and Seminole Heights Posse appeases them to avoid conflicts. ZHP does not interact with other gangs although former members of those gangs may retain their connections.

Members of the Zack Heights Posse aggressively defend their turf, however they fear the priests of the Temple of the Exulted (with good reason, having lost their previous leader to a ritual earlier this year).

A HUNDRED AND ONE PERSONALITIES

d00 DESCRIPTION

001 Luna, F, 14, Nepali, STR 4, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 9, EDU 9, CHR 7, PSI 3, SOC 7

Raised in a Nepali orphanage, Luna became a brilliant hacker by age ten. By twelve, she hacked JM-CFS's web site and was subsequently hired (and relocated) by JM-CFS in exchange for dropping the charges. Now she lives at JM-CFS and assists with security, monitoring employees with surveillance, and the security network. She's ruthless in eliminating spies and traitors.

Skills 4, Computers 9, Computer Operations 9, Computer Empathy 3

002 Fat Mike, M, 40, American, STR 8, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 5

Fat Mike is a chop shop-extraordinaire. He'll take any automobile (even if he doesn't pay much for it), and he's an excellent mechanic, but he's renowned throughout Tampete for his legendary skill at mods. Mounted tripods, reinforced glass, protected fuel tanks, and engine blocks that will bury most anything running the Tampete Bridge Gauntlet; these are Fat Mike's hallmarks.

Skills 4, Mechanic 8, Ground Vehicle 8, Electronics 6, Streetwise 7

003 Grace Walmer, F, 19, American, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4

Grace is a DarkNet contributor and amateur journalist. She anonymously distributes her What Lies Beneath ePamphlets, which are a commentary on the various events within Tampa Bay and beneath Largo and Clearwater and the various factions covering them up.

Skills 3, Computer Operation 5, Interview 6, Research 4, Stealth 5, Observation 5

004 Turn Signal, M, 25, American, STR 8, CON 7, AGL 8, INT 7, EDU 3, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 5

Turn Signal is a Knight in the Prescott Gents. He was hired as muscle and he earned the moniker "Turn Signal" due to his habit of telling his victims what was going to happen to them over the next few minutes and then reenacting that script in excruciating detail. Turn Signal runs his own crew for the Gents and manages meth labs, distribution, and enforcement in the area.

Skills 4, Streetwise 6, Persuasion 6, Slug Weapon (Rifle) 8, Armed Martial Arts (Small Blade) 8





- 005 Sonny Torres, M, 42, American, STR 5, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 8, PSI 0, SOC 8
Sonny Torres is one of the Cepero family's most essential smugglers. He keeps a high profile and has no fear of the police (to whom the Cepero family is off limits) but is wary of retaliation from other families and gangs, particularly Diablo Blanco. He keeps a Cris Craft Foamdancer (Jesus) and two Cris Craft Runabouts (the Zan and the Jayna) docked at Harbour Island Yacht Club.
Skills 4, Small Watercraft 6, Autogun 5, Slug Weapons (Pistol) 6, Navigation 6, Observation 6
- 006 John Gilmore, M, 33, American, STR 6, CON 7, AGL 6, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 6
John is an arms dealer operating in Hyde Park beneath notice of both the Cepero family and the Prescott Gents. He owns an Irish coffee shop and always pays his protection to the Meuces family on time. He charges a little more than he should, and he screens his customers very carefully, but he can get any weapon and can even move DarkTek from time to time. He has ties to terrorist organizations both domestic and international.
Skills 3, Bargain 6, Persuasion 6, Bribery 6, Demolitions 5, Slug Weapons (Rifle) 6
- 007 Nagel Josher, M, 44, Haitian, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 6, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 7, PSI 4, SOC 6
Nagel is an outsider living and working in Artist Alley near Centro Ybor in a booth he calls Inner Child. He makes sculptures and paintings that seem to speak to people who stop long enough to examine his wares. He is an expert at reading people and rarely disappoints his customers. Nagel sells drugs (including Whiz) to supplement his income (but he doesn't make the stuff).
Skills 2, Act/Bluff 6, Bargain 5, Painting 7, Sculpture 7, Human Empathy 4, Foreboding 4
- 008 Oz Drummond, M, 38, American, STR 4, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 5, EDU 3, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 1
Oz trolls the sewers and drainage ditches looking for "shinies". He is passably human but is a Nukid castoff, with patches of scales on his arms and legs and a hard underbelly. He wears a trench coat full of worthless junk he tries to pawn off on locals for whatever he can get. He makes extra cash as a confidential informant for the Hillsborough Police Department.
Skills 2, Act/Bluff 6, Bargain 5, Scrounging 5, Disguise 3, Luck 5, Pickpocket 5, Stealth 6
- 009 Niles Riddick, M, 34, American, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 5, EDU 5, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 4
Niles is an ex-lawyer turned beat cop. He pushes wiretap ordinances and regularly plants evidence on perps he thinks are beating the system. He keeps a collection of detailed files on his past and present targets as well as anyone he might be able to blackmail to that end.
Skills 3, Slug Weapon 7, Stealth 6, Legal 5, Investigation 4, Interview 4, Streetwise 5
- 010 Benny Jaccard, M, 23, American, STR 4, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 5, CHR 6, PSI 3, SOC 3
Benny sells handguns and vests and is really good about getting around any pesky waiting periods. He has a knack for being in the right place at the right time. Riots, gang wars, civil unrest or anywhere in the outskirts of an uncontrolled zone, you may see his hot dog cart, ice cream truck, stroller, or shopping cart. So either make a purchase or run, because it's about to go down.
Skills 2, Slug Weapon 5, Stealth 5, Bargain 6, Streetwise 4, Observation 4, Foreboding 3
- 011 Harvey Dillard, M, 54, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 7, CHR 7, PSI 6, SOC 1
When an insane asylum in Palm Harbor was shut down and abandoned, Harvey was the last resident who stubbornly refused to leave. When food and supplies dwindled, he went back to the only thing he knew before the Greater Depression; door-to-door vacuum sales. Whatever success he might have enjoyed in this lost trade was unfortunately ruined by a strong Foreboding ability combined with a severe case of Tourette's Syndrome.
Skills 2, Foreboding 6, Human Empathy 6, Business 5, Persuasion 5, Electronics 4





- 012 Vincent Croce, M, 47, Italian, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 4, INT 7, EDU 7, CHR 8, PSI 5, SOC 5
 Vincent Croce is a prosperous empath and fortune teller. He reads energy from material things; tea leaves, garbage trails, blood spatter, anything. The more chaotic, the better. He works backwards to determine events that led up to the clutter and sometimes events long before that. Vincent assists the police with high profile cases for free but charges everyone else a premium.
 Skills 3, Foreboding 6, Human Empathy 6, Animal Empathy 4, History 6
- 013 Archana Geruso, F, 19, Indian, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 7, PSI 5, SOC 3
 Archana is a painter who sells her wares in Artist Alley in Centro Ybor. Her paintings are sourced from her dreams and tend to come true, predicting future events with some detail. Often they will contain the faces of people she has not yet met or events that seem impossible. Each painting has a 40% chance of depicting a true event and is inspired by places she has visited recently or dreamed of.
 Skills 2 Foreboding 5, Human Empathy 3, Painting 7, Bargain 3, Slug Weapon 4
- 014 Olena, Ivanov, F, 33, Russian, STR 7, CON 8, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 5
 Olena is a Tampete “tunnel rat”, a cartographer who maps the ever-changing Underbay tunnel network. Her maps fetch high prices if they’re current (the Underbay tunnels tend to change nearly weekly). She works with smugglers including the Ceperos and the Brakemen to move goods, and she runs her own smuggling operations as well.
 Skills 4, Armed Martial Arts 7, Autogun 5, Observation 7, Streetwise 5, Tracking 5, Forgery 5
- 015 Keith Ferreira, M, 23, American, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 9, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 4
 Keith (or “Magz”) runs a vehicle delivery service. The deal is, you call him when you need a car and tell him where you are. A few specifications are okay, but you generally get what you get. Most times you’ll get it in twenty minutes or less. He keeps a few automobiles on hand but often hotwires things on the way, particularly for custom jobs. Keith works with a handful of associates who he uses for drop off and pickup. Turnover is low unless they ask too many questions.
 Skills 3, Grnd Vehicle 10, Streetwise 7, Observation 7, Mechanic 6, Slug Weapon 7, Stealth 7
- 016 Hitch, M, 26, American, STR 5, CON 7, AGL 6, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 2
 Hitch (no one knows his real name) follows people for money. Call him before a meet if you want the other guy followed, want to save a dollar, and have a high tolerance for antics. He’s got a sharp memory and good street skills, but he gets carried away. He’ll try to follow people into their cars, or hide in their trunks, lying in wait, only to be discovered sleeping there the next morning. Antics like that have made him something of a celebrity and sometimes he gets recognized at inopportune times. It’s always something.
 Skills 2, Streetwise 7, Intrusion 5, Stealth 6, Unarmed Martial Arts 4, Act/Bluff 5, Luck 6
- 017 Elise Brabham, F, 24, French, STR 6, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 5
 Elise and her crew are the people you call when you need vehicular rescue or just something specific pulled. Her usual modus operandi is advance light screening and a text with a make/model and GPS coordinates. If you’re with the vehicle, she’ll pull you out too. Depending on the work, she’ll arrive in a scooter, performance car, armored assault vehicle or a chopper.
 Skills 3, Ground Vehicle 10, Pilot 7, Hovercraft 8, Observation 7, Autogun 7, Navigation 7
- 018 Jessie Brinks, M, 27, American, STR 9, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 4, EDU 2, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 3
 Brinks, as he’s known in the community, is a throwback to the 1980s wrestling pop culture. He’s a 6’3” white male who dresses in sleeveless denim, excessive chains and jewelry, talks in an over-gruff voice, and sports a 15-inch Mohawk. He’s muscle and can be relied upon for that. However, if things go quieter than expected and his services don’t seem to be required, he’s prone to starting some trouble to ensure his customers get what they’re paying for.
 Skills 5, Unarmed Martial Arts 9, Thrown Weapon 7, Slug Weapons 7, Climbing 7





- 019 Nicole Feher, F, 22, German, STR 6, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 4, CHR 7, PSI 5, SOC 2
Nicole is an empathic tattooist. She does regular tattoos but if you know to ask, she'll also do special ones. The kind that work once or twice for a special empathic edge and then burn out. She's made tattoos that heal, harm, give dreams and premonitions, or help people find each other. The effects are mostly minor and often only work once. She's got a 60% chance of success (when she's not high). The rest of the time, anything goes. She charges \$1,000-\$5,000 per tattoo.
Skills 2, (4 for Empathy skills Foreboding, Healing, Human Emp, Proj Emotion, Comp Empathy)
- 020 Josh Gearing, M, 44, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 7, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 5
Josh was a news reporter hailing from Dayton, Ohio, who went underground after outing a conspiracy involving the sourcing of foster children for military experimentation there. Now he writes a local underground news-magazine called Barb-Wire. Many articles are pulled from DarkNet, which he is a regular contributor to. Others are original, local pieces. He distributes mostly online but sends some copies to a list of P.O. boxes that he keeps. He used to drop them en masse in the Grid and downtown Tampete until his personal chopper was shot down.
Skills 3, Research 8, Investigation 8, Streetwise 5, Interview 5, Computer Op 7, Observation 7
- 021 Kari Nedlose, F, 26, American, STR 9, CON 8, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 6, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 5
Kari is a HIRO operative on Harbour Island who engages in the risky practice of moonlighting her services privately during her three weeks of paid leave. Subsequently, any missions have a hard stop whether or not they are resolved. Kari has a lot of mercenary contacts she can use in a bind.
Skills 6, Slug Weapons 8, Autogun 8, Unarmed Martial Arts/Small Blades 8, Heavy Guns 8
- 022 Ian Grabowski, M, 32, Polish, STR 6, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 4
Ian runs a tattoo parlor and is very gifted at what he does; he has cybernetic implants in his wrist and fingers which help him work and also house other gadgets. He also keeps his ear to the street and is a fountain of information if you're willing to pay him for his time. He hates "trendy" tattoos or messages in foreign languages and for people who insist upon it, he'll leave little Easter eggs...
Skills 3, Painting 7, Unarmed Martial Arts 5, Observation 7, Streetwise 6
- 023 Anisha Drago, F, 19, Chinese, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 3, CHR 10, PSI 0, SOC 5
Anisha is a street prostitute from Los Angeles who won the interest of a nome traveling in that area. Enamored with her, he paid for her invasive cybernetic and reconstructive surgery. Some of these were for his personal enjoyment, but some (including recording devices and a photographic memory) were installed so he could spy on his employees as well as his competitors. She fled California for Tampete working in Ybor's Castle and eventually working on her own. The repeated surgical procedures have left her mentally unstable and with some anger management issues.
Skills 4, Act/Bluff 9, Persuasion 8, Observation 8, Scrounging 7
- 024 Gabriel, M, 52, American, STR 4, CON 3, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 7, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 4
Gabriel is the moniker for the DJ of WMKU, a pirate radio station operated out of his van. Gabriel's broadcasts stop and start at seemingly random times; sometimes for minutes and sometimes for hours, but always discussing various government conspiracy theories. Gabriel gives out changing phone numbers for his listeners who he'll often talk with on the air. Gabriel is in actuality, Jonathan McTiernan, a former employee of the CDC.
Skills 3, Electronics 5, Medical 6, Biology 5, Interview 5
- 025 Grieco Mueces, M, 17, Hispanic, STR 6, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 7, EDU 3, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 5
Grieco is an up-and-coming car booster in the Mueces family. He races the Tampete bridge Gauntlet and provides some of the drivers with their rides. He's good at what he does but can't always limit himself. Chastising him for his indiscretions rarely reduces his thefts. He'll simply play "musical cars" with random automobiles if he can't take them home with him. Grieco may become a family leader if he lives long enough and learns to be a little less reckless.
Skills 3, Stealth 6, Ground Vehicle 8, Mechanic 5, Luck 5





- 026 Cedric Rigo, M, 38, Afro-American, STR 4, CON 4, AGL 2, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 4
Rigo was a Hillsborough county beat cop wounded in a Cepero family ambush intended to kill him and his partner. Left for dead but with partial paralysis, Rigo survived, quit the force, and became a private investigator. For the last two years while supplementing his income with odd jobs, he's been tailing Cepero operatives, mapping stash houses, and learning their contacts in other organizations. In a world where the Ceperos didn't own the police, Rigo would have already collected enough evidence to shut them down. Instead, he's focusing on destroying them.
Skills 3, Slug Weapons 6, Investigation 7, Observation 5, Computer Operation 5
- 027 Woodchipper Pete, M, 27, Hispanic, STR 9, CON 8, AGL 6, INT 3, EDU 1, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 5
So named because it looks like his face was run through the aforementioned gardening device, Woodchipper Pete is seven feet of muscle and bone and not much else who works for the Cepero family. His injuries are the result of diving from a high-rise into a low-coasting chopper and forgetting how propellers work. Pete is angry, stupid, loud, and racist. He makes fun of people with jokes that make no sense, and then fights anyone pointing that out.
Skills 2, Unarmed Martial Combat 8, Armed Martial Combat 8, Slug Weapons 6
- 028 Tonya Josey, F, 21, Afro-American, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 3, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 4
Tonya is a low-level drug distributor for the Prescott Gents. You call a number, leave a coded order, and she'll show up within a few hours with a stack of pizza boxes, one of which has your blow in it. She travels with whatever muscle she can scrape from the corners on the way to her stops. Tonya is sometimes used as the first eyes into places that the Gents are about to crash.
Skills 3, Unarmed Martial Combat 6, Slug Weapons 5, Streetwise 6, Observation 6
- 029 Alejandro Mohabir, M, 28, Hispanic, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 3, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4
Alejandro is your locksmith-on-demand. He drives a plain white van filled with all manner of tools from simple picks to chainsaws, jackhammers, and nail guns. If he can't crack the lock, he can crack the door (and sometimes the wall). He'll do safes if you hire someone to secure the area while he works. He's also good with automobile papers, licenses, and registrations.
Skills 3, Pickpocket 7, Forgery 7, Demolitions 4, Intrusion 5, Slug Weapon (nail gun) 5
- 030 Warren Gagolski, M, 42, Polish, STR 4, CON 3, AGL 3, INT 8, EDU 8, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 6
Warren is a well-published biologist and zoologist, although lately, he's known more as a crackpot than as a specialist. He has severe agoraphobia and mysophobia (fear of outdoors and germs). He rarely leaves his home (a one-bedroom apartment protected with plastic sheeting and sophisticated filters in the windows and ventilation system) but when he does, he does so wearing a gas mask and clear plastic suit. He regularly publishes articles citing flagrant EPA violations of various corporations and the effects on Tampete's environment.
Skills 3, Biology 8, Chemistry 6, Genetics 5, Geology 5, Computer 5, Research 8
- 031 James Hill, M, 48, American, STR 5, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 8, EDU 7, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 4
James is a former American astronaut who quit after his shuttle detonated with no explanation, seconds after he ejected by parachute and landed in the middle of US 19 during rush hour. He never returned for debriefing or to get his last paycheck. Instead, he slipped off the radar and flies small passenger planes in and around the Gulf, smuggling whatever his customers pay him to smuggle. He lands in airfields that aren't really his and subsequently makes last minute changes to his travel plans. He keeps a small field near Plant City under someone else's name. He's a person of interest to the U.S. government because of the things he's seen on the job.
Skills 4, Pilot 7, Navigation 7, Starship Architecture 4, Xeno-Biology 4, Zero-Grav 7, Autogun 4
- 032 Destin Lonsdale, M, 20, Afro-Amer, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 9, EDU 4, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 3
Destin is a lead chemist for the Prescott Gents in South Tampa. His stuff tends to be pure and, subsequently, pricey. He does occasionally sample his wares, and this affects quality from time to time. He also has a gambling problem that the Gents tolerate (and is the main reason he's still on their leash). Destin's sister Yanine is a Minion Hunter, and although she hasn't disclosed this, she keeps an eye on him and the people he associates with.
Skills 3, Chemistry 8, Gambling 7





- 033 Julia Clement, F, 33, American, STR 4, CON 5, AGL 4, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4
Julia works at the City of Tampete Department of Motor Vehicles and for a fee, will run background checks, registration or tag lookups, or run reports of “shopping lists” for car boosters. She can also update records as requested (but she’s careful with this since she’s been in trouble for it before). She can also provide forged documents for anything issued by the City of Tampete.
Skills 2, Computer Operations 5, Admin 5, Forgery 4
- 034 Grigory Pasternack, M, 47, Russian, STR 8, CON 7, AGL 8, INT 6, EDU 3, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 3
An immigrant from Russia in 2008, Grigory became fascinated with Florida’s culture of wild animals and ridiculous crime. Obsessed with alligators, he began fishing them out of Hillsborough River and now keeps a farm of the things in the eastern outskirts of Tampete. He disposes of bodies with no questions asked and has some skill at interrogation as well. He can even be counted on for the occasional hit, so long as the customer doesn’t require much discretion.
Skills 4, Survival 6, Swimming 6, Interrogation 6, Small Watercraft 6, Guard/Hunting Beasts 7
- 035 Razz Brady, M, 24, American, STR 8, CON 8, AGL 8, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 5
Razz is proof that, no matter how well you pay, you’ll still have bad apples. He’s a HIRO operative who supplements his income by providing his access credentials and paperwork to his brother Gary, an expert forger. Security, being paramount in HIRO, is updated frequently, sometimes hourly. For \$15,000, you get a badge and credentials which *might* get you access into Dome 606. Every hour you wait to use them makes it that much less likely they’ll work. And rule one is you don’t get caught. Get caught and Razz and Gary will need to clear the books of you...
Skills 6, Slug Weapons 8, Autogun 8, Unarmed Martial Arts/Small Blades 8, and Heavy Guns 8
- 036 Gina Todaro, F, 43, Hispanic, STR 4, CON 5, AGL 6, INT 8, EDU 8, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 7
Gina Todaro is a junior partner at the Law Offices of Rhines & Rhines, a firm created to protect the interests of several ET and Darkling-controlled corporations in Tampete. Gina specializes in harassment law as it pertains to Minion Hunters threatening her clients. She’s the wolf the corporations will unleash when careless PCs divulge their names or addresses, and she’s quick to wallpaper them with cease and desist orders, restraining orders, and harassment suits.
Skills 4, Admin/Legal 8, Business 5, Computer Operation 5, Research 8
- 037 Dalia Cartagena, F, 33, Hispanic, STR 7, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 4, CHR 8, PSI 0, SOC 4
Dalia is a sadistic opportunist; the “people mover”. She drives a septic truck and dresses the part, but her truck is covertly used to move large groups of people. In times past, that meant human trafficking, but there’s no money in that since the funding to border patrols was slashed. Now Dalia makes money collecting groups of people and farming them out to the Brakemen, Ultima Ignus, government shadow groups, and even Morlock colonies; anyone with the resources to pay.
Skills 3, Ground Vehicle 7, Hovercraft 5, Mechanic 5, Persuasion 5, Autogun 6
- 038 “Slim Bo”, M, 42, American, STR 6, CON 6, AGL 8, INT 6, EDU 1, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4
“Slim Bo” is straight out of a 1980s police show; tanned to a crisp, game show host smile, overdressed, and ready with attitude and a smart comment. But “Slim Bo” is the best boat mechanic and modifications expert Tampete has to offer. If you want something to make it to Cuba and back in an evening while staying off the radar, Slim is your man. Diablo Blanco once harassed him to work for them. His response was to take a job modifying boats for the U.S. Coast Guard. Months later, they finally decided to back off although he still watches his back.
Skills 3, Mechanic 7, Autogun 7, Heavy Artillery & Guns 6, Hovercraft 7, Small Watercraft 7





039 Rocky Fenzl, M, 30, American, STR 8, CON 5, AGL 6, INT 5, EDU 3, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 4

Rocky is a trucker. He's always been and always will be. It's what he knows. He gets contracts moving raw materials between cities across the countryside. He's good with a gun, but he also knows his limits and is always hiring protection. He's got access to the loading dock sections of most dreamlands and can be bribed to smuggle things in and out. Rocky doesn't talk much, but if the pressure starts, he'll spill his secrets. He just isn't paid enough to do otherwise.

Skills 2, Ground Vehicle 8, Mechanic 7, Act/Bluff 5, Slug Weapons 7, Navigation 5

040 "Bugsy" Marotta, M, 48, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 6, INT 6, EDU 6, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 3

Bugsy pilots mosquito crop dusters throughout Hyde Park and in the Vinoy outskirts. He may have inhaled too much pesticide or maybe it was something else, but he spends his free time sky-writing cryptic messages in and around Tampete. It's obvious he means something with these, it just isn't clear what. Sometimes the wind blows his manifestos apart before he can finish them. Sometimes he just crams too much message into too few words (as during his recent "God hates Qwerty1" escapade). In any case, the man clearly knows more than he's capable of telling...

Skills 2, Pilot 6, Mechanic 4, Navigation 4, Xeno-Biology 6

041 Kodge, M, 39, American, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 5

Kodge operates an old bowling alley, half of which he's provisioned as a firing range. Kodge stocks lots of handguns and ammunition behind the counter and even a few submachine guns. If you want to hire muscle, you could do worse than to look here. Fights happen less often than you'd think and bowlers are asked to wear vests (and you can request a lane away from the MAC 10s).

Skills 3, Business 5, Slug Weapons 7, Autogun 5, Unarmed Marshal Arts 5

042 Rembrandt Karns, M, 58, American, STR 6, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 7, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 6

Rembrandt owns a moderately sized patch of land adjacent to Camp Soule, a land he poaches regularly for sport. Karns is old money. Well into the Greater Depression, Karns was still traveling the world, exploring third world jungles, searching for lost civilizations, and hunting prey of legend. Now, in his twilight years, he maintains a veritable palace of animal trophies (and some human ones) and occasionally still hunts in the last bastion of discovery our world has to offer, Demonground. PCs wishing to explore the adjacent Soule may find travel through Karn's land to be convenient passage, until they learn that he hunts Minion Hunters too.

Skills 4, Early Firearms, Thrown Weapons, Archery 7, Stealth 6, Survival 7, Tracking 7

043 Raezelle Oexmann, F, 24, American, STR 6, CON 7, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 8, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 4

Raezelle is a veterinarian who runs a clinic for wounded Minion Hunters, or sometimes anyone in need. She stocks medical supplies and pharmaceuticals and will cut a deal for anyone she knows is fighting Darkling influence. Her sister, Teresa, was an active hunter until she became infected with the Bleed. She's still out there somewhere, and Raezelle is determined to cure her.

Skills 3, Medical 6, Biology 8, Interrogation 5

044 Hoagie Goodman, M, 48, American, STR 7, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 3, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 4

Hoagie works on the Clearwater shipping docks and will lose a container for the right price. He has a few buddies working with him to facilitate a discrete smuggling operation. He deals with the Brakemen and occasionally the Ceperos to move drugs, weapons, or sometimes people.

Skills 2 Slug Weapons (Pistol) 5, Unarmed Martial Arts 6, Business 4, Bargain 5

045 Alma Merza, F, 32, Indian, STR 5, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 5, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 5

Alma runs a wig and costume shop in Hyde Park. There are racks of outfits for parties and the like, but she specializes in custom wardrobe. Get her a photograph and she'll make you something passable at twenty feet. An expert of disguise herself, Alma enjoys portraying a different cashier every day, each time insisting that the manager isn't here but will be, soon.

Skills 3, Act/Bluff 7, Disguise 7, Persuasion 5, Business 5





- 046 Lucas Frazier, M, 22, American, STR 6, CON 4, AGL 6, INT 5, EDU 6, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4
Lucas has a severe, genetic allergy to cats. His sister died from an infected cat bite and since, he's found work exterminating Tampete's pests; stray cats, dogs, coyotes, or whatever creeps from the overgrowth just outside Tampete. He mostly uses a MAC 10 but hides acetaminophen (in most pain relievers) in foodstuff to poison the vermin as well. He delivers the meat to agro-farms or processing plants for eventual use in chains like Dirty J's.
Skills 3, Track 6, Autogun(Pistol) 6, Demolitions 5, Stealth 5
- 047 Fabien, M, 27, Swedish, STR 4, CON 5, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 9, PSI 0, SOC 4
Fabien was a corporate hacker, fleeing prosecution from Sweden a few years ago. He smuggled himself into one of the "meat containers" that occasionally arrive on the Clearwater docks and has since been keeping his head low. Now, he just tends bar at Thumpers where he listens to the war stories of other hackers and cyber-empaths. Fabien has several cybernetic implants, a wrist flash drive with CPU and network adaptor (can compile code and retain an IP address), a rechargeable power supply, an Ethernet/USB/4G adapter, and fingertip video cams.
Skills 3, Computer Operations 7, Research 7, Electronics 7, Communications 5
- 048 Lance Caufield, M, 58, American, STR 5, CON 3, AGL 4, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 1
Lance has been a vocal crackpot for as long as people in Tampete have known what soap boxes are. He shouts out his conspiracy theories from the Grid during rush hour at anyone who will listen. His rants detail anything from toxic government snow to an invasion of lizard people. The thing is, sometimes his rants aren't that far off. He isn't psychic. He doesn't really even have any connections in the know. How he gets his information is anyone's guess.
Skills 2, Streetwise 4, Scrounging 5, Persuasion 5
- 049 Roc Jamison, M, 23, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 4
Roc is an employee at Hyde Park Parking Garage, which connects to Dome 606. He does light surveillance (keeping in mind that HIRO does the lion's share of the security) and occasionally works the valet. During his shift, he marks cars for subsequent boosting (never from the garage) and makes key imprints. For the right price, he can smuggle you through a service entrance into Dome 606, but he can't get you any security credentials.
Skills 3, Act/Bluff 7, Observation 5, Ground Vehicle 5, Pickpocket 5
- 050 Patty Devore, F, 28, American, STR 5, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 8, EDU 6, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 5
Patty buys buildings from companies that have gone out of business, insisting they leave the signage (or replacing it if necessary). She then builds a front for money laundering and as a tax shelter. If she can run any cons against the legitimate company's previous customer base, so much the better. This lasts for a month or so before she moves on with a new name.
Skills 3, Business 7, Admin/Law 5, Act/Bluff 6, Leadership 5, Research 4, Forgery 6
- 051 Remmi, F, 31, Korean, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 8, INT 5, EDU 3, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 4
Some people work harder at stealing than they would just working. Remmi makes fake ATM machines to leave in questionable areas. She used to glean credit card numbers from them but as security had improved, she found herself resorting to more crude tactics. Recent models have included tasers, bombs, or even bear traps. When the "honey-pot" approach doesn't work, she's been known to back her pickup through a convenience storefront to steal the ATM from it.
Skills 3, Ground Vehicle 5, Demolitions 6, Intrusion 5, Slug Weapon (Pistol) 5
- 052 Manny Way, M, 34, American, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 5, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 4
Manny is a retired fire marshal. That's the technical term they use when they ask you to resign after too many cases of suspected arson. Manny likes fire; he always has. When he's not lighting them on his own, he's doing it for pay. Manny is very good at what he does, but he's not very good at making it look like an accident. His scenes tend to be soaked with accelerant. If the PCs (or NPCs) hire Manny, the target will be set at least partially on fire. That's a guarantee. However Manny has to succeed at an Average Luck test for each fire he sets to avoid death (he will not be captured). Successive fires within a two-week period each increase the difficulty by one category.
Skills 3, Stealth 5, Demolitions, Streetwise 5, Energy Weapon (Flamethrower) 7, Luck 5





- 053 Joe “Pops” Wilson, M, 51, American, STR 6, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 4
Pops can turn your power on or off whether or not you’re current with your bill, so long as there’s wiring. And if there isn’t, he might be able to grease the wheels if it’s something he can write up as a repair. He’s worked at Tampete Electric for 24 years, and a lot of his co-workers pull this routine, so, they cover for each other. Pops has access to most of Hyde Park but not Dome 606.
Skills 3, Electronics 5, Slug Weapon(Pistol), Act/Bluff 6, Bargain 6, Persuasion 6
- 054 Morton Dilinger, M, 55, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 8, INT 7, EDU 7, CHR 8, PSI 0, SOC 6
Morton is a veteran who now drives limousines in Dome 606. He occasionally works for hotels or corporations for days at a time, and depending on his customers’ desires, he is extremely personable or totally unobtrusive. His alertness and reflexes have served him and his customers well on many occasions. He keeps a modest home and car in Hyde Park and lives alone. Dilinger has seen and heard more than he cares to on the job but has learned to keep his mouth shut.
Skills 4, Ground Vehicle 8, Observation 6, Ground Tactics 5, Slug Weapons (Pistol) 5
- 055 Cousin Larry, M, 35, Hispanic, STR 8, CON 7, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 5, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 5
Cousin Larry is the Meuces’ “ace in the hole” when it comes to breaking up labor unions. He’s muscle with a smile. He gets the enemy drunk and laid instead of focused, but really, he’s your last chance before you meet less friendly Mueces. When he isn’t working, Larry is dog-fighting.
Skills 3, Unarmed Martial Arts 7, Slug Weapon (Pistol) 7, Streetwise 5, Persuasion 7
- 056 Dominic Cedron, M, 50, Hispanic, STR 7, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4
Dominic served in Tampete penitentiary since before it was privatized. He knows all of the other guards and most prisoners who’ve been here more than a few years. He also knows what happens on floors 12 through 15 here. Not exactly, but he’s escorted several “transfers” up there. Most were never seen again. Some returned but were wildly different. He’s also escorted a few to the sub-levels and waited while “something” arrived to meet with them. Sometimes they returned from that. Sometimes they didn’t. Dominic is paid enough not to worry about it.
Skills 3, Interrogation, Slug Weapons(both) 7, Martial Arts(both) 6, Medical 3
- 057 Hunter Reezin, M, 22, American, STR 8, CON 9, AGL 9, INT 5, EDU 2, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 3
Hunter is one of Tampete’s favorite Dodge-Brawlers and has even won a few local endorsements though he spends the cash partying faster than he can earn it. He does make enough to support his mother, his sister, and her child who live in the lower-income, fringe areas of Hyde Park. Hunter has, so far, resisted the urge to kill anyone during a game. If he ever gives in to that (and he gets away with it), there’s likely to be a big pay day in it for him.
Skills 2, Unarmed Martial Arts 8, Armed Martial Arts(Knife) 5, Thrown Weapon 8, Climbing 8
- 058 Wyatt O’Sullivan, M, 27, American, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 4, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 3
Exterminators are a dying breed. There’s no funding for the city ones and the private ones don’t work the areas where they’re most needed. Enter Wyatt O’Sullivan, Roach Slayer Extraordinaire. He kills anything with antennae in an exoskeleton, even the large mutant versions appearing all over Tampete slums. His typical MO is to lay baits and traps, pump a place full of gas, then wade in with a gas mask, some guns, and fire axes duct taped to his wrists. For him, it’s personal.
Skills 2, Slug Weapons(both) 7, Thrown Weapon 6, Armed Martial Arts 7
- 059 Gordon Miles, M, 38, American, STR 4, CON 4, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 7, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 5
Gordon manages the archives of the city blueprints. He used to do some planning when the City of Tampete was still budgeting new additions, but now he just provides plans to the fire marshal or private companies as buildings are sold and then demolished or remodeled. He is constantly perplexed at the vast number of layouts containing extra rooms or even floors that aren’t on his plans. Who’s been funding that? But if you want the layout of an older building, he’s your guy.
Skills 2, Business 7, Survey 7, Research 5





- 060 Marlon, M, 55, Cuban, STR 5, CON 4, AGL 4, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 6
Marlon is an aging veteran of a prominent Tampete crime family. He runs one of the staple cigar shops endorsed by the Ceperos. In addition to finding high end tobacco goods, one may petition the family here. Marlon and his crew have all they need to conduct background checks, take and secure or disperse payments, and there are plenty of safe rooms for in-depth discussions or planning, or for use as hideouts. Marlon keeps a lot of muscle in the shop and nearby.
Skills 4, Slug Weapons(Pistol) 5, Streetwise 7, Willpower 7, Research 6, Persuasion 6
- 061 The Bride, F, 29, American, STR 6, CON 6, AGL 8, INT 7, EDU 7, CHR 9, PSI 0, SOC 6
The Bride is a criminal of legend. She and her “groomsmen” rob banks, mansions, drop houses, and even liquor stores in a pinch. Hardly monogamous, she’ll work with various “grooms” but has a few favorites. Her operations are 75% planning and 25% execution with style. Sometimes the heist will start with organ music. Sometimes their getaways are masked with rice cannons as they flee on motorcycles to a chopper reading “Just Married!” All of her operatives are literally dressed to kill, with the bride herself always wearing white.
Skills 3, Autogun & Slug Weapons 6, Investigation 7, Observation 7, Act/Bluff 7
- 062 Rachael Namon, F 31, American, STR 7, CON 7, AGL 8, INT 5, EDU 6, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 4
Rachael is an ex-navy SEAL who found work in the Underbay mining industry ever since the Weedon meteorite crashed into the bay. Now, half a dozen signed NDAs later, she works for a subsidiary of Ultima Ignus, implementing the Underbay tunnel systems between their various underwater facilities and designing the drilling rigs used on the meteorite and the bay floor. Rachael has seen some questionable activity, but she remains loyal to Ultima Ignus.
Skills 3, Machinist 6, Heavy Guns 6, Survey 5, Scuba 7, Metallurgy 5, Robotics 4, Hovercraft 6
- 063 Mort Van Corpen, M, 27, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 9, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 6
Mort is the product of old money. Idly rich and fascinated with SteamTek, Morty dons his trench coat, a gas mask, top hat; all manner of SteamTek he’s collected by way of his family’s wealth, and he walks the nighttime streets of the Grid looking to play hero. He would be preposterous if he wasn’t so effective. His gadgets actually work (even if sometimes by accident).
Skills 3, Early Firearms(SteamTek) 5, Thrown Weapon 4, Machinist(SteamTek) 6, Robotics 6
- 064 Gene Slomcinski, M, 42, American, STR 4, CON 4, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 8, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 6
Cooking books with the best of them since he got his accounting degree in 2016, Gene’s most successful stint was a gig with Ultima Ignus until he’d inadvertently seen a little too much Viemen activity just beneath the surface. Fearing a corporate house-cleaning, Gene fled and now works as a tax consultant at the Law Offices of Nichols & McNulty.
Skills 3, Business 8, Legal 8, Computer Operations 5
- 065 Paris Franke, F 45, American, STR 5, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 3, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 1
Paris is a homeless woman who sometimes squats in the abandoned buildings in and around Clearwater. She survives by scavenging and begging and has turned a trick or two. Some of her most generous friends (and sometimes customers) have been Minion Hunters and she repays them by using (and encouraging others to use) subtle Underglyphs (see Underglyphs, p.200) to mark and monitor Darkling activity in the area.
Skills 3, Act/Bluff 6, Scrounging 6, Persuasion 6, Streetwise 6, Observation 6, Pickpocket 5
- 066 Angel, F, 29, American, STR 8, CON 9, AGL 9, INT 6, EDU 6, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 5
Angel is a heavily augmented cyborg Minion Hunter. She has a cybernetic right arm and heavy dermal plating beneath her skin. Her eyes and ears have been surgically altered as well. She can see through walls in several spectrums and can hear a heartbeat across the room. She is beautiful but the invasive surgical procedures have left her vacant and depressed. She keeps no close friends, only comrades most of whom are also Minion Hunters.
Skills 3, Martial Arts (both) 7, Autogun(submachine gun) 8, Disguise 6, Stealth 8





- 067 Torno Gregor, M, 34, American, STR 5, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 5, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4
Torno is a chopper pilot willing to transport people and cargo around the panhandle for the right price though he mostly does smuggling runs between Tampete and the Gold Coast. He has severe ADHD and can be reckless. Sometimes between jobs, he'll lower an oversized crane hook from his rig to see what he can arbitrarily loot from below. In a pinch, he's not very reliable.
Skills 3, Pilot 7, Intrusion 5, Grenade Launcher 5, Mechanic 4
- 068 Jasmine Rox, F, 25, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 9, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 7
Mz. Rox resides at the Bellaire Mists, one of the Clearwater Beach "bubbles" resorts. The product of a gross inheritance, Rox immerses herself in the occult and wild mythology. She has an extensive collection of occult books (including many first printings) and throws garish parties for other such enthusiasts, a trend her neighbors are wearying of. Rox occasionally navigates DarkNet and hires Minion Hunters to investigate any curiosity she hears about. Most don't pan out but some do and she pays well. She has shown interest in the nearby Sand Barrows.
Skills 4, History 8, Computer Operation 5, Investigation 5, Research 8, Persuasion 6, Gambling 7
- 069 Skins Handshu, M, 41, American, STR 8, CON 7, AGL 5, INT 4, EDU 4, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 5
Skins is a beast handler in a traveling carnival. He's has always been fascinated with venomous beasts. He made the Tampete news in 2031 for kissing a cottonmouth on the lips and surviving the subsequent snakebite although his face was deformed beyond all recognition. His doctors attributed his recovery to a mutation in his metabolism which allows him to consume neurotoxins and hemotoxins. He's since been bitten by countless scorpions, spiders, jellyfish, and centipedes.
Skills 2, Act/Bluff 7, Thrown Weapons 7, Unarmed Martial Arts 8, Pickpocket 5
- 070 Diggs, M, 33, American, STR 8, CON 8, AGL 6, INT 5, EDU 5, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 5
Diggs is a behemoth of a man working as a bouncer at the Manhattan Project (the MP), a trendy, yet sleazy rave in the Grid. Diggs works for cash under the table but his main income is from local pushers who pay him to let them deal their stuff at the MP. Diggs knows some good Whiz chemists, and it seems like there's always a new batch circulating amongst the guests at the MP. Diggs is also "protection" for some of the working ladies who frequent the MP.
Skills 2, Unarmed Martial Arts 7, Slug Weapons (Pistol) 6, Streetwise 5, Persuasion 5
- 071 David Arnin, M, 29, American, STR 5, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 5, CHR 5, PSI 6, SOC 3
David is an empath who discovered his ability to dimension walk after miraculously surviving a high speed car collision on the Howard Franklin bridge in Tampete. David can "walk" between many such dimensions now. Some have healing properties. Some provide prescience. Some are simply gateways to other places. He has since dedicated his time to learning more about the protodimensions, how to reach them, and their dangers. He is a transient as he tends to be hunted by Darklings amongst other factions. Among his many vices is a strong addiction to Whiz.
Skills 3, Dimension Walk 6, Empathic Healing 6
- 072 Axebeak, M, 35, American, STR 8, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 5, EDU 5, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 3
When things break in the Cannery, Axebeak is the guy who shows up to repair them. His W2 probably says Axebeak on it, a moniker he got proving he could puncture a random cylinder of chemicals by head-butting it. Axebeak lives in a cruddy one-bedroom apartment on the outskirts of the Cannery with the security and sanitation crews. A few nights a week, he heads to Centro Ybor to get drunk and pick fights. He's seen some strange stuff in the buildings he's worked in, but he keeps his mouth shut because he knows the kinds of people operating those buildings.
Skills 2, Machinist 6, Mechanic 8, Climbing 6, Carpenter 6, Unarmed Martial Arts 8
- 073 Buzz, F, 29, American, STR 7, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 3, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 2
Buzz is an anarchist motorcyclist through and through. She vandalizes and steals for the joy of it and she runs cars off the road for fun. She is sociopathic and kills without remorse and sometimes without reason. She rides with a crew called the Firewolves, a mostly female war band that terrorizes the Tampete streets and raids outlying territories. She enjoys impossible wagers so long as the price is right when she succeeds. Some of her recent feats include a Tampete prison breakout, a Dome 606 heist, and placing in the 2015 Bridge Gauntlet.
Skills 3, Ground Vehicle 7, Running 5, Climbing 5, Unarmed Martial Arts 7, Slug Weapons 6





- 074 Jacob Rowley, M, 62, American, STR 4, CON 5, AGL 4, INT 6, EDU 6, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 2
Mr. Rowley used to tell the neighborhood kids to get off his lawn when Palm Harbor was still a thriving hive of suburban subdevelopments. Now he says it to looters, beggars, thieves, police, Nukids, beasties, and creatures stranger still. And he backs it up with a Mossberg M-590. With nowhere to go when his retirement was used up, and the government hounding him to evacuate the so-called “barbs”, Rowsley had had it. He stockpiled his home with whatever his neighbors abandoned and went into “bunker mentality”. He shoots anything he sees on sight; a habit he struggles to break on his infrequent trips into town to barter for supplies. Rowley has seen it all.
Skills 2, Slug Weapons (Rifle) 4, Archery 4, Scrounging 6, Survival 6, Willpower 6
- 075 Dr. Warren Starr, M, German, STR 5, CON 7, AGL 5, INT 7, EDU 7, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 6
Dr. Starr is a radiologist at Tampete Hospital who supplements his income by reporting strange injuries to a contact he believes is with HIRO (and withholding them from the authorities), but who is actually with Echo Wisdom (see Protodimensions, p82). In this way, Dr. Starr is an inadvertent contact for Minion Hunters, vigilantes, and miscellaneous Darkling plot threads.
Skills 3, Medical 7, Forgery 4, Observation 6, Instruction 5
- 076 Femme Fatale, F, 22, Hispanic, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 8, INT 6, EDU 5, CHR 9, PSI 1, SOC 5
Femme is the lead singer of her band, Siren, a local band that has had some exposure in the eastern United States coast and abroad. When they play Centro Ybor, it always sells out. Femme has made headlines for bizarre scandals and antics usually involving other celebrities and prominent figures. She is rumored to be the reason for a senator’s divorce, and the catalyst of an all-out war between Diablo Blanco and La Familia.
Skills 2, Music 6, Song 9, Unarmed Martial Arts 5, Gambling 6, Willpower 6, Human Empathy 1
- 077 Torx Maddox, F, 25, American, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 5, PSI 0, SOC 3
Torx is a maintenance person for the Tampete-subsidized labor conveying belt system in the Grid. She is unfriendly, untrusting, and disgruntled that she couldn’t afford a higher education and is now at the whims of those who could. She’s a good mechanic and has access to the belt support systems; a commodity she has used to barter with smugglers for various goods.
Skills 2, Mechanic 6, Streetwise 6, Unarmed Martial Arts 6, Gambling 5, Observation 5
- 078 Savid Dhafter, M, 41, Armenian, STR 4, CON 4, AGL 5, INT 9, EDU 8, CHR 4, PSI 3, SOC 4
Savid is an unfortunate product of modern Tampete society; a serial terrorist. His incredible intelligence, rather than being nurtured by caring adults in technological fields, was instead stifled by cruel children in public school. Savid subsequently developed a deep-seeded hatred for all of humanity. He plans and executes terrorist acts for the challenge and sheer pleasure of doing so. He has derailed trains, detonated gasoline stations, assassinated high profile celebrities, and harvested drug crops on other peoples’ property simply to prove that he could.
Skills 3, Demolitions 5, Electronics 5, Computer Operation 6, Chemistry 5, Physics 6
- 079 Pastor Reeves Martin, M, 28, American, STR 6, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 6, EDU 6, CHR 8, PSI 2, SOC 4
Pastor Reeves preaches at one of the many new-age pseudo-Christian churches that are becoming popular in Tampete. Less focused on scripture and more on inner spirituality, his methods irk more conservative Christians who distance themselves from him. With Reeves’ raw empathic talent, he feels it is more important to get to know the Creator through your soul rather than through a book, and so his sermons tend to be very eventful.
Skills 3, Persuasion 7, History 5, Human Empathy 2, Foreboding 2, Project Emotion 2, Willpower 5
- 080 Robyn Juliano, F, 36, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 8, CHR 8, PSI 3, SOC 7
Robyn works for a Tampete-based GNN news outlet. Her specialty is terrorism investigation, and she broke the story on the Tampete nerve-gas crop dusters in 2028 before the authorities had any real leads. She’s been in the business long enough to know that not all terrorism is terrestrial, but she also knows what airs and what doesn’t, and so she’ll sometimes alter key facts in a story her superiors have reviewed, just to get some air time. She will talk off the record though, particularly with investigators who might be able to help her crack new stories.
Skills 2, Research 5, Observation 5, Interrogation 4, Computer Operation 4, Streetwise 4





