

Abduction

This scenario is different from most in that it is designed for a single player character to explain the origin of the PC's "unique" abilities and induction into Delta Green.

The Set-up

This scenario is designed to be a flashback prelude for a single DG friendly that gained "superhuman" powers as a result of being abducted and experimented on by the Greys. In our game, the player wanted her character to have super-healing, but anything from psionics to darksight to super-strength would be fine.

The events detailed in this scenario should take place roughly 2 years or so before the character's introduction to Delta Green. Ideally, the character should have some sense of mystery around her that makes the other players curious about the character's origins. This scenario can then be dropped into the campaign as a "Lost" style flashback.

Part One: On the road

The scenario should begin late at night while the character is driving home in the Middle of Nowhere. The exact locale (state, city, etc.) isn't too important, though for dramatic effect a forested area might serve best.

Read the following to the player, making changes where needed to fit the character's exact circumstances:

You're driving home after a late night with your college buddies. It's about 1am and despite the cups of cheap 7-11 coffee and Flaming Hot Cheetos that keep your taste buds on fire your character is struggling to stay awake. You are tempted to pull over to sleep, but it's only 90 minutes to your home and you'd rather get there sooner than later.

The road in front of you reveals itself in waves as you climb small hills and descend the other side. Trees on either side of the road loom overhead, blocking out the moonlight and making the road even darker than it should be. The road, old concrete with a faded double yellow line down the middle, is punctuated with the occasional roadkill. Judging from the absence of oncoming headlights and traffic behind you, you are quite alone out here in the oppressive darkness. But that's OK! You've always enjoyed the solitude.

But then, just as you reach the top of a hill, your engine dies and your headlights and your car's other electrical functions go out. You hit the brakes and coast to a stop along the road's narrow, soft shoulder. You try to start the engine, but it doesn't work. Even the emergency lights don't work. With your lights out, the full weight of the darkness comes down on you. Hoping you might be able to jiggle a wire or tighten up a screw to get the car going again, you pop the hood open, open the door, and step into the cold night.

As you lean over the engine jiggling wires and checking parts several bright lights appear above you just behind the tree range to the right of your car. The lights alternate between white, yellow, blue, and red, and then go through the cycle again. You glance up, trying to determine the source of the

lights, and then a soft humming hits your ears and a warm gush of air begins to kick up dirt and fallen needles on the soft ground.

You're standing there, staring, listening, not sure what is happening. The lights are shining so bright that it is impossible to make out the source; it's like a cop is shining a flashlight in your eyes.

Then, an odd sensation hits you. You feel light in the head as if you're going to pass out. You then feel an odd weightlessness. It's hard to believe, but you look down and see the car getting smaller below you as you drift up into the air towards the lights. At that point, you go black.

This is a classic abduction scenario. Feel free to add your own flourishes (such as time loss, telepathic messages from the Greys, etc.) to the event as you see fit.

Part Two: Experimentation

The character will black out for a bit and then wake up on a table in a brightly lit room surrounded by white ceiling and walls. The character can't move, though his or her senses should be operating normally. Out of the corner of the character's eyes, he or she can see the movement of "small, hairless, bipedal men." Soon after, the character finds himself or herself the center of attention. Describe to the character 3 or 4 of the Greys standing over the character looking down on him or her with large black eyes. Some of them have syringes with long needles or other sinister-looking tools in their hands.

While the character is absorbing this, he or she hears the following message in his or her head:

"You will be changed"

If the character tries to respond he or she can't talk. A mental response, however, gets the following reply:

"We have to do these things. It's important that we do these things. You will understand."

If the character protests or asks why, the Grey responds:

"Because it's important."

At this point, the Greys turn the character into a guinea pig. The GM should feel free to mess with the character as much as possible on this. Have the Greys engage in all sorts of fiendish medical experiments, or not. Describe strange medical instruments and the odd physiology of the aliens (no eyelids, long fingers, bulbous craniums, etc.). Make sure that experimentation coincides with whatever "gift" the character gets (that is, if the character gets darksight, describe the character's eyes being removed, etc.). Cruel GM's will make the experimentation painful and will call for lots of SAN checks. When all is done, one Grey will telepathically tell the character, "You are changed."

Shortly after this final moment, the character blacks out and wakes up back in his or her car in the middle of a cornfield at night. Moments later, the character blacks out again and comes to back in his or her car near the spot where the original abduction took place. When the character starts the car again, all systems work fine.

Part Three: Going home

Assuming the character goes straight home, he or she eventually gets there with no more problems. However, the character soon discovers there is "missing time" (depending on the GM's prerogative, this could be a few hours or 24+ hours, in which case the character's friends and family might have filed a police report). The final piece of the puzzle is for the GM to arrange to demonstrate to the character his or her new powers in a dramatic fashion.

Part Four: The future

The GM has a couple of options to work with, but the most important thing is that this character's experiences lead him or her to Delta Green (or, rather, lead Delta Green to him or her). One idea is to have the character become an amateur expert on Majestic 12, the greys, and the government cover-up of alien life. Perhaps the character makes a name for him or herself writing in the alternative press. Maybe Delta Green seeks out his or her expertise because of an MJ-12-related op or the character, doing his or her own research, bumps into DG in Groversville as part of the Convergence scenario. Having a low-profile, knowledgeable outsider with some sort of "gift" just might be a real asset for DG in their continuous friction with MJ-12.