- 081 Z-Dubb, M, 27, American, STR 6, CON 7, AGL 4, INT 6, EDU 4, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 5
Z-Dubb is the moniker for one of Tampete's underground music producers. His artists are mainly electronic with strong punk elements and more recently have included some empathic bands. His business tactics are unscrupulous and predatory; he threatens or kidnaps family members or will resort to blackmail. He keeps studios in the Grid and in Hyde Park just outside the Dome, and he knows virtually anybody who's anybody in Tampete.
Skills 2, Business 5, Streetwise 6, Slug Weapons 5, Persuasion 6, Recruiting 6
- 082 AUSA Ochoa, F, 25, STR 4, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 5, CHR 5, PSI 8, SOC 5
AUSA was born Pawani Dahal, an Indian girl who smuggled herself into America and worked in the labor camps until she escaped. She assumed a stolen identity and married rich by passing herself off as foreign royalty. She now runs AUSA's Closet, a prominent clothing company in Dome 606. However while traveling through the Oldsmar Market in the Shade, she encountered some gypsies who either knew or learned her secret. They remain silent and she thanks some of them by employing them in her stores so that they might find new marks in the Dreamland.
Skills 2, Business 4, Human Empathy 4, Foreboding 5, Persuade 4
- 083 Diamond Jack, M, 33, American, STR 6, CON 7, AGL 6, INT 6, EDU 6, CHR 9, PSI 3, SOC 7
Jack is a salesman for Teknogardens who deals with the Ceperos and the Brakemen to acquire DarkTek, which he gives to R&D for the next lucrative product line, or which he simply sells immediately at a handsome profit. He wears diamond-studded clothing to impress his customers and always travels with top-notch muscle. Jack knows everyone in the technology business, and he can get a meeting with almost anyone.
Skills 2, Business 5, Persuade 6, Bargain 5, Observation 5, Streetwise 4
- 084 Enrico Ajello, M, 36, Italian, STR 6, CON 7, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 7, CHR 8, PSI 0, SOC 5
Enrico is an opera singer who performs in Vinoy and occasionally Dome 606. He chooses parts in complex stories, often inspired by history or religion. He is an enigma. He is hounded by superstitions and bizarre manias. He is a germophobe, he will not sit comfortably in rooms without at least two exits, and domestic animals enrage him.
Skills 2, Music 6, Act/Bluff 8, Song 9
- 085 Catharine Ovechkin, F, 41, Russian, STR 4, CON 6, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 9, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 5
Catherine manages Alexandria, a warehouse of rare books in Vinoy. Her books are first editions and sometimes ancient or hand-made. Many are of occult or religious origin, and some may even be of alien origin. Patrons pay to examine the books or occasionally to borrow them. Most are not for sale, although she'll sell one if she thinks doing so will further her collection, which is strangely growing. Catherine is a master linguist and does sell translations.
Skills 3, Research 8, Computer Operation 5, History 9, Business 5
- 086 Karl Lodoc, M, 52, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 8, EDU 7, CHR 6, PSI 0, SOC 4
Karl Lodoc is an operative of Echo Wisdom (see Protodimensions, p82) posing as an FCC communications agent. Lodoc's team monitors radio waves and cellular transmissions attempting to unearth Darkling plots in the Tampete area. He also audits radio stations and television studios. He works out of a field office in the mostly abandoned Clearwater area.
Skills 3, Communications 7, Xeno-Biology 4, Electronics 6, Energy Artillery 6, Slug Weapons 4
- 087 Jodi Chang, F, 44, Chinese, STR 5, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 8, EDU 8, CHR 7, PSI 0, SOC 7
Jodi is a Tampete realtor who specializes in "hard to move" homes; haunted homes, residences with a history of violent crime, slightly radioactive land, and the like. Sometimes she gets a piece of property and has an opportunity to flip it immediately, if only she can get a few investigators to sort out some minor problems with it, just to allay the concerns of the buyer.
Skills 2, Bargain 5, Act/Bluff 5, Business 5, Observation 4, Streetwise 5





- 088 Cedro Fonseca, M, 32, Cuban, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 6, PSI 2, SOC 4
Cedro is a native of Tampete with roots in Cuba who used to work the Clearwater docks and who now smuggles drugs for La Familia. He was caught in a firefight with Diablo Blanco under some strange circumstances, where he was approached by ISAAC operatives. He now continues to smuggle for La Familia, but he supplies intelligence to ISAAC and helps their operatives when they are in the area.
Skills 2, Communications 3, Slug Weapons 3, Navigation 4, Streetwise 4, Observation 4
- 089 Agent Lara Fenner, F, 33, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 7, INT 8, EDU 8, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 4
Agent Fenner of the FBI is a federal investigator based out of a field office in Tampete. She has investigated cases too strange to be filed as homicides, but too prominent to be swept under the rug. Although she has an open mind, her reports are succinct and well-grounded, which sometimes makes her cases seem more mundane than they actually are. Fenner plays by the rules; it's what she knows, but she's seen enough to know that there isn't a rule for everything.
Skills 3, Slug Weapons 5, Observation 8, Research 6, Investigation 8, Tracking 6, Legal 5
- 090 Det. Jamie DeWolfe, M, 35, American, STR 7, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 6, PSI 2, SOC 4
Jamie joined the Hillsborough Country PD about twelve years ago and is probably the only detective who cares about closing missing persons cases. His precinct is in South Tampa but he follows leads in Ybor and sometimes Oldsmar. He keeps connections in the department and liaisons to some of the local gangs as well, mostly to get equipment he needs to do his job.
Skills 2, Martial Arts (both) 3, Slug Weapons 5, Interrogation 3, Spanish 7, Streetwise 3
- 091 Roderick Bailey, M, 37, American, STR 4, CON 4, AGL 6, INT 8, EDU 8, CHR 6, PSI 3, SOC 7
Roderick worked for the EPA before moving to the CDC to take on a more active role in protecting the environment. Here, he tackled mosquito-borne outbreaks in Clearwater, bacterial infections in the Fishing Pole communities near the Grid, brain parasites near Channelside, and countless rotting and wasting diseases. Feeling powerless, he transferred to FEMA but unfortunately experienced more of the same. He caught the notice of an ISAAC operative during his handling of the Town 'n' Country tragedy this year and now investigates outbreaks of ET and Darkling origin.
Skills 2, Research 3, Slug Weapons 4, Investigation 3, Biology 3, Medical 3, Environment Suit 5
- 092 Gork Kaufman, M, 47, American, STR 8, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 4, EDU 4, CHR 3, PSI 0, SOC 4
Gork is your go-to, no questions, get-it-done, merc for hire. He doesn't talk. About anything. He's the kind of guy who will be tortured violently to death for information, and he'll have never said a word. He's prone to attention span lapses and occasionally starts a firefight due to a misunderstanding or just because he wants to. His only hobbies are violent video games.
Skills 2, Martial Arts(both) 4, Slug Weapons 5, Willpower 5, Autogun 5, Demolitions 4
- 093 Vadim Kravchuk, M, 31, Russian, STR 9, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 6, PSI 3, SOC 4
Vadim is a former Dodge-Brawler who took a dirty hit during a match and retired early. He did bodyguard work for awhile and was popular among female celebrities who would hire him whenever they were in town. Now he does bail/bonds work and hunts those dumb enough to cut and run on him. He works out of his shop and hunts absolutely anyone if the price is right.
Skills 2, Martial Arts(both) 5, Slug Weapons 4, Streetwise 4, Willpower 3, Russian 10
- 094 Krakker Wyland, M, 29, American, STR 8, CON 7, AGL 8, INT 5, EDU 5, CHR 4, PSI 0, SOC 5
Krakker is a moniker given to this ex-S.W.A.T. sniper due to thunderous and repeating sound his Dragunov makes as it punches through targets standing one and a half football fields away. Krakker can be difficult to work with, and he's not particularly loyal, but he does get results. You can find him advertising in any merc-for-hire magazine or brushing up on his skills while knocking off street trash from the South Tampa rooftops.
Skills 2, Slug Weapon (Rifle) 6, Streetwise 3, Demolitions 3, Interrogation 4





- 095 Chillee, F, 15, Hispanic, STR 4, CON 5, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 4, CHR 5, PSI 5, SOC 1
Chillee is a homeless girl squatting in various dilapidated and condemned structures in South Tampete. She uses drugs to escape the horrors of her neighborhood and also of her psionic gifts, but she doesn't use empathic drugs. She runs small time scams to survive, and she keeps an ear to the ground on local crime and Darkling activity in her neighborhood.
Skills 2, Human Empathy 4, Foreboding 4, Animal Empathy 4, Scrounging 5, Streetwise 5
- 096 Dixon Smith, M, 47, American, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 4, PSI 3, SOC 4
Dixon joined the U.S. Army and did accounting for Camp Blanding near Jacksonville prior to moving to Tampete where he now does budgeting for local National Guard training facilities and for officers at MacDill AFB who also use those facilities. Dixon has noticed some irregularities in the accounting though, and he's been told to disregard those. He's starting to get concerned about several of the men sent to these training facilities who aren't returning. Still, it's a job.
Skills 2, Accounting 4, Slug Weapons 4, Observation 3, Legal 3, Research 3
- 097 Preacher Perlow, M, 33, American, STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 5, CHR 8, PSI 3, SOC 4
He comes off as a little naïve and an easy mark, but having the unwholesome responsibility of taking confessions, the preacher's heard it all. His is a roaming church, giving sermons in Pinellas Park trailer-hoods, in the few Catholic churches in Largo, and he's even granted safe passage to Kenneth City. The first few years were tough, but he sharpened his marksmanship skills and made enough examples out of beatniks to ward off would-be trouble-makers. He now feels safe to walk the city streets. The preacher provides intel to Minion Hunter cells when he finds them.
Skills 2, History 5, Persuasion 4, Slug Weapons 4, Autogun 4, Observation 3
- 098 Gordo, M, 52, Latin American, STR 6, CON 4, AGL 4, INT 4, EDU 3, CHR 3, PSI 1, SOC 2
Gordo is a very obese man who never worked for more than a week in his life. His mother was a product of the system, and when the Voting Rights Act was passed in 2007, he was among the first to proxy his votes to move into the Fishing Poles near Lake Maggiore. He spends his allowance on alcohol, drugs, and rock concerts (he attends these both to get high and to scavenge with metal detectors anything left behind by other concert-goers. He has been struck by lightning three times, and conversations with him tend to be awkward.
Skills 2, Streetwise 5, Survival 3, Scrounging 4, Act/Bluff 4, Stealth 3, Swimming 3
- 099 Erin Murray, F, 31, American, STR 5, CON 4, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 5, PSI 1, SOC 4
Erin does clerical work for an online publishing company that has changed hands three times this year. They keep cutting jobs and she's had to take pay cuts while doing the work of other employees who were let go. She smokes too much and sometimes she goes to singles bars after work but doesn't have the energy to stay out very late. She used to jog in Taylor Park before the weirdoes started hanging out there. Last month she came home to an apartment complex that was tented off, and she had to leave most of her things due to toxic fumes.
Skills 2, Running 3, Computer Operation 4, Research 4, Admin/Legal 3, History 3, Instruction 3
- 100 Morty, M, 22, American, STR 8, CON 7, AGL 3, INT 4, EDU 2, CHR 2, PSI 2, SOC 2
Morty never knew his last name or his natural parents. He grew up in a locked room full of foster children with genetic defects like his. His sponsors eventually stopped showing up to feed them, and it got ugly. Morty was one of the few survivors and now he prowls the toxic fields of Zero Point Zack for food. He has snake skin on his left arm, parts of his chest, and the right side of his face. He has a forked tongue, and he was briefly missing his left hand after playing with explosives, but it grew back due to regenerative properties he doesn't understand.
Skills 2, Running 3, Martial Arts(both) 4, Climbing 3, Observation 3
- 101 Aisha Celovic, F, 19, Gypsy, STR 6, CON 5, AGL 7, INT 6, EDU 3, CHR 8, PSI 8, SOC 5
Aisha is a gypsy woman who used to work a tent in the Oldsmar Market in the Shade until she had the misfortune of doing a palm-reading on an Insane Gray masquerading as a human. Since then, she has been having terrible dreams, and the Gray has been using these dreams to find her. She moves around a lot, setting up shop in Hyde Park Village and sometimes in Ybor's Artist Alley. She sells potions and trinkets but no longer does palm reading.
Skills 2, Foreboding 6, Human Empathy 5, Act/Bluff 5, Stealth 4, Streetwise 4

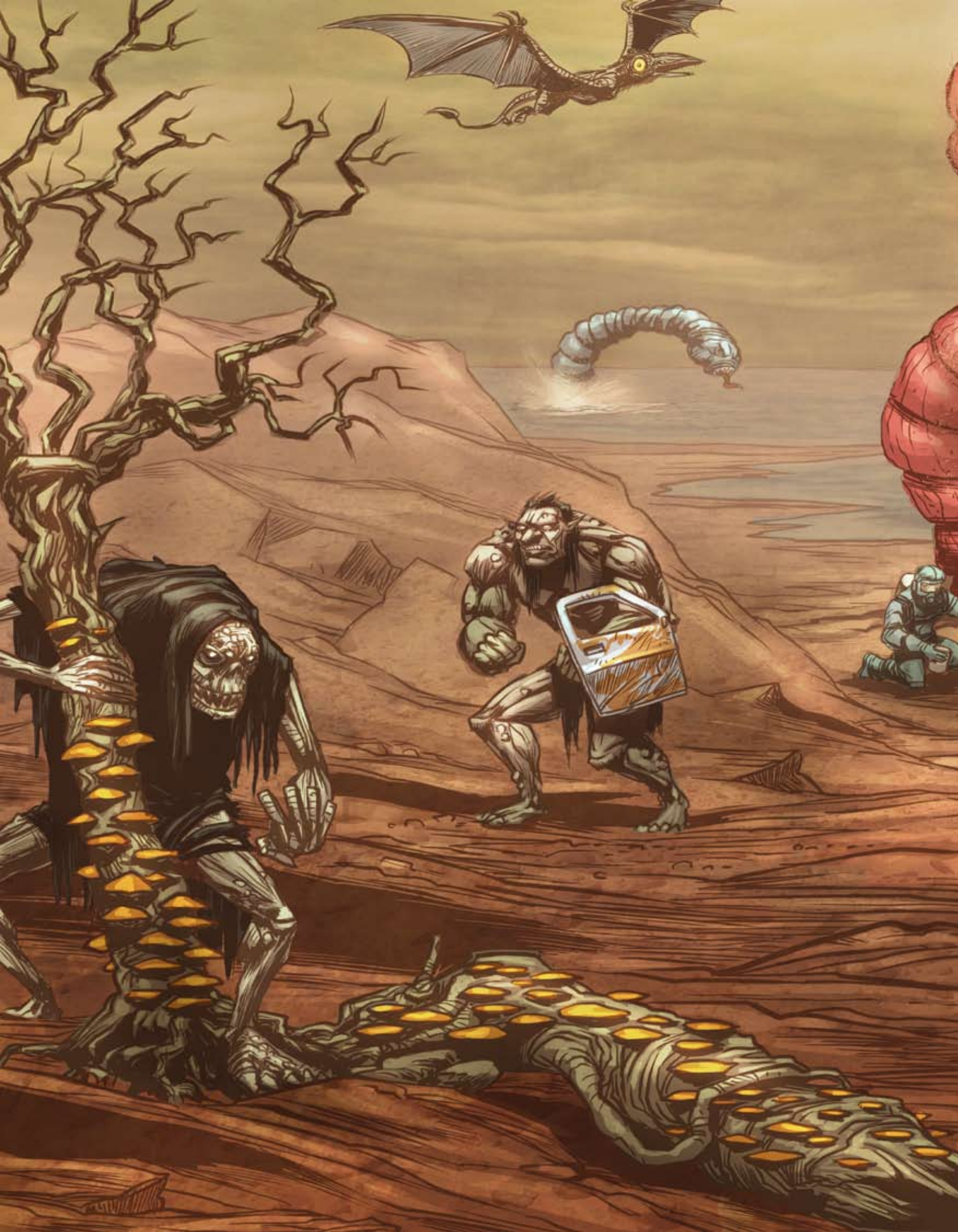
















DARK ADVERSARIES

BEASTIES

Jelly Cephalopod
Mosquito Swarm
Snakepit

DARKLINGS

Barrow Mummy
Bog Troll
Constructs, Viemen
Dragoon
Genesis Spirits
Grazer
Hippocampusite
Krichan
Psiomycota
Sand Wight
Shade, Empathic
Troglodyte
Vampire Ants
Viemen
Weeper
Wurm, Ash
Wurm, Water
Xid-Born Animals
Zenon

DARK LORDS

Genesis, First Wraith
Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille





MAN OF OUR TIMES

(By Scott McClenaghan)

It's hard to control the urges.

I'm going to meet her now. Rhonda. I can hear her voice. It massages my mind. Her eyes, they haunt me. They say as an adolescent that these changes are normal. But it's also normal to have someone to talk to about them and I am so alone.

My foster parents are distant; like they hate me. Like I embarrass them. I was only around so they could collect the checks but as those got smaller, they made it clear that I was on my own. I could sleep in the attic if I stayed out of the way but I had to get my own food and eat it before the roaches did (and there are a lot of roaches lately).

I never met my real parents. They say my mother was a junkie, maybe a prostitute too, that she died giving birth to me. My father's name was Vincent. I don't know how I knew that but it was definitely Vincent. And I knew he was tall with dark hair and penetrating eyes and that he was well dressed.

Did I dream of him? I tried finding him once. My foster parents thought he was some pampered gnome executive living in the Hyde Out, but with only a first name and a vague description (which could fit any sleaze-ball living in there) it wasn't much hope. I decided he probably didn't want to be found and I eventually gave up.

My friends are pretty distant too. Well, I don't really have any friends. Just classmates who can control their nerves long enough to say a few sentences to me while I'm doing their school work. It's good for a few dollars or to keep the bullies away. So it's usually just me, in the attic, with the bugs.

But I'm still human, right? I have needs.

I can't talk to women. I get this funny feeling under my skin. My nerves feel like insects crawling all around me, inside me. The more nervous I feel, the worse it gets.

Sometimes I talk to cashiers or to waitresses in restaurants. That's how I met Rhonda. I sat inside Ralph's Gritz'n'Bitz at the same table for weeks; her table. Sometimes I waited for it if her section was full. The other waitresses and even some of the guests thought it was weird, but Rhonda didn't mind. I didn't order much but I tipped well and didn't complain.

There was something different about Rhonda. I knew it the first time I saw her. It's like she was waiting for me, smiling with a knowing, alluring grin. She always made eye contact. I felt that familiar itching beneath my skin.

Usually I ordered the same thing but sometimes she'd change my order if she decided that I needed to try something new. Vegetables. I didn't really like them. But a single squint of her eyes and a crooked twist of her lips and they were piled chin-high on my plate. And I ate every one. How could she get into my head like that? Sometimes they made me sick though.

She knew when I was having a bad day, or a worse one. And she didn't walk on eggshells those days. Rather she was more prominent; persistent. She wanted me to know she wasn't afraid of me and seemed genuinely curious about me.

One night, a few minutes before closing time, the owner (Ralph) smashed a cockroach under his foot and gave me a dirty look, as if it were my job to clean them up or something. It was a weird feeling; like he'd just punched me in the gut. He said, "We're closing. Finish up."

As I tried to stammer something Rhonda just told him, "Don't worry, Ralph. He can take his time. I'll lock up." I don't think Ralph liked that. I don't think he liked me. But he trusted Rhonda. Everyone trusted Rhonda. So he tossed her the keys.

A few minutes after he left as I was finishing a coffee, she sat herself down at my table. She sat across from me; staring at me.

"Are you okay?"





"Yeah."

"So what is it with you?"

"I'm a stalker," I offered.

"I figured. You're here a lot." She saw the unsure look on my face and smiled, letting me wonder insecurely for a few seconds before finally saying "It's alright. I like you. You're different."

We talked for awhile. Well she talked. I mostly listened and answered her questions. I barely had the courage to speak but she led the conversation. She kept asking about me. I didn't feel like I was invading her space; wasn't creeping her out. I didn't feel like she was invading mine. I enjoyed it. She asked if I knew much about my parents but I didn't. She asked if I had any cousins or distant family but if I did, they were on my father's side and I didn't even know who he was. That fascinated her.

Sometimes I felt more like the object of her studies than a friend, but I wanted us to be more than that.

"Ok," she said, as if I'd asked something.

"I'm sorry?"

"Are you coming over to my place or not?" she said matter of factly.

"You? And me?" She was probably three years older than I was and already out of school. But that wasn't really the source of my confusion.

"You and me. What are you doing tonight that's so much cooler than hanging out with me?" she said and she meant it. She wrote an address on the back of someone's business card and slid it slowly towards me, nudging it under my fingers. Even her handwriting was beautiful. "Give me an hour and a half to finish here and clean myself up. Then come by. It's just a few blocks from here," she smiled again.

"I can walk you home," I offered.

"You brought a bicycle, didn't you?"

"I can walk it."

"You're sweet but no. I'll be awhile here. And I need a shower. And maybe you do too, stalker," she joked. "A cold one."

What could I say to that? So I just said I'd meet her a little before midnight. It seemed weird, but a good kind of weird. I wasn't even nervous. I felt so calm. But I still felt that itching.

My foster parents wouldn't be home. Lenny worked late. Rita would be at the neighbor's. She didn't like to be in the house alone with me. I used the time to take a shower in their bathroom, cleaned myself up as best as I could.

Her image was stuck in my head. It wasn't sexual. It was more than that. She brought up these urges in me and it seemed like there was something wrong with that; like I should be able to control myself. But I wanted to believe in her. I wanted to believe that if she encouraged it, then it couldn't be a bad thing. Urges are supposed to be normal for a kid my age.

It felt cheesy but I wanted to do something for her. I found some heavy paper in my foster parents' closet shelf and folded it around some wildflowers I'd picked from the yard. The bugs in the yard watched me as I worked. They were getting more common but they didn't bother me. I guess I was used to them. So I never bothered them. It was weird seeing so many though, so many. Just watching.

My bicycle coasted through an alley maze toward her apartment and I got there a little before midnight. It was a small studio on the third floor of a derelict building which probably would have been condemned before the Greater Depression but was now just commonplace. I knocked on the rickety door but there was no answer. I felt the itching beneath my skin immediately. The door was unlocked, so I walked in.





I heard water running and felt some steam in the air. Rhonda was in the shower. The main room had a boxy television sitting in one corner with a few chairs and a beat up couch surrounding it. Nearby were a small table and two chairs. In another corner was a little kitchenette with a mini-fridge. The whole area was lit by dim 20 watt light bulbs. Steam hovered in front of one door. The other must have been the bedroom.

The walls were a muted wash of beige and off-white but upon them hung colorful pictures including one page which could have been foreign handwriting or occult scrawling. I couldn't tell which. Near that was a plain mirror.

There was no vase but I found a pitcher in her cupboard to put the wildflowers in and I filled it with water before placing it on the small table. I sat down on the couch and waited.

I didn't wait long. She walked into main room, completely unphased that I'd let myself in. She looked at the flowers and smiled. I think she thought it was cute. Then she looked at me.

"You came."

"You invited me."

"I'm glad you came."

I liked the sound of that. She moved to the small table and sat at the chair nearest the door, indicating the other one with her hand. I nervously stood up, and walked to the table to sit across from her. I could feel the insects writhing within my skin again. What was it about her?

"Do you like me?"

Stunned, all I could muster was "Yeah," and then "Duh."

"Do you find me attractive?"

"Yes," I answered blankly. I felt embarrassed. Like there should be more than that. And there was. What was so interesting about her?

"Do you believe in auras?"

Okay, I didn't like that question.

"No," I said matter of factly. She smiled, like it was ironic. I was starting to lose my patience.

"Let me see your hands," she said softly.

I gave them to her. The conversation made me a little insecure but I yearned for her touch. There was something nurturing there. Something holy. She turned my hands over and examined my palms. She ran her fingers across the inside of my left palm, probing for something. Her fingers were warm. I felt hot. My insides were alive. God, what was she doing to me?

I tried to jerk my hand away but she held it fast. "Don't fight it," she whispered. "Let me see inside."

The itching; it was real. Physical undulations beneath my skin. I felt sick.

Her eyes rolled back. I felt her staring into me; through me. I didn't see any Whiz paraphernalia (it seemed like everyone was on that stuff nowadays) but she was acting like an addict. Was she an empath? Was she something worse? She wasn't talking, just... quivering. Her hands gripped my hand and wrist tightly. She uttered a single guttural grunt, like someone kicked her. Her eyes turned to black pools.

"Oh God. What are you?" she gasped.

"The hell?" I said and ripped my hand free of her. My hand hit the pitcher, smashing it into worthless glass shards which flew across the room. My hand was bleeding.

"You're like everyone else, Rhonda. Why did you invite me here? What did you do to me?"

"D-do? T-to y-you?" She stammered. Her eyes fell onto the table. Another of those damned roaches found its way in from the outside. Probably in the flowers. What a waste those were. Wasted on her anyway.



She screamed. She pointed, and she screamed. I was going to scoop up the bug and get it and myself out of that apartment as fast as possible, but she wasn't pointing at the roach. She was pointing past it.

My hand? I didn't even check it. I should probably wash it off. But why was she...

I looked at it again. The wound was massive; an egregious tear in the skin from the back of my hand up through to my wrist. And it was growing! But that wasn't the source of her horror. The blood; my blood, it was black, and alive. They were alive! A torrent of crawling filth emerged from my wrist; swarming the table and moving towards Rhonda. A relief to the incessant itching and burning, the things crawled across her, swimming into her mouth; into her ears, boring into her skin.

What was happening? I was happening. I felt like I was waking up.

Shooting up from the table, I knocked the chair backwards and ran to the mirror on Rhonda's wall. My eyes. What was wrong with my eyes? Oh God, they

were right. My foster parents. My classmates. Everyone who knew me. They were right.

I looked at Rhonda. I didn't need to turn around to see her. Was she trying to study me? Save me? I could still save her. I could make this stop.

I looked at the mirror again. (I didn't need to turn around).

"But that isn't who I am," I said beneath my breath.

"It is so hard to control the urges."

I moved towards the couch and sat down. I looked again as my... brethren, no, that isn't the right word (they're part of me; they are me), but I looked as they finished their work. And I knew instinctively who my father was. I knew who Vincent was. And I knew how to find him.

And soon, when Rhonda gives birth to my children; when they too come of age, they will know who I am. And they will seek me out as well.





BEASTIES

JELLY CEPHALOPOD

STR 32, CON 30, AGL 8, INT 3, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 5
Move 15/30/60, Skill/Dam 4/5d6, Hits 90/180,
Appearing 1

The Mythology

Old human cultures speak of sunken sea gods who are prayed to not for blessings, but, sacrificed to for appeasement. Legends persist of a Central American island whose priests would sacrifice virgins each year to a demon that never appeared. The priests were overthrown and hanged. However, when the winter solstice came and went with no sacrifice, fleshy arms from the sea thrashed the shores one night, weakened the foundation, and dragged it beneath the waves.

The Reality

The oceans cover 87% of our planet, and mankind has explored barely 10% of that. These massive creatures have been lurking within the deepest ocean floors for millennia. Some have been called by the recent emergence of a Dark Influence.

Physical Description

Jelly Cephalopods are massive squid-like creatures with red-violet rubbery skin measuring over 100 meters in length (the statistics above are for a specimen of this size; though some over 500 meters exist). They have oval, yellow-green eyes protected by a translucent film.

Their tentacles are covered with suckers, and the entire beast exudes a caustic gelatinous substance similar to the venom that a jellyfish's cnidocytes inject into its victim.

Combat

Jelly Cephalopods generally do not attack people; they attack ocean liners or islands. The statistics above are provided as a guideline to the damage it can mete out per combat phase and what kind of firepower is required to damage or kill it (generally heavy air support or demolitions).

Anyone swimming within 25 meters of the thing will feel burning on their skin and eyes due to the cephalopod's venom. Anyone coming closer than that will suffer -2 to Agility and -1 to Initiative and must succeed at a Difficult intensity Constitution check or be blinded for 1d6 turns.





MOSQUITO SWARM

STR 0, CON 1, AGL 5, INT 1, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 2
Move 10/20, Skill/Dam 0/*, Hits *30/*60, # Appearing 1

The Mythology

There is no real mythology regarding these swarms, save that it is foolish to wander through the wilderness or near lakes at night without protection, or even in the city streets after a heavy rain or flood.

The Reality

Mosquito swarms aren't exclusive to Florida, but Florida does have the largest ones due to the unchecked flooding and stagnant waters.

It is unclear what causes so many colonies of mosquitoes to band together. Some blame pesticides, which they've grown resistant to, and were mutated by. Some say it's something evil that has returned to Earth which has them all in a stir.

Whatever the reason, their effects are devastating. In larger swarms, exposed people will take damage per phase (as indicated on the table below) until they can reach cover. Many verifiable stories exist of large numbers of desiccated corpses left by mosquito clouds descending without warning.

Physical Description

Mosquito swarms vary in size from five meter clouds seen in the inner city to kilometer-diameter storms seen in Outlaw and flood zones like Town 'n' Country. At a distance, the things are indistinguishable from tornadoes and similar phenomenon.

Combat

Anyone caught within a mosquito swarm without cover or protection takes damage as follows:

Roll 1d10	Damage
1-2	No damage
3-4	1 point of damage to one random hit location
5-6	1 point of damage to each of two random hit locations
7-8	1d6 points of damage divided between two random hit locations
9-10	1d6 points of damage to each of two random hit locations



Many of these mosquitoes carry diseases; Encephalitis, Malaria, Yellow Fever, West Nile virus, and many bacterial infections and even radiation sickness. Anyone suffering damage from a mosquito swarm has a 5% chance of infection per wound (each phase of damage is counted as one wound).

Mosquito swarms do not take damage from melee attacks or slug weapons. Buckshot and explosives deals 1 point of damage per damage die. Fire and chemical weapons deal full damage.





Snakepit

STR 1, CON 2, AGL 6, INT 1, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 4
Move 5/15, Skill/Dam 4/1d12 or 1d20, Hits 35/70,
Appearing 1

The Mythology

Tampete swallows the unwary. No one argues this. There are sinkholes, undermined terrain, “haunted” areas from which people do not return, and there are snake pits.

The Reality

Snake pits are the vile, underground nests of multiple species of snakes found on beaches, within forest undergrowth, and beneath weakened streets and floors of abandoned buildings. Their existence is a biological and zoological quandary; that water moccasins would lair with coral snakes and pygmy rattlesnakes.

These various species of snakes are actually attracted by nests of oversized, warm eggs deposited by a clan of pure-bred Cobra People (see Dark Conspiracy, p216) hailing from the Florida Everglades who refuse to mate outside their species. These eggs seem to draw serpents of all kinds from the surrounding area, but rather than eat the eggs, the snakes are instinctively protective of them. After the eggs hatch, the snakes leave the area, but continue the bizarre phenomenon of communal living, finding a new lair and passing on the behavior to their young 25% of the time.

While nests left by Cobra People tend to be in wilderness areas (lake and river shores or beaches, or overgrown weed patches and forest undergrowth), snakes that migrate after the Cobra Peoples’ eggs hatch may move anywhere. Some prefer urban environs and lair beneath weakened roads, in sewers, or inside abandoned buildings.

Physical Description

Snake pits are underground cavities containing 4d12 snakes in smaller nests, up to 4d100 snakes in larger ones. They tend to be comprised of species indigenous to Florida and are almost exclusively venomous; water moccasins, pygmy and diamondback rattlesnakes, coral snakes.

Combat

Slipping into a snake pit is almost always lethal. A character who falls in will take 1d12 points of damage (for small pits) or 2d20 points of damage (larger pits). Half of this damage is divided evenly amongst all hit locations. The remaining half is applied to the chest as poison damage. Even if the character somehow escapes the snake pit, the poison damage recurs each combat phase.

The only prevention is avoidance.

There is a 25% chance that 1d4 snakes will accost a character before he gets too close. If he is making excess noise, this may increase to 50%. Add +25% to each of these chances in the wilderness.

For each turn (including combat turns) that the characters are moving about the area within ten meters of a snake pit, there is a cumulative 10% chance that one of them will fall into it.

Urban snake pits can sometimes be detected. Characters in a well-lit and moderately quiet area may make an Average intensity Observation check to notice signs of a snake pit; hissing, rattling, molted skin, a blur of motion between floorboards and the like. This check shifts one stage more difficult for poor lighting or loud noise or if characters are running through the area (penalties are cumulative).

Wilderness snake pits are harder to see before it’s too late. It is a Formidable intensity Observation check to notice one within ten meters.





DARKLINGS

BARROW MUMMY

STR 14, CON 6, AGL 3, INT 1, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 1
Move 4/8, Skill/Dam 4/3d6, Hits 20/40,
Appearing 1 or 1d4

The Mythology

The Egyptian practice of mummification and interring their dead with valuables may have been inspired by these creatures.

Other cultures speak of otherworldly cairns which appear without warning on the outskirts of villages or upon plains of war. These cairns both follow and portent death, and the stones themselves are said to swallow those who seek them.

The Reality

Barrow Mummies hail from the Sand Barrows (see Sand Barrows, p.187) and create more in their own image by interring the living into the ground. They obsessively construct cairns from strange stone (also from the Sand Barrows protodimension) over their victims, a practice that also serves to lure stragglers closer and closer to the Sand Barrows via paths they may not be able to retrace.

Physical Description

Barrow Mummies are human-sized, wrapped in dark gray to jet black bandages. Sections are missing in places, revealing an eerie emerald light from its eyes and chest. It carries a heart-sized chunk of greenish rock in one hand that it seems to use as a sort of guide.

Combat

Barrow Mummies are slow to act, so they rely on fear and their supernatural abilities to incapacitate their victims.

An opponent who sees the eerie glow of a Barrow Mummy (and is close enough to identify it) must make a Difficult intensity Willpower test; failure indicates that, before acting on his next combat phase, he must succeed on a Panic check (see Conspiracy Rules, p108). He must continue to make these checks on any phase in which he would normally act until he succeeds.

An opponent within ten meters of a Barrow Mummy must make an Average intensity Constitution check or become nauseous (-2 penalty to Strength, Constitution, and Agility). He must repeat this check at the beginning of each combat turn (effects are cumulative). Anyone passing out from this (should an attribute reach 0) will develop headaches, hair loss, continued nausea and vomiting, and other symptoms of radiation poisoning.

A Barrow Mummy's grappling ability is formidable and augmented by its supernatural bandages which envelop anyone it grapples with. All grappling checks are conducted at a difficulty shift +1, and the Barrow Mummy may inflict grappling damage as controlling hits (see Conspiracy Rules, p128) or regular damage. A Barrow Mummy takes double damage from fire.



150





BOG TROLL

STR 16, CON 16, AGL 6, INT 3, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 3
Move 5/15/30, Skill/Dam 2/3d6, Hits 20/40,
Appearing 2d6-4

Mythology

The Tocabaga, the Aztecs, and the Incas have all known never to enter the swamp alone. The swamp is an unforgiving and vindictive place. It devours the lost, the scared, and the weak, channeling its malice through leeches, insects, snakebites, and false bottoms.

The blessed are forever lost and eventually forgotten. The cursed return to us, the swamp's malice made flesh.

The Reality

Bog Trolls are an ancient race, but their return is a recent phenomenon. They lair in wetlands and marshy areas, often beneath the waters of muddy basins, and they prefer murky and polluted areas. In Tampete, the contaminated dumping grounds of Mobbly Bayou and Hillsborough River house great numbers of these beasts.

Bog Trolls are encountered in large groups near their lairs, however they strike out in small groups or individually when hunting or bored.

A favorite trick of the Bog Troll is to lie in wait in containment ponds or within the overgrowth near houses at dark, waiting for children to be tucked into their beds at night. They will creep through the windows, stealing children, leaving only dolls of mud, grass, and sticks in their stead.

Physical Description

Bog Trolls are hulking, gray or green-skinned, humanoid beasts standing two and a half meters tall. They have black clumps of greasy hair on their head and back, and their skin is covered in warts and occasional splotches of yellow/green scales. They are extremely pungent and often soaked in biological or toxic waste.

Combat

Bog Trolls seek to isolate their prey, creeping through the wilderness silently to ambush them with makeshift clubs and knives. Anyone in melee with a Bog Troll must make an Average intensity Constitution check or suffer a -2 to all skill checks for 1d6 turns due to nausea.

The bite or claws of a Bog Troll is 10% likely to infect with disease or radiation poisoning.

Bog Trolls make use of simple wilderness traps; snares, pits, spike boards, and deadfalls.

Bog Trolls are immune to poison and radiation and take half damage from cold-based attacks and physical attacks. A Bog Troll who can completely immerse itself in swamp water will heal 1 hit point to any hit location per turn.

Bog Trolls eat anyone they catch in their homes or while hunting, but they like to "play with their food". They are fearsome, scary creatures and will terrorize their prey for fun before finally murdering them.





CONSTRUCTS, VIEMEN

Cadavers

Humans die but that doesn't mean they need to stop working. At least, this is the theory behind the Viemens' SteamTek-augmented Cadaver Constructs. Expired humans are fitted with brass framing, thermal sensors, a series of hydraulic pumps and motors, and surveillance cameras.

Laborer Cadavers are lightly framed and usually unarmored. They are unsuitable for combat but perfect for repetitive, menial labor such as digging, welding, and processing radioactive materials. Intravenous systems keep the mechanical portions well-lubricated and the flesh portions well-saturated with formaldehyde. Unless the unit is abused, a cadaver generally wears out before the frame does, in which case the frame can be reused.

Sentries and soldiers are fitted with layers of arms and armor and usually have targeting systems wired into their cerebral cortexes. Brain functions are stimulated by thermal circuitry to emulate basic artificial intelligence. Sentries can follow simple commands like "guard", "patrol", or "shoot anyone not wearing one of these." Soldiers' programming is more advanced. They are able to exercise rudimentary judgment in discerning targets and choosing attack strategies, but they can still be fooled.

Cadaver, Laborer

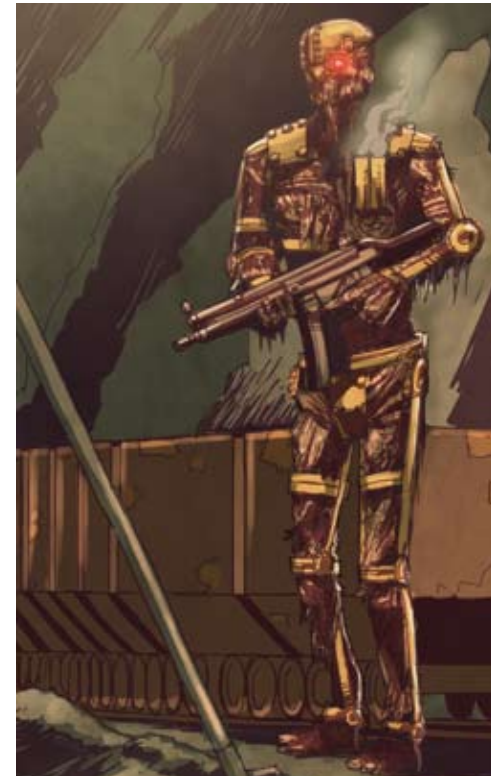
STR 3, CON 3, AGL 3, INT 1,
EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 1
Move 2/4/8, Skill/Dam 0/0, Hits 5/15,
Appearing 2d6

Cadaver, Sentry

STR 3, CON 4, AGL 4, INT 3,
EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 1
Move 4/8/15, Skill/Dam 0/1d6 or weapon, Hits 10/25,
Appearing 2d6

Cadaver, Soldier

STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 4,
EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 2
Move 2/4/8, Skill/Dam 0/1d6 or weapon, Hits 5/15,
Appearing 2d6





Drones

Some work cannot be left to humans or the remnants of them, no matter how cheap they are. For functions of science and precision military operations, the Viemen employ SteamTek drones. They are typically less sturdy and durable than their cadaver-augmented counterparts, but their capacity for judgment and reasoning is increased, and they are tough to fool.

Labor drones handle menial tasks that don't require much physical labor. They are efficient data collectors and categorizers. They sort radioactive materials that have been collected by human labor.

Sentries and tactical drones are expensive alternatives but promise superior combat skills and better targeting systems. They have AV of 1 and are used for precision attacks.

Drone, Labor

STR 1, CON 1, AGL 4, INT 4,
EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 2
Move 2/4/8, Skill/Dam 2/0, Hits 4/10,
Appearing 2d6

Drone, Sentry

STR 4, CON 4, AGL 6, INT 6,
EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 2
Move 4/8/15,
Skill/Dam 2/1d6 or weapon, Hits 10/20,
Appearing 2d6

Drone, Tactical

STR 7, CON 8, AGL 7, INT 7,
EDU 5, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 3
Move 8/15/30,
Skill/Dam 2/2d6 or weapon, Hits 18/36,
Appearing 1d6





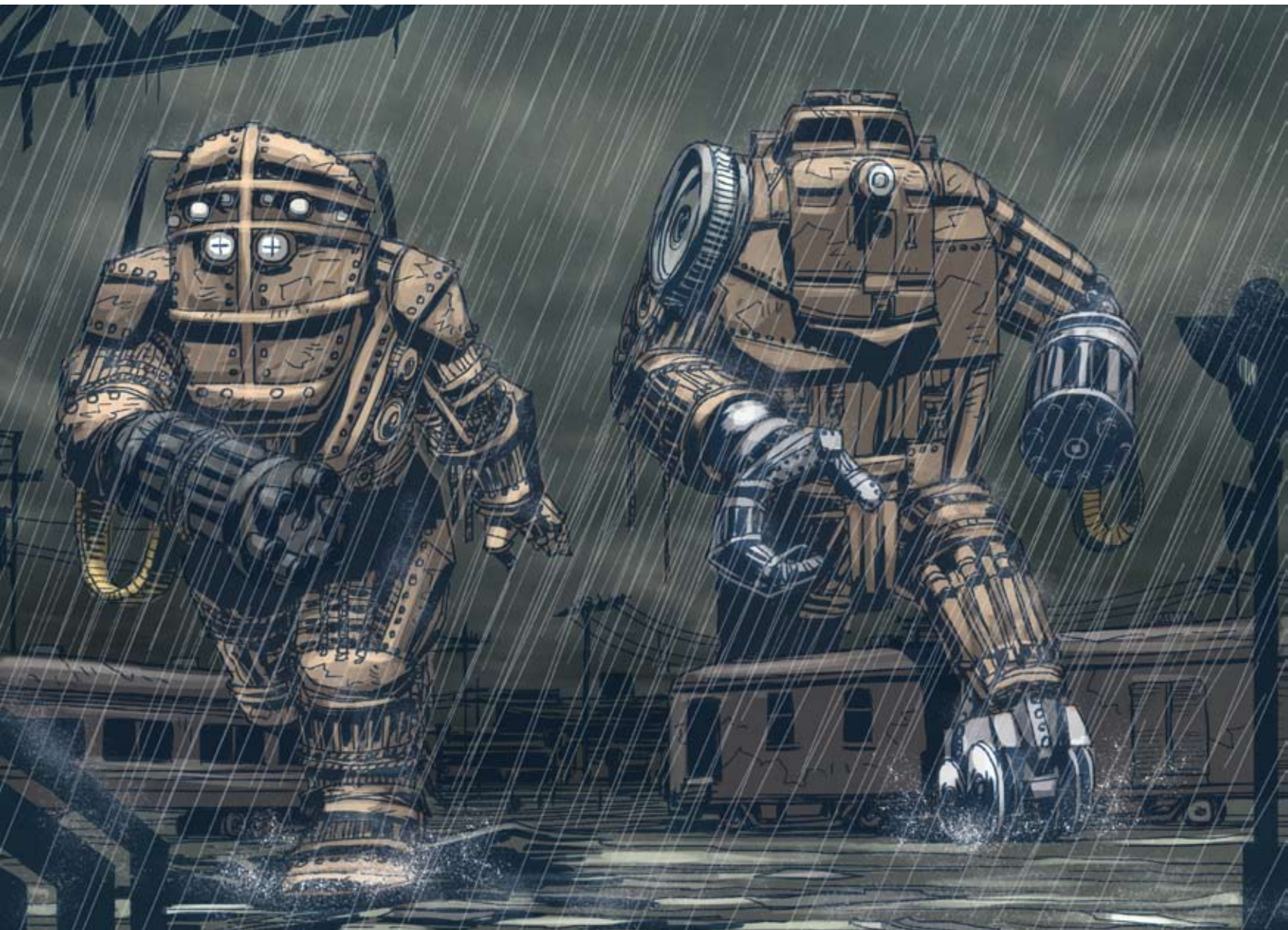
War Golem

STR 14, CON 18, AGL 7, INT 10, EDU 8, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 4

Move 8/15/30, Skill/Dam 2/3d6 or weapon, Hits 28/56, # Appearing 1d4

These mechanical behemoths demonstrate the reasoning and judgment of the drones without any of their physical limitations. Hydraulic skeletal systems provide a sturdy frame for layered thermal circuitry and advanced artificial intelligence. Outer shells are constructed from cannibalized trains or construction equipment and fitted with rapid-firing and high-caliber weapons. Most are equipped with at least an anti-tank weapon and some have surface-to-air missiles.

Their heavy armor provides them AV of 2.



154





DRAGOON

STR 28, CON 12, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 3
Move 15/30/60, Skill/Dam 2/5d6, Hits 45/90, # Appearing 1

Mythology

It was once believed the Earth's mantle was nothing more than the shell of a giant egg, nursing monstrous dragons within. Dragoons are the realization of that ancient fear.

The Reality

These massive creatures originate from subterranean fissures beneath the Earth's oceans and lakes. They are solitary creatures, preferring the openness of the ocean depths to shallow lakes and rivers, although they use these areas to deposit nests of their young, who thrive in these environments until they outgrow them.

Physical Description

They vary in size but specimens the size of commercial passenger planes have been reported. Keeping that in mind, it is important to realize that the dragoons above the surface must pale in comparison with those still trapped within, restricted by the width of undersea fissures.

Dragoons are omnivorous. They eat whales, sharks, plants, coral, and are capable of digesting manmade materials too. A dragoon can devour entire oil tankers and suffer only minor indigestion. Underwater, the creatures detect prey by vibrations. Above water, the creatures must rely on their poor vision to locate food; their vision worsens with each minute spent out of water as filmy deposits coat their eyes.

Their teeth are large and smooth. Rather than rend their food, a dragoon simply smashes it apart before swallowing.

Most dragoons have wings although a few have evolved to be more eel-like. The flyers can achieve altitudes of up to 150 meters and speeds between 150-200 kph. Their eel-like counterparts have python-like reflexes that they use to crush their prey. A few have beached and slithered into lakes and marshy areas and become trapped.

Combat

A dragoon emerges from directly beneath a vessel with its initial attack, often capsizing or fracturing it in the process. During its next combat phase, it will writhe around the vessel in an attempt to crush it.

If there is no discernible threat, a dragoon will continue to smash vessel remnants, focusing on larger portions first (making them smaller) and then on survivors. Due to its territorial nature, it is absolutely relentless in its pursuit of survivors, ensuring that none escape to reveal its whereabouts.

If a dragoon is threatened, it attempts to pull the threat underwater to negate the effect of ranged weapons. A winged dragoon may seize targets and go skyward, dropping them from great heights.

A dragoon will initially flee a superior opponent but shadow it for miles, periodically ambushing it if doing so lends any advantage.

As a final resort, a dragoon will flee its home. Dragoons that do this eventually choose a new lair, never to return.





GENESIS SPIRIT, HAUNT

STR 0, CON 1, AGL 7, INT 7,

EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 0, INIT 1

Move 4/8/15, Skill/Dam 0/0, Hits 5/15, # Appearing 1

The Mythology

Genesis hounds the souls from its trespassers; forces them out with an ocean of insanity, tormenting them, torturing them, driving them as insane as the ocean they swim in. And then they become part of the insanity, ripping the soul from the next trespasser.

The Reality

Genesis Haunts are the lost souls driven from their corporeal forms by the relentless denizens of the Genesis protodimension (see Genesis, p.178). They are little more than ghosts; memories of themselves and themselves no more.

Genesis Specters feed upon them and sometimes make caretakers of them for the pseudo-dimensions they create. Some of these, they instill with their own power and make Wraiths of them.

Physical Description

Haunts appear as translucent, incomplete versions of their former selves. They usually have expressions of abject fear, horror, or rage as they try to reconcile their fate with the events that caused it.

Combat

Haunts are incorporeal and cannot attack or be attacked physically. They can be sensed, explored, and attacked psionically. Psionics may do this to learn more of the protodimension. Other Genesis inhabitants do this to make servants of them.





GENESIS SPIRIT, SPECTER

STR 8, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 9, EDU 6, CHR 7, PSI 18, INIT 3
Move 8/15/30, Skill/Dam 3/2d6, Hits 18/36, # Appearing 1

The Mythology

18th century pirates of the Gulf of Mexico knew of demons that would steal ships, poison them with hatred and malice, and unleash them back upon our world. More, those who once manned these vessels were imprisoned in Hells of their own making, within the demons' world.

The Reality

Genesis Specters personify evil within Genesis. They weave the realm, creating psychic islands to torture their victims. Each Specter is a lord of the realm, subservient only to the First Wraith. Each has his own hatreds and his own psychological idiosyncrasies. However all of them share some traits.

All have been driven mad by the realm. Each feels a kinship with the realm now and any Specter who wishes to leave seeks to transmute other realms so that they become like Genesis; returning when that is complete.

All rely upon psionic powers, using Human Empathy, Project Emotion and Willpower Drain on victims to create elaborate semi-real planes on which to torture them psychologically. They use Darkling Empathy to keep their Wraiths attentive and reliable, using them in these tragic parodies of their victims' dreams.

All are proud. This manifests as elaborate psychological dungeons filled with trappings that their victims' fears and also the Specter's own dreams and delusions. Each Specter has his own unique persona and is a villain in his own right.

Physical Description

A Genesis Specter appears however it wishes, usually choosing to remain unseen.

Combat

Genesis Specters psionically assault their victims, empathically discerning whatever they fear most so that their Wraiths may be prepare a suitable Hell. Initial areas ease prey into a horrible, yet believable reality. They often contain puzzles, tricks, or other delay tactics intended to allow the Wraiths to continue building outward.

Specters can possess their prey one at a time, and they often use this tactic to turn them upon each other. They use Pyrokinesis, Cryokinesis, and Electrokinesis but must be in physical form to do these things. This makes them vulnerable so they only do it when their prey is isolated, or as a last resort.

Taking a physical form temporarily reduces a Genesis Specter's Psionics score depending on the size of the form chosen but allows physical attacks. A Specter can assume a form in meters equal to number of Psionics points spent. Unarmed damage is half that number in d6. The transformation to or from physical form takes a full turn, during which time, it cannot act and is vulnerable to physical attacks.

Genesis Specters can create Wraiths, spending Psionics points to create them which are regained as the Wraiths are dismissed or destroyed.





GENESIS SPIRIT, WRAITH

STR 5, CON 4, AGL 6, INT 5,
EDU 3, CHR 2, PSI 3 (5% 15),
INIT 2

Move 8/15/30,
Skill/Dam 2/1d6, Hits 12/25,
Appearing 1d6

The Mythology

The sea crushes both dreams and dreamers, and its bottom is littered with the vengeful and restless dead. Their spirits are said to now remember only hatred, avenging themselves on any who dwell too near.

The Reality

Genesis Wraiths are the manifest, ephemeral will of Specters within the Genesis protodimension as they create new planes to torture their victims. They come in two varieties.

A Spontaneous Wraith is a fragment of the Specter's psyche that created it, or sometimes from the thoughts of a Specter's victim. They are not self-aware and require clear direction but not much supervision. They are phantasms. Here one instant, gone in the next. They are emotional and their presence is relative to their emotional state. These Wraiths are forever fettered to the pseudo-realities created for them and perish if these dissolve.

A Genesis Specter creates a Spontaneous Wraith by spending some of its Psionics points on the task. For a single point spent on a Wraith, it gains 6 attribute points to spend as needed and does 1d2 points of unarmed combat damage. Each additional Psionics point spent doubles the amount of attribute points and unarmed combat damage the Wraith gets.

An Instilled Wraith is a lost Spirit within the Genesis protodimension that the Specter lures and alters for its own evil purposes. These Wraiths are sustained by rage alone, and they do not vanish until slain. A Specter spends one Psionics point to lure and mold the Wraith, a process which can take days or weeks depending on what its ultimate role will be. A Specter may regain this Psionics point when he relinquishes control of the Wraith, however from then on, the Specter must take precautions to ensure the Wraith is loyal. The Wraith is free to leave the Specter, its pseudo-dimension, and Genesis altogether.

Both Wraiths are susceptible to physical damage.

Combat

Spontaneous Wraiths use Telekinesis to throw anything nearby at opponents, or they ambush them with melee attacks, promptly disappearing immediately after. Opponents

who have not readied actions to defend against this can only counter-attack in time if they succeed at a Panic check, otherwise their attack is too late.

Instilled Wraiths rely on melee attacks and weapons. A few (5%) are imbued with Psionic abilities and may use those as well.

Spontaneous Wraiths will fight to the death or at the will of their master. Instilled Wraiths will do likewise if they are still under the Specter's control. If not, they may flee as the combat sours.





GRAZER

STR 16, CON 6, AGL 6, INT 3, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 1
Move 4/8/15, Skill/Dam 0/1d6, Hits 25/50, # Appearing 1

The Mythology

For a long time, it was believed Grazers were a natural phenomenon rather than sentient life. Many believed that it was a defense mechanism of the Tesseract protodimension itself as its lands were spoilt over time.

The Reality

Grazers are sentient. They travel within the soil of their protodimension, cleaning up debris left by travelers. Grazers travel silently or with the sound of a freight train, depending on their hunger and tactics. However they always move slowly, usually at speeds of around 10km/hour. The Grazers steer clear of dense metals (like osmium, platinum, tungsten, or gold) which are poisonous to them. In fact, Echo Wisdom (see Protodimensions, p82) has devised gold misters to combat the things, or at least drive them off.

If a Grazer is killed, its innards can be pilfered for the various dense metals it has collected over the years, a usually very prosperous activity.

Physical Appearance

Grazers are massive and thunderous whirlwinds of dirt and ash indigenous to the Tesseract protodimension. Often mistaken for sinkholes, they vary in size from a few dozen meters to a kilometer in diameter.

Combat

Grazers tunnel beneath an unsuspecting party and open under them. Characters at the edge of an expanding Grazer must make a Difficult Balance check to leap to safety. Shift the intensity one level more difficult if the Grazer's rate of expansion combined with its speed (if it is moving toward the character) is greater than the character's running speed. If the Grazer pursues a target, the target must continue to make these checks each time its perimeter overcomes him.

Grazers can expand 10% of their diameter in one direction per phase.

The inside of a Grazer is extremely caustic, dealing 1d6 points of acidic damage per combat phase to a random hit location. Armor reduces this damage but most armor is likewise damaged in so-doing.





HIPPOCAMPUSITES

STR 8, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 12,
EDU 10, CHR 8, PSI 1 (10% 16), INIT 2
Move 4/8/15, Skill/Dam 0/1d6, Hits 25/50,
Appearing 2d6

The Mythology

Myths concerning Hippocampusites are shrouded in mystery. Ancient earth civilizations encountered them and were subjugated by them to build wondrous and elaborate structures such as the pyramids and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. They were considered gods and many sacrificed themselves for them.

During the 10th and 11th centuries, the few cells of Hippocampusites remained on Earth went underground to avoid the global backlash against anything perceived as alien or magical. Europe retains vague myths of sorcerous men who devoured brains for knowledge and power.

The Reality

It is not known, even to them, from where they originate. The Overmind (see below) died with that information long ago. However Hippocampusites perceive themselves as the dominant species in the universe.

The Modus Operandi of Hippocampusites is out of sight, out of mind. They quietly but methodically aggregate data from whatever culture they've grafted themselves into from their secret headquarters, often hidden in plain view. Usually they lure a criminal element to assist them in their initial, capital generating ventures. If those are successful, they will hire large groups of the populace for business positions under the pretense that they're working for someone else. In this way, the Hippocampusites integrate themselves into a society's economy, learning and eventually managing its most lucrative markets.

Hippocampusites use whatever technology is available to warehouse vast amounts of data. This information is input to a massive Overmind; a gigantic mass of brain tissue, usually suspended in nutrient-rich saline solution. The Overmind examines all data provided to it, creating trending analysis tools, pattern identification algorithms, and intricate forecasting models.

The Overmind interfaces with technology or with other Hippocampusites through use of its brain stalks. It is a collective of all information and strategy, and so its safety is paramount. If the Overmind is destroyed, a new one can be created but this is a lengthy, resource-intensive process, and the generations of information lost must be slowly replaced.

Physical Description

Hippocampusites are vaguely bipedal creatures with massive, exposed brains on their shoulders. They stand two and a half meters tall and are well muscled.

Combat

Although Hippocampusites try to avoid direct contact with people, they are lethal combatants. They arm themselves with the best technology they can afford and secure their lairs similarly. They are strong and tactically minded.

Their brain stalks extend up to two meters. If they can successfully grapple an opponent with these, they can attempt to paralyze the opponent or control him (victim must pass a Difficult intensity Willpower test each phase to resist). Once the victim has succumbed to control, the Hippocampusite may begin "feeding", a process involving the collection of all thoughts and memories as well as nutrition from the victim. This takes an hour and invariably kills the victim.



160





KRICHAN

STR 5, CON 6, AGL 7, INT 1, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 2
Move 12/24, Skill/Dam 0/1d6*, Hits 25/50, # Appearing 2d6

The Mythology

It is said that the Tesseract protodimension birthed these creatures from its soil as a defense mechanism against the viral agent that are the visitors who exploit the place for its special warping features.

The Reality

Krichans have always existed in Tesseract, but they are greatly mutated from their once benign forms, being one of the few life forms able to successfully do so.

Physical Description

Krichans are bat-like creatures with four meter wingspans and prehensile tails that inhabit the recently rediscovered Tesseract protodimension. Their shrill wailing can be heard for kilometers but are often indistinguishable from the rail cars frequently barreling along the tracks in that protodimension.

Their eyes have wasted and atrophied, and the creatures now rely on sonar to navigate. They emit wisps of gray/black carbon as they breathe; their blackened lungs have adapted to convert the carbon monoxide so prevalent here into oxygen.

Their tails carry a lethal poison (1p3) which kills within minutes.

Krichans are often disease-ridden; a side effect from the bacteria thriving in the toxic streams and runoffs from which they drink. Anyone suffering a wound has a 10% chance per wound level of contracting a disease that varies from a bacterial infection to radiation poisoning.

Combat

Krichans are hunters, relying on sonar to locate living prey. They like to dive from above, stinging their prey with their poisonous tails or snatching them and dropping them from great heights.

They screech during combat, which aids their sonar in locating targets. However travelers sometimes bring devices called Wailers into Tesseract to disrupt this. A Wailer can process a Krichan's shrieks and emit corresponding wavelengths to nullify them. This effectively blinds a Krichan.

Krichans ensnare prey with their tails. While grappling, they may still sting and bite.





PSIOMYCOTA

STR 0, CON 4, AGL 0, INT 10, EDU 8, CHR 1, PSI 16, INIT 1
Move 0, Skill/Dam 0/0, Hits 15/30, # Appearing 1

The Mythology

The latchkey youth of the 2030s, when they aren't drinking or smoking, or trying Whiz, and if they haven't been railroaded into a career camp, are enjoying the latest fad. Congregating in hidden groves, they experiment with mushrooms unlike any their parents used. The mushrooms expand the mind. They expand the consciousness, make one all-knowing, lead to places that don't exist; that shouldn't exist. But everyone who's anyone is doing it.

The Reality

Psiomycota is an empathic and radiotrophic fungus that feeds off psionic energy and radiation, although like most fungus, it also requires moisture. The fungus grows on trees, on moist wood or stone, or in radioactive environments like toxic basins or landfills. If enough radiation is present, the fungus can even grow on bare metal or become airborne.

Psiomycota exudes spores that can emulate empathic abilities when ingested. The spores can be propelled up to ten meters, sometimes farther from larger colonies. The spores distort the perception of nearby prey with delusion, lust, and paranoia. In this way, the fungus lures other animals and people.

Physical Description

Psiomycota usually manifests as flat, rust-colored mushrooms between five and ten centimeters-diameter. The surrounding area is often covered with red-orange, powder-like residue from spores.

Combat

Creatures exposed to Psiomycota spores who fail a Difficult intensity Constitution check, or those who ingest more than 30 grams of the fungus, are susceptible to the Psiomycota's psionic attacks, including Project Emotion, Dream Intrusion, Mystic Hypnosis, or outright Possession.

Such creatures will gather others of its kind to the fungal colony, exposing them to the fungus' effects. Such "workers" will collect and disperse the colony in whatever habitat seems most suitable to it, often within their own homes.

Psiomycota prefers empathic hosts who are often used to incubate the seed for new colonies, a process that kills the host. However, Psiomycota will allow particularly empathic creatures to live under their control for extended periods if it serves a purpose to do so.

Psiomycota may protect the host, as needed, with the following psionic abilities: Foreboding, Self Healing, Psychic Mask, and Invulnerability.

The fungus may also attempt to kill an infected subject outright with its poisonous and radioactive properties. This can occur if the colony wishes to preserve the secret of its existence (the survival instinct of the race supersedes the survival instinct of the individual). In this case, the Psiomycota can, as an action, force the subject to make a Difficult intensity Constitution check to avoid taking 1d6 points of damage to the head.

Creatures affected by the fungus develop severe behavioral quirks. They crave radioactive materials and can sense empathic ability in nearby creatures. Affected creatures will drink water and consume more fungus for nourishment if it is available. If it isn't, they will eat portions of their own body until they are no longer able to do so. Most affected creatures retain only rudimentary communication and cognitive skills. Empaths often retain all of their skills and most of their personality.





SAND WIGHT

STR 11, CON 9, AGL 7, INT 7, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 8, INIT 3
Move 4/8/15, Skill/Dam 0/2d6, Hits 28/56, # Appearing 1d6

The Mythology

Central America and Northern Africa are rife with legends of spirits who call to the foolish and the unwary, luring them into endless mazes of sand where they are murdered and their bodies are never recovered. They are said to lair in secret, unmapped beach trails and in desert mirages.

The Reality

Sand Wights are denizens of the Sand Barrows protodimension, a so-called Soft Place accessible from Clearwater Beach and other places where countless dead lay hidden by nature alone.

Sand Wights hate the living. They hate that living creatures still possess free will and may avoid a fate such as their own.

Physical Appearance

Sand Wights are wasted, near skeletal beings wearing only the last remnants of dry and leathery skin upon them. They are sometimes covered with tattered cloth. Their fingers are tapered to claw-like nails, and their teeth are similarly elongated.

The speech of a Sand Wight (if it can be called that; it is an indecipherable language) can instill confusion or insanity in those who hear it.

Combat

Sand Wights stalk lone travelers or whisper to trailing members of larger groups to isolate them. Sometimes they hunt well trafficked areas, whispering their dreams of depression to those sulking too close to the sands. These victims may leave unmolested but will continue to dream of the sands, wishing to return to them; to walk deeper within them.

Sand Wight can whisper to a single opponent within melee range as a combat action. Those who fail a Difficult intensity Willpower check (and can hear) are afflicted with fear, confusion, or depression as chosen by the Sand Wight (similar to Project Emotion). If the Sand Wight has physically overpowered the opponent, the check shifts to Formidable. Outstanding success results in a permanent mental affliction of some kind.

The Sand Wights claw and bite attacks are vicious and can penetrate AV value of 1.

If a Sand Wight can murder a living creature so that its body remains whole and is never recovered, the victim will rise as a Sand Wight itself after a year and a day. So a Sand Wight will not kill while there are witnesses, unless it can kill the witnesses or drive them away.





SHADE, EMPATHIC (Shade Hollows)

STR 5, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 6, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 8, INIT 2

Move 4/8/15, Skill/Dam 0/1d6, Hits 16/30, # Appearing 1

These psionic creatures are native to the Shade Hollows protodimension (see *Soft Places*, p.187). They feed off of stress and fear, and they probe their victim's minds to learn what scares them most. They then begin their empathic attacks.

The Mythology

Empathic Shades are known by a few names depending on the culture. The Incas knew them as Chaos Spirits. The Tocobaga refer to them as the "Riddle's Reflection" due to their belief that mysteries and the spirits that work to hide them are one and the same.

In most cultures, Empathic Shades are seen as the guardians of secrets; tests to be overcome by the seekers. More obscure and terrible mysteries are overseen by more sinister wardens. It is said that this is to protect the minds of the weak-willed from learning truths they are not meant to know.

The Reality

Empathic Shades haunt the Shade Hollows and are not tied to specific truths, but are reflections of a traveler's psyche as he explores the realm. They are born as travelers bring their darkest fears to the Hollows and most remain there. However a few escape into other dimensions. Without the flow of seers and those embarking on vision-quests, the Shades must find other sources of sustenance.

Physical Description

An Empathic Shade is pitch black and takes menacing form. If successful in delving into the minds of its prey, it will take the form of anything sinister found there. Otherwise it will choose a form that is likely to terrorize most people; spiders, large roaches, snakes, and similar beasties.

Combat

Since visitors rarely travel to the Shade Hollows physically, an Empathic Shade is usually limited to psionic attacks. An Empathic Shade must always be within melee range of its victim in order to attack. They appear as a second shadow of the victim.

Empathic Shades detect the arrival of psionics with their Foreboding ability. They attempt to get within melee range and use Human Empathy to pry into his thoughts. If this fails, the Shade uses subsequent phases to perform Willpower Drains and continued Human Empathy attempts. During these empathic probes, it will seem as if the Empathic Shade is a second shadow attacking the target's real shadow. If the target doesn't notice this or the empathic assaults, he may not

even realize he is under attack.

Within a few phases, the Empathic Shade will have some idea of how best to attack the target, or it may desist and simply choose generic fears (doing this immediately if it is detected).

It then attacks with Project Emotion. Empathic Shades project only fear and pain, but do not require a mental link to the target. Basic success forces the target to pass an Easy INT test, or take one point of shadow damage to a random location and make a Panic check in order to act during his next phase. If the Empathic Shade has discerned its target's fears, then this is an Average INT test and two points of shadow damage to a random location. Either way, each stage of success beyond basic increases the intensity of the INT test and adds one point of damage. This is shadow damage, and it exists only so long as the Empathic Shade exists. During combat, the target's extra shadow can be seen attacking him directly rather than just his shadow.



Attacks that deal critical damage to any hit location or serious damage to the head will cause unconsciousness, shunting the target from the Shade Hollows to his plane of origin. If the character suffers a critical head wound, he has a 25% chance of permanently gaining some form of insanity.

Although Empathic Shades are immune to physical damage, physical attacks within Shade Hollows are dream attacks or empathic attacks. So they deal damage as normal.

If an Empathic Shade is ever physically encountered, it may also use its Possession ability or any of its melee attacks. It is also completely immune to physical attacks. It can cast off pieces of itself as smaller shadows, favoring the forms of cats, birds, and small children. Such monsters are used for observation or to attack creatures of like size (usually with Possession) either to use or for sustenance.

Empathic Shades are susceptible to bright light. In physical combat, if one is surrounded with multiple sources of bright light, its attributes, skills, and health are halved. Light sources should be strong, like the sun, a halogen search light, or florescent track lighting.





TROGLODYTES

(Soldiers)

STR 10, CON 8, AGL 8, INT 4, EDU 5, CHR 5, PSI 1, INIT 4
Move 5/10/20, Skill/Dam 0/2d6, Hits 25/50,
Appearing 2d6

(Shamans)

STR 4, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 9, EDU 5, CHR 8, PSI 10, INIT 2
Move 4/8/15, Skill/Dam 0/1d6, Hits 15/30,
Appearing 1

Troglodytes are native to the Ch'Narr protodimension (see Ch'Narr, p.184). Groups routinely hunt Tampete wilderness areas, and a few are occasionally stranded here. These stranded tribes usually lair near rivers and swamps, hunting the area for food and occasionally venturing into populated areas when game is scarce.

Sometimes troglodytes will invade an isolated home, slay all within, and erect an altar to their primal Ch'Narr gods as a testament to their race.

Troglodytes are intelligent but not curious. They are not scientific. They can learn to use human technology such as firearms and vehicles. Their camps often include a collection of such things.

Physical Description

Troglodytes are half-human, half-reptile cave dwellers. They have scaly green and yellow splotches on the surface of their skin and sometimes beneath it. They are tall (two and a half meters), strong, and mostly hairless.

Combat

Troglodytes are quick, strong, and cunning. They set traps to weaken prey and ambush them when possible. If they have access to technology, they will use it.

Troglodytes are hyper-alert and need not make combat Panic checks (although they lose this advantage when facing supernatural threats).

Bands of hunting troglodytes that have traveled to other dimensions will contain at least one shaman. Although the GM is free to choose a list of appropriate empathic skills, the following list is typical: Empathic Healing, Close Portal, Open Portal, Dimension Walk, Change Environment, and Foreboding. An important difference between normal psionics use and its use by troglodyte shamans is that shamans use blood to power their abilities. Easy tasks take only a few drops of a shaman's own blood. Difficult tasks require up to a pint. Formidable and Impossible tasks may require a sacrifice. A shaman may use his own blood but usually will use the blood of another.





VAMPIRE ANTS

STR 1, CON 4, AGL 6,

INT 1, EDU 1, CHR 1,

PSI 1, INIT 1

Move 2/4/8, Skill/Dam 0/1, Hits 15/30,

Appearing 1 swarm

Vampire Ants inhabit camp grounds, graveyards, charnel pits, or any place hosting large numbers of the sick, recently dead, or dying. They look like oversized carpenter ants with peculiar white and crimson specks on their backs. Noticing these differences requires bright light (which repels them). Ultraviolet light causes them pain and kills them after prolonged exposure (an hour in the sun, or ten minutes of focused ultraviolet exposure). Newborn ants die immediately if exposed to ultraviolet light during the first 24 hours.

Vampire Ants bore through the flesh of the sleeping, the dying, or the recently deceased, drinking blood and secreting endorphins to paralyze the nerves, dulling the pain as they eat. Over the next 1-3 days, the body is further devoured and molded until the queen ant is ready to inhabit the host and lay her eggs. The host is usually alive during this time, as brain functions are the last to be devoured during the gestation cycle, which takes another 12-24 hours.

Vampire Ants feed on blood and allow their queen to drink it directly from their bodies. When they move as a colony, they make a soughing sound, as of wind through the trees, which is similar to the sound they make as they feast on a victim, except that is much more aggressive.

Combat

Vampire Ants typically attack only sleeping or prone victims. It is a Difficult intensity Observation check to notice the attack for a sleeping human. Subjects who do not notice the peril will continue to sleep through attacks for days, as the endorphins accumulate in their systems. Those who do awaken must succeed at a Panic check before they can act (this can be attempted once per turn).





VIEMEN

STR 7 CON 1, AGL 3, INT 10, EDU 10, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 1
Move 5/10/20, Skill/Dam 0/2d6, Hits 6*, # Appearing 2d6

The Mythology

Amongst the oldest and the most formidable races in our universe persist rumors of an extra-dimensional threat to not only our dimension, but all dimensions through time and space. They are universally feared and respected, even by the Darkling community.

The Reality

The Viemen are the dominant species of Primitus Domus (which is their name in Latin for their home dimension and also the SteamTek metropolis they've created within this dimension).

They are extremely intelligent and use a base-3 (ternary) mathematical system in their calculations and in their technology. They communicate with special trilling organs that rapidly alternate between three unique sounds. Dozens of trilling organs can be used simultaneously (which produces a sound similar to white noise) and the Viemen are proficient at distinguishing individual streams and collating them. Written communication is done digitally. The Viemen have a rich culture and appreciation of art but it is different to anything other species would enjoy, mostly because of the range of sight and sound they are able to perceive. To others, it looks and sounds mostly like noise.

The Viemen live in constant fear of exposure to Xid, a caustic substance comprising the bulk of their home dimension, or the loss of pressure to their citadel. These are the two most common ways to kill a Vieman, although chemical poisons and empathic attacks will also work.

As a race, the Viemen are paranoid and meticulous. They rein other races into servitude if possible or else avoid them. They are jealous and greedy and rarely divulge knowledge or trade their technological secrets (although this is precisely what they have done on a smaller scale with humanity in order to establish a foothold on Earth).

Physical Description

The Viemen are vaporous carbon-based organisms pressurized to a liquid or gelatinous state. They assume forms that are practical and situational and as such, are very difficult to injure.

They retain fine motor control over their forms so long as the pressure in their environment is stabilized. If it isn't, they rely on SteamTek powered exo-suits to help stabilize their forms and maneuver in the hostile environment.

Viemen are able to grow or withdraw appendages, hair, teeth or claws, and orifices with which to eat and produce waste. They can modify their auditory and visual receptors to perceive light or sound outside the normal human spectrums and can fashion lenses to view microscopic or distant items (though the Xid tends to negate any advantage at seeing things at distance). They cannot control pigmentation and cannot produce taste buds or olfactory organs.

Viemen encountered outside of their metropolis always wear exo-suits, which may vary by application.

Combat

The Viemen rely on their technology and their slaves to initiate combat (see Constructs, Viemen, p.152 and New DarkTek, p.195). They also employ their Xid-Born creations, using Xid-Born Earthworms to attack Underbay tunnel trespassers and using Xid-Born Grubs on beaches or transporting them to domiciles and structures. For the latter, Viemen will fill their exo-suits with the disgusting things and then introduce them into the structure via the water main.

The exo-suits provide AV of 3, however if 6 points of damage can be applied to a single hit location (counting blunt trauma damage), this will cause the suit to leak, dispersing the inhabitant and effectively killing it.





WEEPER

STR 4, CON 5, AGL 5, INT 5, EDU 4, CHR 8, PSI 1, INIT 1
Move 8/15/30, Skill/Dam 0/1d6, Hits 12/25,
Appearing 1d6

The Mythology

It is said that concentrated lust is sentient and seeks out its own, and that any lacking the willpower and judgment to resist these temptations will reap what he sows. Weepers thus seek out and beguile the lascivious, punishing them for their wicked ways. All the while, they weep tears of blood; despair for the loss of mankind's virtue.

The Reality

Weepers are unwholesome beings who reproduce by pregnancy or by infection. As such, they come in two varieties; most are human who have been exposed to the blood of another bleeder and undergone traumatic physiological changes. The rest are Darkling in origin; the result of sexual reproduction, which for Weepers, involves the ingestion of human blood needed to incubate a fetus in the womb.

90% of infected Weepers are female, as males have limited life spans after infection. They retain their memories but their behavior changes drastically. An infected male will live for 1d4+1 days at most and experience a heightened sex drive, during which time he is highly infectious. He becomes antisocial and sociopathic within hours of the infection, and his behavior becomes violent and predatory.

Infected females withdraw from acquaintances and reside instead with covens of six to twelve Weepers. They experience heightened sexual urges, often seeking work in the sex industry where they can easily pass on the infection, sometimes allowing highly intelligent and charismatic males to impregnate them. Weepers do not exhibit outward signs during their one month pregnancies except during the last few days, during which time they withdraw to their coven. Infected female weepers can live for decades on the fringes of cities and settlements if they are careful. A Weeper can always recognize another Weeper.

Weepers born naturally will exhibit behavior and instincts unseen in their infected siblings. Weeper covens raise their young collectively and demonstrate maternal instincts. Females vastly outnumber the males, who lead solitary and secretive existences. Weepers mature at a rapid rate (assuming the appearance of an adolescent human by the age of three). Males leave the covens immediately upon reaching adolescence. Females remain awhile longer and learn the customs of their race to pass onto their own children.

"The Bleeds" is the disease that is passed by exposure to a

Weeper's blood, resulting in infection 50% of the time. Sexual contact results in infection 90% of the time.

Physical Description

Weepers are human in appearance. Those who were infected retain their original appearance. Those born to Weeper females tend to be very attractive. Weepers wear dark glasses and heavy makeup to conceal the light bleeding from their eyes and nose (although the latter is often confused with symptoms of heavy drug use). They dress provocatively to direct attention to their other assets.

Combat

Although male Weepers may become aggressive, female Weepers typically do not engage in physical combat.

A Weeper gets close to her prey using Charisma coupled with Charm skills. She seeks to isolate prey, traveling with them to their homes or sometimes just to their cars or vacant alleys. A Weeper's attempts to seduce isolated prey using Act/Bluff or Persuasion are shifted one column easier. This bonus does not apply to those who know their true nature.

If a Weeper can get her prey alone, she becomes intimate with him as soon as it is safe to do so. She will lacerate the subject's back and neck, giving easy access to blood. Likewise the subject will be exposed to her blood, likely infecting him with the Bleeds.





WYRM, ASH

STR 30, CON 28, AGL 6, INT 3, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 3
Move 10/30/80, Skill/Dam 6d6 or 3d6, Hits 55/110,
Appearing 1

The Mythology

Legend describes god-like monarchs of a verdant protodimension. These Guardian Wyrms once nourished a land of hedge mazes and game trails, but as that world devolved into an apocalyptic waste, so have they devolved into foul, lethal creatures that hate all trespassers to their home. It is said that the Wyrms are one with the protodimension; they are the protodimension's will made flesh.

The Reality

Ash Wyrms are native denizens of an ancient protodimension only recently rediscovered by mankind and labeled "Tesseract" (see Tesseract, p.182) for its useful transportation properties.

Physical Description

These massive worms grow to be nearly a hundred meters and have the head of a giant lamprey. They have segmented sections of chitin which are red in color if one can see beneath the thick layers of ash and filth it gathers from the soil.

They are excellent burrowers and can digest almost anything, leaving the ashen soil of Tesseract that is so caustic to travelers as a byproduct (see Tesseract, p.182). Only the densest metals (such as the osmium tracks that line the protodimension, but not the steel or titanium cars that traverse them) can withstand Ash Wyrms and actually deter the beasts since digestion of such metals is poisonous to them.

Combat

Ash Wyrms are drawn by noise and vibration. A train will draw one as will any large band of foot travelers. A Wurm will (50%) attack from beneath, attempting to surprise and rout large groups or (50%) attacking from overland, diving into large groups and smashing one or more targets.

An Ash Wurm attempting to swallow a single opponent a quarter of its size or smaller does so on a natural 1-4. Such a creature is incinerated immediately by the intense heat generated within the Wurm. If the Wurm hits but does not swallow the target, it will inflict its bite damage (which will still kill most opponents).

An Ash Wurm attempting to crush multiple opponents may attack all opponents within a 5 by 10 meter strip where the Wurm lands, dealing 6d6 points of damage to human-sized creatures and 3d6 points of damage to larger creatures, distributed evenly to three random hit locations.

During subsequent phases, the Ash Wurm will attempt to swallow individual prey, or retreat and then return on the following phase to smash groups of opponents.

The chitinous exterior of an Ash Wurm provides AV 3.

Intense cold will stun the beast if applied evenly and over time, putting it into a state of hibernation where it can live for



169





WYRM, WATER

STR 20, CON 8, AGL 8, INT 4, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 3
Move 10/20, Skill/Dam 0/5d6, Hits 32/64, # Appearing 1

The Mythology

The Native Americans believe the Earth is alive. She nurtures those who show her reverence. She is vengeful to those who dishonor her. The Hopewell tribe further believed that the Earth could manifest in many angry forms; cicadas upon those who defiled the air, beetles to those who did not respect fire, rock serpents from the earth, and from the water: colossal Water Wyrms.

Water Wyrms were not seen before the recent and global climate change. Some speculate that they didn't exist before then; that our disregard for our world brought them. Whether or not there's any truth to that, Water Wyrms seems to be attracted to coastal settlements of all kinds. Beach resorts, bubbles, shipyards, moored vessels, and submerged structures; all these things draw Water Wyrms.

The Reality

Water Wyrms found our world when oil drillers in the Gulf of Mexico punctured a sealed portal to an unknown, watery protodimension. These massive creatures have the ability to transmute themselves to and from water, making them virtually invisible.

They are attracted to sewage, oil, chemical and biological waste, and any manmade structures likely to contain these things (they have learned these places frequently dump "foods" for them). They attack without warning, fleeing at any significant resistance. Therefore, many beach communities and shipyards maintain aircraft to defend against them as needed.

Physical Description

An average specimen can stand 30 meters above the water and may have a total length of over 60 meters. Their skin is clear and blue and has the reflective sheen of water. If it has eyes, they are so subtle as to be invisible. Rows and rows of teeth seem more like icicles than enamel. A sandpaper tongue snakes from its mouth.

Combat

A Water Wyrms cannot eat or attack in liquid form. Transformation takes 6+1d6 combat turns (during which time it is both visible and defenseless).

It attacks without warning and is gone just as quickly, returning to a liquid state when killed or driven away.

Water Wyrms ignore small watercraft and aircraft unless they prove to be a significant threat (at which point, they will usually flee). Otherwise, Water Wyrms will concentrate their assault on the main structure of the human settlement until its waste material, oil, or fuel is exposed for consumption.





XID-BORN ANIMALS

Earthworm, Xid-Born

STR 14, CON 8, AGL 5, INT 3, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 1
Move 8/15/30, Skill/Dam 0/3d6, Hits 30/60, # Appearing 1

The Mythology

The subterranean tunnel system is one of Tampete's worst kept secrets. They are used by smugglers, criminals, government groups, Darkling groups, and Outlaw gangs. It is a mystery how these tunnels sustain the shallow water table and why they twist and turn this way today and that way tomorrow, thus making any map almost immediate out of date.

The Reality

These awful mutations are the result of continued genetic experimentation by the Viemen (see New Protodimensions, p.177) upon our own indigenous earthworm species. The result is an over-sized, over-agile, chitinous monstrosity that secretes a variant of the acidic Xid Substance known to fill most of Primitus Domus, allowing it to bore through the earth at incredible speeds, leaving four to five foot diameter tunnels in its wake.

The Viemen breed these creatures to develop their underground transportation network throughout Tampete. The Xid-like substance these creatures excrete hardens quickly after exposure to air or water, allowing the construction of tunnels within gelatinous or liquid environments. Still, the creatures have been known to destabilize the region by boring too close to water or the surface. This can result in floods, landslides, or sinkholes.

The Viemen control the worms with a series of surgically implanted SteamTek pain inducers. Adult worms rarely need more than the weakest signal to prod them into action, reminded of the more severe settings endured during training.

Physical Description

Xid-Born Earthworms are chitin-covered, segmented worms between one and three meters in diameter and between ten and thirty meters in length.

Combat

When commanded to attack, a worm attempts to crush its prey and grind it with its acidic exoskeleton. It will burrow beneath a larger opponent to unbalance it, and then crush it within its coils. Xid-Born Earthworms will never flee or betray the Viemen so long as the SteamTek implants are working. However there is a 2% chance per encounter that the implants will fail and the specimen will go berserk, attacking anything and everything in its sight for 1d6 turns before eventually fleeing.





Grub, Xid-Born

STR 1, CON 1, AGL 5, INT 1, EDU 1, CHR 1, PSI 1, INIT 1
Move 2/4/8, Skill/Dam 0/1, Hits 1/3, # Appearing 1 swarm

The Mythology

Beaches, plains, and woodlands are rife with rumors of campers who set up tents and sleeping bags in patches of so-called hungry earth, although it isn't really known whether it's the earth that's hungry, or simply the darkness. They are alive and healthy at nightfall, and by morning, all are found are bones.

The Reality

The Viemen have bred carnivorous worms spliced with Xid, the caustic substance which fills 98% of the Viemen home protodimension of Primitus Domus. These blood-sucking creatures eat their own body weight in minutes, using the excess mass to reproduce. Their bites contain a strong anesthetic, dulling the pain one would normally feel from their attacks; more, the worms often bore into their prey. If the wounds are not noticed immediately, it may be difficult to later determine that worms are inside.

The Xid-born earthworm's fast metabolism exposes the Xid-laden portions of its DNA. This means that the creatures are particularly light sensitive and will dehydrate within minutes of exposure, unless they are actively feeding. Ultraviolet light kills them immediately. A dead Xid-born earthworm transforms to a greasy, ashy compound.

The worms lair near beaches and rivers. They are nocturnal, burrowed beneath the earth during the day, feeding ravenously and multiplying at night. A Xid-born earthworm reproduces asexually by splitting itself into two smaller versions. This process takes only seconds.

Physical Description

Xid-born earthworms are 3 centimeters long, segmented worms. They are mostly black and gray although their mandibles are sometimes red (blood-covered). A colony of the things can be hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands.

Combat

It is a Difficult intensity Observation check to notice attacks from Xid-born earthworms during the first 1d6 turns. This becomes one stage more difficult in darkness or near darkness. After these initial 1d6 turns, it becomes one stage easier for successive turns. During each turn of exposure, 1d6-2 worms will burrow into a person.

Running barefoot over a patch of these worms will cause 1d6 of them to burrow into a characters feet.

Worms exposed to bright lights will flee the light, sometimes burrowing into the victim.

If between one and four of these worms burrow into a person, he will lose one point of Constitution per hour until cured. Roll a random hit location for each worm (if the wounds are not already known). These hit locations will additionally take 1d2 points of damage per hour. If a location moves to critical, the worm moves to an adjacent hit location.

If five or more worms burrow into a person, all hit locations will move to the next damage level once per hour.

Sunbathing entitles the victim to a Difficult intensity Constitution check per hour to kill each worm. X-rays will kill the creatures immediately.





ZENON

STR 9, CON 7, AGL 7, INT 8, EDU 6, CHR 6, PSI 14, INIT 3
Move 8/15/30, Skill/Dam 0/1d6, Hits 20/40,
Appearing 2d6

The Mythology

The Zenon threat to this and neighboring galaxies was once severe, but the race is dwindling and they no longer pose a serious risk. The race and its conspicuous spacecrafts are now regarded in the same way space pirates might be. They are simply avoided when possible.

The Reality

Zenons are a particularly hardy and violent race of ETs. Their civilization is based around conquest and the subjugation of other species. However the Zenon population is very small, something which has kept them from becoming a major galactic threat.

Zenon life spans are very long; five to seven centuries being average although a few make it to their "Millennials". They become truly venerable only during the last century or so of their existence; only then do they begin to breed and eventually parent. This combined with a long gestation period (seven years) has kept the Zenon population low.

Most Zenons have psionic ability. The specialties vary, but most choose neuropathic or psion cluster skills. A few are sorcerers, and these tend to be pilots and field transports. The Zenon do not sleep, but they meditate in order to replenish their formidable psionic talents.

The Zenon employ biotechnology for defense and travel. Their spacecraft are wondrous things; part technological wonder, with bolstered weapons and armor and the near light-speed capacity, part evolutionary triumph, with vessels demonstrating psionic combat and travel ability.

Similarly, their multi-layer lairs are a hybrid of alien synthetic compounds and organic material. They usually build in forests and swamps. Within the hive, they cultivate all manner of biotechnological agents; colossal worms, man-eating plants, molds with toxic spores, and insects capable of chemical attack are but a few of the threats manufactured to colonize new planets.

Physical Description

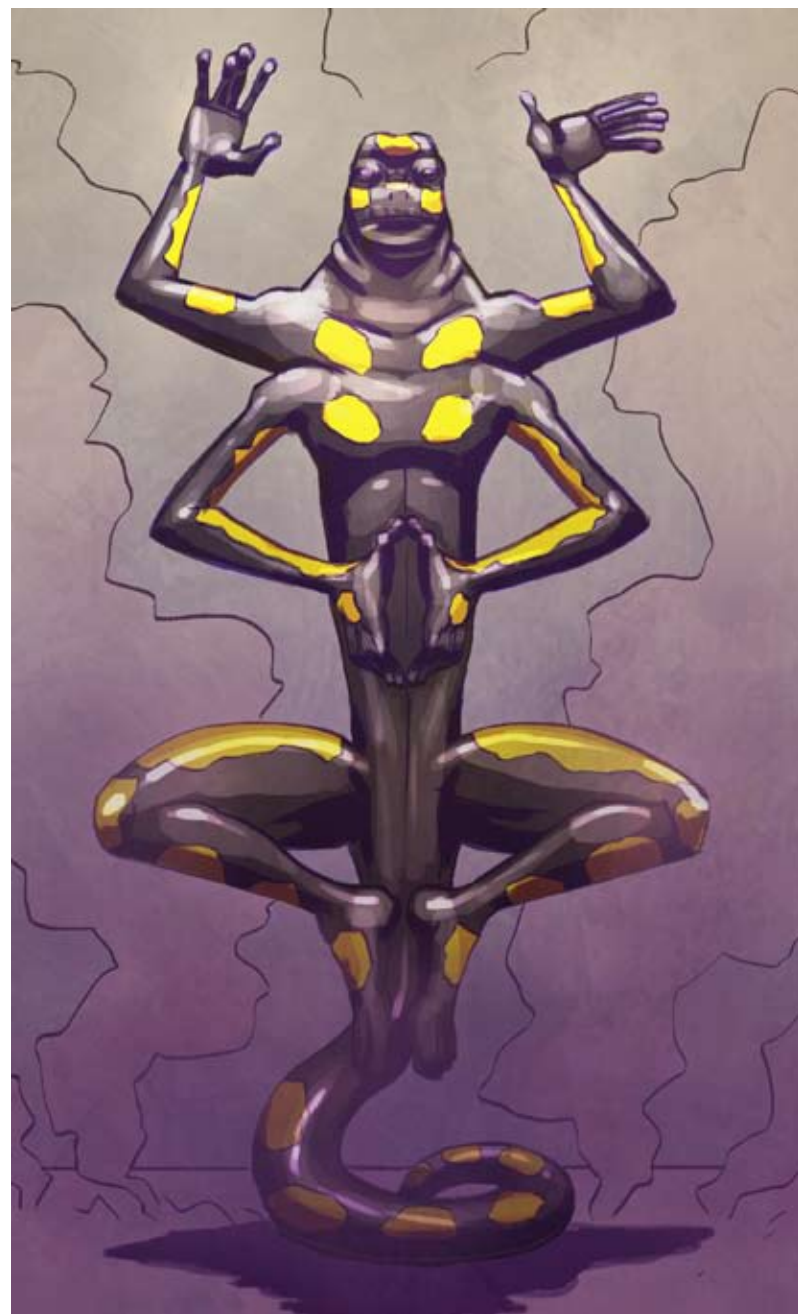
Zenons are vaguely humanoid. They have four arms, two legs, a head, and a prehensile tail that can support their weight. Their skin is tough and leathery, and skin color varies from mottled gray to blue-violet. It has yellow to orange splotches. Their heads are lizard-like. They have opposable thumbs and can operate advanced technology.