Here are some other options:

- * The child's (single) mother was abducted 9 months prior to the character's birth. The character herself is the product of an implanted pregnancy using cloned fetuses (the fetus was implanted in the mother's womb). The character has a number of clones throughout the country, all of whom products of the same sort of experiment.
- * The abduction was part of a longitudinal experiment on cloning and human reproduction and was one of a series of similar abductions throughout the country at the same time (all done upon the same group of clones). Somehow, the character learns that he or she has a number of twins somewhere. If this option is used, have the Greys on the ship make cryptic references to the character's childhood development.
- * Majestic-12 somehow finds out about the character's new abilities (perhaps the Greys reveal who they experiment on) and wants to capture him or her for their own experiments. The character would most likely need to go underground and would rely on Delta Green's assistance. This could lead to some real conflict between MJ-12 and DGiK perhaps even a shoot-out at some point as a RECOIL team tries to capture the character and DG tries to stop them.

When all is done, the GM will have a powerful character with a unique background with a lot of room for dramatic storytelling.

I'm indebted to C.D.B. Bryan's Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: Alien Abduction, UFO's, and The Conference at M.I.T., the source of the abduction scenario described above. It's based on the experience of a real person who gave the story above while under hypnosis.

Some Comments

Abduction! provides a good background for a specially-enabled character, but it could do with a lot more interactivity. Plus, I'm of the personal opinion that a long term super powered character messes with the CoC flavor.

With that in mind, here's how I might use it...

Prior to a game session, let all the players but one know that we're going to mess with that one and tell them how. We'll call that one the Victim. Let's say the change to the Victim was to enable darkvision. It would be good to select the character with the lowest SAN as the Victim, as it improves the odds of getting the scenario underway quickly.

While running through whatever scenario is already underway, the Victim notices a strange effect - when a light turns off in a room, instead of everything going instantly black he sees the light level fade slowly over a few seconds. Nobody else sees this.

Each exposure to darkness has a longer onset for the character, and they have no idea why. Each time this happens after the first time, they make an Idea check. If they succeed in the Idea check they realize something is different about them (and realize nothing else), and they make a sanity roll. Once they fail the sanity roll, the flashback sequence begins.

At a predetermined signal, the rest of the players turn their backs to the Victim's player. While the Victim's player is still a little confused, jump right in without other prior notice: "You find yourself driving through a wooded area at night. Lively Irish folk music blasting from your CD player seems to be the only thing keeping you awake as you feel your heavy eyelids tempt you with sleep." The SAN loss from the failed check (which should be significant) is only applied after the flashback is over.

From there, let the player react. Maybe they pull over to sleep, maybe they drive on, maybe they pick up their cell phone to make a call and try to find out where they are and what's going on. Doesn't matter. The abduction will happen before they have contact with anybody. Their memory was messed with after the fact in such a way that the fact they have no idea where they are or what's going on before the abduction is just a product of the fact that this whole scenario is a fault-prone memory of events. Later they might remember that it all happened a few weeks or months or years ago when they were on their way home from Mom's house, or whatever, but for now it's a displaced memory being relived as though it were happening now. It took time for the alterations to grow to fruition, however long you think that takes is how long ago all this really happened.

Up to this point, the other players still are sitting with their backs to the victim.

"A blazingly bright flashing light envelopes your vehicle." One player turns back to the table, turning on a strobe light while other lights in the room are extinguished. After a few seconds the strobe is turned off, bringing the room to darkness, and the players all turn around and face the Victim as the lights are brought back up.

(If this session can be played in a place where you have easy access to turning lights on and off from your seat, that will be a major plus. Otherwise, you can have one of the other players control the lights.

Just don't have him hang around the light switch first. There should be as little warning as possible, and he just happened to be at the switch. Any weirdness prior will decrease the discombobulation factor.)

The other players are now playing the Greys. They've been given plenty of strange things to monotonously utter in turns... "The seventh angle of its protuberance into curved space will be altered." "It will forget." "The defective optic circuit will be enhanced." "It will forget." "It will forget." "It reacts." "Reactions are irrelevant. It will forget."

Those last two are spoken as the Victim is screaming in pain while strange instruments are used to vivisect his head, with blood spray covering everything in sight. Through one of his eyes he sees the other being extracted and destroyed in front of his face. With his good eye he sees an impossibly long probe being inserted into the other eye socket. A pressure on his remaining eye begins just before the lights are turned out.

The lights come back on after a few seconds and the rest of the players are back in their regular characters looking at the Victim with concern, asking if everything is okay. The SAN loss from before the flashback is applied, and the character hopefully goes stark raving mad for a while.

Let the character have darkvision for a while, but it certainly needs to be removed before it screws up power balance. Maybe the Greys detect that their memory block failed and so come back to remove their enhancements. Maybe the character himself rips out his eyes in a fit of terrible insanity.

Regardless, any earthly medical procedure fails to find anything out of place.

Yeah, that's how I'd run it.

Some More Comments

That's fantastic. The best cutscenes are always when players get involved as NPCs. I agree, superpowers are an issue, however if you can keep it minimal to things like dark vision it's not so bad. If anything, that player is at a disadvantage, because he'll see the thing in the dark that the others don't.

In fact, instead of dark vision, what if there is a mini resonator (From Beyond) implanted that goes on and off seemingly at random or on its own?

The only thing is I would probably not have them destroy the eye. I know it's silly to limit alien technology and unknowable things, but I would keep it unarguable by stating they remove the eye without severing the optic nerve and tinker with the eye itself. Like you stated, "The defective optic circuit will be enhanced" so I'd throw in something creepy like, as they are carefully extracting the eye, careful not to sever the optic nerve, it slips up out of the instrument to dangle back towards the other. For one single moment, as the eyes suddenly fall into alignment facing each other, an effect that would remind one of two mirrors facing each other comes into effect. For that split second, the player sees Forever, and that is what causes his brain to shut down for the remainder of the abduction.