Zenons meditate while free-standing on their tails or by hanging from them (from trees or within their hive-like structures).

Combat

Zenons are lethal in combat. They are tactical geniuses and are rarely surprised. They like ambushes, and they rely on their environment to weaken and hinder attackers.

Zenons may attack twice during each combat phase but suffer a one-shift penalty to each attack roll unless both attacks target the same opponent. They may use two two-handed weapons (however recoil penalties are cumulative).





DARK LORDS

GENESIS SPIRIT, FIRST WRAITH

STR 24, CON 22, AGL 22, INT 18,
EDU 16, CHR 26, PSI 22, INIT 5
Move 10/20/40, Skill/Dam 5/3d6, Hits 45/90

Mythology

The oldest civilizations on Earth have unexplainable stories of boats, trains or spaceships that have disappeared and return years or even decades later. These same civilizations all have their own version of Abadan, Hades, or Hell; some permanent prison for those too morally weak or corrupt to safeguard their own souls.

The Christian myth of Cain and the Transylvanian legend of Dracula may also have some roots here; an ill-gotten immortality purchased by devouring souls.

Reality

The First Wraith is an ancient and evil spirit that devours souls. It is said that the first soul he devoured, by way of a pact, was his own. After the immeasurably powerful ecstasy was an insatiable soul-lust and a great despair that was punctuated only by brief, gluttonous soul binges. He has since created a kingdom based on luring the living. He devours most souls leaving some to serve as his spirit agents, responsible for garnering more souls. He is literally the first wraith of the Genesis protodimension. If he leaves the protodimension or dies within it, Genesis will collapse upon itself.

Physical Description

The First Wraith is a massive beast towering at seven meters with humanoid torso, arms, and head but a shower of tendrils in place of its legs. The skeletal remnants of wings erupt from its back, and his eyes glow fiery white.

He flies or floats freely.

Combat

The First Wraith will not risk himself in personal combat unless he or the Genesis protodimension is threatened.

When that happens, he prefers psionic combat, relying on Possession, Willpower Drain, Pyrokinesis, Cryokinesis, Telekinesis, Compulsion, and Mind Blast. Since Genesis is inherently inhospitable to its inhabitants, he will destroy any of his opponents' gear that might allow them to survive here.

He will use the protodimension to attack opponents however he must be aware of them to do so. He can fashion a 50-square-meter area with complex puzzles or traps in one full turn. He can summon another specter or wraith once per turn 50% of

the time. He has become so dependent on these powers that he becomes overwhelmed should he lose them (if he were forced to leave the protodimension, for example).

He is immune to cold attacks and can withstand high and low-pressure environments including the vacuum of space.

The First Wraith fears death and will flee at any indication that he is outmatched, returning later to slay any of his own spirits that witnessed his cowardice.



174





XSEADU HOTH-KIN SILLE

STR 14, CON 12, AGL 12, INT 8, EDU 6, CHR 6, PSI 22, INIT 4
Move 10/20/40, Skill/Dam 4/2d6, Hits 25/50

Mythology

Sumerians believed in Edimmu, evil spirits of the restless dead. Two of best known such spirits were Asag, whose presence alone would boil the fish of the waters, and the faceless Alu, who terrified people as they slept, leaving them in comas.

These Edimmu could possess the living, and if they possess one with child, the Edimmu would eat that child's soul upon birth and assume its life. Such children were said to be horribly disfigured and inherently evil.

Little evidence of Sumerian culture exists to corroborate this, however early 20th century archeologists unearthed statues of child lizard-men in Tell al-Ubaid, a small Sumerian settlement mound.

The Reality

The Drithe, an ancient reptilian ET race, once inhabited a distant planet they called Drithys, millions of light years away from our own. The Drithe achieved wondrous feats of engineering and technology, and they transformed their world into a mechanical utopia. When they learned that their solar system was dying, they tried to refuel their sun with injections of dense, radioactive metals, intended to promote nuclear fusion the next century.

The injection process was risky, and the engineers miscalculated. Their sun went nova, obliterating the closest five planets and killing most of the Drithe population. The rest endured a post-apocalyptic hell.

When the blast destroyed the inner planets, it also ruptured a long-buried protodimension seal inside one of them. This released the children of a demonic race called the Xseadu into our universe. The impulsive Xseadu overwhelmed the surviving Drithe, possessing them and driving them toward unspeakable acts of horror upon each other. The demons dominated pregnant Drithe, leeching their children's lives.

Around 6,000 BC, the possessed, space-faring Drithe-kin discovered Earth. No one knows whether the reptilian offspring resulted from human and ET cross-breeding or from Drithe DNA remnants mutating the wombs of dominated humans. In any case, each demon took one of two forms; an incorporeal and empathic form, or a lizard-like flesh-and-blood form.

Over the millennia, most of these creatures were eradicated. Due to the lack of their Elders' guidance, this was mostly of their own doing. They provoked the ire of several warlike



ET races, and the creatures (incorporeal demons and flesh-wearing half-breeds alike) were systematically sought out and destroyed.

Now, with insane ETs rupturing so many protodimension seals in recent decades, "Elder" Xseadu are crossing into our dimension. They observe the actions of their "children" with some prejudice.

Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille was born in Mesopotamia. Like many of these wayward children, he lacks the patience and discipline





of his elders. He is unknowingly being observed and judged by these elders as they analyze his work in corrupting mankind.

Unfortunately Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille has fallen victim to many human vices. He is obsessed with weapons and money, and is addicted to drugs, taking them in doses lethal to humans. He is prone to overreactions and tantrums, and his grand plans for humanity usually amount to little more than placating his gluttony for drugs and material things.

He has recently taken lair in Count Philippe Park in Safety Harbor and uses the local drug gangs against each other for his pleasure and benefit.

Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille respects and honors nothing. He enjoys tampering with the code that many demons abide by; free will for humans and fate to elders. He purposefully enslaves humanity and elevates a chosen few beyond their accepted designations.

Physical Description

Xseadu Hoth-Kin Silles is an eight-foot-tall reptilian creature with olive skin that glistens with sweat and slime. He has tawny/white hair which makes him seem prematurely aged. He has a red forked tongue and yellow snake-like eyes. Sometimes he dresses in the manner of the drug lords who serve him. Sometimes he wears only a loin cloth.

He speaks with a clear but sibilant voice, sometimes speaking in a tongue reminiscent of Old Saxon or Latin (or something older)?

He sometimes carries a handgun but employs cronies to manage his weapons arsenal. He always carries a viciously barbed, ebony black knife.

When he uses his psionic abilities or simply when he becomes angry, a feint blue aura surrounds him.

Combat

Xseadu Hoth-Kin Silles psionically charms and controls key members of criminal factions in Tampete's Outlaw. He uses those factions, as needed, in combat.

Drug use impairs his senses 50% of the time (half INT, EDU, AGL and related skills), however he retains alert henchmen.

When he fights, he moves like the wind between opponents, rarely attacking the same one twice in a row. Rather than walk or run to opponents, he seems to glide between them as a fast, blue blur. He can do this once per combat phase, moving up to 20 meters. When he does this, he drops everything he is carrying except his knife, but makes his melee attacks at one

column shift easier by attacking from the side or from behind. Xseadu Hoth-Kin Silles cannot pass barriers in this way.

His knife can penetrate AV 2 and, upon inflicting a wound, Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille bestows a vision; a death memory of another Xseadu killed either in Mesopotamia, or as far back as Drithys. Some of these death visages may even pre-date Drithys. The visions are lurid and cause mental quirks (phobias and the like).

Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille can use the following empathic abilities at will: Human Empathy, Animal Empathy, Project Emotion, Foreboding, Mystic Hypnosis, and Invulnerability.

He also retains a handful of artifacts passed down to him. Even these are a mixture of misuse and innovation.

He will never flee combat due to his overwhelming arrogance.





NEW PROTODIMENSIONS

- Genesis
- Primitus Domus
- Tesserail
- Ch'naar
- The Soft Places





GENESIS

A twisted joke, Genesis (meaning life) is the name of a protodimension that is anything but. Rather it is darkness and the icy cold of space. It is malignant and nurtures only evil and insanity. In this protodimension, life cannot exist unassisted; not as we know it. Genesis is absolutely inhospitable.

Matter within is inert or “dead matter” or quickly becomes so. Animate and even sentient matter exists but lacks the genetic sequencing required to grow or reproduce. When this dead matter leaves Genesis, it ceases to exist.

But Genesis isn't empty. It houses incorporeal echoes of those created or drawn in by a malignant force calling itself the First Wraith. The First Wraith is the Dark Lord of this protodimension. His pets are evil and sadistic spirits manifesting themselves as Specters, Wraiths, Haunts, or some other spirit. They wait near dimensional portals to possess any matter hovering too close, using it for safe passage through a portal to know life and purpose beyond Genesis.

But the spirits' favorite matter is living matter. They construct elaborate settings for their prey; rooms, homes, cities, worlds, all to torture them physically and psychologically. Spirits prolong this as much as possible. It brings them great joy and meaning. They are highly empathic. They assault their prey psionically to learn their fears, and use them against them. If the spirits instill enough insanity and terror, it drives out the victim's consciousness into Genesis (stranding it as a new haunt), leaving a living vessel for the attacking spirit to inhabit and control.

And all spirits seek to leave Genesis. Not for escape (as most greatly treasure their time in Genesis), but to find other entities to bring back and torture. This is also the will of the First Wraith, who encourages his pets to be as voracious as possible in contaminating other dimensions and luring back their meek.

Physical Description

The dimension is a mix of violent ionic storms, little created pockets of dead matter (called pseudo-realities) and boundless empty space. Genesis has the immenseness and frigidness of our own deep space, and the pervasive feeling of isolation.

In the stormy regions, conventional laws of physics govern orbital motions of superfast particles around dense centers. Toward these centers, laws of special relativity apply, including the folding and warping of space-time. These storms are lethal and are seen from virtually anywhere within the dimension. However the commonality of these storms is an illusion. Similar areas in Genesis often “overlap” or are connected in

some way. So it is with the storms; each a writhing tendril from some larger mass elsewhere in the protodimension.

The physics in the space of Genesis is not just counter-intuitive, but completely irrational. There are no geometrical axes; distance is an illusion. No discernible relationship exists between places, times, events, and remembrances. Travel is not done physically, but empathically by molding pseudo-reality into the destination one is trying to reach. The closer a pocket of pseudo-reality is in composition to another, the more likely the two will eventually overlap and merge. You get to a place by creating a place. When you create it, you may find someone already there.

The islands of pseudo-reality are subject to the whims of its creators. Some are navigated physically, some mentally, some psychologically at the mercy of a traveler's own terrors and anxieties. The creating spirit decides all of the rules and may change them at will.

Some pseudo-realities are gothic metropolises where it is always night and never silent. And the travelers somehow call this place home, though they never remember how or why they arrived.

Some are elaborate, mechanized clinics of invasive surgery and torture.

Some mirror precisely every aspect of Dante's Hell as if Dante himself had constructed it.

And these pseudo-realities are crafted with such exquisite detail because the blueprints are taken from the minds of the travelers for whom they are intended.

Assimilation Effects

Foreign matter entering Genesis that is not destroyed by ionic storms or the frigid vacuum of space may transform into inert matter which cannot exist outside of Genesis, once the assimilation effects set in.

Nonliving matter decomposes into inert matter within an hour but may take longer depending on its stability and state. Chemically stable or nonreactive matter like Noble Gases assimilate within an hour or two, but carbon-based compounds and most metals resist assimilation for days or even weeks. Liquids resist assimilation more than solids do, gases even more-so (but not Noble Gases, as noted above), though most stable matter will assimilate within 24 hours regardless of state.





Living matter does not assimilate. This isn't due to the resistance conferred by carbon-based chemical composition (even dead bodies assimilate). Rather a traveler's empathy keeps assimilation at bay, as it keeps the Genesis Spirits at bay. And this is why the spirits must hound out the psyches from their victims before they can possess them (see below).

Nonliving matter in close proximity to living matter will not assimilate.

Possession

Genesis Spirits possess nonliving (but not inert) matter if they must, but prefer living matter to draw from their experiences, skills, and thought processes, easing travel to bordering dimensions.

Spirits drive out a traveler's psyche psionically. The traveler must resist these attacks or else his psyche abandons his corporeal form and becomes a Haunt (see Genesis Spirit: Haunt, p.156). Then the spirit may choose to possess the body.

Abandoned bodies that are not possessed become comatose until they are either possessed or assimilated (nothing protects an abandoned body from assimilation effects).

The Portals

Portals to Genesis often violate the laws of physics in whatever dimension they bridge to. The gateway from Earth's universe, for example, may be a propulsion rail that travels faster than the speed of light. Or it may be a high-gravity drive that creates a space-time singularity when activated.

Portals on the Genesis side are temporary, sometimes emitted from the bordering dimension, because they assimilate quickly. Persistent bio-tech portals are rumored to exist though.

Genesis can be reached psionically. Dimension Walking is dangerous and leaves the sorcerer vulnerable once he arrives but it is possible. Likewise, communication with the occupants of Genesis (which must seem like demons to the diviners) may also result in pacts of transport.





PRIMITUS DOMUS

Primitus Domus is a highly pressurized universe with no concept of gravity but with greatly intensified nuclear force (allowing for the increased stability of complex atoms and molecules). It is filled with Xid, a tarry, near-opaque gelatin that is very similar to cytoplasm. It is rich in phagocytes which tend to act like white blood cells. Exposure to Xid is lethal to many denizens of Primitus Domus including the Viemen (who are considered the dominant species). And so these creatures protect themselves with elaborate physical shelters, biotechnology, or the dimension's industrial trade: SteamTek.

Pressure in the dimension is extreme. Since there is no gravity, space-time is instead warped by pressure and the passage of time slows as pressure is reduced (and also quickens as pressure is increased though this is difficult to measure unless the pressure increases to debilitating levels).

The existence of any kind of boundary around their universe has yet to be discovered. However one is implied by the historically constant density of, and pressure that the Xid (this dimension's "space") is under. That said, in recent millennia the Viemen have observed this pressure has been marginally but steadily decreasing leading the Viemen to believe either the universe is expanding or it is ruptured, allowing matter to escape its confines into other dimensions or the interstices. In either case, their universe's ability to support the Viemen now has a shelf life in the area of 400,000 Earth years.

Most denizens, including the Viemen, are liquid rather than solid (or actually pressurized vapor) and they require special suits to survive low-pressure environments or they will turn to mist and dissipate.

Physical Description

The Xid is believed to constitute well over 99.99% of Primitus Domus. Vast labyrinthine cities constructed by the Viemen span Primitus Domus and protect them from the Xid. These cities are made from complex alloys and are pressurized, not to resist external pressure but rather to stabilize internal pressure. Unsuiated Viemen navigate by altering their own internal pressure rather than relying on gravity or external propulsion. Therefore stable internal pressure is required for ease of movement.

Elaborate tunnels and conduits wend their way between Viemen cities and small node-like communities and conical submarines transport Viemen between cities that are not interconnected or elsewhere in Primitus Domus.

The Portals

Due to the high pressure of Primitus Domus, most gateways are, by practicality, airlocks (or else the pressure would resist access into Primitus Domus from lower pressure dimensions). The concept of a simple portal (or series of portals) "stuck" in the open position has not escaped the consideration of the Viemen as one possible cause for their universe's decreasing pressure.

The Viemen

The Viemen are the dominant species of Primitus Domus (which is their name in Latin for their home dimension and also the SteamTek metropolis they've created within this dimension). They are vaporous carbon-based organisms pressurized to a liquid or gelatinous state. They assume forms that are practical and situational and, as such, are very difficult to injure.

They retain fine motor control over their forms so long as the pressure in their environment is stabilized. If it isn't, they rely on SteamTek-powered exo-suits to help stabilize their forms and maneuver in the hostile environment. Viemen are able to grow or withdraw appendages, hair, teeth or claws, and orifices with which to eat and produce waste. They can modify their auditory and visual receptors to perceive light or sound outside the normal human spectrums and can fashion lenses to view microscopic or distant items (though the Xid tends to negate any advantage at seeing things at distance). They cannot control pigmentation and cannot produce taste buds or olfactory organs.

Viemen encountered outside of their city always wear exo-suits that vary by application.

They are extremely intelligent and use a base-3 (ternary) mathematical system in their calculations and in their technology. They communicate with special trilling organs that rapidly alternate between three sounds unique to that organ. Dozens of trilling organs can be used simultaneously (which produces a sound similar to white noise), and the Viemen are proficient at distinguishing individual streams and collating them. Written communication is done digitally. The Viemen have a rich culture and appreciation of art, but it is different to anything other species would enjoy, mostly because of the range of sight and sound they are able to perceive. To others, it looks and sounds mostly like noise.

The Viemen live in constant fear of exposure to Xid or the loss





of pressure to their citadel. These are the two most common ways to kill a Vieman, although chemical poisons and empathic attacks also work.

As a race, the Viemen are paranoid and meticulous. They tend to rein other races into servitude if possible, or else they will avoid them. They can be jealous and greedy, and will rarely divulge knowledge or trade their technological secrets (although this is precisely what they have done on a smaller scale with humanity in order to establish a foothold on Earth).

SteamTek and Science of Primitus Domus

The Viemen steam-based technology is primarily powered by heat or pressure, and most systems have to do with pressure control or combustion in some way. Systems tend to be complex with many dependency systems of moving parts. All technology is robust enough to weather a significant percentage of damaged or missing pieces, and more advanced technology can self-repair.

Weapons vary greatly. The Viemen use complicated arrays of projectiles or concussion blasts with elaborate loading systems. They employ sonic weapons that do damage at the molecular level and are effective even through vast expanses of Xid. They also employ nuclear weapons.

Micro-processing is done via a ternary pressure and combustion system rather than the binary method of alternating current. The result is machines of nearly limitless computing capacity due to the virtually inexhaustible access to pressure within Primitus Domus. Heat-resistant metals that only remain stable in Primitus Domus (due to the stabilizing effect that this dimension's pressure has on a larger nucleus) allow the Viemen to surpass physical limits that exist within our own universe. They have had some success with reproducing archaic versions of this technology on Earth, substituting tungsten for their native metals (which are too unstable there) but humans have encountered scaling issues when attempting to mass-produce this technology.

The Viemen can create life, and they have been doing it for a very long time. It started several millennia ago with the

creation of enzymes and eventually bacteria, paramecium, and other single celled organisms. Then they began to create colonies of lichen and moss. Soon they were able to engineer organisms similar to slugs but that were constructed primarily of bone, chitin, and metal alloy. Some of these organisms are impervious to the Xid.

Of particular interest to the Viemen when they first explored Earth were cockroaches and water-dwelling segmented micro-animals called tardigrades, both renowned for their resilience. Experimentation with cockroaches proved to be a dismal failure, but some species of tardigrades were found to be hardy enough to withstand recurring travel between Primitus Domus and our own dimension. Here was the first organism that the Viemen could harvest and send into unexplored protodimensions that would be capable of surviving and multiplying. The potential for something like this was enormous.

Micro-processing, bio-technology, and basic SteamTek engineering principles combine to make a very sophisticated robotics program, the pinnacle of which is the Interstices Worm. These cybernetic devices were designed for interstices and protodimensional exploration, robust reconnoitering and communication, and a profound ability to adapt. These adaptations can be physical, chemical, biological, or tactical. Recent generations have even demonstrated empathic ability.

Other Denizens

In addition to the tardigrades that the Viemen have brought back from Earth and the simple organisms they manufactured within Primitus Domus, there also exist many other life forms. Most of these are indigenous to the Xid and only a small percentage of these have been discovered.

Organisms resembling massive eels, morays, or jellyfish have been discovered in the Xid. Some intelligent species similar to over-sized cephalopods have been documented there. Some empathic species have even been rumored to exist. Most of these have chitinous or enamel shells or exoskeletons composed of dense elements or alloys. Some do not, instead exuding enzymes that somehow repulse the phagocytes within the Xid.





TESSERAIL

Tesseract is the burnt-out remains of a quantum proto-dimension linked to our universe that may once have been a tropical realm of some kind until over-utilization and a complete disregard for the ecosystem turned it into an apocalyptic wasteland.

The proto-dimension spans the space-time of our own universe at a compressed scale of about a hundred to one, which makes it extremely useful for rapid transport between distant places in our home dimension. However Tesseract also intersects with a handful of other proto-dimensions.

Blazing through the toxic soils within Tesseract are lengthy expanses of railroad track constructed of an osmium alloy (coincidentally one of the densest and most durable metals naturally occurring on our planet). These rails deliver sturdy trains from portal to portal, each a rail station or similar structure built to withstand the inhospitable environment.

And the environment is definitely inhospitable. The air is toxic, the soil is acrid, and most of the denizens are blinded due to the elements. However they are attuned to vibrations or sound, and are very deadly.

Civilians in Tampete discovered Tesseract accidentally and were the first people on Earth to do so, although by then the dimension had been used by many races spanning the universe. Tesseract is the only quantum proto-dimension regularly trafficked by commercial interests in Earth's public sector.

Physical Description

The sky of Tesseract is a chalky red-orange like the inside of a large creature's throat, and it is often mistaken for that. The air is primarily carbon monoxide and can kill within minutes. The soil is an acrid, black powder that is often radioactive and will corrode most substances, though some metals (like the osmium alloy rails which run across it) are immune to it. An incessant ash wind howls through the plane with the strength of a hurricane, kicking up soil and delivering corrosion to unprotected vehicles and structures.

Where lakes and rivers exist, the liquids are contaminated and usually contain radioactive waste. In fact, the entire plane seems to have been the universal dumping grounds for radioactive material by any number of races. Now even a few of Earth's companies do it.

The rails are three meters wide and are constructed of an osmium alloy strong enough to resist the effects of Tesseract's toxic soil. When the proto-dimension was first discovered, it must have been a cooperative effort between many races

because a standard for rail width was adopted allowing ease of transportation between those races.

Although the distance scaling between Tesseract and our universe is consistent (at a hundred to one), that does not translate well to navigation when attempting to pilot the trains since Tesseract is effectively a two-dimensional proto-dimension. It requires a mathematician, an astrophysicist, or an empath to successfully navigate the proto-dimension.

Denizens

Indigenous life in Tesseract is an obscene reflection of its ancestors and comprises the few hundred or so species that were able to adapt to the apocalyptic conditions here.

Plant life is virtually extinct except for a few algae beneath the radioactive lakes and rivers.

Mammals, where they exist, are severely mutated. They tend to have thick carapaces or segmented shelled bodies. A few have adapted to breathe the carbon monoxide atmosphere though most absorb oxygen from the acidic soil through their shells.

Few creatures have retained their visual organs, relying instead on hypersensitive sonar or vibration sensing.

The most prevalent species are probably the colossal Ash Wyrms (which can devour entire rail cars in a single strike), the venomous Krichan (bat-like creatures with four-meter wingspans and prehensile tails), and the subterranean Grazers (predators best described as roaming sinkholes that are capable of devouring millions of kilograms of soil within minutes).

Tesseract is not a safe place.

There was at one time a strong Darkling presence here as well, but there has been no established colonization by them for several millennia (by which time the proto-dimension was mostly abandoned due to the spoiling of the environment there).

Portals

Portals are simple rift pairs in the fabric between our universe and Tesseract and, as such, they require no physical structure on either side of the portal to function. That said, for practicality (and sometimes aesthetics), supporting structures are generally constructed on each side of the gateway.

Portals tend to be rail stations, tunnels, or anything capable of housing vast expanses of railroad tracks. This is true in our





universe, and it is the convention on Tesserail as well. Secret portals exist, but they are not common.

Passing through a gateway into Tesserail is a precise and potentially risky endeavor. Due to inertial differences within it and our universe (a result of the hundred to one scaling factor of distance), passing into Tesserail via a portal requires a traveler to synchronize his relative velocity before doing so.

Basically, that means that travelers must always pass through the portal within a slim range of speeds (configured separately on each rift in a pair) or risk serious injury. Moving at a speed nowhere near the configured threshold will typically just result in the portal failing to operate. However speeds close to the threshold but still outside of it can result in shunting the travelers (landing them on the acrid soil, well off of the tracks), a massive tidal effect that can cause structural damage to vehicles or their occupants (if moving too slowly) or simply splattering them upon the rails (if moving too quickly).





CH'NARR

Ch'Narr is a protodimension over 60 million years old that intersects with, and eventually diverged from, Earth's Triassic period. Merely a reflection of our world and not of its surrounding universe, Ch'Narr's divergence is chiefly due to a lack of interaction with celestial objects. In particular, a meteorite which impacted Earth during the subsequent Cretaceous period prompting an extinction event there never impacted Ch'Narr.

Ch'Narr is a biosphere of diverse natural habitats consolidated onto a single massive continent. It is a land of boiling tar pits, forests, wetlands, deserts and a surrounding ocean that stretches to infinity. Billions of species destroyed in our universe thrive here and continue to evolve, however in this protodimension, none of them evolved to mankind.

In this protodimension, the sneaky, wiry, ape-like creatures (the would-be ancestors of mankind) were ultimately preyed upon by the massive lizard-like creatures that thrived in the hot atmosphere. In this way, the entire mammalian line is extinct. Although intellect and reason were destined to be selected traits in evolution, they surfaced in reptiles rather than in hominids.

The Troglodytes are the dominant species here. Though there are many species which still prey upon them, they are the only species to have developed true intellect rather than instinct. They adapt extra-genetically, engaging in learning, teaching and recording knowledge and history.

However the evolutionary advantage to reason was sharply stunted by a lack of meaningful patterns amongst the celestial objects in the night sky. No benefit to navigation, weather forecasting, or season prediction could be gained by examining the stars. Without real incentives to master astronomy and astrophysics, and few philosophical inclinations, the Troglodytes have instead honed their intelligence toward the classification of species, general physics, and base cunning. Paired with genetic might and speed, the troglodytes are a feared adversary in any universe.

Some Troglodytes have even developed empathic abilities and it is these who have managed to forge gateways back into our own world.

Physical Description

The lands of Ch'Narr are wildly varied, but there is a marked lack of tundra, arctic, or icecap regions. The main land mass is what remains of Pangaea after pieces of it began to break off and fall into the sea. As far as the denizens are concerned, that sea is infinite in all directions.

The coast is mostly savanna and beach with forested areas appearing farther toward the center. Jungles, rain forests, and wetlands make up the bulk of the central portion of the island, occasionally divided by mountainous rifts and in a conspicuous horizontal stripe running the width of the island which is Ch'Narr's massive and only desert region.

Lakes and rivers are many and pristine. Some are fresh-water, and some are saltwater.

The weather varies by region and not by season (there are no seasons). The huge yellow orb of the sun sears a path through the blazing desert, east to west, daily. Clouds sometimes make it past the mountainous peaks to soothe the lands, but usually fall just short in the wetlands and rain forests to the immediate north and south.





Storms are frequent and violent. Hurricanes (and worse) often blow in from the endless seas.

The sky is static, and any evening sky is comparable to another, varying only by weather and not by presentation of the constellations or planets. In fact, many constellations and planets visible in our universe cannot be seen here. Those that can look as they did 200 million years ago.

Gravity never relents in Ch'Narr as it does in our universe when we achieve escape velocity, and so the upper boundary of the dimension is unreachable. And however high one goes, the sun and moon never appear any closer.

Denizens

The land is filled with snakes, lizards, toads, salamanders, insects, birds, crabs, fishes, and all manner of marine life. Notably missing are any kind of mammals.

The species of Ch'Narr tend to be specialized to their environments. And while this means they would probably not weather any drastic environmental changes, such changes here seem impossible.

This specialization can sometimes be very sophisticated. For example, some species of tree snakes have developed carapaces with barbs serving as claws specific to certain kinds of tree bark. Some stingrays are adapted for high-velocity swimming in deeper rivers. However they would burst from lack of pressure if they ever came to the surface.

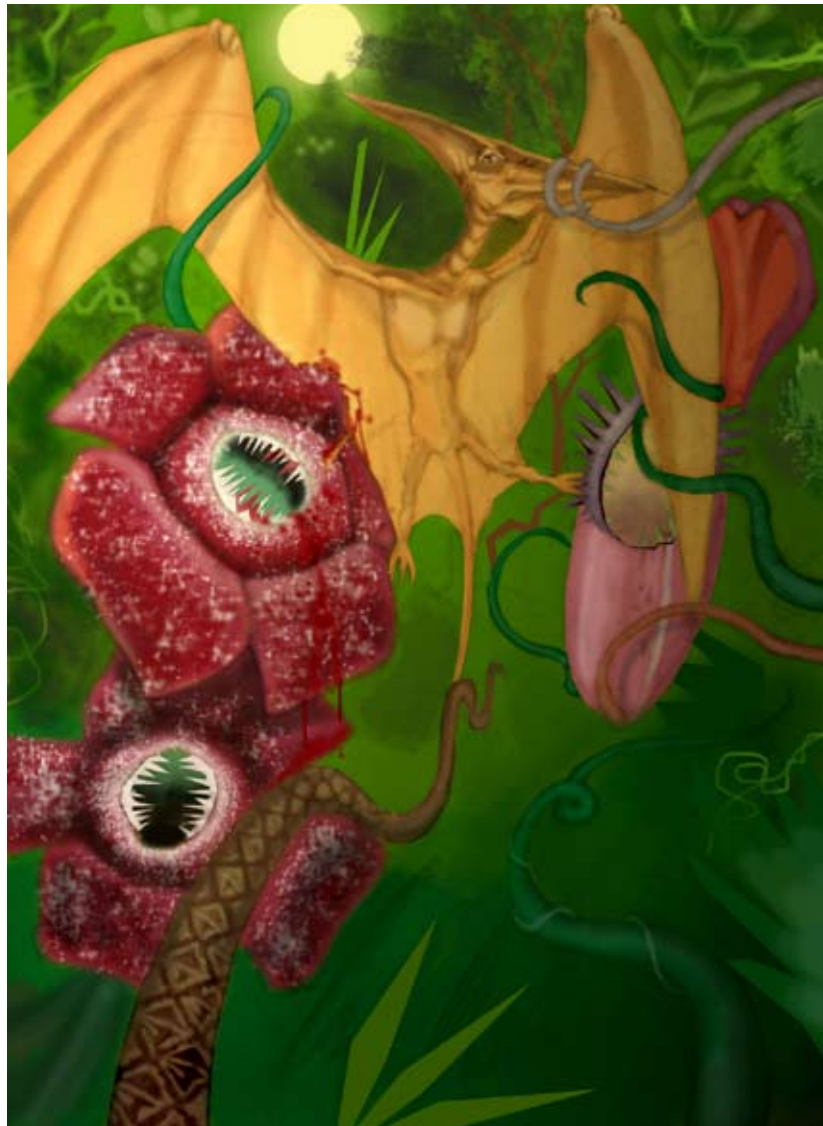
Dinosaurs are rampant though they stay mostly to the savannas and plains. A few species have adapted to life in the mountains, having developed beaks and claws with which to work and climb the stone. Some of the larger dinosaurs can entangle smaller, faster, and fiercer attackers by shedding their thick skins during an attack.

Birds are among the most strangely adapted creatures. Some fire needles at prey. Some have developed long, sticky appendages that they suspend into forested areas in hopes of ensnaring prey. Some can see outside of the visible spectrum, and a few even use sonic attacks.

Marine life is rich in the streams and lakes and near the shores of the mainland. Huge coral reefs and fungal colonies line the ocean floors, and some massive sharks, cephalopods, and jellyfish reside further out. However the further one gets from the mainland, the less aquatic life he encounters until eventually the waters become stagnant and devoid of life.

Troglodytes

The Troglodytes have developed into an intelligent but warlike



race. They are highly militant and strategic. Intelligence is prized over might, and the concept of ethics or rules of warfare is alien to them.

They reside in massive wetland citadels made of log platforms or in jungle tree-top cities. Sometimes they maintain subterranean tunnels near rivers and lakes and occasionally even in the deep desert.

The tribes are hostile to each other but will occasionally overcome their instinct to kill long enough to work together toward some end.

The political systems can be complicated and varies by tribe. Some have elaborate democratic systems in place to elect officials. For others, authority is usurped by those with the means to do so. This is one of the reasons that negotiations are often so strained between the tribes. No one wants their





customs undermined by the customs of another.

Economics is usually limited to the barter system, although a few of the larger tribes have experimented with crude forms of currency. Fraud in these tribes has been rampant.

Although their knowledge of the higher sciences is limited, they have demonstrated extensive aptitude in biology (particularly in foraging, identifying threats, and creating poisons) and in simple engineering. Traps can be complicated and are usually lethal. They commonly employ pulleys and levers and also the concepts of friction, force, and heat.

Troglodytes don't limit their guerilla tactics to Ch'Narr adversaries. Shamans within many tribes know how to Dimension Walk and can take large numbers of their tribe with them. Having remade contact with our own Earth in the past few decades, many shamans take assault teams to raid the cities there. They've acquired weapons and technology in this way, which they don't completely understand but can still operate. Sometimes they also return with human prisoners for use as food or slave labor.

Occasionally a shaman will be killed or injured during one of these raids, forever stranding his tribesmen on Earth unless they can find another way home.

Portals

There are no gateways to Ch'Narr, at least none constructed from that side. None of the species indigenous to the dimension has the technological expertise to build one. However many empathic creatures (primarily troglodytes, but others exist) are able to dimension walk into our universe.

No faction within our universe had previously shown any knowledge of or interest in Ch'Narr. However some corporations have recently been made aware of the place after learning of it from humans who were kidnapped by the troglodytes but escaped. Highly interested by the vast oil pools (created by 600 million-year-old bacteria, not dinosaur fossils as sometimes thought), these companies have pooled their resources into the research of gateway construction to Ch'Narr.





THE SOFT PLACES

"It is not drawn on any map; true places never are."
 - Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick or The Whale*

The Soft Places are not a protodimension, but are the places in our space-time where the fabric is weakest between it and adjacent protodimensions. These protodimensions call to our universe, and sometimes our universe calls to them. There are no portals or gateways to open; no seal to breach.

The ways to reach these protodimensions are unconventional.

Some protodimensions call the wandering and unwary as they draw near; get them lost amidst sand dunes or trees until they reach a world where no world should be.

Some protodimensions whisper to the easily tempted; bribe them, promise them, teach them to find their own way.

Some do not call at all but rather respond to the mental anguish of those who seek them out, not themselves knowing that they do.

Soft Places are related to inter-dimensional tunnels (see Conspiracy Rules, p87). They are a specific instance of those tunnels, but there are some differences. While most inter-dimensional tunnels are permanent and physically navigable, Soft Places tend to be dynamic and ephemeral. And travel through them is not necessarily physical.

Below are a few of the Soft Places in and around Tampete.

The Sand Barrows

The Sand Barrows are a cold, endless, desert plain. Its denizens are the unburied dead; vicious and insane creatures jealous of and thirsty for the blood of the living. They forever wander amidst the protodimension's only structures: pyramids, temples, tombs, mausoleums, and other houses of the dead but are forever denied entry to these oases. The protodimension is a halfland with tendrils into the Sonoran desert communities of 5500 B.C., Egypt's Middle Kingdom of 2000 B.C., Anasazi communities within the Aztec Ruins, Solomon Ruins and New Mexico (1200 A.D.), and even modern day deserts of Syria and Iraq among other places.

The Clearwater Beaches of Tampete were once the haunts of derelicts, drug users, and the homeless. They established small scavenging communities and, while it wasn't a comfortable existence, it was an existence. Then the flash hurricanes of the early 2000s rolled in. People died by the hundreds. Never

rescued, never buried, their remains blanketed the beach dunes.

It is the sheer numbers of unclaimed dead that drew the attention of the Sand Barrows to the beaches. Now the wights, ghouls, and ghosts wandering that nether-region also freely wander the Clearwater beaches, preying upon any foolish enough to lose themselves among the dunes there.

And there are paths from the beaches into the Sand Barrows as well. When the moon is right, when the night is still, when the forgotten dead clamor for it, the Sand Barrows will unfold into our own space-time. Wanderers may see fleeting shadows. Choosing to follow them, perhaps they'll pass over and around dunes or behind ruined walls. Before they know it, a shallow ridge that should empty onto the shore instead debouches into an endless desert plain.



Shade Hollows

The Shade Hollows are the mystic grounds visited by the Tocobaga and other Native American peoples and, though there are many ways to reach it, it cannot be done by passing a gateway.

It is a moderately forested realm whose trees reach far into the skies, often out of view. It is always dim or dark here. Even when it isn't twilight or evening (which it usually is), much of the sun's light fails to pierce the tree canopy, which is quite dense despite the sporadically planted trunks below.

It is a dream realm; a living vision. It is a world that pulls from a traveler's thoughts and fears and gives physical form to those things so that they might interact with him. It is a dangerous place, but its meditative and oracular properties are undeniable.





Early Native Americans discovered the Shade Hollows by accident but have since developed rituals designed to take them there. Drugs, peyote, breathing of incenses, and fasting are all ways to find the Soft Places, and the Tocabaga people of ancient Safety Harbor were said to have been able to find them simply by sleeping (dreaming is a way to enter the Shade Hollows if you can find the Soft Places).

Travelers who visit the Shade Hollows in this way are usually in no imminent physical risk, but there is a mental risk. Often a dreamer's thoughts and fears will take menacing form, allowing him an alternate perspective on his demons. These phantoms, or Shades, will hound the dreamer, relentless in their assault until they or the dreamer are dead. But one cannot really die in these dreams. Such a death simply ends the vision and halts the flow of any further knowledge he might gain.

But the dreamers are here to learn. So they do anything they can to escape or defeat their demons. Every minute they spend here offers the opportunity for insight and augury. Of course the Shades cannot be long eluded or permanently defeated. And so the Shades begin their assault anew; their attacks ever more devastating to the dreamer's psyche. The protodimension adapts to find more sinister ways to portray a dreamer's thoughts and fears. What were first depicted as ghostly animal sounds and leering faces within the bark of trees may progress to taboo ceremonies or inhuman murders within the trees. It will continue to escalate. A dreamer who stays too long stands a real chance of going insane.

And it is even more dangerous for a traveler who manages a way to physically visit the realm. There are no portals to the place, but one can Dimension Walk here. The danger of such a journey is that death is no longer an escape to the torment within. Foolish sorcerers have accidentally trapped themselves in this dimension and have gone permanently insane in so doing. And it has definitely come up that a vindictive shaman has permanently entombed his enemies within the Shade Hollows.

The Badlands

(The Badlands were originally outlined in Protodimensions #17 by Scott McClenaghan and Captain Obvious and are covered in far greater detail there. They are included in this supplement not because of any great relevance in Tampete, but because they were one of the first detailed "Soft Places" in the Dark Conspiracy universe).

The Badlands are old. Very old. They easily predate the worlds they were intended to reflect and may even have precipitated a few of them. They are most often compared to deserts or wastelands prominent in the frontiers of 19th century America, Mexico, and Australia. Yet the protodimension is more than

just a terrain or the home of some race or thing (though it is both of those). The Badlands are built upon tenets of justice as it would exist in the cradle of most societies.

Justice and the search for it, or the lack of it, is a principle upon which legal systems, societies, and many of the earliest religions are based. Justice and treatment of the unjust define the starkest pieces of religious mythology. It is no coincidence that the Badlands often connect to these places. For example, they touch sections of the Mayan Xibalba, the Chinese Diyu (or Shadow Lands), the Slavic Rai or Peklo, Tartarus, Hades, Naraka, and Hell. (Yet the place seems forever separated from Nirvana, Paradise, or any other kind of heaven).

Perhaps the land is best categorized as a kind of Purgatory, which can be very similar to Hell. The unjustly murdered wander as apparitions until somehow freed from their manacles; the guilty walk unceasingly seeking an atonement that seems to be forever denied to them.

The Badlands were almost certainly created for a purpose. Whether it was a plane of penance for the guilty, or an oasis of justice for the wronged, or somewhere in-between as a kind of moral proving grounds for those looking within themselves... well, that will vary greatly on one's perspective.

Physically, the Badlands are a series of distributed ghost towns, cursed cities, abandoned gold mines, old railways, barren and blasted wastelands, deserts, prospecting camps, and early frontier settlements. Native technology is generally limited to SteamTek and earlier, however exceptions exist. There is at least one report of a dimensional pocket resembling 20th century Perth, Australia, inhabited by outlaw biker gangs.

The protodimension is sparsely inhabited by small pockets of natives (or at least, those who have forgotten their origins), trapped wayfarers, supernatural entities, and a strong Darkling influence.

The Badlands are not difficult to navigate, but they do defy conventional mapping. The protodimension is a series of interconnected regions, the avenues of which sometimes pass through or near other dimensions. Drawing a map to scale would be nearly impossible, but directions can still be a simple matter of: "Pass over the Barrow Plains and stop at Preston's Inn & Saloon. Walk downstairs through the wine cellar to Kimball's Worth & Wares. Walk outside to Tumbleweed Withers, and it's the fourth dwelling on your left."

Many pockets within Palm Harbor and the rural agro-farms surrounding Tampete have these "soft" links to the Badlands. For more information on the Badlands, as mentioned above, see Protodimensions #17.





APPENDICES

Appendix A: New Careers

Appendix B: New DarkTek

Appendix C: Underglyphs

Appendix D: Tables

- Urban Sprawl Encounter Tables
- Demonground Encounter Tables
- Oldsmar Market Stall Generation Table
- Oldsmar Market – Supply and Demand Table
- Oldsmar Gang Generation Table
- Dome 606 Structure Tables
- Harbour Island Merchant Generation Table
- Whiz Effects Generation Table
- A Hundred and One Plot Seeds





NEW CAREERS



CAREER CAMP RESIDENT

You read the flyers. You saw the TV commercials. Free training, free meals, room and board, and contract lengths of only two years. Sure they get extended sometimes if people don't follow the rules, but... come on, that almost never happens. Plus you get \$1000 at the end of your contract!

Prerequisites: None

All Terms:

Skills: A total of 6 levels (max 3 from any one skill) from any of the following:

Carpenter, Electronics, Farming, Mason, Machinist, Mechanic, Willpower

Special Assignment (occurs on successful Difficult INT or STR test):

Choose from these skills instead:

Electronics, Environmental Suit, Farming, Mason, Machinist, Mechanic, Robotics, Scuba, Willpower

Promotion: None

Contacts: Two per term, criminal or specialist (in field of skill learned this term)

Special: Make a successful Difficult Willpower test or next term must be Career Camp as well.

Once per term, a character may attempt to escape the Career Camp with a successful Difficult Stealth test. He may then instead choose from Criminal, Drifter, Ganger, Homeless, Mercenary (if military), or Truck Driver, taking half of his skills from this career and half from the new one.

Secondary skills are limited to tools available in the Career Camp.

Characters receive no pay for each term spent in a Career Camp, rather they receive \$1000 if they succeed at the Willpower test to leave successfully. Those who escape receive no pay.

DARKNET HACKER

The truth is out there. But there are ways to reveal it without exposing yourself in the process. You hacked your way to straight A's in school, and some guy in Tulsa is still paying off those computer parts you ordered online last year. Now you put your skills to use comparing notes with other Minion Hunters on DarkNet, the underground internet forums dedicated to uncovering Darkling activity.

Prerequisites: INT 7+, Computer Operation 6+

First Term:

Skills: Computer Operation 2, Research 1, Stealth 1, Electronics 1, and 1 in either Communications or Computer Empathy (Computer Empathy can only be selected if the character is empathic).

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: *Choose from the following:*

Business, Computer Operation, Communications, Computer Empathy, Electronics, Robotics, Stealth, Xeno-Biology

All Terms:

Promotion: None

Contacts: Two per term: government, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 6+

Special Assignment: On roll of 10, something the hacker is working on has caught the attention of an ISAAC operative. If the character pursues this, he may get leads from the ISAAC operative, and the operative may even be in a position to have criminal charges dropped if he is caught (depending on how useful the character is). Of course, such a favor may have a price.

Special: Make a successful Average Computer Operations test or next term must be Prisoner.

Characters may choose to shift the difficulty of this test one category harder in order to double their income (or shift it twice to triple it, and so on). Failing the roll will result in no income and a career of Prisoner for the next term.





GANGER, BALLAST POINT BUTCHERS

There are gangers and there are terrorists. You are both. The Ballast Point Butchers instill fear in everyone they meet, even their initiates. In fact, half of the initiates never make it into the gang. Those who do must prove they have the grit it takes to be a Butcher. Therefore all initiates must stalk and murder a member from a rival gang.

Prerequisites: African American, murder at least one person from a rival gang (or a police officer).

First Term:

Skills: Autogun 1, Luck 1, Melee 1, Slug Weapons 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1

Special: Initiates must pass an Average Streetwise check on the first term (after assigning skill points from it) or they simply don't make the cut. That's right. If you miss this, scrap the character sheet and start again. You are allowed to retest once on a successful Difficult Luck check.

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: Choose from the following:

Rank'n'File: Autogun, Chemistry, Luck, Melee, Observation, Slug Weapons, Stealth, Streetwise
 Knight: Autogun, Ground Tactics, Heavy Artillery, Heavy Gun, Leadership, Observation, Persuasion, Recruiting, Slug Weapons, Streetwise
 Boss: Autogun, Business, Ground Tactics, Leadership, Observation, Persuasion, Recruiting, Slug Weapons, Streetwise

All Terms:

Promotion: 8+

Commission: Knight (and then Boss), double pay for Knight, triple for Boss

Contacts: Two per term: criminal, military, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 10

Special: Make a successful Average Streetwise test or next term must be Prisoner.

GANGER, CEPEROS

Anything that anyone needs, you know where to find it. The Ceperos are your family, and they are Tampete's oldest bootleggers still in existence. From their cigar shops in and around Hyde Park, they run the black market, the gambling, and a healthy protection racket.

Prerequisites: Cuban, CHR 4+, Spanish 4+

First Term:

Skills: Act/Bluff 1, Bribery 1, Persuasion 1, Slug Weapons 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: Choose from the following:

Rank'n'File: Act/Bluff, Autogun, Bribery, Business, Luck, Melee, Persuasion, Slug Weapons, Stealth, Streetwise
 Boss: Act/Bluff, Autogun, Bribery, Business, Interrogation, Leadership, Liaison, Luck, Melee, Persuasion, Recruiting, Slug Weapons, Stealth, Streetwise

All Terms:

Promotion: 8+

Commission: Boss, double pay for Boss

Contacts: Two per term: criminal, military, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 8+

Special: The Ceperos are connected. There is no check to avoid prison each term (although special circumstances during an adventure can still land them in prison).





GANGER, LA FAMILIA

Maybe you're undocumented. Maybe you have a record. But whether by air or by sea, you know how to get things into Tampete. That makes you useful. Alright, so distribution isn't what it used to be, but there's been a truce between your gang and Diablo Blanco for months now. Now if only you could figure a way to deal with those HIRO boats.

Prerequisites: Latin American, CHR 3+, Small Watercraft 2+, Pilot 2+, or Mechanic 2+, Spanish 4+

First Term:

Skills: Bribery 1, Navigation 1, Small Watercraft or Pilot 1,

Slug Weapons 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1

Special: Initiates choose a supernatural image to make a tattoo of. Each kill or distinguishing accomplishment is cause to augment this tattoo, once they get their boss's approval.

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: Choose from the following:

Rank'n'File: Act/Bluff, Autogun, Bribery, Luck, Mechanic, Melee, Navigation, Persuasion, Pilot, Slug Weapons, Small Watercraft, Stealth, Streetwise
Boss: Act/Bluff, Autogun, Bribery, Business, Interrogation, Leadership, Liaison, Luck, Melee, Persuasion, Recruiting, Slug Weapons, Stealth, Streetwise

All Terms:

Promotion: 8+

Commission: Boss, double pay for Boss

Contacts: Two per term: criminal, military, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 8+

Special: La Familia members earn \$500 per point in Streetwise, Pilot, or Small Watercraft. They may test that asset (Difficult) to attempt to double that pay (or a Formidable test to triple it). Failure indicates they spend the next term in prison.

SCISENSATIONALISM PARISHER

You are right with God. Sure there are those who make fun of your devotion to a fictitious religion and maybe also of your uniform, but you know better. You are learning, expanding your mind. And besides, what could you possibly want that the Scisensationalists can't offer you?

Prerequisites: \$1000 should be paid to the cult or SOC drops by two.

First Term

(if \$1000 is paid to the cult):

Skills: History 1, Leadership 1, Persuasion 1, Recruiting 1, Research 1, Stealth 1, SOL becomes level 4 (see Scisensationalism, p.113)

Commission: 7+, DM+1 for INT 7+, DM+1 for Recruiting 3+, SOL increases by one

First Term (otherwise):

Skills: Admin/Legal 1, Persuasion 1, Recruiting 1, Research 1, Service 1, Stealth 1, SOL becomes level 3 (see Scisensationalism, p.113)

Commission: 9+, DM+1 for INT 7+, DM+1 for Recruiting 3+, SOL increases by one

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: Choose from the following:

SOL < 4: Admin/Legal, Bribery, Persuasion, Recruiting, Research, Service, Stealth
SOL 4-5: Act/Bluff, Business, History, Leadership, Persuasion, Recruiting, Research, Stealth, Willpower
SOL 6: Bribery, Business, History, Instruction, Leadership, Persuasion, Recruiting, Stealth, Willpower
SOL 7: Bribery, Business, Genetics, History, Leadership, Persuasion, Recruiting, Willpower, Xeno-Biology
Commission: 7+, DM+1 for INT 7+, DM+1 for Recruiting 3+, SOL increases by one

All Terms:

Contacts: Two per term: criminal, military, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 8+

Special: No income is earned from this career path, and money earned elsewhere is tithed here. However residence and essentials are cared for by the church for members of SOL 5 or higher. Characters who achieve SOL 6 or 7 become hunted by the organization when they switch careers.

Player characters cannot achieve SOL 8 unless it is done in game.





TAMPETE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY INMATE

Criminals are tough, and Tampete has some of the worst, so you've seen it all. Then you spent some time in Tampete Correctional Facility and now you're not sure what scares you more; the guards, Warden Greenstreet, or the whispers of what happens to prisoners taken to levels twelve to fifteen. There's less fighting here than in other penitentiaries. That's because everyone is scared of the people who run the place, and for good reason.

Prerequisites: Sentenced for criminal activity within Tampete. Also, if another career indicates a

next term of Prisoner while the character is in Tampete, that next term can be TCF Inmate.

First Term:

Skills: Admin/Legal 1, Melee 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1, Willpower 1

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: Choose from the following:

Act/Bluff, Admin/Legal, Bargain, Bribery, Dance, Disguise, Martial Arts, Persuasion, Service, Stealth, Streetwise

All Terms:

Contacts: One per term: criminal, law enforcement, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 9+

Special: No income earned and no secondary activities allowed. Prisoners with SOC < 4 may be incarcerated in closet-sized protodimensions in the upper levels (25% chance). Some acquire a mental illness due to this (Difficult intensity Willpower test to avoid). Although most emerge believing the experience was nothing more than a hellish solitary confinement, a few remember the experience. Those who talk about it usually find themselves put back there and forgotten, or otherwise "lost".

TAMPETE ESCORT/SEX INDUSTRY WORKER

Most of us aren't born into opportunity and have to do whatever it takes to make ends meet. Maybe you're a felon who can't find work. Or you're up against it trying to support someone. Or maybe you're homeless and just looking for the next escape. Whatever it is, you ended up here. If you're lucky, you're a high-end-escort working at a nightclub like the Castle or one of Dome 606's gentlemen's clubs. If you're less lucky, you're working a cathouse in South Tampa or walking the streets of Ybor or the Grid.

Prerequisites: CHR 4+

First Term:

Skills: Charm 3, Dance 1, Service 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: Choose from the following:

Rank'n'File: Admin/Legal, Charm, Dance, Disguise, Martial Arts, Service, Stealth, Streetwise
High End Escort: Act/Bluff, Business, Charm, Computer Operation, Dance, Observation, Service, Stealth

All Terms:

Promotion: 8+

Commission: 9+, (minimum CHR 8+), High End Escort

Contacts: One per term: criminal, law enforcement, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 9+

Special: When calculating starting money, use CHR times \$400 for each term or \$800 if Computer Operation is 3+. High end escorts instead multiply CHR times \$2000. Each term you spend as a Sex Industry Worker, you must pass a Difficult Willpower test or become addicted to a hard drug (half income of any terms while you are addicted).





UNDERBAY DERRICKHAND

Ever since the recent acquisitions by Ultima Ignus in the area, Tampete has a unique opportunity for undersea drilling employment. Skilled workers willing to sign non-disclosure agreements can earn good, albeit risky, money. Maybe you do the engineering. Maybe you do the drilling. You're not sure that anyone knows the whole story of what's going on under Tampa Bay. But if there's a good paycheck in it, then that's none of your concern.

Prerequisites: Scuba 2+, Excavation, Geology, Machinist, or Metallurgy 2+

First Term:

Skills: Choose 7 (not more than 3 from one skill) among the following:

Computer Operation, Construction, Excavation,
Geology, High-G Environment, Metallurgy,
Navigation, Research, Robotics, Scuba, Sensors,
Small Watercraft

Subsequent Terms:

Skills: Choose from the following:

Computer Operation, Construction, Excavation,
Geology, High-G Environment, Metallurgy, Navigation,
Research, Robotics, Scuba, Sensors, Small Watercraft

All Terms:

Contacts: One per term: business, specialist (in field of skill learned), contact is foreign on 9+

Promotion: 7+

Commission: 8+ Engineer

Special: Engineers earn double income.





NEW DARKTEK



Badlands Sextant

This tarnished brass navigational device seems little more than an antique novelty likely to fall apart under duress. It is barely functional for celestial navigation in our own dimension, however in the Badlands (see Badlands, p.188), the device becomes insanely useful.

An untrained viewer can use the sextant to immediately identify “soft portals” from the Badlands into other dimensions. It is rumored to have similar uses in all of the Soft Places but such tidbits cannot be substantiated.

In the hands of a psionist, the sextant’s abilities are formidable. With a successful Difficult Foreboding or Dimension Walk test, a psionist can determine the destination plane of the portal. Each stage of success allows the character a little more information about the destination, including approximate location they will be deposited, the discontinuity level, the year (in a plane known to him), or similar information.

It takes one minute to use the device.

Weight: 3.5kg

Price: NA (-/-)

Cebriticite

Cebriticite is an internal building material used by the Greens (see p.116). It is lightweight and brittle, but conducts energy better than most metals and only transfers that energy to a handful of materials, which protects it from water shorts and makes it safe to touch. It acts like an integrated circuit board but has the look and feel of porous coral.

The Greens fill the inside of their lairs and spacecrafts with cebriticite, reinforcing it with sturdy alloys. This design makes the energy systems particularly resilient. They also tunnel into the Earth with cebriticite to more efficiently transfer the energy siphoned from within.

Weight: 50kg per cubic meter

Price: NA (-/-)





Interstices Worm

The Viemen (see *Factions and Personalities*, p.117) wish to conquer all known dimensions. To do so, these dimensions must be discovered. The Interstices Worm represents the pinnacle of Viemen adaptive design and artificial intelligence. Each is three meters long and made of dense alloys made to withstand extreme changes in pressure and temperature, and to explore billions of different protodimensions.

The worms can create micro-portals to alternate dimensions based on the exploration model initially loaded into it. Each worm normally retains enough energy for a handful of “jumps”, however it can scour its surroundings for the raw materials needed to replenish these energy levels. It can communicate through these micro-portals even after they close, although the complexity of this (and so, the energy consumption) grows with time and with distance from *Primitus Domus*. Since this communication is unreliable, the Interstices Worms are programmed to make their own decisions on which of any newly discovered dimensional portals to explore next.

Its goal never changes; find suitable dimensions for the Viemen to infiltrate and subjugate. To this end, it explores all new dimensions for signs of life, other portals, and a place to hide itself if necessary.

Worms fly through near-vacuum at speeds of 80,000 kph and can do so for nearly twenty years before running out of energy. It can burrow through dense materials, also at high speeds (and high energy consumption). Each protodimensional jump costs it about a quarter of its full allotment of energy. It can enter a kind of sleep-mode that uses next to no energy at all.

The worms can deliver an electrical shock of 2d6 points of damage to defend itself and can absorb 30 points of damage (AV level 4) before being destroyed.

Weight: 20 kg **Price:** NA (-/-)

SteamTek Arbostudium

The Viemen (see *Viemen*, p.117) have devised a probe capable of analyzing a plant’s “memories” in order to learn more about it. Since plants have no visual or audible organs, this information is limited to biological responses to external stimuli. The “memory” is surprisingly accurate and the Viemen use this to gauge activity in the area. For example, they may learn how recently another organism made contact with the plant, and how often (useful if searching for hidden camps or other surreptitious activity).

By itself, the data is often inconclusive, but combined with other evidence in the area, the Viemen can draw useful seismic, geological, or military conclusions.

The device works by inserting a series of needle-like probes into the plant (which must be large and sturdy enough to tolerate needles of two to four inches). The scanning process takes about ten minutes.

Weight: 9kg

Price: \$175,000 (-/R)





SteamTek Chess Engine

More of a novelty than a practical tool amongst the Vinoy community in Old St. Petersburg, the Viemen Chess Engine is a demonstration of Viemen heat-based technology used to power the complex and robust strategy models for chess. It is produced by Stromm Inc., a subsidiary of Ultima Ignus, and consists of a marble chess board and pieces, a variety of gears and levers to move the pieces, and a conspicuous series of chrome cylinders, valves, and pistons to power the calculating engine.

Weight: 9kg

Price: \$85,000 (-/R)

SteamTek Mortostudium

The Viemen, after devising a method to examine the stored memories of plant life, directed their efforts to deciphering the stored memories of the dead. The brain activity continues in most mammals for several minutes after clinical death, and the synapses in the nervous system contain chemicals for much longer than that. The SteamTek Mortostudium probes cadavers for any remnant of neurological activity and can often reveal images in the subject's mind, real or imagined, just prior to death. More invasive scans can divulge long-term memories and secrets, although these scans are destructive to the subject's brain tissue.

The scanner is an unwieldy carriage of heated pipes, cogs, and gears, with tubes and wires running up and down the cadaver to be studied. It can be attached to a monitor and to a laptop with the appropriate software to operate the device.

It is an Average intensity Computer Operations check to glean any images and flashes of a newly dead subject experienced prior to his death. This becomes a Difficult intensity check after four hours, Formidable after one day, and Impossible after one week, so long as there is brain tissue left to probe. The check becomes one intensity level easier if the brain matter is preserved somehow.

It is a Difficult intensity Computer Operations check to probe for a specific long-term memory in a subject who has been dead for less than a week; Average if the subject has just died or his body has been preserved. Each subsequent probe is performed at one cumulatively greater Difficulty stage (as the brain tissue is further destroyed with each probe). A specific memory could be a name, location, password, or similar piece of information that is a phrase or less.

A single long-term probe at one stage of difficulty greater can be attempted to generate a kind of brain dump. If it works, the operator will know the name, age, profession, and basic information about the subject. Secrets may be learned, but these will be incomplete and cryptic. Whether or not this succeeds, the attempt destroys all remaining brain tissue.

A critical failure destroys the subject's remaining brain tissue.

Weight: 25kg

Price: \$400,000 (-/R)



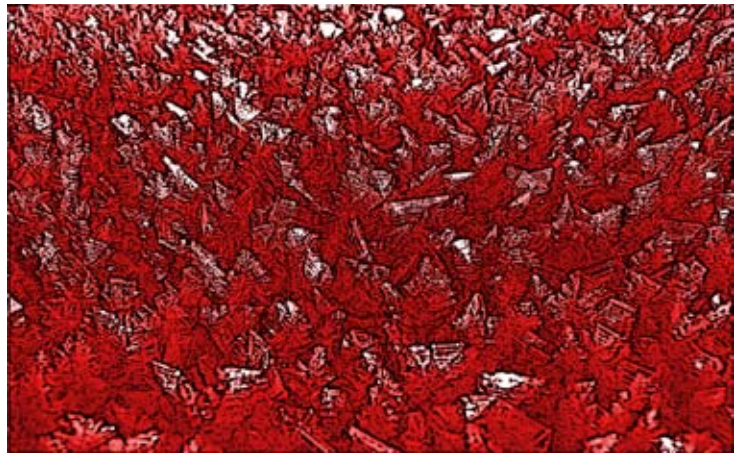


SteamTek Ore

Super-dense, radioactive metals extracted from extraterrestrial materials can produce nearly immeasurable heat during decay. This heat powers the Viemen thermal-based technology, or SteamTek, more efficiently than conventional energy sources. One kg of metal is equivalent to about 5 million joules over ten minutes (the decay time) for something like 8000 watts. Design elements in various SteamTek devices may regulate the flow of power.

Weight: 1kg

Price: \$75,000



SteamTek Transdimensional Gate

In their pursuit of dimensional exploration and conquest, the Viemen were driven to create technologies to locate and enter new dimensions. The SteamTek Transdimensional Gate is a crude method to navigate interdimensional pathways for those who aren't too picky about where they end up.

SteamTek Transdimensional Gates stand about four meters tall and have tubular frames of copper, brass, or iron. Coils of wiring hold patchwork sections of gears and cogs together as electricity flows freely throughout. The device uses a lot of energy; 5 megawatt connections like a high-end data center. This translates to about 125kg of SteamTek ore a day to operate and 5kg of ore per transport.

Before it can be used, the gate must be attuned to a dimension. Usually a portal will lock onto the strongest dimensional path nearby, however operators familiar with the machine can attempt to guide this process. An Average intensity Computer Use check allows a choice between two randomly determined protodimensions. Double this selection for each intensity level this test is increased by. However each attempt takes 1d6 days with a sustained energy stream. Once the portal is attuned, it must be gracefully powered down or it will lose its configuration. When the portal is next activated, anyone walking through the portal should appear on the designated plane. 80% of the time, the traveler will appear within a hundred miles of his chosen destination. 15% of the time, he will appear somewhere in the protodimension, but nowhere near his intended destination. 5% of the time, some mishap happens. He may be shunted to another plane, he may not travel at all, or the portal may explode. This is left to GM discretion.

Weight: 350kg

Price: \$50,000,000 (-/R)





SteamTek Zeppelin

Over a dozen Viemen airships have been constructed and kept in subterranean hangars in the bay floor disguised with mud and rock portals. The hull is reinforced, plated metal alloy designed to withstand highly pressurized environments. It can travel 2,000 kph and serves equally well as a submarine, though speed is limited to 100 kph, which is still twice as fast as a nuclear submarine.

The airship is heat-propelled, both above ground and in the water. Viemen heat-based technology is used to power massive steam engines, generating force unseen during our own steam age. The fuel (SteamTek Ore) is dense (and makes up nearly half of the ship's weight) but compact. Each kg of SteamTek Ore powers the vessel for about an hour.

Weight: 1200kg (including 600kg of SteamTek Ore)

Price: \$11,000,000 (-/R)

Zenon Antivenom

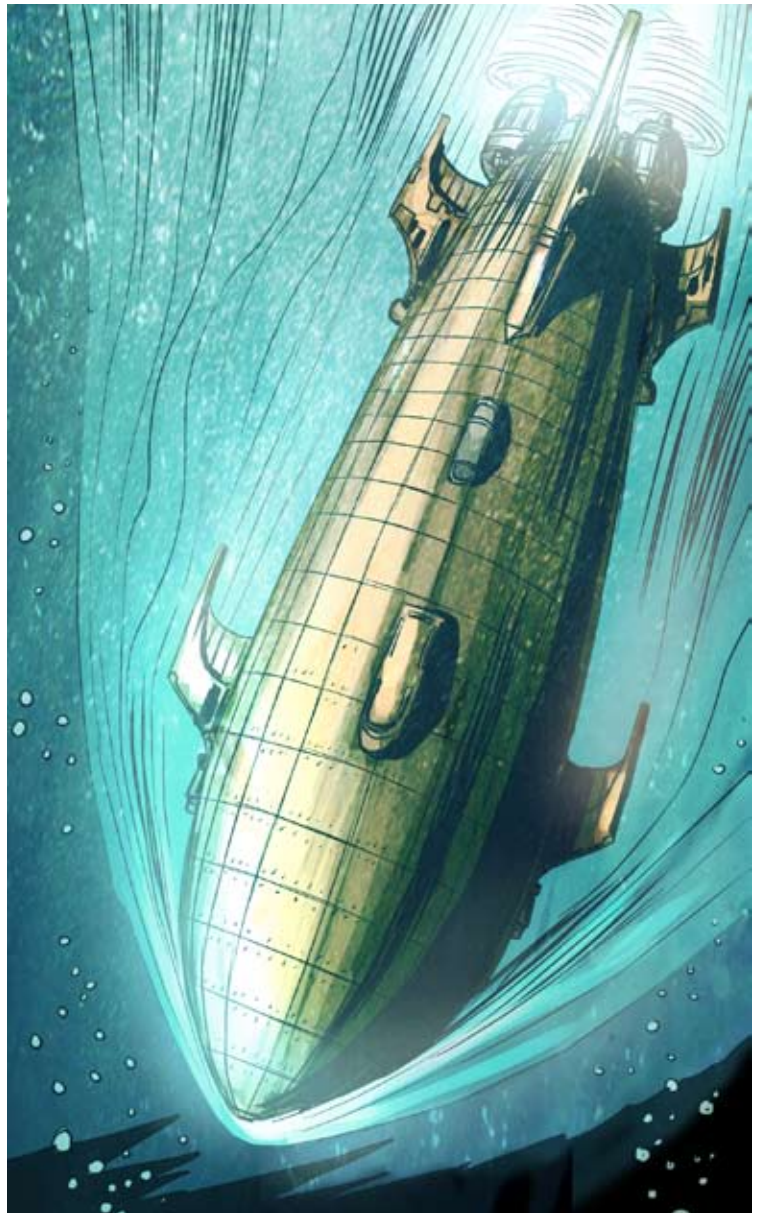
The Zenon (see Zenon, p.173), after repeated run-ins with Cobra People and Tampete snakepits, developed a bio-serum to treat a wide variety of neurotoxins and hemotoxins. Although it is primarily a preventative measure, it may be helpful if administered within 1 turn of exposure.

The serum is a living fluid of compatible, viral agents that feed off of various toxins, reproducing as a by-product. The viruses live up to 48 hours without food, so this is the effective duration of a dose.

The serum is 85% effective against venoms and 55% effective against poisons if administered at least ten minutes before exposure to them. Half these percentages if administered after that.

Weight: 1.5kg

Price: \$1800 (-/S)





UNDERGLYPHS



In and around Tampete but particularly within the Underbay tunnel network (where they get their name) is a system of sophisticated, yet subtle warning glyphs similar to Hobo Symbols that the homeless use to warn each other of danger. Instead, these warn passersby of ETs, empaths, and Darkling influence in the area.

Underglyphs are lightly graven or chiseled into Underbay tunnel surfaces, signs, smooth walls, trees, mailbox posts, or windows. Sometimes they are inked or chalked onto rougher or less yielding surfaces like streets, brick, or dumpsters. They are mostly left by Minion Hunters but also by empaths, ETs, or anyone who knows the system.

The symbols are not intuitive by design, thus requiring familiarity with them in order to discern any meaning. Responsible Minion Hunters are discreet, leaving them only in places other hunters know to look, and they are careful who they teach the system of symbols to.

A sampling of images is to the left. The GM is encouraged to add to these.





URBAN SPRAWL ENCOUNTER TABLES

These tables have been customized for quick encounter generation within Tampete Ant Hills and Mike-Towns but you should find them applicable for any urban sprawl in the modern Dark Conspiracy universe. Events vary and may promote role playing opportunities, introduce plot hooks, divulge leads, or just degenerate quickly to combat. It isn't a safe place.

Many of these encounters may simply be ignored by PCs. It is recommended that the GMs permit this to happen without

forcing the encounter to escalate unless the PCs do something rash.

USING THE TABLES

Simply roll 1d100 on Table 1.1 Encounter Type using either the Ant Hills or Mike-Towns column depending on where the PCs are exploring. Then just roll on the indicated table to generate an event.

Table 1 – Encounter Type

(d100 roll)

Ant Hills	Mike-Towns	Sub-Table
01-40	01-50	Table 1.1.1 - Miscellaneous Disturbance
41-60	51-70	Table 1.1.2 – Conspiracy Activity
61-75	71-80	Table 1.1.3 – Darkling Activity
76-90	81-90	Table 1.1.4 – Beastly Activity
91-00	91-00	Table 1.1.5 – Natural (or Unnatural) Phenomenon

Table 1.1 – Miscellaneous Disturbance

d00 Event

- 1 A civilian's gun misfires with no injuries.
10% chance this provokes an attack from someone nearby.
- 2 A homeless veteran is provoked by an amped up ganger who begins shouting and shoving him. The veteran begins pummeling the ganger and will kill him if not stopped.
- 3 Someone has left a claymore under a few sheets of newspaper and it detonates in the street 2d6x100 meters away, 2d4-4 casualties.
- 4 A grocery store is being robbed. The PCs are in the store or outside the storefront.
75% chance one armed thief, 25% d3+1 armed thieves.
- 5 Empathic street band plays, affecting the mood of many nearby listeners.
Pickpockets begin to navigate the crowd.
- 6 Four men nearly seven feet tall and wielding baseball bats with nails driven through the end of them don't like your wardrobe very much, and they say so. (If the PCs outnumber or outgun them, they'll disperse after exchanging a few insults and threats).
- 7 Drive-by shooting. The victim is killed outright.
- 8 A Lancer flees over a curb into some trash cans before running over an NPC.
50% chance: 3 combat phases later, 1d3 police cars fly by in pursuit.
- 9 Police chopper flies overhead scrutinizing people in the area.
50% chance: PCs in search light for 15 seconds before it moves on, longer if the PCs are acting suspicious.
- 10 Prostitute accosts party and says that if she doesn't score \$200 in next 30 minutes, the "management" will kill her.





- 11 Pimp accosts party because they look like trouble, tells them to get lost. He has appropriate backup 50% of the time (otherwise he gets lost if they won't).
- 12 A TV falls out a 3rd floor apartment window.
30% chance that gunshots are heard two combat phases later.
- 13 Gang fight, lasts 1d3 turns before abruptly stopping as one side flees.
- 14 Motorcycle crash, biker slams into a broken streetlight.
10% chance: Streetlight begins to work immediately after.
- 15 Liquor truck shows up outside a bar as armed escorts wait patiently. The entire street slips into an uneasy silence as all wonder whether this will go down peacefully.
d6+1 combat phases later, after delivery, the truck leaves.
- 16 A green Zil races by the players with police in pursuit. 50% chance one of the Zil's passengers tosses 1d4 fragmentary grenades out of the window to deter pursuit. If this happens, 25% chance the police respond by firing an undocumented LAW rocket at the suspect's vehicle. (Note, the police are generally not experts with a weapon like this).
- 17 The police ask the PCs if they saw any suspicious activity 30 minutes ago or if they saw a dark green Zil with no plates roll through the area. If the PCs smart off, there is a 50% chance one of them will be taken in for questioning.
- 18 A crowd gathers for bum-fighting. The pit-fight occurs in the middle of the road, disrupting traffic and lasts six turns. It results in one death and a lot of money changing hands. A police car passes on turn 4, driving up on the curb and then around, like nothing's happening.
- 19 A random civilian is shot by sniper fire (50% chance killed outright).
Shooter is d4x100 meters away. If civilian isn't killed immediately, there is a second shot two combat phases later unless the PCs intervene. Victim has no idea who shooter is. The sniper is just testing a new rifle.
- 20 Three guys, one with bolt cutters, are clipping a chain link fence. If anyone looks at them, one reveals a piece under his vest. If that doesn't do the job, they flee.
- 21 Minor car collision. 25% chance it results in gunfire.
- 22 1d4 kids throw a cinder block against the plate glass window of a convenience store then run off. One combat phase later, a man runs out with a gun looking for them, and then he wanders back inside.
- 23 A well-known rock star and his entourage arrive in a limousine outside of a seedy bar, to "mingle with the commoners". Whatever local band is immediately thrown off stage and, within ten minutes, the club degenerates to a city-block size mosh pit. It becomes too congested in the street to move or operate normally. The police are called but do not respond to break up the crowd for about an hour.
- 24 A man with a hot dog cart hawks his daily special of unicorn burgers and canned mermaid meat. This has provoked a loud altercation with a nearby environmental activist.
- 25 A gray Le Boeuf coasts down the road slowly (20mph) as three of its passengers fire 44 caliber weapons at a slowly pursuing Lancer. The Lancer has got bullet resistant glass that is starting to crack. In 1d6 combat phases, a passenger in the Lancer will fire an LAW80 at the Le Boeuf before turning down a side road.
- 26 A melee gang fight between a group of eight adolescent teens and another one of eleven goes down here. It seems to be a territorial dispute, and the smaller group is attempting to drive the larger one off. Mostly, the boys are brandishing clubs, chains, and bats, but when the violence escalates, they will pull handguns.
Passersby may be hit by indirect fire.
- 27 A limousine escorted by motorcycles parks outside apartments. A man in a suit gets out and walks into the building with a few biker escorts.
3 turns later, 50% chance of gunshots within building.
If there were gunshots, then 50% chance of a three-turn firefight, 25% chance of a bomb being dropped on the limousine from above (destroying it), and 20% chance limo and motorcycles become abandoned (if not already destroyed).
- 28 Two homeless people have simultaneously discovered a discarded lottery ticket and are violently arguing over who gets to keep it. The thing is worth \$25. They are shouting for 1d4 turns, then 50% chance one of them runs with it, 50% chance it comes to blows.





- 29 A guy with a metal detector is using a tire iron to remove lug nuts on random vehicles. He keeps this up for ten turns before moving on. There is a cumulative 1% chance per turn that he pisses someone off enough to provoke a street fight. He'll use the tire iron accordingly if that happens.
- 30 Someone pours an acid compound on a sleeping homeless man. The bum starts screaming in agony as the assailant runs away, laughing maniacally.
- 31 Scalpers: 1d3 men are selling T-Shirts and concert/sports tickets to events in the various domes/arenas over the next few days. 25% chance any tickets sold are forgeries.
- 32 Two teenagers are having fun tossing some old-school glass Christmas ornaments filled with petrol and dry soap at random passersby. They will not target anyone in a group with someone brandishing firearms but may target PCs otherwise (amongst 2d6 other passersby).
- 33 Someone has managed to get a diesel lawn mower running and is attempting to mow the pavement in the middle of the road. Cars will honk and swerve around him. There is a cumulative 1% chance/round that someone will pelt him with a can of diced beats, probably knocking him unconscious and sending the mower roving unattended (its safety devices having been disabled).
- 34 A group of men are fighting dogs in the street and betting on the results. 25% of the fights are to the death.
- 35 A group of 1d6+2 people are fighting at the top of an apartment complex. Two guys were dismantling the air conditioning compressors and stealing the copper before being discovered by vigilante residents. If the residents outnumber the guys, 50% chance the guys get tossed off the roof.
- 36 A man is arguing with two street thugs about drugs for 1d6 turns. After the argument, one of the thugs stabs the man and both flee the scene. The wound is lethal 50% of the time.
- 37 Someone has hijacked or stolen a school bus and modified it to cause maximum mayhem. Sacks of flour are near the back (to toss through windshields) as well as a pile of bowling balls (including several pairs chained together – to break car axles), a tripod is up top with a mounted Storm Cloud, and the gas tank and driver's cabin are armor plated. In front of the thing is a massive 18" drill bit powered by a high RPM motor in front of the engine block. Six men wearing Kevlar and gas masks are aboard, all armed with automatics. They have no plan.
- 38 One of the PCs is targeted by 1d4 pickpockets working either alone or as a team. If as a team, the remaining thieves will cause distractions or diversions (fireworks, air horn, car alarm, mock fight) while the last accomplice attempts to pilfer.
- 39 A dumpster barricade has been set up in the middle of the road. Several thugs, most armed, are set up within/behind the dumpsters. "Negotiations" between two to three sets of thugs take place. It disrupts commerce and traffic for 6d10 minutes until all agree "they're not coming" and they all take off.
- 40 Four armored police vehicles barrel through the area assisted by a police helicopter. They are doing a sweep of the area and have targeted a handful of drug labs and suspected weapon depots. Anyone following these vehicles will witness a firefight within 2d12 turns.
- 41 Three guys in a pick-up truck smash their truck into a gas station and attempt to steal the ATM machine. They have a base 25% chance per combat phase of loading the machine into the back of the truck, but will flee after the sixth phase whether or not they succeed. If they get the ATM into the back, there is a 25% chance one or more tires go flat. If that happens, the police arrive 1d10 minutes later and a shootout follows (50%) or they surrender quietly (50%).
- 42 Three men hassle two other men near the side of the road. They argue for 1d3 turns, and then one of the two men points a wicked finger at the PCs before dashing down a side alley. The three men accost the PCs with a single question: "Alright. Where's our blow?"
- 43 Sounds of rumbling can be heard from within a nearby dilapidated building. People flee out the main exit and from fire escapes. It takes 4d4 turns for the 4d10 residents to escape. However the building will have partially collapsed in 1d6 turns, and finished collapsing in another 1d4 turns.





- 44 The PCs turn the corner and discover a Zil with a giant-sized slab of stone smashed over its windshield and engine block. The stone is a smooth block about 1 meter square by two meters in length and has apparently been sitting here for awhile. No one recalls hearing or seeing anything, and it wasn't there yesterday. No one is in the car.
- 45 A dozen gypsies have set up camp in a vacant lot. They're running power generators to power games of chance, lights, and a few food cookers. There is typical carnival fare within.
- 46 A man in a Brewer's uniform walks down the street, amidst traffic, wielding a large baseball bat with some nails driven through it. As drivers begin to honk at him, he goes into a rage, smashing windshields and attacking anyone nearby. He attacks anyone attempting to intervene. There is a cumulative 2% chance per turn that an armed pedestrian intervenes.
- 47 A well-dressed woman walks four burly men in iron-collared leashes, as if they were dogs down the street. The men seem rabid, frothing at the mouth. Three are dressed in tatters and one isn't dressed at all. She barks commands at them ("sit", "stay", "down", "guard") if people come too close to her.
- 48 Kids set off a lengthy chain of fireworks outside a convenience store.
1d4 nearby people flinch and pull loaded weapons.
- 49 Three men are on a rooftop testing out automatic weapons on nearby streetlights. They'll limit their damage to public property unless incited.
- 50 Sounds of a sobbing woman or child emanate from one of the run-down residences. This continues for 2d12 minutes. (Their residence has been robbed again, and they don't have any food).
- 51 An ice cream truck moves down the street blaring music, much too quickly to be garnering any sales. Someone steps in front of the truck and is clipped as it peels around the corner. There is a 75% chance someone assists the person who was hit and a 25% chance he is instead robbed and left in the street by nearby thugs.
- 52 A street entertainer performs on a strange xylophone concocted from automobile scrap metal and chain. There is a 10% chance per minute of a pickpocket attempt by a passerby unless precautions are taken.
- 53 A water main bursts as orange water floods the street. None of the buildings within three city blocks have running water for the next 1d6 days.
- 54 A detoured petrol tanker has overturned and fuel has spilled into the street. Dozens of people are standing around, nervously, gawking at each other. A few junkies are flicking lighters, resisting the urge to set the whole place ablaze. The driver is practically begging the populace to settle down. There is a 5% (non-cumulative) chance per minute that someone gives into their primal need for fire.
- 55 A camper is parked right in the middle of the road. A strange adapter is connected between its water hookup and a tapped fire hydrant. The occupants have mounted a tripod outside the camper and the 50mm weapon is manned around the clock for the next 12 hours by a man, a woman, or one of three teenage children.
- 56 A van has parked outside of a long abandoned car wash. Three men get out and begin scavenging the place for metal and equipment. Anything seems usable to them. They chase away anyone getting too close.
- 57 A punctured drum of toxic waste liquid sits festering in a nearby alley. 2d12 homeless have contracted radiation poisoning and are wandering around the area with various symptoms.
- 58 A man sitting next to a large cardboard box filled with underinflated blow-up dolls peddles "roommates" outside of a run-down motel. The dolls are rentals.
- 59 A caravan of seven sick people passes through the streets. Everyone seems to be giving them a wide berth. If the PCs make eye contact or ask about them, they will approach the PCs and risk infecting them. They have a communicable disease with symptoms similar to tuberculosis.
- 60 For the next two city blocks, a commercial philanthropist has donated materials to build stackable container homes. They are stacked in rows about four high and are accessible via outside ladders. They have connections for power and water (though neither is actually connected). A few have run adaptive devices to nearby fire hydrants.





- 61 The passenger section of a jumbo aircraft is used as housing for most of this city block. A few of the locals regularly guard it and don't let anyone inside that they don't know. One wing has been removed and used to curb traffic away from the boarding entrance. Two tripods have been mounted each with .50 caliber M2HB weapons; one on the remaining wing and one just behind where the cockpit used to be (privacy ensured by a MLP shower curtain).
- 62 A feral dog is tied to a sign post and has been for days.
- 63 A restaurant owner begins to curse and swear when an employee discovers a human body in an alley behind the restaurant. The man wears a cheap suit and is missing his wallet and shoes. The police do not arrive for 1d6x 10 minutes.
- 64 A man pushes a cart selling candles, water, and bags of rice. There is a 1 in 6 chance that he is attacked and robbed. In this case he'll flash a Browning: 25% chance this deters the robbers, 25% he has to fire twice before they're deterred, 25% he's out of ammunition so they rob him anyway, 25% he fires and this results in a gunfight for 1d6 combat phases.
- 65 An unmarked van is parked around the corner here. Three men are talking to two pedestrians carrying trash bags and coolers filled with body parts and ice. \$400 changes hands after 1d6 combat phases and the van leaves, destined for a commercial emergency medical clinic.
- 66 Three humanoids in baggy clothes and gas masks flee down a manhole into the sewer. The sound of an engine starting can be heard as something takes off at high speed underground.
- 67 Two men covered in aluminum foil and rain coats are attempting to communicate with each other several hundred yards away. One of them has fashioned some kind of antennae from the foil around his head. They occasionally shout to each other "Can you hear that?"
- 68 Three men in worn clown suits begin harassing a random resident. If there are 2 PCs or less, 50% likely they are the ones harassed. One clown wields a sledge hammer, another wields a tire iron, and the last wields a lasso of chain. All also pack HP Brownings but won't use them unless necessary.
- 69 Someone ends their miserable life by walking off the ledge of an abandoned high-rise. There is no scream on the way down. A few people walk over to look, but no one says anything.
- 70 Ten to fifteen Russian residents are listening to loud techno (in Russian) on an old boom box in the street. Some of them are on drugs. They're harmless if left alone.
- 71 A group of 2d6 teenagers are bum-hunting with melee weapons and handguns. They will converge on any defenseless person and begin beating them.
There is a 25% chance the beating will be lethal.
- 72 A Spam cannery seems to be in working order here. The machines are running night and day, and the place smells of rotten death. The occupants round up any vermin, road kill, or feral animals they can and grind them, bone and all, into the canned products.
- 73 A one-square-meter section of pavement is covered with painted tarp, concealing a pit of sharpened stakes (2d6 to a random body part, 1d6 to another one).
- 74 3d4 members of a local biker gang, renowned for their violence and the strange bone helmets they wear (resembling skulls) and the skeletal imaged jackets begin to converge on the area. They wield knives and chains and some even pole arms. A few carry submachine guns in tour packs.
- 75 A teenager has found an M12 rocket launcher with four missiles and is literally having a blast with it. He shoots into traffic, into crowds, at buildings, and at anyone walking near him.
- 76 A homeless man accosts you and won't stop saying the word "tomato". He probably means something else but he's very passionate about it.
- 77 An aggressive beggar demands cash. He's shouting and making quite a scene. Someone has apparently already beaten him to a pulp but he hasn't learned. If the PCs give him anything, he just insists on more and will start shoving until he gets it.
- 78 A pizza delivery car parks outside of an apartment building. The driver is immediately mugged after exiting the car. After being robbed (of cash and food) he flees to his car and takes off.





- 79 Some of the tenement housing in the distance finally collapses (due to oversized termite colonies). 20% chance 1d4 people were still inside when this happens.
- 80 A man seems to wrestle with an elderly woman in an alley, wresting away some cans of food before shoving her into the brick wall and darting away. She sobs loudly as she slumps to the ground. If the PCs walk in to investigate, a pair of men on one of the rooftops aim a belt-fed M2HB mounted on a tri-pod down at the PCs. The woman shyly invites the PCs to drop anything of value starting with their weapons.
- 81 1d6 aggressive people are outside a building out from which wafts the scent of cooking food. They don't answer questions and shove anyone away who gets too close. Anyone traveling by themselves and relatively defenseless may be attacked. Inside, another 1d4 people are preparing previously captured humans for consumption.
- 82 Four well-armed men are selling neo-Nazi pieces of "culture"; clothing, patches, helmets, some weapons and ammunition, and books of a dubious nature. They will not speak with anyone who is not Caucasian and American or German. Non-Caucasians may prompt a negative reaction. (The books or patches may prompt a plot seed).
- 83 A group of 2d12 Amish people walk past, carrying various shotguns and rifles and obviously prepared to defend themselves. They're walking into town together to hunt for a boy who crept into their farmstead last night.
- 84 Screams emanate from within this very run-down building. Within, a roaming doc-shop attempts to stitch the wounds of a pair of motorcyclists who got into a fire fight with the private security firm hired by an inner city car lot. If the PCs investigate, the motorcyclists, the doctor, and a third gun man will assume they are with the security firm.
- 85 A small robotic disk-like device skitters out into the road, being closely followed by a tall man with disheveled hair, glasses, and holding a radio device. He's shouting at the device "No! Come back here! Where do you think you're going! OUCH!!!!" The last comment as the Room-ba like droid shocks him with a small but visible arc of electricity.
- 86 A barren, grass-overgrown field, laid on the remnants of old tenement housing (crumbled to its foundation) is here. Within, like old tents or something, are a series of plastic semi-portable dome houses. Bubble-like windows face all directions and a series of 3d6 humans live in the settlement.
- 87 An extremely pushy drug dealer accosts you. He targets the weaker members of your group and tries to power-sell a new hallucinogenic called Sere. He's willing to give some of it away for free as long as someone tries it now. He'll insist on selling more on the spot after that person's reaction.
- 88 Two gaunt and sickly men walk toward you. Exposed open sores and severe rashes cover their bodies; probably the victims of severe radiation poisoning. They beg for help. Not money but help. One looks like he's on the verge of collapsing.
- 89 An oversized and very loud road hog screams around the corner. The driver blares a radio at a decibel level that is probably making his ears bleed. A man is in the back handling a gun turret and smoking no less than five cigars at once and occasionally drinking from a glass bottle with a label that says "Rat Poison" on it. He aims the turret at random passersby but hasn't shot anyone yet. Now he's aiming at you.
- 90 An eerie weather balloon drifts overhead into the distance. Little metallic flaps dangle freely over the sides. Almost like tentacles? The government may not care about the weather situation anymore, but someone does. A young meteorologist is researching the strange inclement weather phenomenon seen in the district recently.
- 91 A man carrying a bouquet of mostly dead flowers attempts to bump into a PC and pickpocket him.
- 92 In the distance (d100 x3 meters away) a series of pops, probably gunfire, can be heard for about two minutes as a pair of snipers test new rifles on a series of transformers. Power will be down for the surrounding blocks for 1d4 weeks.
- 93 A fire rages through a diner as 2d6 people rush outside to the curb.
- 94 A man sputters, like he's drowning, but he's just really sick. He slides through a yellowish-green muck which seeps from a nearby lot. The lot, behind a run-down building, is a veritable marsh of toxic sludge dumped by some inner city corporation. The dumping happens weekly.
- 95 Anarchists repaint the traffic lanes and redo some street signs. They're redirecting two One Way roads into each other. They flee if threatened (to return later that night to finish the job).





- 96 A limousine coasts through the street almost plowing into a pedestrian who dodges the front of the car but who barrels headlong into the passenger door of the car as it is subsequently opened and then shut in order to bludgeon him (presumably out of boredom).
- 97 A youth street hockey game is being played on this street. The puck is a hand grenade but it's hard to tell if it's live or not; it does seem to have a pin in it. The grenades are usually not live, but occasionally one of the players will slip in a live one to keep the players on their toes – there is a 1 in 6 chance this one is live. If so, it will detonate within 2d20 combat phases using scatter rules centered on the game.
- 98 A tenement is blaring Nigel Pepper Cock's only record into the street and has been for days. Inside, eight human bodies are here, having been ravaged by non-descript blunt trauma. The men still have their wallets, and there is a total of about \$100 in here. No one messes with the PCs if they go in. No one messes with them when they leave.
- 99 A woman in her fifties is arguing with a policeman to take her son with them because he's amped up on something toxic. The policeman replies that the kid is fine and not to call again. Things are beginning to escalate, proto and the policeman is considering punching the woman to shut her up. The teenage boy has overdosed and will die in 1d4 hours without medical attention.
- 100 A raving lunatic walks around the area screaming at people and sometimes things. If anyone talks back to him, he swings a giant-sized shovel (think: the guy in Home Alone) at him. He has no fear and will fight or chase anyone until death or until something else angers him.

TABLE 1.2 – Conspiracy Activity

d20 Event

- 1 Two military tanks roll through an adjacent block, sealing off both entry ways. Soldiers arrive by an armored transport and begin clearing the street. They conduct a building to building search over the next 1d4 hours. No one is permitted to leave or enter without being processed by soldiers during that time.
- 2 An armed soldier lands in the middle of a street (50%) or rooftop (50%) with a parachute. He has radioed his location before landing and is clear of the chute in 1d3 turns.
- 3 HAZMAT arrives with 2d4 trucks to tent 1d3 buildings with plastic sheeting. Then they fumigate the buildings. It isn't clear whether or not the buildings were evacuated first.
- 4 A man in a U.S. army uniform carries several claymore landmines into a street intersection. He begins tearing into the blacktop with a pick axe and depositing four mines in a diamond pattern in the intersection. There is a base 10% chance per minute that someone will intervene in the man's efforts at which time he'll detonate anything already planted, probably killing himself too. If he somehow completes his work (20 minutes to plant all four mines) he'll immediately leave the area and detonate the mines the first time he notices that anyone moves or drives near them.
- 5 About an hour ago, a commercial laboratory field tested a new combat drug on 2d6 residents here. Administered as tear gas would have been, victims now suffer permanent vision loss, severe skin lacerations, and breathing difficulty varying from wheezing to throat and lung lacerations. The laboratory technicians have already gathered their data and left.
- 6 Five fighter jets fly, in formation, over the slum. They are scouting the border of an uncontrolled zone. 1d4 hours later, four jets will return.
- 7 A portable office building is erected in the middle of the street dispensing cash, food, drugs and alcohol in exchange for proxy votes. Four armed soldiers are here.
- 8 A series of 18-inch long, 4-inch wide, 3-inch deep booted footprints start in the middle of the road amidst some black and brown/red stains. Half-inch deep prints lead off to an adjacent building. That building has been absolutely eviscerated. The foundation outlines are barely visible (nothing else is). No prints leave the area. (A cyborg was dispatched recently looking for something or someone. It was recovered shortly after deployment).





- 9 Two mechanized helicopter drones pursue a pair of men fleeing down a street toward an alley. One man fires at one of the drones with no discernible effect before rushing into a group of people. The drones attempt to close on the men and begin a pattern of spraying a mace-like solution and firing an 80,000 volt stun gun (50% chance of each per phase). If the primary target is not neutralized within 1d4 turns, each drone is 50% likely to acquire a new randomly determined target within 2d10 meters of the original.
- 10 An extremely disoriented man is wandering the streets here, lost. The tatters he now wears may have been nice clothing at one time. He speaks in broken sentences, is easily distracted, and has no identification. He is actually the previous owner of a prominent electronics import firm, although he doesn't remember that or even his name. He's been drugged and surgically altered to impair his memory. If the PCs can somehow figure out who he is and return him to his former life, there's probably a substantial reward (and some new enemies) in it for them.
- 11 An elderly man in an electric wheelchair, long expired (from some unknown cause), has been left in his wheelchair to coast aimlessly down the streets until he eventually reaches a brick wall and repeatedly bumps into it. If approached, the wheelchair bursts into flames.
- 12 A series of automated robotic road paving machines are here. They've arrived with enough equipment and materials to fix potholes but are about to tackle a giant-sized crater in the middle of the intersection. The remnants of a police cruiser are still within. (The pavers plan to work right over it). Any damage to the pavers will generate an alarm to the police that may or may not be ignored (d100 x 2 minutes later for arrival).
- 13 A group of medical trucks are parked in the area. Men wearing hazmat suits are rounding people up and taking blood samples under the pretense of doing a medical sweep for a prevalent and lethal flu. Many of the residents are surreptitiously given drugs that certain corporate security interests believe will make the populace more docile.
- 14 An astronaut, in full spacesuit gear, walks down the street past the PCs into a nearby restaurant. He makes a phone call and waits 1d4 hours until a military hummer arrives to pick him up. He has no weapons or explanation of his presence.
- 15 S.W.A.T. arrives with an armored personnel vehicle. 2d4+4 armored units deploy and attack a laundromat with tear gas canisters before infiltrating it. They leave in 2d6 turns with two restrained men and two sealed body bags. The police have no record of this incident.
- 16 Glass shatters as someone smashes the passenger-side door of a sedan parked outside an ethnic restaurant. The man fumbles around the inside of the car for 1d2 turns and then the car detonates, spraying an area 2d10 meters away with shrapnel. 1d2 turns later, four armed men storm outside the restaurant to investigate. The man was a covert operative attempting to get information from the businessmen whose car this was. Unfortunately he opened the glove box.
- 17 Three police cruisers have blocked the road ahead, only allowing cars to pass after they have consented to a saliva test administered by a group of medical staff on hand. Each car is held for about a minute as the technicians process the DNA with handheld testing units. Once a light turns yellow, the car is cleared to go.
- 18 A flaming railroad car thunders through the area, eventually barreling off the tracks and into a series of storefronts. Everyone aboard the train has been killed. The train was apparently sabotaged and attacked by eco-terrorists in response to the repeated transportation and dumping of toxic waste into the uncontrolled zones. Anyone coming within a hundred meters of the wreckage will be exposed to radiation.
- 19 A CIA helicopter crashes due to engine failure, 1d4 city blocks away from the PCs' location.
- 20 A septic truck is parked in an empty lot near a dead homeless man, apparently killed by gunfire. Four other homeless men are made to connect the tubing to the truck and operate the septic dumping mechanism at gunpoint. Two men in biohazard suits (one of them has a rip) aim AK-74 rifles at the men and seem to be rushing them to finish.





TABLE 1.3 – Darkling Activity

d100/2 (Round up)	Event
1	Morlocks are testing a sonic weapon in the sewers beneath the street. A deafening bass rumbles through the area shattering most windows in 1d4 city blocks and setting off all car alarms. The Morlocks flee (underground) immediately after the hardware failure.
2	The PC with the highest Foreboding (or highest Empathy, failing that) sees a ghostly figure crossing the street. He wears military clothing indicative of the 1800s and has a terrible gut wound, though he labors on through the street until he crosses and enters the threshold of a shop across the street. His image fades as soon as he steps into shadow.
3	An entire building façade has been defaced with Sumerian script (only identified as such by those familiar with Sumerian). It is loosely translated as a ranting and repeating warning to all mankind that Enlil the Destroyer is angered by humanity and he will return to destroy it.
4	A man is screaming at the top of his lungs, having been ensnared by some kind of animate shrubbery outside of a nearby apartment building. Vines entwine the man as thorns and razor sharp leaves begin to slice into him. The stuff seems to be feeding off of his blood. (New encounter: Carnivorous Vines)
5	A speeding U-Haul truck careens around the corner too quickly. The loading door is open and some men are inside, apparently armed and trying very hard to brace themselves. A wooden crate flies out the back of the truck, smashing against the pavement as the truck speeds off. Within the crate are the remnants of a giant-sized egg – larger than an elephant bird egg. The shell is smashed and a visceral blue-green substance oozes from it, eating through the pavement below.
6	A Haitian man carries a worn cloth doll and seems to stare with a penetrating gaze at one of the PCs. If the PCs come too close, he mutters a blessing (or perhaps a curse) and scurries in another direction.
7	You feel a strange vibe while passing a weirdly well-kept chapel. The windows are actually intact and a series of robed men wander to and fro within. These men (2d4 of them) are Cobra People. These despicable creatures threaten or bribe the local vagabonds to provide them with infants.
8	Some guy is literally out in the middle of a road with a canvas and his paints, detailing the background except that it is filled with translucent spirits or beings. (Think: Pickman's Model).
9	An 80-year-old woman, evidently pregnant, meanders past the party.
10	Three mummified bodies are laid out neatly within a long abandoned storefront. Shuffling noises out the back door can be heard if the store is entered.
11	A 5'6" guy in leather vest and breeches, Serengeti sunglasses, and ten-gallon cowboy hat wields a fully six foot sword with a 6" wide blade. It takes him two full turns to unstrap it from his back if needed, but he's really good with it. He ignores most derision and jeering but won't hesitate to cut into someone interfering with him.
12	Destroyed Vampire: The skeletal remains of someone are left out in an empty and open lot. Sharpened iron pitons pin the corpse through its arms and torso into the blacktop. Heavy chain surrounds the wrists (binding them to a bicycle mount) and around the ankles (binding them around a lamp post). A pair of Serengeti sunglasses graces what's left of its face.
13	Someone has been incubating a giant wasp's nest. An overbearing buzzing fills the air as a dozen man-sized wasps smash through the topmost floor windows in an adjacent building, out into the street.
14	An empath adolescent is testing his telekinetic abilities, unaware anyone else is nearby. Debris begins to float to and fro into the road and nearby intersection. As soon as the PCs make their presence known, he'll quit practicing and will attempt to hide. If found, he'll deny it was him.
15	The Malleable: Drifting plastic trash wafts by and lurches quickly toward a random PC. The thing is sentient! Feeding on flesh and sailing lightly, they attack stragglers or anyone if hungry enough. This one has Init: 3, Hits: 9/14, Skills: 5 and Damage: 2d6.





- 16 A group of four men have what's left of an unspeakably sized corpse on a spit roast in an alley. The thing looks vaguely humanoid, but with thick matted fur. It probably once stood nine feet tall. Its head is an unrecognizable lump of gore and even its torso has a very high lead to meat ratio. People are beginning to gather to ask for handouts.
- 17 Elvis Presley walks by the party. It isn't an impersonator. It isn't a mistake. It is most definitely Elvis. He walks into a shop and orders a rat burger. If anyone talks to him, he asks who Elvis is.
- 18 An abandoned apartment building complex is overgrown with vegetation of all kinds. Three of the buildings in a horseshoe design face an old swimming pool which has become the breeding ground for yellow zombies. 4d20 of the things roam the area by day and night.
- 19 Banshee: A woman is near a polluted creek rinsing clothing. She appears to be sobbing. If approached by a group, she attempts to slip away until she can encounter a single PC (or NPC) and attack him. If surrounded, she'll use her empathic abilities to escape rather than to attack.
- 20 A restaurant is owned and operated by five wereboars. They aren't looking for trouble but also don't welcome intrusion by adventurer types. If the PCs do anything other than order quickly, eat quickly, and then leave, they'll be told that the restaurant is closed and that they should leave.
- 21 A street lamp begins to wobble back and forth before being forcibly pulled underground. Wild cheering from the sewers ensues as a motor and loud dragging noise can be heard fading into the distance.
- 22 A series of cacti are growing nearby in an open plain. These particular cacti drink blood and are quite agile. If anyone comes within a meter of one, it will lean and attempt to hug him, dealing 1d6 to an unarmored person. They are intelligent and will target unarmored locations and can maintain their hugs (doing 1d6/round) until they or their victims are dead.
- 23 A group of Igors walks outside of a seemingly abandoned building as the PCs walk near. They continue to stare at the PCs and make them feel unwelcome until they are well out of sight, brandishing weapons and refusing to answer questions. A vampire slumbers within this building and these men are in his employ to ensure he gets his privacy. There are 2d6 Igors in total, some of which are outside. The rest will walk outside if things escalate. None of the men are aware that their boss is a vampire, though they do suspect something is wrong with him.
- 24 Clouds of locusts and swarms of grasshoppers pour out from behind an alley. Within the alley is a dark gray tunnel bored behind a dumpster made of an epoxy/cement compound. The tunnel leads far underground toward Demonground or a protodimension gate.
- 25 Three county water vehicles park near a city water main, planning to repair it. 1d6 turns later, one of them screams as another is pulled in through a gash in the water main by a pair of knobby pale white arms. One of the workers runs back to his truck to retrieve an AK-74 and begins pumping a full clip into the section of pipe they were working on. 50% chance that clanging continues within the pipes. Either way, the surviving men leave immediately.
- 26 A series of arms, legs, hands, and fingers animate for 2d6 turns, crawling toward anything living at attacking feebly. A nearby building, once occupied by a serial killer, contains dozens of bodies in varying states of decay and separation. Something has animated everything in the residence for just a few minutes.
- 27 A zombie has been dressed in full riot gear and walks out from between a pair of buildings. He's carrying a gun but it is pointed aimlessly toward the ground. He saunters in a haphazard direction until he gets close enough to a PC or NPC after which he'll attack using the gun as a melee weapon once before lifting his helmet visor and trying to bite into his victim.
- 28 A large tree near an empty lot is filled with plastic bags, the kind you might use in a grocery store. Dozens of them are suspended from its branches. If the bags are investigated, the bodies of wild cats can be found. Some have been dead for a few weeks and some less than a day. All were killed by blunt trauma to the head, and none were used for food.
- 29 2d6 chickens strut across the road. A few are clucking things like "The end is nigh!" or "Abandon all hope!"





- 30 Someone from another city recognizes one of the PCs and creates a possibly awkward situation saying so. (He is also visiting, on a job, and doesn't know the area well either).
- 31 A high-end sports car with tinted windows peels around the corner, accelerating to a vacant portion of the street/sidewalk where it screeches to a halt. The passenger door opens and a dead prostitute is hurled onto the pavement. The car accelerates away in any direction.
- 32 Someone has constructed a rock cairn in the middle of or immediately to the side of the main road. Buried within the rocks is a man who recently overdosed on some bad amp.
- 33 Four men in ski masks are washing blood off of a Yugo Contempo with a hose connected directly to a (working) hydrant. They sternly discourage anyone passing by from lingering for too long.
- 34 A fire hydrant in seeming disrepair explodes. A geyser of water floods the street. 50% chance another adjacent one explodes 1d4 turns later (and so on until the 50% check fails). Egregious explosions and gunfire can be heard underground.
- 35 1d4+4 catamites haul an Egyptian-style palanquin down the street, escorted by 1d4 guards, obstructing traffic for 2d6 turns.
- 36 A taxidermist storefront is open and strangely doing good business, offering preserved remains of varying mutant hybrids found in and around the sector. Mounted examples include a squirrel and snow crab monstrosity, a human head with external bones, mosquitoes with bat wings, and a moray eel with dorsal fins and rows of centipede legs. The authenticity of some of these organisms is... questionable.
- 37 An unkempt man accosts the PCs and asks some strange questions as if for a sports magazine interview. If he gets any serious answers, he pulls an oversized typewriter from his pack, loads it with paper, straps it around his neck and shoulders and begins typing. He follows the PCs around until threatened. He'll even join them if asked.
- 38 A middle-aged woman is roaming the streets hoarsely calling for her pet goats. She has three of them but hasn't seen them in a month and a half.
- 39 A man walks into the road, dragging random appliances one by one, and smashing them with a baseball bat. All the while he mutters something about "them" listening. He'll become violent if anyone tries to interfere with him or mess with the debris.
- 40 A squirrely man has dismantled the base of a traffic light and is working on the wiring within. If challenged, he'll draw an HP Browning. If the challenge persists, he'll angrily mutter some threats and pack as much of his tools as he can before fleeing.
- 41 A building is severely overgrown with foliage, mold, algae, and fungus. All vegetation appears to have been meticulously cultivated. The 3d4 people inside wear gas masks and carry handguns although a few carry submachine guns. Stepping on the mold/algae near any entrance or window will cause the dispersion of spores into the air. These spores are intentional and will have a variety of effects. Deep within the building is a drug laboratory.
- 42 A manhole lid pops up. Something peers out for two combat phases. Then it slips back down and replaces the cover.
- 43 A man has been previously exposed to a rage-inducing toxin. He begins shouting at a newspaper machine that took his money. He starts kicking and punching the thing for two turns after which someone tries to get him to stop. He starts punching and kicking the person who tried to get him to stop. It keeps escalating. Two turns later, he's uprooted the newspaper machine and is bludgeoning the man with it. The man is incommunicable; intoxicated with the stuff for 1d4 hours.
- 44 A raving lunatic screams about some conspiracy theory (10% chance it's true).
- 45 EMP goes off with radius of a city block. Roll d100 meters from center.
- 46 Three homeless men are arguing over the contents of a cache of weapons they've discovered. A coffin full of 43 bizarre weapons including a crossbow, nun-chucks, a double-sided axe, chains, hooks, and other melee weapons. (No, coffin was not a typo).





- 47 Six frozen corpses have been hastily deposited into an alley here. Most still are covered with frost.
- 48 Two Viemen in their exo-suits (which might be mistaken for hazmat suits) are taking soil samples and testing ground stability (checking on the progress of their mutated and tunneling earthworms). They may attempt to use the tunnels to escape but if they are killed, it appears as if the exo-suits were empty all along (as the vapor dissipates).
- 49 A band of 2d12 troglodytes have Dimension Walked in with their shaman from Ch’Narr in a “hit and run” to take whatever resources and slaves they can before fleeing home.
- 50 A pack of 1d6 werewolves are stealthily stalking prey tonight. If it is during the day, they may be in human form as they look for worthy adversaries. They consider the PCs to be a welcome challenge and will set an ambush for them. Even if the PCs seem vastly overpowered, the werewolves will simply step up their guerilla tactics game.

Table 1.4 – Beasty Activity

d20	Event
1	Sewer alligator slips into the street and attacks a sleeping, inebriated homeless man. The man is dragged into sewer in 1d6 combat phases.
2	Oversized roaches pour into the street (3d12)
3	Oversized sewer rats pour into the street (2d12)
4	A loud and ravenous wild dog pack tears through the streets. (2d6 dogs)
5	A malnourished horse wanders through the street. 50% chance: In 1d6 turns, someone with a dirty apron walks out into the street, shoots or stabs it, and drags it into his building
6	A flock of 6d4 blackbirds flies overhead. The flock has been unevenly contaminated with some kind of chemical that is making them give off an eerie green light. 25% chance the birds descend to harass a random passerby.
7	A six-year-old boy is playing with an oversized python in the middle of the street. Cars have stopped to observe the spectacle. The python is about twelve feet long and is 25% likely to kill the boy within 1d6 turns.
8	A woman comes screaming into the street that her husband needs an ambulance. On investigation (if any), her husband, on the fifth floor of her apartment complex, has somehow bled out on their living room couch although his body shows no signs of external damage. He was the victim of attacks by mutant Tampete Mosquitoes who habitually over-drink their fill of blood for their iron content, immediately regurgitating the bulk of the blood onto their prey. Further exploration reveals 1d4 other cases within the building and a nest within one of the long vacant apartments.
9	Three oversized cockroaches (approximately two feet long each) flutter out of an abandoned restaurant toward a sewer drain. Within the ransacked (powerless) building are 2d10 more of the things who’ve made a nest from an abandoned refrigerator inside the kitchen.
10	A three foot hairy spider lurks behind a battered news stand and strikes (75%) with surprise, fleeing after its initial attack.
11	4d4 of a new species of blood sucking vampire ants.
12	A hill of refuse and trash is infested with 4d10 coconut crabs.
13	A lizard-like Dragon has made its home out of a towering hill of refuse. It is not hungry but is extremely territorial. Noise will not scare it as it’s used to hunting the local populace.



- 14 A small forest fire in a copse of trees has irritated a large colony of hornets. They rush into a nearby vacant lot and into the roads. For each person who doesn't find shelter within one phase, roll 1d10 per combat phase for 1d6 phases (after which the hornets scatter):
1-4=no damage
5-7=1d6 damage to a single body part
8-9=1d6 damage to two body parts
10=1d6 damage to three body parts.
- 15 A pack of five rabid dogs races into the street, tackling and tearing into a young man. He's dead within 1d6 combat phases. They eat ravenously and retreat into the shadows if approached.
- 16 A giant-sized spider web with two inch thick strands stretches from one side of the road to the other. A Zil has managed to get stuck in it, and the driver is pouring gasoline on his grill and windshield to help scrape the stuff off. (Reversing didn't do the trick). The giant spider is inside an adjacent (abandoned) apartment building finishing another meal, finishing in 2d12 minutes.
- 17 A saber-toothed tiger lands in the middle of a nearby intersection. Add the PCs to 1d6 other people. The saber-toothed tiger attacks one of them at random.
- 18 A fire hydrant begins to rock back and forth before finally thrusting upwards as a swarm of giant rats pours onto the streets. 1d6 turns later, an underground gas line explosion sends a jet of flame up every manhole and hydrant within 500 meters.
- 19 A clowder of mutant cats infest a nearby building and the area around it. Each has four eyes and is strangely hypnotic if stared at for too long. (It has the ability to mesmerize while attacking so that opponents do not see, nor recall an attack).
- 20 An underground colony of spiders has been disrupted and literally hundreds of the things begin pouring onto the surface. They come through drywall, sewers, pipes, holes in the ground; completely enveloping 1d3 nearby buildings causing widespread panic and evacuations.

Table 1.5 – Natural (or Unnatural) Phenomenon

d20	Event
1	Inclement and unseasonal weather (hail or sleet in summer, twisters in winter) drives most residents indoors. Damage is limited to a few broken windshields or tossed trash bins.
2	Sinkhole. 50% likely affects street only, 25% 1 building, 25% 2 adjacent buildings. There is also a 50% chance that at least one PC is in the affected area.
3	It begins to rain live fish for 1d12 minutes. No explanation is ever made or offered for the phenomenon.
4	The next three city blocks are completely devastated due to recent storm activity. Even the homeless and vagrants have left the area. It appears to be completely deserted. The area is filled with rotten timber, rusted scrap metal, weeds, vermin, and a few dead bodies.
5	Lightning blasts a passerby. 50% chance of immediate death. 40% chance of incapacitation. 10% chance he gets up relatively unharmed.
6	The streets for the next 2d4 city blocks are iced solid. 1d4+1 inches of snow cover the surrounding area. The ice and snow are starting to melt in the current weather.
7	An electronic diode surges and, as a result, a fuel pump at a gasoline station detonates. A nearby car is incinerated as well as 1d3 passersby (including the driver). The explosion happens 2d100 yards away from the PCs and may damage them if close enough (C:6, B:4).
8	An unexplained volcanic eruption splashes molten hot magma onto the street and around 1d4 buildings. The flow is slow but steady. People are evacuating the buildings and 1d4x10 meters of pavement is destroyed by the stuff before the flow eventually stops.





- 9 Baseball-sized chunks of hail begin to rain down onto the surrounding area for 1d10 minutes. For the first turn, just an occasional crash occurs, and it isn't clear what the source is. Soon, windows shatter and car alarms go off. Roll 2d6 versus anyone without cover in a 100-meter area. Each 6 indicates 1d6 points of damage to a random hit location. Most vehicles will require body work if left unprotected for the duration.
- 10 Dust storm. Flash winds of 40mph kick up dust, debris, and no shortage of Coccidioides spores (resulting from disturbed topsoil previously exposed to various toxic chemicals). Each person caught in the storm and breathing without protection has a 5% chance of contracting coccidioidomycosis (a lung disease that is potentially fatal if untreated).
- 11 Firenado: One of many out of control fires in an uncontrolled zone has been visited upon by a twister, which subsequently drifted toward the urban sprawl via a petrol station. The flaming tunnel pummels through a nearby intersection and threatens to envelop the street.
- 12 Smog for the next 2d4 city blocks is smothering. Visibility is reduced by 50% and prolonged exposure requires CON checks.
- 13 A distant black line reaches from the sky, touching down to the ground. As it moves closer (and quickly) it is seen to be a swirling funnel of living insects; wasps, flies, locusts, bees. This insect cyclone grinds against the ground leaving tens of thousands of shunted insects in its wake until finally barreling into a structure 2d100 meters from the PCs and dispersing tens of thousands more in all directions. Anyone within 200 meters will take 1d6/round insect damage until they can find and secure shelter. Anyone within 50 meters will instead take 2d6/round. (No PEN, however if a person isn't armored in all body locations, he'll still take damage. Thick smoke or 75% cover or more will half the damage).
- 14 A bright, loud, energetic ball of pulsating lightning originates from the top of a street light. It is stationary for nearly a minute before a thin strike of lightning parts from the heavens right into the post to give the thing motion. It subsequently thrashes down the street laying waste anything in its path (dealing 2d6 to each of two random body parts). The ball lightning moves 100 meters in a random direction (bouncing off stone) before expiring.
- 15 A building is on fire and has been for at least twenty minutes. It doesn't look salvageable. The fire department has finally shown up to put it out. 50% chance they do within 1d4 turns, otherwise the water main is broken and they need to send for reinforcements to attach to the next-closest, working hydrant/main. The street is completely congested for the duration.
- 16 A car detonates in the street 2d6x100 meters away for absolutely no discernible reason. There are 2d4-4 (so, 0 to 4) casualties.
- 17 A 10-foot-diameter meteorite falls through the sky and smashes into a nearby building. 25% chance it is occupied by 2d6 people. If so, 1d6 of them are killed as the structure collapses. The resulting crater scatters 2d12 giant subterranean roaches into the area.
- 18 A building is covered, wall to wall, in six to eight inches of ice. It is melting, but slowly. Anyone who is asked about it didn't see what caused it. It was just like that this morning.
- 19 For the next 1d4 hours, the constellations seem to shift in a such a way that they emulate the constellations as they appeared during Earth's formation over four billion years ago.
- 20 The entire city block is filled with buildings where trees and shrubbery seem to have grown overnight through the earth and building slabs up and out through the walls and roofs.





DEMONGROUND PATCH GENERATION TABLES

These tables are ideal for quick generation of Demonground patches within Tampete, particularly Safety Harbor and the Palm Harbor “barbs”, but they are effective for any Demonground patch. The key to generating creative Demonground patches is to take your seemingly hodgepodge list of results and fashion a reason for all of those results to work together with the Demonground patch’s occupant. Reasons that may seem forced are often great ways to involve other NPCs or factions.

USING THE TABLES

Roll on each of the tables in order.

1. Roll once on Table 2.1, rerolling only if the locale is not applicable to your setting.
2. Roll 1d4+1 times on Table 2.2 and combine all results.
3. Roll once on Table 2.3, rerolling only if the occupant is not applicable to your setting.
4. If desired, roll once or twice on Table 2.4 to generate ideas for leads for the PCs. Some of these leads may seem innocuous but are intended to generate stories that NPCs may share based on what they would have seen at the dwelling.
5. Table 2.5 is offered to flesh out tunnel networks that are common in Demonground and may not be needed.

Table 2.1 – Demonground Patch Locale

d100	Locale
01-02	Bridge
03-04	Cell tower
05-09	Cemetery
10-12	Church
13-15	Daycare center
16-19	Department store
20-25	Empty lot
26-27	Fire department
28-30	Hospital or doctor’s office
31-35	House, Small (< 500 sq. meters)
36-40	House, Moderate (500-750 sq. meters)
41-45	House, Large (751-1000 sq. meters)
46-50	House, Estate (Over 1000 sq. meters)
51-52	Library
53-54	Office suites
55	Post office
56-60	School (elementary or middle school)
61-65	School (high school)
66-69	Sculpture/Monument/Fountain
70-71	Shop, Bar
72-73	Shop, Convenience or gas station
74-75	Shop, Grocery store
76-77	Shop, Laundromat
78-80	Shop, Miscellaneous
81-82	Shop, Pharmacy
83-84	Shop, Restaurant
85-86	Street (intersection or sewer entrance)
87-88	Sports field
89-90	Telephone Central Office
91-92	Wilderness (bay shore, lake, river)
93-94	Wilderness (small copse)
95-96	Wilderness (deep woods)
97-98	Wilderness (ditch or trail)
99-00	Wilderness (overgrown park, golf course, or camp grounds)

NOTES: Locations tend to be abandoned and neglected unless otherwise noted.





Table 2.2 – Demonground Patch Environmental or Supernatural Characteristics

d100	Characteristics
1	Algae, fungi, and/or lichen is pervasive (may release spores)
2	Animated (one rolled effect is animated or changes by itself in some way)
3	Area is covered with sheets of a violet, pungent, foamy substance
4	Artwork or sculptures in and around area (matching skill level of occupant or victims)
5	Automobile smashed into one side of structure
6	Bone fragments in and around the dwelling
7-8	Booby trap or alarm system corresponding with skill level of occupant
9	Camping gear of all kinds is strewn about outside of the dwelling
10	Children playing within or nearby
11	Darkness. Visible light will not penetrate or work within the structure (IR or UV may)
12	Debris arranged in unusual ways outside of dwelling and perhaps within
13	Deep rifts and chasms have split the ground as if by an earthquake
14	Distorted architectural features appear face-like
15	Dissonant electrical hum persists
16-17	Drug paraphernalia (syringes, spoons, lighters, and makeshift pipes) abounds
18-19	Dwelling has been used for repeated dumping of chemical or biological waste
20	Eggshell pieces litter the area
21	Elaborate graffiti
22	Emits eerie lights at night
23	Emits radio waves
24	Emits smoke, steam, or mist
25	Emits ultraviolet or infrared light
26	Emits white noise
27	Evidence of recent explosion
28-29	Evidence of recent gunfire
30	Exposed electrical wiring is sparking throughout the area
31	Extradimensional force either repels or pulls trespassers who come too close
32	Flora in the area is of an alien or extradimensional nature
33	Flora in the area is particularly verdant, producing vast quantities of fruit, etc...
34-35	Flora in the area is withered and dying
36	Fire always burning outside or within structure
37	Fenced off by chicken-wire
38	Former gang hangout
39	Giant-sized crater in the yard or area outside the dwelling
40	Gravity is weaker or stronger in the immediate area
41	Ground is spongy with water, septic, tar, or blood
42-43	Groups of homeless gather nearby sometimes
44	Heavy construction vehicles are nearby





- 45 Huge shards of jagged slate tablets have burst from the earth
- 46 Inordinate amount of books in or around the dwelling
- 47 Internal room is painted to resemble a protodimension or distant solar system
- 48 Laughing or snickering sounds frequently heard from within
- 49 Lawn ornaments of a creepy or sinister nature
- 50 Magnetism is reduced in the area, electronics won't work, people may develop cancers
- 51 Majority of structure is subterranean
- 52 Mechanical noises, irregular
- 53 Mechanical noises, regular
- 54 Moaning or wailing sounds frequently heard from within
- 55 Multiple antennae or dishes on rooftops or within trees are all aimed the same way
- 56 Music playing (natural)
- 57 Music playing (unnatural)
- 58 Nausea and/or disorientation affects trespassers here
- 59 Oil drums in and around the dwelling
- 60 Phosphorescent glow
- 61 Playground or tree house
- 62 Portal to another protodimension is present here
- 63 Radioactive material present
- 64 Red chalky substance causing metal to rust mars the dwelling and surrounding area
- 65 Rope, chains, or wiring attempts to entangle trespassers
- 66 Scarecrow, extremely life-like
- 67 Scent of candy or cooking
- 68 Scent of chemicals
- 69 Scent of death
- 70 Scent of petroleum
- 71 Seaweed, coral pieces, and shells litter the area
- 72 Sirens originating from the dwelling blare at strange hours
- 73 Secondary structure (shed, barn, gazebo, or for wilderness, a makeshift structure, etc...)
- 74 Skin molting can be found in the area
- 75 Snakelike tendrils emerge from doorways, windows or from behind structures
- 76 Soil has taken an unnatural and sickly green color
- 77 Sounds of hissing gasses can be heard within
- 78 Sounds of liquid bubbling or flowing can be heard within
- 79 Strange weather limited to this locale (snow, rain, drought, high winds, etc...)
- 80 Structure is flooded
- 81 Structure encased in a membrane
- 82 Structure encased in spider webbing
- 83 Structure encased in vines
- 84 Structure has been tented off as if by a fumigator or the CDC





- 85 Structure mostly boarded up or taped off
- 86 Structure partially collapsed
- 87 Structure wholly infested with locusts, cicadas, roaches, spiders, bees, or wasps
- 88 Television or radio heard from within (whether or not power is available)
- 89 Temperature in area immediately surrounding dwelling varies by +/- 5° Celsius
- 90 Trespassers experience "lost time", discovering hours have passed after a few minutes
- 91 Trespassers taste blood or rust in their mouths when within the area
- 92 Vast sections of earth have been dug up
- 93 Vicious, possibly rabid critters are here
- 94 Voices whisper to trespassers
- 95 Walls of chitin or scales
- 96 Walls of fleshy material or tree bark
- 97 Walls of honeycomb or wax
- 98 Walls exude slime or blood when punctured
- 99 Well has been drilled in the area
- 00 Windows have recently been replaced with related stained glass imagery





Table 2.3 – Demonground Primary Occupants

d100	Occupant	d100	Occupant
01-02	Animator	56-59	Nukids (2d6-1)
03-04	Banshee	60-62	Ogre
05-06	Barghest	63-65	Plagueling (1d6+3) (DR)
07	Bhuta & Bhuta's Children (DR)	66	Poltergeist
08	Bleak	67	Ptero-Raven (1d6) (DR)
09-10	Bloodkin, Trolls	68	Ravager (1d6) (DR)
11-12	Bloodkin, Vampires	69	Reaver (1d6+3) (DR)
13-14	<i>Bog Trolls</i>	70	Rover (1d6) (DR)
15	Braineater (1d3) (DR)	71-72	<i>Sand Wights (1d4)</i>
16-17	Cobra People (2d8)	73-74	Skeletons (3d6)
18-20	Daemon	75-77	<i>Specter, Genesis (1d6)</i>
21-23	Dark Elves (2d6)	78	Spectral Guardians (1d6+3)
24-25	Desert Ghoul (1d10) (DR)	79-80	Stalkers (1d6) (DR)
26	Electrogeist (DR)	81	Stick Indians (2d6) (DR)
27-28	Gargoyle, Lesser (1d6+3) (DR)	82	Storm Wraith (1d6+3) (DR)
29	Gargoyle, Mediterranean (1d6) (DR)	83-84	Super Rats (1d6) (DR)
30-31	Gargoyle, Rock (2d10) (DR)	85	The Pale (1d6+2)
32	Gargoyle, Subterranean (1d6) (DR)	86	Toxic Mother (DR)
33-34	Gremlins, Dwarf (2d6) (DR)	87	Tulpa (1) (DR)
35	Gremlin, Entropic (DR)	88	Wailer (1d6+2) (DR)
36	Gremlin, Torgol's (DR)	89	Wendigo (DR)
37-38	Grubs (1d6)	90	Werebear (1d6+3)
39-40	Harpy (1d6+1)	91	Wereboar (1d6+2)
41-42	Haunt	92	Wererats (2d6)
43	Hellfire (DR)	93	Weretiger (1d2)
44-45	Hungry Woman (1d6+3) (DR)	94	Werewolf (1d6)
46	Khar'lanki (DR)	95	Will-O-Wisp (DR)
47	Marterkind (DR)	96	<i>Wraith, Genesis (1d6)</i>
48-49	Medusa	97	<i>Zenon (1d6)</i>
50	Morrigan (DR)	98	Zombies, Animator (2d6)
51-54	Morlocks (4d6)	99	Zombies, Moss (1d6)
55	Mummy (1d2)	00	Zombies, Yellow (3d6)

NOTES

All creatures above are described in the core books except:

(DR): Creature is listed in the Dark Races book or the Master's edition of the DC 2 Referee's Guide.

Italics: Creature is listed in the Dark Adversaries section of this supplement.





Table 2.4 – Recent Leads or Related Activities

d20	Lead
1	Neatly laid piles of dismembered animals were found in a trail leading to the dwelling.
2	Sewer entrances in the nearby areas have been vandalized. Tracks in raw sewage may be noticed heading from these places.
3	Four teenagers hid in the dwelling while trying to evade the police. While there, they were attacked by something. Two of them escaped but the others were killed.
4	Multiple police units were called into an area just a block away from the dwelling to deal with a somehow related event.
5	One of Tampete’s infamous bridge races was set partially through this area. One or more racers crashed near the dwelling possibly because of bizarre activity there.
6	A deranged homeless man saw a van pull up to the dwelling. Three men got out and a violent firefight ensued. The van was there for several days before someone claimed it.
7	A foreign man was asking a lot of questions about the dwelling for several days in a row before disappearing.
8	Homeless and gang members have been disappearing in higher numbers than usual around the place.
9	A survivalist house squatter that lives nearby went looking for his dog that entered the area and noticed something (possibly resulting in the death of his dog).
10	Three thieves recently burglarized the dwelling after learning of high tech equipment which was seemingly abandoned there. They still case the place from time to time.
11	Video from a nearby intersection surfaces on DarkNet depicting the dwelling’s occupant, its servants or the last known footage of a few of its many victims.
12	A corporation has been trying to contact the owner of the property in order to buy it due to some geographical interest or access to natural resources there. They sent agents out with an offer but they were never seen again.
13	An inmate from Tampete Correctional Facility was tracked to this dwelling and had to be ferreted out by S.W.A.T. Some of the operatives may have seen or heard something.
14	A fire brigade was dispatched to a nearby residence to contain a massive blaze.
15	A local fumigator turned down a job in or near the dwelling due to the enormity of work it would require or risk that it would entail.
16	The F.B.I. was called in to investigate an apparent terrorist attack in an area not too far from the dwelling. Whatever they were investigating was somehow related.
17	An angry mob of mostly racists and drunks congregated to harass another group of nearby squatters until somehow the dwelling or its occupants became involved.
18	A growing group of homeless, druggies, and lunatics have been accumulating near the dwelling proclaiming some kind of imminent rapture.
19	The residence is regarded as “haunted” by anyone who knows about it. No one that ever owned it kept it for more than a few months unless they had trouble selling it.
20	A frequenter of the tunnels within Tampete’s Underbay discovered a new tunnel leading up from the labyrinth to an area not too far from the dwelling.





Table 2.5 – Demonground Tunnel Construction

d20	Tunnel Description
1	Pitch black epoxy/cement compound. Rough, porous surface.
2	Humid, warm tunnels coated with long, matted hair. The tunnel itself seems organic.
3	Translucent, elastic membrane that is sticky to the touch and slightly caustic (like jellyfish).
4	Translucent, elastic membrane filled with some kind of (possibly breathable) amniotic fluid.
5	A faceted, mirrored, crystalline path leads downward, turning often and at sharp angles. Light reflections are extremely disorienting and offer camouflage for crystalline organisms.
6	Squirming and writhing segments of insect carapaces bind to loosely form a tunnel inward.
7	A mechanical array of clockwork devices and fine instrumentation (the likes of which are as alien as they are bizarre) navigate deeply into the earth. The entire passage is alive with shifting gears, clicks, pulleys, and other mechanical contraptions. It is easy to misstep, to catch an arm or a leg into a grinding mechanism or pointy extension. If too much of the machinery is tampered with or destroyed, it will alarm the denizens within.
8	A dark orange wet and spongy material forms the passages here. Touching the sides with bare skin has the unnerving effect of drying the skin. After only a few minutes, lips and fingers become dry and chapped. Extended exposure can lead to dehydration or death.
9	Dark green, soap-colored stone reaches deep into the earth. The stone is cold to the touch and seems to resonate age. Old, forgotten runes of unspeakable things mar the surfaces. It seems possible that these tunnels may continue infinitely into extra-dimensional spaces.
10	Hard, yellow, stiff wax passages wend their way here and there, intersecting often, and in hive-like patterns. A prominent bass droning fills the passages. Its source is indeterminate. Many insect races burrow within the tunnels and in the lairs they lead to.
11	Dead, fading coralline walls penetrate the earth. Some of the coral is bleach-white until it becomes difficult to tell the difference between coral and bone. Distant clacking noises of claws (or perhaps bones) can be heard dancing across the tunnel passages.
12	A black chitinous substance tunnels below but is filled with a tarry, black, seemingly sentient substance that struggles to permeate and clog any exposed orifice. The stuff itself, a kind of alien nervous system, is liquid insanity, if it isn't pure evil. To be submerged in it is to hear the mutterings of irreconcilable motives and ambitions. The dreams of the unknowable.
13	A web-like pattern of metallic chain wends into the earth. Beyond the chain, one can see only darkness and the temperature gets increasingly colder the farther one reaches past them.
14	Tunnels lined with silk-like material and filled with nitrogen-dioxide (toxic to humans) lead to pools of white fuming nitric acid before branching off into more gas-filled tunnels.
15	The walls are constructed of the naked, exposed forms of something inhuman but perhaps devolved from humanity. The passage writhes and convulses in time with the suffering of the seemingly infinite supply of still animate bodies; the degenerate slaves of some Dark One.
16	Crystalline walls react to sound, allowing passengers to surf the vibrations without touching the walls. Too much noise or vibration could resonate, causing backlash of sonic energy.
17	The tunnels are completely filled with a caustic (and damaging) sand-like substance that recedes to the touch much like carbonated foam, leaving an acrid odor in its wake.
18	Walls of red glaze that are slippery yet jagged, forming lots of tight turns and dead ends.
19	Rows and rows of sharp-edged teeth are sunken into the tubular passage, growing out of molted scales. Loose teeth and rotted meat occasionally litter the passage.
20	Hollowed out earth with thick layers of a black, foul smelling, pudding-like substance. The sludge is likely to contain lots of bacteria or even leeches and will freeze during cold spells, which can destabilize the tunnel.





DOME 606 STRUCTURE TABLES

For randomly generated buildings within Dome 606, it is recommended the GM use the following tables. Like places tend to be grouped together. Therefore, after determining the appropriate sub-table for the first structure, it is usually best to roll on that same table when determining adjacent structures.

Table 3 - Dome 606 City Structures

d00	Sub-Table
01-55	Roll on Table 3.1 – Dome 606 Businesses
56-80	Roll on Table 3.2 – Dome 606 Entertainment and Shopping
81-90	Roll on Table 3.3 – Dome 606 Residential
91-00	Roll on Table 3.4 – Dome 606 Infrastructure

Table 3.1 – Dome 606 Businesses

1d20	Business
1	Americharge Credit Institution: Financially backed by JM-CFC, Americharge is America's leading creditor and credit reporting bureau. Most of their time is spent creating strategies to keep the masses in a pattern of debt consistent with their income levels.
2	Bugjoose Beverages: Founded in Tampete, Bugjoose headquarters provided free beverages to all restaurants housed within this building's lower levels. Now, after the recent legal settlements, Bugjoose is proven to cause cancer in less than 1% of customers by volume.
3	Caterpillar Robotics.
4	Di-Tek Plastics headquarters.
5	Eden Genetics: Specialized DNA splicing and cloning technology.
6	GM-Post Grains and Cereals headquarters.
7	GNN Tampete Offices.
8	Hauled-Off & Dumpt Recording Studios.
9	HP-Zenith: HP-Zenith offers quality computing and monitor technology at only slightly inflated Dome prices. These towers are their southeast national offices.
10	Hyatt-Hilton (although the business does contain premium suites, most of the building is dedicated to the company's business functions).
11	JMC-CFC Banking.
12	Keiss-Wegan Clinics for Laser and Plastic Surgery (owned by Dr. Keiss and Dr. Wegan, other specialists rent out floors for their own customers and specialties).
13	Kroger-Sweetbay Agricultural headquarters.
14	Kreed Cryogenics "Sometimes the cure is time."
15	Moffitt-CTCA (Cancer Treatment Centers of America).
16	S&J Trust Financial Planning, Tampete branch offices.
17	Shaman Pharmaceuticals: Conventional medicines.
18	The Organ Stem: Organ growth, transplant, and storage facilities.
19	Unicast Telephone and Satellite.
20	Various Small Offices (roll 1d4+1 times on Table 3.1.1 – Dome 606 Small Offices).





Table 3.1.1 – Dome 606 Small Offices

2d12	Small Office
2	Accounting Offices of Jaymes & Jiles.
3	Accounting Offices of Monro & McMasters.
4	Allstate-Farmers Comprehensive Insurance.
5	Boulton Realtors.
6	Dresden Waterfront Properties: Clearwater beach “bubbles” leasing and purchasing.
7	Frag Pwn Entertainment: Custom themed virtual reality programs used for training, rehabilitation, and entertainment. Here, the development, 3D and 4D modeling, and testing within elaborate VR suites occurs 24x7. Some suites are open to the public.
8	Law Offices of Armstrong & Taylor (US Bankruptcy Law): Although the business purpose of the firm is to protect the rights of failed businesses under corporate law, their real specialty is the creative weaving, maintenance and dissolution of subsidiary companies for tax evasion.
9	Law Offices of Jewels & Roark (Agricultural Law).
10	Law Offices of Johnstone, O’Brien and Hawk (Intellectual Property Law).
11	Law Offices of Katania, Katania, Katania and Katania (Personal Injury): Serving the Tampete area for 40 years, this family has refined its mastery of personal injury law practice and now all of its practitioners are clones of the original founders. It’s considered something of a novelty.
12	Law Offices of Kowalczyk & Taylor (Labor Law): This firm exists to steamroll union and workman’s compensation disputes. This firm, including its branches in Cigar Town of Hyde Park is closely tied to the Mueces family of Cigar Town (see Factions and Personalities, p.35).
13	Law Offices of Murdock, Walters and Dent (Criminal Law).
14	Law Offices of Nichols & McNulty (Tax Law): With recent corporate deregulation, this practice is trending toward becoming obsolete. Still, private citizens and smaller companies who don’t retain their own lawyers rely on them for legal tax evasion.
15	Law Offices of Payton & Bruce (Entertainment Law).
16	Law Offices of Rhines & Rhines (Admiralty Law): Purporting to specialize in zoning laws, this legal firm is a puppet firm solely dedicated to protecting the rights and privacy of groups of ETs as they operate in the Tampete waterways. Both Rhines brothers are Igors completely subservient to this end.
17	Law Offices of Rollins & Rollins (Family Law).
18	Law Offices of Spencer, Bates and Haller (Corporate Law): Specializing in manufacturing statistics and studies for the purposes of merger and monopoly approval.
19	Law Offices of Walters, Dreyfuss & Dagastino (Military Law).
20	Law Offices of York & Brown (Real Estate Law).
21	Liquid Brain Accounting Offices: Fees are reduced at this firm because all transactions are automated. Some say the entire firm is run by just a handful of people with sophisticated AI equipment.
22	Phoenix Travel and Security: Plan a vacation to artificial resorts local or abroad, or improve your odds of survival while traveling the old fashioned way with a Phoenix ATV or camper.
23	Walken and Payne Dentistry.
24	Yates & Freeman Realtors.





Table 3.2 – Dome 606 Entertainment and Shopping

Roll once per region. You may wish to roll 1d3 times on Table 3.2.1 – Restaurants, Plazas, and Kiosks.

1d30	Store
1	Agrigardenz Botanicals: Exotic plants and seeds amidst a beautifully maintained golf course.
2	Avacado Republic: Fashion Clothing and Accessories.
3	Blamburgers: The French Fries glow and the burgers crunch when you chew them.
4	Blood Diamonds: No African blood was spilled to collect these jewels from the earth, however they may have been washed in some tears.
5	Buccaneer's Den (Shooting range, firearms, ammunition, and hunting enthusiasts).
6	Club Dante (Nightclub where columns, rings, and walls of fire are juxtaposed against pitch black darkness and frigid air conditioning. The live acts tend to be very theatrical).
7	Cologne's Men's Store.
8	Dali Discotheque (A surreal nightclub with renditions of Dali's work on the walls and ceilings. The staff's "clothing" is actually painted on their skin and varies nightly).
9	Earwig's Audio Emporium (Sound systems, surveillance equipment, and audio implants).
10	Eye-Max (24 theatre cinema).
11	Eye-Rise Domotel: Prestigious hotel offering daily sky-rides to the dome Eye.
12	GNN Gameshow Emporium (filming live episodes of The Vault, Hand of Justice, Smarter than the Devil, and Doctor Geiger Says).
13	Greco's Custom Tailoring.
14	Halo-cation Virtual Tours.
15	Haslam's Athenaeum (books, media, puzzles, and toys).
16	Hulk's Sports Center and Casino: Owned and operated by a former local wrestler, this high rise contains multiple boxing and wrestling rings, an indoor football stadium, horse racing and many levels of gambling and live entertainment.
17	Improvorium (comedy club including interactive AI acts).
18	La-Z-Gnome Home Furnishings.
19	Leather Princesses of Deimos novelty shop.
20	The Most Dangerous Game (laser tag and light saber themed VR gaming including arctic, desert, jungle, and interplanetary battle settings).
21	Museum of Spanish and Native American History: History is truly written by the victor, and no better example of that exists than this grand display of frequently updated exhibits with a newly added Tocobaga wing.
22	Nome Domes: Electronic puzzles and media.
23	Q Kids: Clothing, shoes, and accessories for children.
24	Shade of Music (music superstore with instruments, lessons, two concert halls, and a museum containing exhibits of historic and local punk and country bands).
25	Spa of Eden (beauty and health spas).
26	Teknogarden electronics and AI.
27	Trump Rugs and Carpeting.
28	Twenty One Holes premium golf resort.
29	Vlamor Designer Clothing.
30	Vueblix: Virtual grocery shopping. Order online and have it delivered. Or use one of the terminals in front of the store and it will be ready in 15 minutes or less.



Table 3.2.1 – Restaurants, Plazas, and Kiosks

Use Table 3.2.1 with Table 3.2, as needed.

2d12 Store

- 2 Adrenalize: Caffeine and energy drinks.
- 3 Bern's Staked Steaks: The menus and signage make it seem like old festival fare from Medieval times but it's one of the oldest and finest dining establishments in the area with a world-renowned wine cellar. The staff dresses as vampire hunters from that era.
- 4 Chocolate Factory Child and Pet Care: Pods are available for your children, pets, and elderly guests with a variety of virtual entertainment and a broad selection of feeding tubes. To avoid fees and delays, please remember to present your claim tag when retrieving your loved ones.
- 5 Data Link Layer: Plug in for a secure, encrypted connection to the internet while enjoying a variety of snacks.
- 6 DeleGators Personal Assistants: Dependable, trustworthy, and immediate: DeleGators personal assistants are thoroughly background checked and monitored so you can rely on them no matter what the need. All surveillance footage is wiped upon their return, honest!
- 7 Driver 8: Test drive automobiles in a sleek VR chamber.
- 8 EnvyRo Suits: Trendy traveling gear for excursions outside the dome. They also sell gas masks, sun block, and air purifier cartridges.
- 9 HIRO Personal Security: The only security outlet selling personal security gear officially licensed by HIRO. Handguns, knives, panic sprays, and alert systems.
- 10 Hoopz: French dining hosting human acrobatics.
- 11 Kurdi's Fresh Mediterranean.
- 12 Lemus Cigars.
- 13 Lezcano's Fine Cuban Dining & Cigars (Smoking is encouraged).
- 14 MEDZ: No Prescription, No Hassle, Five-Minute Pharmaceuticals.
- 15 Neeks Appliance Repair.
- 16 No-Tel cellular phones.
- 17 Russian Soufflé.
- 18 Samurai Red's authentic Japanese sushi.
- 19 Scenses Erotic Perfumes and Comsmetics.
- 20 Serisyringe: Quick alcohol fixes administered intravenously by the "shot".
- 21 Shades Sunglasses and Accessories: High end sunglasses and jewelry.
- 22 Spaghetti Storehouse: A remnant of Centro Ybor before the economic collapse, Spaghetti Storehouse offers the best local Italian cuisine.
- 23 The Watchmen: Time pieces and wrist wear.
- 24 Z-Meds: Prescription medicines and diagnostics for any ailment, real or imagined.





Table 3.3 – Dome 606 Residential

d00	Residence
01-35	Residential Bungalows.
36-70	Pod Farm: Tall spires that reach up near the dome housing, each containing rows and rows of arms, each supporting a series of hanging residential pods coated with reflective one-way glass. At the spire bases are usually parks or private pools and patios.
71-95	House (1/8 to 1/4 acre lot).
96-00	Manor (1/2 acre lot).

Table 3.4 – Dome 606 Infrastructure

d12	Building
1	Dome Pyrotechnics (Dome lighting, lasers and special effects).
2	Fire Department: These still exist although most fire-fighting is handled by HIRO ever since security was recently contracted through them.
3	HIRO Subsector Security Office.
4	Government Registrar’s Office.
5	Library.
6	Maintenance Service Station (used by Sanitation and Facilities Repair Departments).
7	Post Office.
8	Power Station.
9	School.
10	Telephone Central Office and Wireless Tower.
11	Urgent Care Clinic.
12	Weather Forecast/Influence Facility.



OLDSMAR MARKET - STALL GENERATION

Table 4.1 – Random Stall Generation (Roll 1d20 and read across or 3d20 and combine)

d20	Wares	Quirk	Makeup
1	Knives / Machetes	Owner has giant pet rat on leash	Goods sold out of two pickup truck beds
2	Beer / Wine / Hooch	Proprietor has severe radiation burns	Stall is a large tent with old billiards table as counter
3	Clothing	Owner obsessively checks a broken pocket watch	Old storefront
4	Tools	Same song playing on repeat on battery-powered radio	Corrugated metal shack
5	Sundries (soaps, hygiene items, etc...)	Chalkboard with giant roach drawn on it and tick marks proudly displayed	Igloo of old plywood and aluminum siding
6	Bullets / Guns	Owner has intricate facial tattoos, but no memory of receiving them	Tall wire racks with tarps draped over them
7	Junk dealer (non-essential items: old magazines, non-working rotary phones, etc...)	Severed head or hand in murky glass jar	Several large tents
8	Fuel (diesel, bio-diesel, or gasoline)	Owner has crude peg leg or hook hand	Old train car
9	Livestock (Pigeons / Rats / Rabbits)	Prominent display of proprietor's wanted posters from Tampete PD	Large flatbed truck
10	Looking to dump stash of stolen corporate secrets or files	Skeleton of giant alligator on display	Modified foundation of destroyed home
11	Fortune teller - 20% chance of having Empathic abilities	Proprietor has glaring deformity or old wound	Broken down bus or truck trailer
12	Gambling (Dice, Darts, or Cards)	Proprietor is very young	Drywall and timber shack
13	Recreational Drugs	Stall has the dubiously claimed remains or trophy of a dark race	Tipped over metal dumpster
14	Boxing or Arm Wrestling tournaments	Proprietor has glaring signs of affluence above normal wares, very shrewd	Metal framing with curtains and rugs
15	Electronic or Mechanical repairs	Proprietor very willing to give discounts or freebies to indebted those not cautious	Open air stall with large tables
16	Dry and canned foods	Proprietor has secret ties to law enforcement or corp group attempting to undermine the Market	Wood framed yurt
17	Flophouse (Rows of cots or makeshift beds for rent)	Proprietor is a member of a clandestine cannibal cult and is secretly feeding humans to people in the market	Series of jury-rigged Port-O-Lets
18	Mercenary gang or Bodyguards for hire at daily rate (low level combat thugs, See appendix)	Stall has a piece of possibly functioning DarkTek or alien tech	Small brick or cinderblock enclosure
19	First Aid or Medical supplies	Child on bike powers generator for stall	Scavenged car doors and hoods in dome-like lean-to
20	Shoemaker (makes shoes from old plastic and tires)	Stall is in repairs from recent fire	Chain link fence enclosure with tarp



OLDSMAR MARKET - SUPPLY AND DEMAND

To simulate the shifting needs of the massive trading community, use these tables. As a baseline, quality foodstuffs, ammunition, and fuel are always needed and will typically get full price in barter value as exceptions to the pricing rules found in the Commerce section. The Supply and Demand table abstracts the immediate pressing needs of an individual market proprietor or greater levels of shortages and/or surpluses in the community as a whole. If rolling for a single stall in the market, just use the demand column. If generating a general state of the Market, roll twice for surplus and twice for demand. These seasons of shifting concerns typically last between 1 and 4 months. Once Demand has been generated, assume that any PC bartering with an item that is currently in demand gets a price reduction that eliminates the typical 50% price hike for a given item. Treat items related to a Surplus as having a 1 letter code improvement for availability and a price reduction of 75% of core book cost.

Table 4.2 - Market in the Shade: Supply and Demand

d12	Surplus	Demand
1	Moonshine / Grain alcohol	Iodine / Bleach
2	Vehicle parts	Diesel / Gasoline / Biofuels
3	Designer drugs	Livestock
4	Handguns	Batteries
5	Rifles (Hunting and shotguns)	Plate steel and aluminum
6	Electronic parts	Medical Supplies
7	Melee weapons	Sundries (hygiene, cleaning)
8	Stolen goods from Mega-corp shipping boat or truck	Ammo (50% Pistol calibers / 50% rifle)
9	Stolen valuables (watches, jewelry, coins, chains, etc...)	Construction materials (boards, nails, etc...)
10	Small vehicles (motorcycles and compact cars)	Dry or canned food
11	Animal skins and Scavenged or handmade clothing	Wiring and soldering tools
12	Small hand tools	Sewing materials (needles, thread, bolts of cloth, and leather)

Example:

Calvin the PC Minion Hunter has located a particularly aggressive band of giant cockroaches responsible for numerous recent disappearances in the abandoned warehouse nearby. He decides to try and secure a shotgun from the Market before dealing with the vicious insects. The GM generates a Market Demand result of 2: Diesel / Gasoline / Biofuels as the overall need of the Market this month and a Surplus result of 11. If Calvin has a few gallons of gasoline to spare he can likely secure a shotgun for the printed price in the core rulebook instead of paying 50% more. If he needed to purchase some leather or animal hide, it is particularly easy to locate this month in the Market and is likely heavily discounted from prices in the core rulebook.

Additionally Calvin has previously purchased ammunition from a stall owner named Dallas. Calvin visits Dallas again to inquire about purchasing the shotgun and a box of buckshot. The GM generates a 10 for Dallas' stall, indicating he and his family are running out of food supplies. If Calvin can produce some food supplies, Dallas will gladly sell him one of his old hunting shotguns.





OLDSMAR GANG GENERATOR

Table 4.3 – Oldsmar Gang Generator

d10	Style	Unique Trait	Symbol	Main Income	Side Income	Size
1	All members carry a folding straight razor	50% of population are Nukids	Black Spade on red field	Drug trafficking	Guns	10 + 3d4
2	Heavily tattooed	All members escaped from same mental asylum	Green Skull with flaming eyes	Petty Theft	Gambling	15 + 3d4
3	Shaved heads with head piercings	Leader is Empathic	Closed fist made of black cobras	Stolen Cars	Mercs	20 + 3d4
4	All members wear presidential Halloween masks	Leader is a vampire	Bulletholes against a silver shield	Guns	Prostitution	30 + 3d6
5	Ritual scarification	Local politician uses gang for illicit business	Red knives on black field	Assassinations	Drug trafficking	40 + 3d6
6	Gang wear adorned with stolen law enforcement regalia	All female	Black vulture on a branch	Smuggling	Petty Theft	50 + 4d6
7	Bikers	Leader is a sorcerer	Crossed revolvers	Street Racing	Underground fight clubs	60 + 5d6
8	All members get plastic surgery to look like celebrity	All male	Row of tombstones	Extortion	Kidnapping for Ransom	60 + 6d6
9	Heavily customized and stylized matching handguns	Leader is a medusa	Flaming red skull with fangs	Drug manufacture	Slave trafficking	60 + 7d6
10	Wear blacked-out contact lenses and bear matching tongue tattoos	10% of members have cybernetics	Giant snake or dragon	Racketeering	Forgery	60 + 7d6





HARBOUR ISLAND MERCHANT GENERATOR

Table 5.1 – Harbour Island Merchant Generator

d20	Location	Brief Description
1	The Mushroom Palace	Music shop selling rare vinyl records, vacuum tube radios, nano-sized, transistor, compressed music players and other digital players and entertainment. The shop keeper is deaf and becomes irritable when asked the usual litany of questions regarding his affliction. He can read lips and enjoys the music if only by memory or vibration.
2	Authentische Deutsche Küche	The owners claim to be related to the owners of a popular chain of German cuisine previously prominent throughout St. Pete but actually are not and have perpetuated this fraud to escape the urban slums.
3	Armani-Brooks Suits	The shtick here is that the retailers are androids manufactured at UTP. They are efficient, precise, and very personable.
4	“Potholes” Italian cuisine	One of the owners employs an empath as a table server who has been reading the minds of his customers and sells this information to various criminal and corporate groups.
5	Kome-Rad’s	Radiation prepared Russian cuisine. Although the staff here is Russian, the owner is Paresch Kumar, an Indian (he also owns Lazizeasons Indian Cuisine). In his kitchen are organic meat farms developed by the students at UTP.
6	Lazizeasons	Indian Cuisine. Paresch Kumar, the owner, uses a system of organic meat farms to grow the food used in his meat dishes.
7	Hands Off Massage	The gimmick here is that all massages are done hands-free. The employees are gorgeous and often work as escorts during evening hours. There are android masseuses for those who request them.
8	Sea of Escher	Puzzle and novelty shop. Its owner, Ivan Anatoli, is an empath who designs and builds his items by hand. He takes the time to learn whether his patrons are also empathically endowed, building contacts as needed. Ivan is sympathetic to the efforts of several Minion Hunter groups in the area. He enjoys relieving the Darkling empowered elite of their cash so that it might be better spent fighting them.
9	Frakes’ Art Gallery	Three to four artists are showcased here and are rotated weekly to monthly. Wares consist mostly of paintings and photographs but occasionally contain sculptures.
10	Travel and Event Planning	This small shop coordinates travel planning, event planning, real estate showing and other consultation services.
11	Automagic	Weapons including a few shady ones (though HIRO is here frequently to ensure nothing which would pose a risk to island security is available). The owner, Mikai Hope, an African American man, will often take interested buyers beyond the nearest wall gate to test his wares. Although frowned upon by HIRO, it hasn’t usually caused a problem though there have been instances of patrons aiming their weapons across the channel...
12	Beauty Salon	This shop is managed by a Gray ET who trains her staff in the empathic arts in order to give her customers a fully satisfying experience. She goes by the name of Roan Jivers and has had extensive plastic surgery in an attempt to hide her heritage.
13	Millipedes	From executive shoes, to casual sandals, to hiking boots. Pedicure and fitness training services are also offered here.
14	The Same Wavelength	Radio, IR, and UV technology including communication and home security. The merchant, Nibs Anderson, is a frequent HIRO informant.





15	Deadwood	Paperbacks, journals, collectible magazines, and stashes of cryptic books describing obscure role playing games can be found here.
16	Zoops Vietnamese Kitchen	This closet-sized kitchen offers the finest Vietnamese cuisine in Tampete. The owner, Phan Quang, makes it a point to engage his customers in deep philosophical conversation as they eat, a practice that is strangely welcome by all of his patrons.
17	Hooks	Fine, fresh, wild sushi has become scarcer and scarcer as pollutants contaminate the world's oceans. However, Tampete's original Hooks continues to provide freshly flown-in, uncontaminated sushi with an amazing presentation and price to match.
18	Channelside Barn	Surf'n'turf steakhouse offering premium meals, never farmed.
19	Nick's Knacks	An antique and novelty shop run by the mysterious Nick Fredholm. He performs tarot readings and makes it a point of making the purchase of a relic a very personal experience for his customers. Nick is a sorcerer and an unscrupulous man who uses his position and affluence to find promising young minds so that he might manipulate them to his own ends. He has sacrificed more than one apprentice in a bargain with a Darkling.
20	Glass Eye	Glassware, ceramic, and pewter sculptures are here.

"WHIZ"

An underground drug called Whiz has been circulating in the Tampete community, loosely based on a powerful empathic drug of ET design intended to augment empathic ability. In particular, the drug is designed to protect ETs from the dominating influence of the Dark Ones. When prepared correctly, it works well. If it isn't, effects are erratic and sometimes deadly.

There are as many recipes and variants of Whiz as there are groups of people researching the compound. Some groups are affiliated with ISAAC with goals of identifying or promoting empathic ability. Some groups are corporate entities investigating pharmaceutical applications of the drug. A few are corrupted versions of even the knockoffs, introduced by unscrupulous dealers or by some incomprehensible plan of the Dark Ones themselves.

With the right connections, street variants of Whiz are available for recreational use.

WHIZ EFFECTS

For each batch of Whiz, the GM should roll 1d4+1 times on Table 6 – Whiz Effects and combine the results in a meaningful way (looking for synergy where possible). For example, a subject able to detect short wave radio waves and who sees "ghosts" might be able to hear broadcasts from a few weeks ago. Effects last 1d4 hours with longer lasting or even permanent effects as noted in the table. Of course the GM is free to choose effects and vary the duration if appropriate.

People commonly react to the same drug in different ways. It is therefore suggested that at least one effect be randomly determined or selected by the GM at the time the drug is taken.

Use of the drug incurs risk of physical addiction (cumulative 1% chance per use) and risk of Willpower loss (5% non-cumulative chance to permanently drain by one point). Once a person becomes addicted to Whiz, it becomes their primary purpose in life. If forced to go through withdrawal, they suffer a loss of 1d4 points to each ability for 1d3 weeks (during which time they still crave the drug).

Also, each time the drug is used, the subject must make an Average difficulty CON check (with a –1 penalty for each effect of the drug beyond the first) or he suffers one point of damage to both the head and chest hit locations due to nosebleeds, ear-bleeds, eye-bleeds, and internal bleeding.

As a final note, the GM may wish to create batches with his own moniker and reference the effects by listing result numbers. *(Example, "suicide whiz" commonly invokes effects: 19:paranoia, 43:thought broadcast, 62: own death throes, 54: Darkling conduit, and is known as a risky thrill drug sometimes used in initiation rites. Subjects develop intense paranoia, becoming more and more introverted until a "voice" seems to speak to them from within, showing them awful things including their own inevitable death. These visions are often psionically broadcast to those in close proximity. Subjects have been known to commit the terrible acts they witness, sometimes even culminating in suicide).*





Table 6 – Whiz Effects

d00	Effect
01	Photographic memory for the next 2d4 hours. Memories generated during this time become permanent.
02	Recall a 1d8 hour period that occurred to the subject during a random period of his history with perfect photographic memory. These memories become permanent.
03	Develops the ability to read emotions with 90% accuracy.
04	Becomes oversensitive to any physical stimulus. He can feel slight breezes from air vents (precise direction and temperature), can feel irregularities within his own body including tumors and the like, and is acutely aware of the rapid beating of his heart – a condition which increases that beating.
05	Develops perfect night vision.
06	For the next 2d4 hours, the subject sees “ghosts,” imprints of real events that occurred within the last 1d4 weeks.
07	Develops acute hearing and frequently intercepts short wave radio message and occasionally snippets from AM broadcasts.
08	Becomes acutely aware of weather patterns for the next 2d4 days, and has a 75% chance of accurately detecting the weather within the next 24 hours.
09	Becomes competent and obsessed with a subject of study he or she previously had no developed skill in. Skill level is 3+1d6.
10	Develop a permanent phobia related to subject’s trip.
11	For the next 1d4 hours, subject intermittently becomes catatonic or laughs maniacally at certain realizations that should have been previously obvious, but which only now have come to light.
12	Subject develops the ability to communicate at the cellular level with other creatures of his race. He can perform minor healing and can even attempt more complicated procedures like attacking cancer growths.
13	Subject develops elongated canine teeth and an acute sense of smell and hearing.
14	Subject can see the thin places between the prime material and various protodimensions including dimensional gates and portals.
15	Subject can read the surface thoughts of those around him.
16	Subject has polarized luck for the next 24 hours. (Extremely bad luck followed by spells of extremely good luck).
17	Fever and chills.
18	Nausea and occasional vomiting.
19	Extreme paranoia.
20	Extremely low energy. Pale complexion. Average CON check to complete physical activities or faint during the attempt.
21	Severe depression for next 24 hours related to this trip.
22	Bad batch. Average CON check to avoid death if not hospitalized within first hour.
23	Permanent gray or white streaks develop in subject’s hair.
24	Dreams for the next 2d4 days are very rich and vivid and recalled with photographic recollection.
25	One randomly determined psionic skill is boosted by 1d4 points. Disregard this effect if no psionic skills are developed in the subject.
26	Develops Computer Empathy at skill level 2d4 (or increase current skill level by 1d4).
27	Develops Foreboding at skill level 2d4 (or increase current skill level by 1d4).
28	Develops Animal Empathy at skill level 2d4 (or increase current skill level by 1d4).
29	Gain a vision of a first-hand experience from a close friend or relative.





- 30 Severe migraine headaches for next 2d12 hours.
- 31 Develops the uncontrolled ability to project fear (as per the Project Emotion psionic ability).
- 32 For the next 1d4 days, the subject becomes a receiver for extradimensional transmissions from a nearby protodimension. He develops an obsession with finding that protodimension and will tirelessly search for gates and portals or a weakening of the barrier between the prime material and that proto dimension in an attempt to travel to that protodimension (which may not be hospitable to him).
- 33 Loses 1d4 willpower points (minimum of 0).
- 34 Loses 2d4 willpower points (minimum of 0).
- 35 Subject teleports to a location within 3d6 miles.
- 36 Subject teleports to a location within 6d6 miles.
- 37 Subject teleports to a location within d100 miles.
- 38 Subject's thoughts begin appearing on the screens or displays of nearby electronics or computers.
- 39 Develops telekinesis of objects weighing up to one pound.
- 40 Develops uncontrolled telekinesis of objects weighing up to one pound.
- 41 Develops the ability to cause paralysis via a focused manifestation of Human Empathy (skill at 2d4 or increases by 1d4).
- 42 Develops a form of Fire Empathy that bestows 1d4 points in Pyrokinesis (or an increase of 1d4 points). If subject previously had Pyrokinesis, he retains this Fire Empathy (but not the Pyrokinesis skill increase) after the drug's effects end.
- 43 Subject broadcasts his thoughts telepathically in the voice he perceives as his own. This increases and diminishes with stress levels.
- 44 Develops the ability to levitate up to six inches above the ground.
- 45 Subject becomes a beacon for Darkling activity. Sometime during his trip, a Dark Lord, one of his minions, or at least their Igors will seek out and attempt to capture or destroy the subject using any means at their disposal.
- 46 Subject becomes a transmitter for some empathic signal he is receiving. He begins speaking in a language he doesn't understand and draws pictures of events he cannot comprehend.
- 47 Subject can understand all forms of spoken and written communication but loses the ability to be precise with translation, resorting to vague concepts and generalizations.
- 48 Subject experiences completely fictional hallucinations.
- 49 Subject mentally projects completely fictional hallucinations to those around him.
- 50 Subject mentally projects disturbing images from his memory to those around him.
- 51 Subject psychically experiences the death throes of the nearest dying creature.
- 52 Subject experiences the dreams of people within a mile and begins to psychically connect those dreams with each of the dreamers.
- 53 Develops psychic boils or sores on his face and body. These psychic symptoms are the result of psychically connecting with another empathy with some form of psychic disease.
- 54 Subject becomes a conduit for some Dark One or its minions to see and speak through. There is a 50% chance this includes control of motor actions that may result in sabotage, assault, or suicide.
- 55 Subject becomes catatonic for 1d4x10 minutes while studying a news story, radio program, book or even a conversation. After this time, the subject gains Foreboding psionic skill of 2d4+1 (or an increase of 1d4 to an existing Foreboding skill) when making checks associated with this event.
- 56 Subject becomes blind with a 5% chance of this becoming permanent.





- 57 Subject is somehow attuned to a Darkling plan, even if he doesn't understand it. He should make a Difficult Willpower test. Failure, indicating that whether or not he understands the plan, he will do everything in his power to assist his interpretation of it.
- 58 Subject hears voices from a previous conversation or event in the place he is in now. There is a 25% chance that if he attempts to talk, those voices will hear and possibly understand the disruption.
- 59 Subject feels psychic euphoria and cannot be motivated to do anything except sit and enjoy the experience.
- 60 Subject gains the ability to communicate with insects.
- 61 Exposure to water causes burns to the subject's skin or internal organs. (Treat all newly introduced water as a kind of psychic sulfuric acid).
- 62 Subject gets a vision of their own death throes.
- 63 Develops the ability to paint and becomes obsessed with the idea of communicating his ideas via this medium.
- 64 Develops the ability to sing or play a musical instrument and becomes obsessed with the idea of communicating his ideas via this medium.
- 65 Develops the ability to draw and becomes obsessed with the idea of communicating his ideas via this medium.
- 66 Develops the ability to write and becomes obsessed with the idea of communicating his ideas via this medium.
- 67 Develops the ability to sculpt and becomes obsessed with the idea of communicating his ideas via this medium.
- 68 Develops the ability to carve and becomes obsessed with the idea of communicating his ideas via this medium.
- 69 Develops an unbridled urge to copulate.
- 70 Develops agoraphobia with a 10% chance of this affliction becoming permanent.
- 71 Develops a 360' radar sense that extends about a hundred meters, but which permeates most normal structures except for lead or other very high-density materials.
- 72 Gains the ability to phase through solid materials of less density than lead if he passes an Average difficulty Willpower test.
- 73 Experiences a first-hand experience from a sane ET.
- 74 Experiences a first-hand experience from an insane ET.
- 75 Experiences a first-hand experience from a Darkling-dominated ET.
- 76 Experiences a first-hand experience from a Darkling's Igor.
- 77 Acquires a communicable disease.
- 78 Experiences a first-hand traumatic experience of a nearby animal (hunting, being hunted, veterinarian trip, or similar)
- 79 Develops an attunement with sculpted stone fixtures. They guide, mock, instruct, and torment him for the duration of the drug's effect.
- 80 Acquires an inherent understanding and acceptance of religion if he hasn't already got one. Other effects of the drug are seen as divine channeling.
- 81 Develops paralysis for the duration of the drug's effect.
- 82 Develops the ability to sense psionic activity within a hundred-meter radius.
- 83 Develops insomnia for 1d8 days after which subject becomes exhausted and passes out for 4 hours per waking day.
- 84 Develops physical addiction to the drug automatically.
- 85 Lose one point of willpower permanently.
- 86 Increase INT and CHR by 1d4.
- 87 Increase INT by one permanently (ignore this result in the future).
- 88 Develops amnesia concerning the period of influence.





- 89 Develops amnesia for 1d4+1 days.
- 90 Develops psychometric ability (learns about people by touching their possessions).
- 91 Increase INT by 1d4. Extraordinary extrasensory perception. Ability to do rapid computation of complex math and to estimate with extraordinary precision.
- 92 Develops the ability to read “auras,” including things like behavioral and lifestyle analysis and overall fortune telling. All observations are at some level rooted in truth but only 60% of these predictions provide distinct clarity and testable accuracy. Most observations unfold within the next 48 hours.
- 93 Experiences bilocation (75%, one location) or multilocation (25%, 2-4 locations) which may be associated with protodimensions, past lives, astral or ethereal projection, or some other means.
- 94 Experiences 1d4+1 specific precognitions of him and close friends (one precognition per person).
- 95 Telepathy with a long gone friend or person presumed dead. This should be someone the subject has no other method of communicating with.
- 96 Experiences the channeling of a spirit, ghost, demon, or other entity. (50% of these entities are Darkling, the rest may or may not be of malicious nature).
- 97 Becomes obsessed with an item of nature, technology or art and does not rest until the item is created. The item is worthless (50%) or psionically significant (50%).
- 98 Subject loses the ability to speak or write for 1d8 days.
- 99 Experiences dulling of nerves. The subject does not feel pain or discomfort.
- 00 Subject is transported to a protodimension for the duration of the drug’s effects.





A HUNDRED AND ONE PLOT SEEDS

Table 7 – A Hundred and One Plot Seeds

Just cross them out as you use them. Choosing the nearest usable plot on a re-roll.

d00 Plot Seed Summary

- 001 An earthquake shakes the grounds in the Oldsmar Outlaw, the result of incessant drilling by the Viemen deep into the earth there with their SteamTek mining equipment and mine supports. The quake exposes the conduit that the Viemen are using to collect natural resources with scores of SteamTek constructs and human slaves. The Viemen trade some of this SteamTek with a local gang called the Brothers of Prose in exchange for slave labor. If this plot is exposed, the Brothers will seek to cut ties and the Viemen will attempt to seal the conduit and exterminate all within.
- 002 Stefan Montoya, a cybernetically augmented soldier, has escaped a training facility in Seminole, fronting as a water purification laboratory owned by Neo Lunar. He is an ex-soldier transferred to Neo Lunar as part of a pilot program to test cyborgs in high and low-pressure environments (for eventual deployment on the moon and in Primitus Domus). GNN has been plastering news of trumped up charges against him, the work of Neo Lunar and those sympathetic to them.
- 003 Robert Chamberlain is a Vinoy collector and Victorian enthusiast. He is also an amateur inventor who has become fascinated with the wave of thermal technology that a few of his colleagues within the Gulf Saucer have divulged to him. He has hired a team of researchers to learn the origins of this technology and, after spending a small fortune, has acquired Viemen Analytical SteamTek (see New DarkTek, p.195) from the Ceperos family, which was originally obtained from the Brakemen. The device has been guiding him in developing technical plans that have become more and more bizarre including invasive cybernetics. He has been experimenting on his staff and on the employees of some of the companies he owns.
- 004 Jacob Moore is a former DHL engineer recently let go after budget cuts. He now lives in Hyde Park and uses crates of equipment and technology he has stolen over the years to conduct awful experiments onto any hapless victim he can abduct. Recent successes have included the development of sonic weapons that cause internal hemorrhaging in unprotected victims and the transplanting of human brains into animals. Moore has used his sonic weapons to attack armored trucks to generate revenue that he reinvests into his research. If the PCs involve the police or the news, both DHL and Echo Wisdom are swift to react before the story gains traction.
- 005 Whispers are circulating of dark black stones appearing on the fringes of the Vines (one of Largo's "Trailerhoods"). They are said to jut out of the ground haphazardly at strange angles and in arbitrary places as jagged teeth. They are engraved with strange symbols, and some are painted with haunting imagery. Few have actually seen them. Those who have are either missing or cannot give clear directions to the things (having been spotted only during drunken stumblings through the maze-like Trailerhood corridors). The stone is denser than any known on Earth and, although it cannot be carbon dated, the carbon based inks used to mark the stones are over 50,000 years old. The corridors wend a path to the Sand Barrows, a Soft Place. And Barrow Mummies within have been abducting people who wander too near the Barrows and interring them into the ground, transforming them, also, into Barrow Mummies.
- 006 A "number station" has been broadcasting stories of old Florida tragedies; the burning of a town in Arcadia, FL, in 1905, an ocean liner blaze in Cape Canaveral in 1910, an Everglades airliner crash in 1963, and many similar tragedies. Amidst these stories are the coded coordinates for a gate that will open near the deserted rails of Oldsmar, to an ancient and evil protodimension. Many Darklings, some seemingly human, will gather at this place to return home. Awful ceremonies and rituals will be conduct to help open the gate, culminating at a mass slaying of 101 people. If the historical stories are investigated, a supernatural pattern will begin to appear.
- 007 One of the investigators' government contacts warns them of a secret railroad housed in an abandoned Clearwater warehouse that is used to procure weapons, DarkTek, and gold from another protodimension. Worse, these things are paid for with captured ETs, empaths, and human infants. The warehouse is operated by a rogue branch of the United States military intent on bargaining with one Darkling faction; paying for time and tools that they believe will protect them during a mass invasion. They rendezvous with these Darklings in Tesseract.





- 008 The Brain Trust, masquerading as Infominer, has a prominent online social service used to hunt for empathic humans on behalf of dominated ET Grays. By data mining and subsequently identifying these empaths, the Hippocampusites are promised transport to off world colonies by the corrupted Grays.
- 009 The Grid harbors a nasty secret. Underground, within its workings, Mirror Demons steal the souls of people who gaze their reflection, leaving the victims trapped within the machinery and allowing the demons to move among men. In time, the victims become as insane as the demons, becoming demons themselves, and using the reflective magic to possess other travelers. (Mirror Demons exist in no Dark Conspiracy publication as of this writing, have fun GMs!)
- 010 Neo Lunar, a supposed water purification facility in Clearwater, has been abducting the homeless and performing drug-induced testing on them in order to read an old, morphing, Living Script. The script is indecipherable to those of sober mind, but to those who are feverish, drugged, or insane, the Script speaks to them in vague, prophetic ways, indicating an imminent return of an ancient, corrupted entity. Similar fragments of stone containing this script have been found on Earth's moon, and documents within Neo Lunar seem to indicate that there are plans to terraform it.
- 011 A Darkling owns a glass menagerie and sells soul-stealing artifacts. These things corrupt the weak willed; children, the ill, the insane, the addicted. These people are driven to commit unspeakable acts, using the artifacts to collect blood from their victims (and further empowering them). In one case, a boy stabbed his grandmother to death and devoured her heart. In another, a junkie began poisoning all the food in his parent's household. Darklings collect the "energized" artifacts and leave the pawns to the fates of society.
- 012 Reports of serial killer activity in one of the Seminole Ant Hills have been circulating. Upon investigation, the targets have all been empathic (or suspected of being empathic) and at least one or two have connections to Minion Hunter resistance cells. The "killers" are corrupted Gray ETs trying to stifle the resistance cells but who are having a hard time distinguishing legitimate empaths from the wake of Whiz circulating in the area. Several mass killings have resulted.
- 013 The Broz exterminators have been called to "tent off" an Ant Hill high-rise. It seems that some over-sized roaches from a neighboring garbage dump have tunneled their way into the building and are using closets, wash rooms, and in some cases, people as nests. The Broz are notoriously efficient at exterminating *all* forms of life within an infested building, a process which takes around four hours from start to finish. The PCs either live in this high-rise or have a contact that does, ideally being inside as the tenting goes up. They'll have to deal with the dual threat of the Broz and also the roaches inside.
- 014 Buck McGraw, a farmer living in the outskirts of Tampete is sheltering a community of Gray ETs who have, so far, avoided Darkling corruption. He's been bringing supplies from Tampete and selling strange bits of technology to fund this. He was killed during a recent sale to the Ceperos, which soured and has subsequently left the ET cell to fend for itself. The ETs have begun making cautious forays into town for supplies and to discover what happened.
- 015 Morlocks and Viemen have been combating each other underground as they chance upon each other. Both groups have increased activity in the Clearwater area and it has resulted in frequent sinkholes and floods. The Viemen are intentionally destabilizing the region for eventual collapse. The Morlocks, having fled from eastern areas already, refuse to flee any farther. A shadow branch of the National Guard is considering a scheme to pump thousands of gallons of neurotoxins into the subterranean tunnels in response. This will have only partial affect on the Morlocks and is unlikely to affect the Viemen or their earthworms at all, however a lot of collateral damage is anticipated.
- 016 Jerry Gordon is a prison guard at Tampete Penitentiary who hasn't been seen for two weeks. Scanned pages from a journal he'd kept prior to his disappearance are now circulating on DarkNet. His notes detail a "prison within a prison" that coworkers nicknamed the Oubliette where many inmates are interred and subsequently forgotten. Other awful truths concerning the prison were also intimated including consignment of inmates to labor camps and underground organ harvesting rings. Since the DarkNet leak, Gordon's body was subsequently discovered in an alley in Ybor, having overdosed on methamphetamines. Now his family and close friends are being stalked, and a few are disappearing as well in an effort to cover this up.
- 017 Oversized marine animals are attacking fishermen and Clearwater dock workers; giant eels and squids and others harder to describe. Some have been seen eating the piranha within the Harbour Island channels. A few have even slipped into the sewage system and ended up in containment ponds. Some of the curators at Tampete Aquarium have bonded with the creatures there and release them at night so that they can get the nutrition their diets require.





- 018 Carrion birds have infested a drug lab in South Tampa once used by the Prescott Gents to manufacture Whiz, but which has remained vacant since a recent firefight between the Gents and a rival gang. The crows have started ingesting the stuff, resulting in arbitrary attacks on the surrounding wildlife and populace. More and more, these attacks are targeting empathic or Darkling entities. More, the birds are exhibiting paranormal behavior due to both the drug and the ingesting of some of their targets.
- 019 An underground pirate station begins broadcasting the nature of Darkling activity before it happens. The station is actually operated by a cell of Ravagers (see Dark Races, p80) who divulge enough specifics to lure Minion Hunter cells to elaborate traps of their design. These traps often involve third party criminal groups, usually without their knowledge (for instance, tipping off the Ceperos that a group of thieves is about to infiltrate one of their holding yards).
- 020 A text with an elaborate ritual for the creation of a portal to Genesis has been stolen from the personal collection of Horace Winthrop, a Vinoy resident who dabbles in mythology and the occult. He is willing to pay an exorbitant amount of money for the book's return, but as the PCs begin hunting for the book, many of the ingredients for the ritual begin happening.
- 021 A witch coven has been congregating near the home of Jesse Nolte and his family, and at the graveyard of Megan Stewart, a teenager brutally murdered by Jesse after he got her pregnant. The witches hold séances that cause Megan's spirit to linger and harass the murderer but these are escalating and will culminate in the reanimation of Megan as a Dread Sidhe. Until Jesse and his family are dead, Megan will haunt only them. After, she will behave as a Dread Sidhe usually does. The witches are empathic women (and some men) who will use their skills to retreat or escape.
- 022 Underwater monolith in Tampa Bay discovered by divers and published on DarkNet. It is covered with Living Script runes. Many factions are competing to investigate the thing, which does not seem to be movable. Further, the Viemen feel threatened by the attention that this part of the Underbay is generating and are doing everything in their power to discourage investigation and remove the artifact.
- 023 Black box recordings have been circulating on DarkNet of a B2 stealth bomber depositing nuclear ordinance into Tampa Bay before being destroyed by an unexplained surface-to-air weapon, discharged from the bay depths. Widely lauded as a superb work of fiction, the recording features accurate radio protocol for such an endeavor and a GMT timestamp of one month into the future. There is a real operation being planned at MacDill AFB to target multiple structures within the Underbay but specifics are pending investigations that are still underway.
- 024 A sextant has been discovered that leads to a shallow island within the Gulf. On certain nights during low tide, the jagged, rocky spire peeks above the surface for a few hours. The reefs contain the wreckage of many dashed ships and countless bones of many who'd managed to swim or flee their vessel in this vicinity. The sunken tower contains subterranean tunnels and niches that are the home to a colony of Wailers (see Dark Races, p98) who have used a variety of tactics to lure unsuspecting men to their midst.
- 025 A stone fountain has erupted through the grounds of the Woodlawn Cemetery in the abandoned Tampa Heights area just north of Hyde Park. The carvings appear Mayan but the stone seems more recent than that. The fountain dispenses rusty red water with a coppery taste not dissimilar to blood. Investigating the water conduit below reveals the entire reserve to be filled with the stuff. The fountain is the product of a Tocabaga ritual, and the blood heals wounds and cures all disease, but also imparts the evil urges of demons in their pantheon into anyone who drinks. Rumors of this "holy grail" are beginning to circulate.
- 026 A Nukid snack truck driver has been distributing soft drinks and ice cream contaminated with hallucinogens, morphine, and spores from the Psiomycota fungus (see Dark Adversaries, p.162). There have been subsequent infestations in schools and homes of the stuff. Street vendors have also begun appearing selling the tainted goods, which are originating from a contaminated factory in the Cannery. The end goal is to replace the stock of all the local grocery stores with the stuff.
- 027 DVD rental machines have been dispensing DVDs of popular movies with sections of footage recorded over with spans of flashing bright lights and discordant sounds that can induce seizures in a portion of the population, in some cases, death. The DVDs are a red herring so that precise murders could be covertly carried out in overlapping areas, targeting whistleblowers and their acquaintances in the National Guard who've been investigating expenditures on clandestine training exercises which are fronts for cybernetic test facilities. The training facilities are abandoned military bases with minimal or no security. The actual operations are occurring in privately funded facilities throughout the area.





- 028 A cabal of clowns has been robbing kitchens and hardware stores, selecting specialized deli equipment, power tools, aprons, and catering equipment. They have stolen an ice cream trunk, a limousine and a Brinks security trunk (dumping the cash on the road in the latter case). Finally, the clowns commit a series of abductions on the eve of a fundraiser hosted in Dome 606 for the upper social echelons as a fundraiser for Jared Ferman, democratic hopeful for the next governor of Florida. The plan is to infiltrate the kitchen of this event so that they may get on with the grisly business of serving the kidnapped victims to the guests. Unless the clowns are particularly careless during their activities, the PCs will require at least one character with Foreboding.
- 029 Delyla Sikes, an empathic beach-goer, has been sculpting horrific figures in the sands that are generating some attention, particularly on DarkNet where some have noted similarities between the sculpted images and supernatural events occurring within Demonground areas in Safety Harbor and Palm Harbor. The sculptor has foreboding dreams of Darkling activity, and the only way to suppress those dreams is to actively sculpt the images she sees, however she can't stand to look at her creations or to even accept that they exist, so she sculpts them of sand.
- 030 Hugo Chin, a former Teknogardens employee, has built a machine which can read the information contained within dead brain material. He has been exhuming the graves of men he suspects of inside information in the money market and has profited in that area. Recently he has unearthed the mind of Charles Joyce, an employee of EMC-Oracle, but also an inside operator for ISAAC who has been gathering information on that company and in particular, on Mr. Glass. Using this new knowledge, Chin has been looking for other operatives and has found the corpse of a Minion Hunter (which the PCs may have heard of or know). However the equipment Chin uses is not always reliable, particularly involving Darkling content and he has become quite insane attempting to decipher what he can. He is no longer above using living brain matter.
- 031 Tyke Moore, a low level distributor for the Prescott Gents and voodoo practitioner, has been animating lawn gnomes and similar statues which have been congregating on the homes and workplaces of his enemies. Crime scenes always involve lots of blood splatter, bludgeoning wounds, large pieces of stone, and nondescript footprints in the surrounding area. Witnesses, the few times there were any, have only seen shadows and faceless forms.
- 032 The PCs are approached by a man who believes his spouse has been possessed. Some investigative work reveals similar such stories. A cult lives within some abandoned Palm Harbor homes. On the first midnight of each full moon, they abduct a stranger each. Under the moonlight, wearing the flesh of their victims, they bathe in the blood and, in the early dawn, become their victims. For the next month, they live their victims' lives until the next full moon when they return to their Demonground abode with new victims.
- 033 A wraith from the Genesis protodimension has escaped that place and now resides within the confessional of an abandoned Catholic church in Tampa Heights. The church is still frequented by vagrants and squatters who have been subsequently turning up dead in the immediate vicinity.
- 034 One of the Bubble communities is losing its children to the Clearwater beach dunes, to the Sand Wights who have learned to navigate from the Sand Barrows to the village outskirts. They are luring the children to their deaths. The situation escalates to search and rescue personnel being targeted as well.
- 035 Jordan Zabroski has built a machine with DarkTek parts that has been controlling the weather in South Tampa, leading to sweltering heat waves killing the populace. Not only is his device unstable, but it is attracting Darkling activity. He got the parts by stealing them from a Cepero warehouse, and now they are interested in his activities as well.
- 036 Meteorite activity has increased in Tampete this past week, with daily occurrences of boulder-sized rocks hitting buildings and residences, and causing flooding and other natural disasters in the area. Transmissions originating from the Underbay are being broadcast, in Latin, giving GPS coordinates of the next place to be struck. The FCC, radio enthusiasts, and even some students at the University of Tampete are beginning to notice these, and there are some murmurings on DarkNet. These transmissions are the work of the Viemen who have negotiated with some of insane Grays to target troublesome factions in the area. Unfortunately, the Grays are really enjoying this, and if they don't hear coordinates from the Viemen, they make up their own.
- 037 There has been another breakout of a lethal disease in the Grid. It was intended to be a variant of Typhoid which would be fatal to Gray ETs but with only minor flulike symptoms for humans. White Light is responsible for the introduction of the disease into a soup kitchen near the Grid outskirts. Once the finished product is reliable (with a kill rate of <0.1% for humans), it will be introduced into the general population in an effort to cleanse the insidious Gray ETs. However, until then, these variants are getting into the wild with a 1-2% kill rate.





- 038 Police are harassing all African Americans between the ages of 15 and 25 in the South Tampa area, resulting in a vast increase in fatal shootings and disappearances. The police act at the behest of the Ceperos who are trying to find some DarkTek stolen from them by the Prescott Gents. The DarkTek piece is a Barbute Helmet that can make its wearer sensitive to the use of empathic powers and other DarkTek. The Gents have been using it to find other stores of technology, resulting in some unusual combat situations that have been making the news.
- 039 A Grid-based skateboarding gang is subservient to a Blood kin Vampire (see Conspiracy Lives, p.214). They have some unusual quirks including eating lots of citrus, chocolate, and Dirty J's shellfish, with the intent of increasing red blood cell production. They also have a strange initiation rite: assault and kidnap three Grid wage slaves and bring them to the gang leader.
- 040 There is a kind of grape grown in Harbour Island vineyards used in a wine that supposedly restores youth. The vines nurture the active ingredients in their grapes that exhibit this behavior by imbibing large volumes of human blood. To this end, vast quantities of blood have been purchased to sate the plants. However since the vines wither quickly without nourishment, the keepers occasionally resort to abducting the homeless or Tampete prisoners to feed their plants.
- 041 Three members of the Diablo Blanco cartel were found dead, staked through the arms and legs into solid brick with pitons in the slums near Zero Point Zack and Seminole Heights. A few hours later that same evening, four members of the Seminole Heights Posse were found murdered in a drop house. One was crushed to death under a parked car in a driveway; one was mauled to death in the street – no unbroken bones in him; one was literally tied in a knot; and the last had his skull and spine removed while leaving the rest of his corpse intact. Naturally each gang blames the other, but this is the work of Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille (see Dark Adversaries, p.175) who has been feeding off of the drug-induced fear and adrenalin created by conflict between the groups, but who has recently become addicted by the drugs within his victims.
- 042 A coven of Dream Masters (see Dark Races, p.26) have been reaching into the dreams of those in Tampete but rather than kill them, they have been causing them to commit gruesome murders and move the bodies into public places while sleepwalking. A supposed family (none of the victims are actually related) has been postured on a park bench. A convenience store parking lot has been littered with a dozen bodies. A school bus full of bodies has been discovered on one of the bridges. These acts are all committed by multiple people with no knowledge of each other. The police have identified a few suspects due to surveillance cameras in neighborhoods, however these people remember nothing during interrogation. The Dream Masters are plotting a massacre to rival that of the Town 'n' Country tragedy from earlier this year.
- 043 Tocobaga activists have been firebombing gas stations and petrol trucks in the name of reclaiming Tampete. Either by seer vision or by sheer luck, some of these targets are fronts for Darkling activity. One of the gas stations employs a Werebear (see Conspiracy Lives, p.228) who has been murdering solitary customers traveling late at night. One of the petroleum trucks is owned by Di-Tek and is a decoy; it is actually transporting Blood Kin Troll children. These incidents escalate but will target Darkling activity 75% of the time. The PCs have a tough decision on whether or not to stop this activity once they get to the bottom of it.
- 044 The Undertube between Tampa and St. Petersburg has been infested with Vampire Ants. During the last run of the night, straggling or sleeping passengers are attacked by the things and either moved into hidden crevices or sometimes left to be found the following morning. Since the ants hate light and will hide deep within the body, cause of death is not immediately clear. Therefore the bodies may be brought to morgues (where the ants try to seep into nearby bodies).
- 045 The Tocobaga people have been setting off EMP devices in high rises and offer an ultimatum that the next target will be an airport, hospital, or the Grid unless Fort De Soto is evacuated immediately and forever. One of the high rises houses a protodimensional portal and opens when the power is cut.
- 046 Tampete municipal water has been infiltrated by CDC operatives loyal to ISAAC. These people have been contaminating the water supply in and around the Fremont Pyramid with excessive levels of lead, for the purposes of discrediting some of the bizarre stories start to circulate there. Canisters of hallucinogens have been attached to water mains, provoking even more bizarre stories (which have nothing to do with Fremont).





- 047 There is a VR bar in Ybor called Phantasmik! that sells virtual games and fantasies. During the experience, blood samples and DNA from customers are taken, and if they are a match for certain criteria, they may be selected for organ harvest. Some of the parts are going to Tampete Hospital. Some are going... elsewhere.
- 048 Eco-terrorists protesting the destruction of Tampete's waterways have been murdering people in Tampete, filming it, and then hijacking GNN broadcasts to air it. The first murder is of a Nukid buried up to his neck in Mobbly bay mud. It looks like a hate crime. The next is a Radicycle dispatcher strapped to a chain-link fence outside Radicycle's primary facility. An electrical cable is cut above him, electrifying the fence and him with it. Successive victims either work for Radicycle or any of several clandestine companies procuring their services in some way, resulting in biological waste being dumped in the waterways. Each murder is notably bereft of explanation, an artistic choice to leave something for the viewer. (GM is referred to Zack Heights Posse, p.120).
- 049 American Civil War-time merchant and slave-trader Carter Thorpe wended his way into the Badlands from the Gulf of Mexico. Here, he and his crew spend the better part of a decade surviving that Hellish place. Thorpe learns that some of these slaves are adept psionicists. United toward escape, Thorpe begins to work with them, eventually treating them as equals. On a particularly smoggy morning, Thorpe and his crew (which now include the former slaves) manage to catch a dimensional tendril back to one of the Soft Places in the modern-day Gulf of Mexico. Now that they have returned, they plan to visit Tampete with the same intentions as any self-respecting pirates...
- 050 Reports are circulating amongst the merchant marine community of a ghost ship seen in the Gulf Coast waters; a two-masted, square-rigged Cuban vessel that dates back to the 1800s. By all accounts, no armaments were evident and no crew was ever seen save for one lone shadow who men now call "la Gangularo". Hundreds of human skulls (and other more alien skulls) are tied to the bulwark rails. The few who have ever boarded the vessel have never returned and their ships fled from them, in fear, from the demons they could hear rending their former comrades. (The GM is strongly encouraged to read the Genesis protodimension in this supplement).
- 051 A punk band called Love Bites has been playing various clubs in Ybor. Three members of the band, the singer, lead guitarist, and bassist, are Dread Sidhe (see Dark Races, p24). The drummer is just a groupie but they keep him around because he's good. Nightly, they play to large crowds and feed off of the anger they generate with their music. They host nightly backstage parties and convert handfuls of their fans into groupies and in this way they have built quite a following.
- 052 An engineered series of sinkholes collapses prematurely in succession along Bay to Bay Boulevard near the perimeter of South Tampa. The Viemen have been preparing elaborate chains of these sinkholes across the cape of South Tampa for eventual use in an experiment to sink it; a process they'll use in larger land masses if it is successful.
- 053 TPS Security Systems keeps a six-storey high rise in the Grid which employs hundreds wage slaves who believe they answer phones all day and dispatch the police for home break-ins. In actuality, the company is run by a tight-knit group of Mesmers (see Dark Races, p66) who program their employees to plan and commit acts of terrorism under the pretense of stopping Darkling activity. So they shoot up hospitals and schools, bomb churches, sabotage the Grid and Undertube, and so on. The ones who are caught make wild claims of monsters or goblins or aliens who had to be stopped no matter the cost, and they come across as raving lunatics.
- 054 Black, oily fog rolls out of Taylor Park in through nearby trailer-hoods several nights a month. It makes people sick and kills the already unhealthy crops. Some nights, the sounds of industrial machines can be heard for kilometers, and there have been more reports of UFO activity here than in any other single area of Tampete. Some nights, the ground shakes while bright lights shine on nearby trailer-hoods like sunlight. Some whisper of men in silver suits being behind all the activity, but anyone who has dared to explore further has never returned.
- 055 Di-Tek, a plastic manufacturing company, has chanced upon a colon of Blood Kin Troll children (see Conspiracy Lives, p.213) and is harvesting them in a facility within the Cannery for trial medicines and also for regenerative plastic shielding. The healing properties are encouraging but there are serious side effects including high contraction rates of skin and bone cancer, sensitivity to light (particularly sunlight), and spontaneous genetic defects. The plastics created are durable, but break down in sunlight. The Blood Kin Troll parents have been searching for their children and begin targeting Di-Tek buildings and transports.





- 056 Little girls, Child Monsters (see Dark Races, p20), are living on the South Tampa streets and in abandoned homes and churches. They lure people into vacant alleys with sob stories; good Samaritans, wage slaves, child molesters, anyone. Here they wait while Blood Kin Trolls, their allies, murder the victims in intricate and gruesome ways and some of these are making headlines.
- 057 An empathic teen recently overdosed on Whiz. He survived the experience but now believes he is the seasonal giver of death and despair and has assumed the moniker "Satan Claus". Subsequently, he's been climbing into people's homes with his sack of weapons and has been torturing them throughout the evening, leaving gifts fashioned of their bones or parts for others to discover in the morning. Those with Foreboding who handle these items will gain jumbled visions from the demented teen as he plans his future conquests.
- 058 A cell of Insane Grays is field testing a bizarre plan to use the St. Petersburg power grid to execute large groups of people traversing sections of the Grid. During each test, a few ETs are there, incognito, to document the results. Successive tests are constructed which account for the various escape attempts witnessed by the ETs. A final test is planned to electrocute the entire Grid.
- 059 A communications and signal intelligence cell (of the NSA) has unearthed communications originating from an abandoned radio station in St. Petersburg. They have a surveillance team on it. A race of ETs called Zenon have been long stranded on the planet and are attempting to make contact with their colony in the Everglades, coordinating forays into Tampete.
- 060 Numerous mental asylum patients claim to keep dreaming of the same home in Palm Harbor, which they describe as authentic gothic style. Gargoyles statues have gaze attacks (psionic attacks which can induce fear, nightmares, and even heart attacks). Stained glass windows are done in black, clear, and gray with a smattering of red. The mailbox post is fashioned as a wyvern that strikes those fleeing the residence with its poisonous tail, imbuing eternal nightmares of the place. Cloaked shadows (ghosts of enchanters who lived here long ago) haunt the place but they are temporal memories; echoes from ages past. Only empaths may speak with them. They speak the language of insanity. Those speaking with them may self-mutilate, attack their friends, go catatonic, believe they are someone else, or actually become someone else (get possessed)...
- 061 An NSA cell has been infiltrated by Changelings (see Conspiracy Lives, p.215). The cell now hunts Minion Hunter cells. Agent Lex Winter leads the group, based out of an old abandoned Clearchannel radio station in Clearwater. They send distress calls and then triangulate the replies. They can order attacks on domestic soil by calling in favors from military groups.
- 062 An FBI cell has been infiltrated and is using storage facilities in Palm Harbor to house dead ETs. These cadavers are used whenever a rogue group needs to demonstrate that an assault or domestic strike is warranted. In FBI gear, they cordon off the area before the assault. This could be a good horror aspect as PCs see Feds dumping off ET cadavers around their building for no good reason. Then the Apaches come...
- 063 Palm Harbor development Homestead Terrace has assumed the moniker "The Web." It is composed of rows of houses, linked together with crystalline, incandescent strands of webbing (visible only at night) and the area is unseasonably misty and cold. Energy ETs use the strands to travel throughout the suburb. Structures contain humans suspended from hooks (as food), alien plant life nourished with toxic fumes (these are tented off), mining gear and drill presses to bore into the earth, grow lights and demolished walls and floors make room for mature plants which have become radioactive (the ETs feed off of these). A slave race of Morlocks tills the land, bores holes, and dumps fertilizer into the earth. They feed off of any humans foolish enough to remain in the area.
- 064 A rogue machine intelligence has escaped a Viemen field laboratory and infiltrated a sprawling abandoned junk yard. Initially a small automaton resembling a crab, the machine is using scavenged parts from the junk yard to construct larger and more capable shells for itself. Strange disappearances of technological items and the like afflict the nearby areas, as well as increased Viemen activity as they search for their lost creation.
- 065 Gray ETs have been running a "Meals on Wheels" service to a Palm Harbor suburb in support of some of the less mobile residents. Human Igor drivers have been surreptitiously siphoning brain fluid from the dementia-ridden victims. The brain fluid is used to create the empathic drug in its pure form on which Whiz is based, a drug intended to enhance empathic ability in ETs. Gallons of the stuff are harvested every day. Meanwhile the cell also hosts a facility where the brains of the elderly are surgically removed and kept alive in jars in order to keep generating the fluid. Many of these folks have volunteered for the procedure in the belief it would offer them eternal life.





- 066 A series of failed shootings begins to make news in the DarkNet. In each case a desperate or enraged person came into mysterious ownership of a rare 1878 double action revolver. In each case, the would-be murderer is killed in a spectacular backfiring of the weapon, and the gun disappears from evidence lockers or is never retrieved.
- 067 An underground group has been marketing a drug they call the Lazerus Code, rumored to be able to resurrect the dead. It is extremely expensive and only given to people of power under the oath of secrecy. If the salve is administered within 24 hours, the victim will return to life. He will suffer amnesia lasting for 1d6+6 days during which time, his body is genetically reformed into a Doppelganger, eventually leaving no genetic trace of the original victim, save his memories.
- 068 A human Igor serving a group of Braineaters (see Dark Races, p14) has been stalking vendors in Artist Alley in Ybor. He has been siphoning their brains with an Egyptian bronze probe, a device that allows him to preserve a brain's memories and psionic ability. He brings them to his Braineater masters and is allowed to taste them as a reward. He has subsequently been developing some temporary empathic talents.
- 069 A small group of troglodytes from Ch'Narr who were separated from their hunting party have established residence in one of the telephone company's central offices in Seminole Heights and used the copper found there to set perimeter security systems (resulting in loss of network connectivity in most of Seminole Heights). Since Seminole Heights is a non-affluent area, the phone company waited about two weeks before dispatching a pair of technicians to investigate. Neither has been seen since. The troglodyte shaman is still looking for his band of missing soldiers.
- 070 Pirate radio stations have been broadcasting alien or mechanical noises, occasionally voices, sometimes in English, sometimes Russian or even old Hebrew. A few of the sources broadcasting into the Dreamlands have been triangulated and eliminated (one was a radio room in an old church, another was within a mid-level residence in a Dome 606 sky rise) but others have popped up still broadcasting to the Mike-Towns and Ant Hills. The messages are decipherable only to those with empathic ability or on a kind of empathic drug (like Whiz). The messages, when understood, are instructions to find and open a protodimensional gate in a cemetery in southern Palm Harbor.
- 071 Insane Gray ETs have been ravaging the graveyards of Tampete for infamous criminals, and, by introducing their DNA into new "host" humans (abducted from the surrounding area), they are re-animating these killers and releasing them into the wild. These serial killers are making the news. One kills only the elderly. Another kills only gays. Carl Panzram, renowned for killing 22 men, is fond of reciting old quotes including his own from the gallows: "Hurry it up you hoosier bastard! I could hang a dozen men while you're screwing around!"
- 072 A Doppelganger clan has been hosting a generations-old contest to each replace Arthur Reddick, the Tampete City Council Chair. Reddick, having been murdered long ago and replaced by dozens of such clones over the years, is now seen as erratic and growing more paranoid every day. The PCs may be approached to defend Reddick or to unseat him as part of a coup.
- 073 Reports of abductions near the Grid belts are significantly higher than normal. Some people are disappearing in broad daylight. Grid maintenance workers report finding bones and hair within the conveying belts' inner workings. News stories are blaming clowns, eco-terrorists, and in particular, the Tocobaga natives. The truth is that giant spiders from a nearby garbage dump have found underground Demonground tunnels created by giant roaches that lead to the Grid, and so the spiders have explored these and begun preying on the commuters in the Grid.
- 074 S.W.A.T. was dispatched to a drug lab in South Tampa. Following their typical MO for loud rollout (to give time for the criminals to get away and reduce the danger level) they found no one had left. Rather, the criminals were all dead with no signs of injury. They were buried by the state and the strange event made the news. Now the S.W.A.T. operatives are turning up dead in their living rooms one by one. Each of these men are being followed by Empathic Shades (see Darkling Adversaries, p.164) who have escaped the Shade Hollows. These shades haunt the bodies of their victims until those bodies are discovered, and then the shades stalk those who discovered them.
- 075 FEMA has a facility to harvest antibodies intended to combat an infection they created to kill ETs. They are still fine-tuning it (the current variant is still lethal to most humans). One of the bio-containment chambers was not sealed properly, resulting in infection of the entire staff. The humans were killed immediately, but the animals (though exhibiting symptoms similar to rabies) proved to be simply carriers beyond that. Many of these animals (some monkeys, rats, and a pet Labrador kept by one of the scientists) have escaped and have been infecting the populace.





- 076 An explosion occurs at an unidentified building connected by artificial rail to the tracks running through Oldsmar as a freight train running through Tesseract returns to our universe at a much too high velocity, splattering itself and spilling its contents all over a hundred-meter area.
- 077 ISAAC is shielding a brood of ET young Grays somewhere in Largo. The front is a government testing facility for empathic humans but the tests border on torture in order to help obfuscate any ET empathic outcries of the young (although these are still heard as when they have nightmares). A similar safe house existed in Clearwater but a careless act caused its discovery and a bloodbath ensued after a rain of Insectoid Grubs fell upon it. ISAAC is being more careful now.
- 078 There is a UFO fad restaurant called Graze (even some ETs frequent it for fun). Lots of enthusiasts trade stories of alien sightings, wild experiments, and friends who have been abducted. ISAAC occasionally tries to get someone on the payroll just to keep an ear to the ground. This is a good mustering out seed for new PCs.
- 079 Stories in Dome 606 of erratic, criminal behavior have been circulating. Homicides, assaults, vandalism, and mass shootings have all been reported; each case crazier than the last. The perpetrators are suffering from an empathic disease contracted by some Dome 606 teenagers who ingested a bad batch of Whiz on a recent spree to Ybor. Many don't survive the drug effects, but the few who do have passed on a powerful, sanity-eating disease psionically.
- 080 A biker gang terrorizes the barbs of Palm Harbor and the outskirts of Dunedin. They aren't stealing anything. They are doing it simply for pleasure. They are actually Daemons (see Conspiracy Lives, p.216) who have fled the service of their own terrible Dark Lord and hide in the guise of men during the day. At night their true forms are revealed and they relive their infernal fantasies.
- 081 Creepy looking boxed dolls called Little Wiccans have been turning up in toy stores everywhere and seem to be the latest craze. They can't be ordered and don't even appear on any inventory lists. They simply show up on the shelves of popular toy stores. They seem to have extensive dialogue that somehow customize to the toy's owner. The things are actually little empathic creatures. They use Project Emotion to get children to love them, a feeling they crave and are addicted to. Demand for the dolls results in frequent shopping altercations. More, when several of these toys get together in parks or play areas, their Project Emotion abilities amplify exponentially, resulting in brawls and sometimes murders. During the aftermath of such incidents, the dolls always seem to disappear into the hands of other children or their parents.
- 082 The oldest terrestrial virus, nearly eradicated long before our earth was peopled (by people) lies dormant, but sentient and with empathic ability; it communicates in dreams to the sick, the ill, the delirious, and the children. In this way, "Eureka!" moments have been instilled into biologists and chemists (and future biologists and chemists) in order to let the virus rein again. Professors and students at the University of Tampete have been conducting unconventional laboratory experiments in order to recreate the stuff. (At least one empathic PC should be involved).
- 083 An incident in downtown Clearwater has left an Echo Wisdom safe house temporarily unmanned. A skateboard gang called Pier Pressure has broken into the place and has absconded with military grade weapons, explosives, and DarkTek. Echo Wisdom personnel will be at least a week before they are able to return and take stock of events. Pier Pressure has subsequently been wreaking havoc all over the docks and storage facilities with these toys, and GNN has been airing footage of obscenely powerful DarkTek being demonstrated in the streets. If the PCs can connect the dots before Echo Wisdom returns, it could be a powerful lead-in to future work as Minion Hunters.
- 084 Some Zack Heights Posse gangers have trespassed onto Harbour Island and dispersed spores into the Vineyards there. Within a few weeks, (the gestation period for maturing and infesting indigenous fauna), a few security guards and maintenance workers have gone "wandering".
- 085 Cryogenically stored soldiers from the 1990s have thawed out due to a power surge in one of the forgotten warehouses on Clearwater Beach. They are cybernetically augmented and know of a portal to Tesseract previously thought discovered within the last decade. A company called Neo Lunar is searching for the soldiers and anyone who knows about them.
- 086 Groups of people west of Hyde Park are being rounded up and sent to Career Camps for terms of two or more years for minor offenses. These people have seen the recent emergence of the Fremont Pyramid and FEMA is trying to keep a lid on it. Visitation to them has been restricted and a few have been made to disappear in high risk field assignments. A few have been convicted of felonies and interred into Tampete Prison where they have been put into the "Oubliette".





- 087 A group of Braineaters has been terrorizing a “barb” community in Palm Harbor. The response from citizens is to sacrifice groups of out-of-towners to the things so that they might be left alone. So they host indoor flea markets advertising excellent deals on ammunition, gasoline, and food. Periodically throughout the day, dealers surreptitiously leave their booths as all access to the place is sealed as legions of Braineaters begin murdering all within. Authorities investigating the disappearances are eventually turned away as all within the community plead ignorance.
- 088 Students at the University of Tampete have been measuring the trajectory of the moon over the past several years and have determined that it is gradually but steadily descending toward Earth. This is the brainchild of a rogue group of Gray ETs intent on transforming our world into something more hospitable for their Dark Lords. To this end, they have tricked an American company called Neo Lunar into facilitating the moon’s transformation under the guise of making a hospitable moon base. In actuality, there is a portal within the core of the moon that can only be unsealed by increasing the moon’s density and mass to levels that could threaten Earth.
- 089 In the downtown St. Petersburg Career Camps, residents are forced to work on SteamTek circuit boards but some of them have been getting sick. Many who go to the infirmary don’t come back. A relative of one of the missing inmates has received a smuggled letter from the camp, containing a plea for help because people are being worked to death. Hastily drawn blueprints of a strange circuit board design are included and a hand drawn map to an agro-farm near Plant City where some of the residents have been taken (whether or not they survived).
- 090 Professor Edward Gray at the School of Psychology in the University of Tampete has been hypnotizing his students, who have been committing awful crimes in and around Tampete. He does this to earn favor with a group of sorcerers who call themselves the Coven of Sheol, and who keep a grove in Count Philippe Park in Safety Harbor filled with stone pylons in the form of demons from Jewish legend. These sorcerers are able to conjure Dybbuks, a kind of Daemon (see Conspiracy Lives, p.216) that can possess the bodies of those dulled by Gray’s hypnotism.
- 091 White Light has replaced the repellents in the Hyde Park mosquito misters with a chemical that both makes them immune to various insecticides, and that makes them carriers for an engineered virus intended to kill empaths. There has been a rash of unexplained deaths in Hyde Park, coinciding with the blaring of Mosquito sirens. As investigators explore the events surrounding these deaths, they will learn that all of these people bear no sign of injury save mosquito bites and that most or all of them seem to be empaths.
- 092 Antonio Deleon is a Mexican American who acquires bodies by exhuming them from graveyards and purchasing them from crematories and other places from which they will not be missed. He sells them to an Oldsmar gangster named Randal Hoskins, who in turn, sells them to the Viemen. A local news story has broken of repeating grave-robbings in the Largo and Clearwater areas. Antonio has been doing this for months and regularly hits fringe cities like Palm Harbor and Safety Harbor.
- 093 A cell of corrupted Gray ETs has been surreptitiously inducing terminal cancers in high-ranking military officers and their families and then extorting intelligence from them in exchange for access to the ETs’ advanced medical treatment. The patients are unaware of the origin of the cancer and have been dealing with the ETs indirectly through their human agent, Bradford Shine. The intelligence is in regard to extra-dimensional portals hidden within Clearwater and the Outlaw area between Oldsmar and Town ‘n’ Country. Investigators begin to hear rumors of this as facilities are attacked, sometimes brazenly in broad daylight.
- 094 A clandestine branch of the FBI has supplied the Tampete Police Department with chemically altered heroin. The drug is a streamlined variant of Whiz that causes users to project their thoughts as well as what they see and hear on a certain empathic frequency, detectable by devices the organization has developed for this purpose. Tampete PD has been encouraged to distribute the drugs to the local cartels (the Ceperos, the Mueces, La Familia, and Diablo Blanco) for weapons or favors, and to target groups likely to be in the intelligence community. The drug has an undocumented side effect; it causes psychotic behavior in 0.5% of its users.
- 095 Someone has developed a computer virus that can kill. It is, so far, only effective against about 10% of the population, killing users with flashing lights, sounds and vibrations intended to induce epileptic seizures. For computers accommodating VR, the effectiveness rights to 35%. The NSA has been using the virus to target DarkNet hackers, ET and foreign hackers, and key personnel by using honey-pot methods. DarkNet posts are starting to circulate. Several regular patrons of Ecias’ Hookah and Thumpers have been targeted.





- 096 A rogue FEMA cell has been exploring an emergency contingency plan to deal with the Viemen problem in Tampete. Using a network of underground tunnels, sinkholes, and pseudo-fault lines, the group has mapped a series of subterranean paths that could be fitted with explosives, causing most of the under city to collapse. This, combined with a nuclear option for Old Tampa Bay, is expected to resolve the issue with acceptable levels of collateral damage. Some of the members of the FEMA cell are ISAAC, but are not acting on their behalf. The investigators receive cryptic warnings from agents in the know, attempting to undermine the plan.
- 097 Infominer has developed an intricate massively multi-player game called Rekt. Players compete, online, in increasingly sophisticated levels of criminal activity including assassinations, heists, kidnappings, terrorist plots, and mass shootings. Players complete extensive questionnaires in order to make the experience more “real”. Successive levels are “customized” by the submission of personally identifiable information on whatever targets the player chooses or videos of the places they’d like to “game in” and Rekt constructs a challenging gaming experience. The Hippocampusites use Rekt to collect information for identity theft, blackmail, and sometimes even to execute some of the crimes their customers fantasize about (the profitable ones at least).
- 098 There has been a rash of trespassing incidents in Clearwater warehouses. The trespassers, when apprehended, have had sudden, unexplained heart attacks. The Gray ETs seek information on United States government operations within the area that are targeting them and Darkling activity. The Grays use their spacecrafts to abduct people driving on barren stretches of road on the fringes of Old Downtown Tampa. These people are surgically modified to broadcast everything they see and hear on encrypted frequencies (which the Grays monitor). Most are unaware of the procedure and don’t recall the night they went missing. A few hear “voices” and are told to do things or explore certain places under threat of duress. These people are also fitted with digitalis (foxglove) release mechanisms in the bloodstream, which can emulate a heart attack.
- 099 A foundry in an abandoned lot just north of Mobbly Bay uses children to wire thermal circuit boards. These parts are used for Viemen drone technology used to monitor the Underbay. The facility sits on a pseudo-fault line that the Viemen have inadvertently created with their excessive tunneling. Sinkholes and quakes have been occurring in the area. The children come from state-assisted Childrens’ Homes in South Tampa who are reporting the children as runaways.
- 100 The CDC has zeroed in on a bacterial infection spreading within South Tampa. The contamination area is a few city blocks centered on Gandy and Himes, just north of MacDill AFB, and includes mostly prole buildings. The CDC is trying to contain the epidemic without scaring the people (and prompting them to flee the affected area, spreading the infection). Radiation is effective against the bacteria, often without killing the host. Radioactive countermeasures have therefore been distributed in the area and local government branches have been warned away. People attempting to leave the area are discouraged and forcibly injected with radioactive agents. The source for this infection is a sick ET who’s been given refuge by a sympathetic citizen.
- 101 A strain of genetically mutated orchids begins to grow in barely inhabited wetlands south of the Skyway bridge. A group of locals discovers that drying and burning the leaves of these plants causes non-organic matter exposed to the smoke to become gelatin like for several hours. These locals begin supplying these leaves to Tampete crime families to facilitate murders, break-ins and robberies by allowing the criminals to slip through walls, doors and floors.





GLOSSARY

Ant Hill – Ant Hills are the densely populated, low-income (and often no-income) slums of the city. Many buildings are collapsed and those that are standing are heavily damaged.

Ballotmen – Those who sell their vote proxies to the mega-corporations in return for a subsistence stipend (usually company scrip or debit card) used to buy food and clothing from company stores.

Barb – Slang for suburban areas of Tampete with large pockets of Demonground area within them.

Beasty – Animals, evil plants, and mechanical creatures that are typically low-grade PC encounters.

Bot-City – Industrial areas of the city where production is carried out in automated factories. There is little residential housing (all of it bad) and the only people usually found here are police, corporate security, maintenance technicians, and delivery personnel.

Bubbles – Moniker for the many coastal residences and resorts in Tampete, protected from the environment by plastic domes.

Cages – High-rise buildings in and near Ant Hills that are surrounded by metal bars or grating on the lower floors, and sometimes all floors.

Career Camp – A labor farm that touts itself as a housing and training facility. Enrollment is voluntary and is typically in two-year increments, however inmates may be subject to involuntary extensions due to breach-of-contract clauses.

Dark Lord (or Dark One) – Ancient and evil entities from alternate dimensions, bent on perverting our universe for their own twisted purposes.

Darklings – Races of old and evil creatures from alternate dimensions, often subservient to a Dark Lord but sometimes acting independently as well.

DarkNet – The well-concealed, evergreen underbelly of the internet where Minion Hunters can read and make reports on Darkling activity.

Demonground – Urban Demonground consists of areas of the city now deserted by humans and inhabited by Dark Ones. These areas have been altered into habitats more familiar to their new residents.

Dreamland – The heart of the city dominated by the places of the largest and most important mega-corporations. These places are usually isolated by domes, walls, or natural geography.

Fishing Poles – Interconnected, over-populated, residential towers in and around Lake Maggoire in Tampete, which resemble clusters of upright fishing poles.

Global News Network (GNN) – The only government and corporate sponsored news source today.

Gnomes – The absolute financial elite of the world. Most gnomes are born to their station, with family money guaranteeing a superb private education and family influence securing choice entry-level positions in corporate management.

Grid – The name of the hybrid Ant Hill and Mike-Town area in St. Petersburg interconnected by a series of people moving belts.

Harbour Island Response Operatives (HIRO) – World-renowned private security firm based out of Harbour Island but staffed with military and para-military types.

Igor – Derogatory name given to the human lackeys of Dark Lords.

ISAAC – International Space Agency. Aerospace Command. Covert international military arm of the shadow government charged with the defense of Earth and its human inhabitants from ET incursions from space or across the multiverse.

Mike – Mikes are what are left of the middle class, and actually consist of two radically different groups: wage slaves (a term considered extremely offensive) and outsiders (or true mikes).

Mike-Town – Area taken up with independent shops and modest-income housing. It has the look of a crowded and slightly run-down inner-city neighborhood, but it is vibrant and full of people making it on their own (if just barely).

Minion Hunter – Those who are aware of the Darkling resurgence and who actively try to combat it.

Outlaw – Just as there are large portions of the city no longer protected by the police, there are large stretches of the countryside which are officially out of any legal jurisdiction except for the federal government.





Prole – Prole is the general term used to describe the vast underclass that clings to survival on the fringes of society. They are largely without regular income, and often without a regular residence.

Skerries – Floating land masses in and around Vinoy, held in place with magnetic technology.

Tuhao – Tampete slang for the “new rich”

Trailerhood – Slang for the interconnected mazes of stacked trailers in and around Largo.

Uncontrolled Zone – An area where the police are not expected or obligated to enforce the law.

Underbay – Term given to the collective network of tunnels and structures beneath Tampa Bay and connected bays.

Undertube – The secured tunnel between Vinoy and Hyde Park which traverses the Underbay.

Wage Slave – Wage slaves form the bulk of the salaried work force for the large corporations which control over 90% of the productive capacity and distribution channels of the industrialized world.

Whiz – A synthetic, empathic, and highly addictive drug available in Tampete.





INDEX

Abramov, Dr. (see Zotov, Boris)	pg. 34	Buckhorn, Bob	pg. 14
Academy of the Holy Word	pg. 31	Bullard, Richard	pg. 29
Aftermath 98	pg. 14, 45	Burgonet Security	pg. 35
Amish, Captain Gregory	pg. 96	Cages, the	pg. 64
Ammemet	pg. 53	Calornavitas	pg. 101
Arranger, the (see Taylor, Max)	pg. 106	Camelia's Teas	pg. 34
Artist Alley	pg. 55	Camp Soule	pg. 88
Awray, Eladio	pg. 107	Cannery	pg. 56
Badlands, the	pg. 188	"Car Bomb" (Prescott Gents)	pg. 113
Ballast Point Butchers	pg. 30, 106, 112, 191	Car Wharf	pg. 47
Banks, Waldo "Fusion"	pg. 113	Career Camps	pg. 63
Barbs	pg. 12, 74, 89	Castle	pg. 54
Barbus, Nico	pg. 35	Calderón, Marcus	pg. 110
Barranco, Cleto "Mausoleo"	pg. 107	Celeriputo Enterprises	pg. 118
Barrow Mummy	pg. 150	Center for Disease Control (CDC)	pg. 17, 86, 88, 120
Bayshore Blvd.	pg. 26, 30	Centro Ybor	pg. 54
Beacon Groves	pg. 75	Cepero, Silvio	pg. 106
Bellair	pg. 72	Ceperos, the	pg. 106
Bierling, Jasper	pg. 42	Ch'Narr	pg. 184
Bite Back Pest Control	pg. 38	Channelside	pg. 36
Blitz, Maxwell	pg. 21	Chronoton Calcium Carbonate	pg. 100, 119
Bodine, Lt. Colonel Hank	pg. 74	Cigar Town	pg. 35
Bog Troll	pg. 151	Clearwater	pg. 72
Boyd Hill	pg. 67	Clowns	pg. 20, 66
Bradenton	pg. 89	Cole, Xavier	pg. 31, 113
Brady, Admiral Mason	pg. 32	Coletti, Justin	pg. 47
Brakemen	pg. 83	Coors-O'Doul's Brewery	pg. 56
Brandon	pg. 90	Corrigan, Jason	pg. 32
Bridge, Bayside	pg. 99	Crime	pg. 20
Bridge, Courtney Campbell Causeway	pg. 99	Croom, Janathan	pg. 47
Bridge, Gandy	pg. 99	Cropduster Guy (see Edvard, Klement)	pg. 106
Bridge, Howard Franklin (1275)	pg. 99	Cross, Benjamin	pg. 37
Bridge, Sunshine Skyway	pg. 99	Cuesta, Martez	pg. 107
Bridge racing	pg. 99	Curci, Jonathan	pg. 43
Brink, Colin	pg. 120	D'Charro, Benjamin	pg. 118
Bronowski, Eryk	pg. 34	Daniels, Jamie	pg. 36
Bubbles	pg. 96		





Danilowicz, Emil	pg. 21	Genesis, First Wraith	pg. 174
DarkNet	pg. 27, 34, 89, 90, 93	Genesis, spirits	pg. 156
Darwin's Creed	pg. 87	Global News Network (GNN)	pg. 27, 57, 89, 103, 120,
Davidson, Brin	pg. 114	Grands Penseurs	pg. 48
Davidson, L. Gerold	pg. 113	Grazer	pg. 159
Davis Islands	pg. 49	Green Iguana, the	pg. 54
Deaton, Kelly	pg. 48	Greens (ET race)	pg. 116, 195
Delegates, the (see Viemen)	pg. 118	Greenstreet, Joel	pg. 49
Dentist, the (see Washington, Elijah)	pg. 113	Grid, the	pg. 63
Deth Proze	pg. 103	Gulf Blvd.	pg. 95
Diablo Blanco	pg. 106	Gulf of Mexico, the	pg. 92
Dickson, Cal	pg. 85	Hal (see Krendel, Calvin)	pg. 46
Die Mond Ritter	pg. 88	Hangar 7	pg. 49
Dirty J's	pg. 33	Happy Time Brewery	pg. 37
Dodge Brawl	pg. 37	Happy Time Pharmacy	pg. 37
Dome 606	pg. 45	Harbor Island	pg. 39
Dowling Funeral Home	pg. 37	Harbor Island Response Operatives (HIRO)	pg. 40
Dragoon	pg. 155	Harbor Island Road Security	pg. 41
Dragos, Stefan	pg. 119	Harbor Island Wall Security	pg. 40
Drithe, the	pg. 175	Head Above the Rest, a	pg. 48
Dunedin	pg. 244	Hillsborough River	pg. 104
Echo Wisdom	pg. 72	Hippocampusite	pg. 160
Ecias, Jason	pg. 55	Honeymoon Island	pg. 96
Ecias' Hookah	pg. 55	Hope, Malcolm	pg. 65
Edvard, Klement	pg. 109	Hyde Park	pg. 33
Eradica	pg. 56	Hyde Park, North	pg. 33
Espectro, el (see Higinio Meuces)	pg. 112	Hyde Park, Parking Garage	pg. 35
Fischer, Dave	pg. 14	Hyde Park Village	pg. 34
Fishing Poles	pg. 64	Hydrix	pg. 84
Flood, Jamie	pg. 121	I-Beam	pg. 56
Fort De Soto	pg. 98	Infominer	pg. 65
Fremont Pyramid	pg. 27	Iorio, Pam	pg. 14
Friedman, Aarol	pg. 75	ISAAC	pg. 98
G'Thyxul	pg. 36	Jelly Cephalopod	pg. 147
Gabor, Camelia	pg. 34	Kenneth City	pg. 69
Garden of Peace	pg. 70	Kennigan, Colonel Marcus	pg. 32
Gardener, the (see Calderón, Marcus)	pg. 109	Klaus, Thorsten	pg. 49
Gauntlet runs	pg. 99	Krendel, Calvin	pg. 46
Genesis	pg. 93, 178		





Krichan	pg. 161
La Familia	pg. 51
Lake Maggiore	pg. 67
Lakeland	pg. 90
Largo	pg. 73
Leeds, General Martin	pg. 32
Little Wiccans	pg. 244
MacDill Air Force Base	pg. 27, 30, 32
Maliq	pg. 85
Marduke, Hurricane	pg. 15, 18, 86
Market in the Shade, the	pg. 81
Maxwell, George	pg. 114
Mayborough, Monty	pg. 106
McCollough, Ian	pg. 15
McCoy Prosthetics and Cloning	pg. 47
McMillian, Niles	pg. 31
McMullan, Grant (see Re'Let, Lur)	pg. 116
Medina, Tomás	pg. 51
Meese Hospital	pg. 88
Methhead (see Stomas, Yanaki)	pg. 110
Meuces, Higinio	pg. 112
Meuces, the	pg. 112
Meuces, Tumulo	pg. 112
Meuces, Yuniel	pg. 112
Mobbly Bayou	pg. 87
Montgomery, Walter	pg. 68
Mosquitoes	pg. 17
Mosquito Swarm	pg. 148
Mr. Glass	pg. 46
Municipal Street Belts	pg. 63
Muster'd	pg. 65
Neo Lunar	pg. 102
Neucoxi, Chief	pg. 116
Old South Tampa	pg. 30
Old Tampa City	pg. 23
Oldsmar	pg. 81
Omni-Tek	pg. 118
Ootlow's	pg. 55
Palm Harbor	pg. 74
Pauley, Roderick	pg. 47

Phrenic Zeta	pg. 67
Pinellas Park	pg. 69
Pirate Radio	pg. 94
Plant City	pg. 90
Poppetmeister	pg. 66
Prescott Gents	pg. 113
Primitus Domus	pg. 101, 180
Psiomycota	pg. 162
Re'Let, Lur	pg. 116
Re-Deux	pg. 48
Red Thursday	pg. 14, 26
Reddick, Arthur	pg. 243
Ritz 2020	pg. 55
Rossi, Dennis	pg. 69
Rotek	pg. 49
Rutilege, Daniel	pg. 46
Safety Harbor	pg. 87, 117
Sand Barrows	pg. 187
Sand Wight	pg. 163
Saucer, Gulf	pg. 93
Sawgrass Park	pg. 69
Scienta Terram	pg. 101
Scisensationalism	pg. 113
Scott, Rick	pg. 100
Seminole	pg. 72
Seminole Heights Posse	pg. 110, 120
Shade, Empathic	pg. 164
Shade Hollows	pg. 187
Sinkholes	pg. 12, 45, 119, 149, 159
Skerries	pg. 68
Skyway Bridge	pg. 89, 90, 97, 99
Smallpox	pg. 17
Snakepits	pg. 104, 149
Soft Places, the	pg. 187
Spyre Inc.	pg. 116
St. Petersburg, Historic	pg. 58
Starr, Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan	pg. 49
SteamTek	pg. 181





Stomas, Yanaki	pg. 110
Stromm Inc.	pg. 97, 118, 197
Suncoast Homeless Shelter	pg. 63
Survivalist Communities	pg. 17
Tampete Aquarium	pg. 37
Tampete Correctional Facility (TCF)	pg. 49
Tampete Forum	pg. 36
Tampete General Hospital (TGH)	pg. 50
Tampete Museum	pg. 35
Taylor Park	pg. 72, 116
Taylor, Max	pg. 106
Teknogarden	pg. 46
Temple of the Exulted	pg. 53
Terra Verde	pg. 97
Tesseract	pg. 182
Thumpers	pg. 31
Timeline	pg. 14
Tocobaga	pg. 116
Town'n'Country	pg. 86
Trailerhood	pg. 69
Troglodyte	pg. 104, 165, 185
Tufel, Mark	pg. 36
Ultima Ignus	pg. 97, 118
Underbay	pg. 101
Underglyphs	pg. 200
Undertube	pg. 68
University of Tampete	pg. 35, 43
Vampire Ants	pg. 166
Vargas, Dr. Arturo	pg. 47
Viemen	pg. 117, 167, 180

Viemen, constructs	pg. 152
Vineyards	pg. 42
Vinoy	pg. 68
Wapner (see Dragos, Stefan)	pg. 119
Washington, Elijah	pg. 113
Weather	pg. 17
Weave, the	pg. 47
Weedon Meteorite	pg. 100
Weepers	pg. 66, 168
White Guy, the (see Flood, Jamie)	pg. 121
White Light	pg. 74, 120
Whiz	pg. 231
Wickermen	pg. 96
Wild Acres	pg. 74
Winthrop, Robert	pg. 36
Worm, Interstices	pg. 117, 181, 196
Worm, Ash	pg. 169
Worm, Water	pg. 170
Xal'Xatick	pg. 84
Xid and Xid-borne	pg. 171
Xseadu Hoth-Kin Sille	pg. 175
Yacht Club, Davis Islands	pg. 51
Yacht Club, Harbour Island	pg. 42
Yaga, Dr. Vera	pg. 48
Yates, Caleb	pg. 51
Zack Heights Posse	pg. 120
Zenon	pg. 173
Zero Point Zack	pg. 52, 117, 120
Ziggurat, the	pg. 72
Zotov, Boris	pg. 34





Tampete is the strangest place you will ever visit.

From its people-moving "Grid" and its Largo "trailer hoods", to the domed dreamland and WWII-style wall on Bayshore Boulevard, to its strange road-rage, excavation, and clown ordinances...

In downtown Tampa, a pyramid erupts from the earth which interferes with radio transmissions and stops electronics from working altogether.

In Channelside, an aquarium breeds new species of Darklings used in secret experiments on the clientele.

In Oldsmar, a resistance group fronts as a market and rail network to smuggle drugs, weapons, and DarkTek used to fight ET cells.

And the Underbay covertly interconnects prisons, hospitals, and Underbay Mining operations with smuggling conduits and demonground tunnels for various dark purposes.

There is literally never a dull moment in Tampete.

DARK CONSPIRACY



INSIDE YOU WILL FIND

Descriptions of all Tampete areas, with maps, plot hooks, and NPC stats.

Coverage of all the major factions and organizations in Tampete.

New protodimensions, beasties, Darklings, and Dark Lords.

New Career Paths and DarkTek.

50+ pages of comprehensive tables for encounters, fully developed NPCs, Demonground patch generation, gang generators, psychic drug effects, and a hundred and one plot seeds, all useful for dropping Tampete flavor into any campaign.