

IMAGO

# MORTIS



GRAMEL



# IMAGO MORTIS RPG

Hardboiled Horror Investigation in an Old World Metropolis

By Mauro Longo

**Additional material:** Umberto Pignatelli, Piotr Koryś, Paweł Jasiński

**Editing:** Andy Slack, Piotr Korys, Umberto Pignatelli

**Playtesters:** Antonio Agnello, Francesco Arcifa, Demetrio Battaglia, Marzia Bianchini, Mattia Bianchini, Cordelia Bonforte, Andrea Borzi, Alfio Cardillo, Serena Celi, Francesco De Luca, Luca Di Gennaro, Cristina "Eowyn" Fagone, Giuseppe Salvatore Fazio, Ivan Fighera, Giulio Guerrera, Carlo Spinelli, Alberto Tagliavia.

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**Cover:** Ania Jarmołowska

**Layout & typesetting:** Irek Winnicki

**Art:** Ania Jarmołowska, Nina Garnarczyk, Igor Myszkiewicz, Bartek "Fedek" Fedyczak, Mark Wester, SADE, Nikola Avramovic, Miguel Santos, Scott, Kenya Ferrand ©2011, Alexandre Benhossi, David Lewis Johnson, Luigi Castellani, Joyce Maureira, David Sharrock *NUELOW Stock Art Collection #14: Starkest Terror* is Copyright ©2015 Steve Miller, ©2006 Bradley K McDevitt. All Rights Reserved, Publisher's Choice Quality Stock Art © Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games, Some images copyright Louis Porter, Jr. Design and Skortched Ur! Studios, used with permission

*Imago Mortis is a Savage Setting directly inspired by the works of the Italian horror writer Samuel Marolla.*

*Although you'll find elements and ideas from his other works, together with some from other horror and hard-boiled books, the main inspiration comes from the novel Imago Mortis itself.*

*However, this is not the roleplaying game of the Imago Mortis novel, but a game set in the world of Imago Mortis, or in one particular vision of it. Most of the elements in the game are therefore original and created for it. It is not essential to read the novel to play the game, but it is strongly recommended.*

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**CHAPTER 1**

**ENTERING A ROUGH,  
GHASTLY WORLD ..... 9**

**CHAPTER 2**

**THE BUREAU:  
CHARACTER CREATION .... 33**

**CHAPTER 3**

**THE DEPOSITORY:  
NEW GEAR ..... 47**

**CHAPTER 4**

**SETTING RULES ..... 63**

**CHAPTER 5**

**GAME MASTER SECTION .... 77**

**CHAPTER 6**

**GHOST FILES: A GRITTY GHOST STORY  
GENERATOR FOR IMAGO MORTIS .... 91**

**CHAPTER 7**

**PHENOMENOLOGY ..... 101**

**CHAPTER 8**

**SOMETHING WICKED  
THIS WAY COMES... ..... 119**

**INSPIRATIONS ..... 139**

**GLOSSARY ..... 140**

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"HELL IS EMPTY AND ALL THE DEVILS ARE HERE"  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, THE TEMPEST

"THE STREETS WERE DARK WITH SOMETHING MORE THAN NIGHT"  
RAYMOND CHANDLER  
THE SIMPLE ART OF MURDER

THE OLD WORLD'S METROPOLISES ARE GETTING WICKED. NIGHT AFTER NIGHT THERE IS MORE CORRUPTION, MORE VIOLENCE, MORE MADNESS THAN EVER. AND THE CRIMINALS ARE BECOMING HETICUS

IN THE MEANTIME, AROUND DARK CORNERS, PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO SEE DREADFUL THINGS: PARANORMAL ACTIVITY, POSSESSIONS, HAUNTINGS...

AND A FEW PEOPLE THINK THERE IS AN UNDERLYING PATTERN TO ALL THIS. PROPHECIES AND INVESTIGATIONS POINT IN THE SAME DIRECTION. SIGNS AND CLUES ARE BOTH USED TO SOLVE CASES. PSYCHICS AND PRIVATE EYES ARE STARTING TO CO-OPERATE

AND THERE IS SOMETHING UNHUMAN RISING FROM THE NETHERWORLD

PROLOGUE



*Imago Mortis* is a paranormal hard-boiled Savage Setting, focused on the classic ingredients of hard-boiled crime fiction, mixed with chilling elements from modern ghost stories.

## Who the Heroes Are

In *Imago Mortis*, every hero is an “Occult Detective” that knows something is going wrong in the city. Every Detective has a foot in each camp: investigation *and* paranormal. He could be a cop that has seen *too much* in the sprawl, a medium operating as consulting detective, a hacker using the “GhostWeb,” connecting via secret places, a private eye specializing in “very particular cases”, a vengeful victim of a weird menace, a spiritualist with a gun, a scoundrel who has had enough of his creepy, atrocious boss, or a Lombrosian doctor working as a profiler.

## What They Do

In *Imago Mortis* Occult Detectives face gangsters, robbers, kidnappers, corrupt officers, terrorists, mobsters, serial killers and ruthless secret service agents. They solve cases in a very hard-boiled style, in the rotten heart of contemporary cities or in their enormous suburban sprawls. But, in all of their cases, there is something weird, paranormal and twisted, and a dark plot from the Netherworld is coming out. Entities are real, places and people are being haunted and the Unhuman is preparing the Midnight of the Century.

Every case will be one part investigation, one part action and one part paranormal, and everything is going to get more evil, dark, and chilling as the story goes on...

## Where They Are

*Imago Mortis* is primarily set in darkest Europe or, to be accurate, in its largest, most contaminated and modern cities. Forget desolate moors, deserted mansions and cemeteries corroded by saltness; nowadays Entities emerge from the rotten and polluted heart of the modern metropolis. Where millions of people live

together, where crime, decay and abandonment rule, where modernity shows its dark side... there the Slits to the Netherworld open up.

And there you'll be.

## What's Going On

Something is happening. Everywhere. Something obscure and evil. You probably used to think of these Things Man Was Not Meant to Know as a joke or a game of any sort. Well, now the game has changed. Now you've seen *what's going on*.

The majority of people and the media are not yet aware, but something wicked this way comes in the very heart of the modern world: the greatest metropolises of our age.

Something is rising from the Netherworld and the Slits in the Curtains between life and death are expanding and spreading, day by day. Some say the End of Days is coming. Some say the countdown to the Apocalypse has started. Some call it the “Midnight of the Century”. I don't know about that. I just see that Entities are real and they are invading our cities, driving people crazy, planning dark schemes and opening the gates of our Earthly World to their armies. From the inside.

So, it's time for you to take your gun and your flashlight and descend into the darkest pit of *our* metropolis.

Hunting for Entities.

## The Bureau

After the first phenomena occurred in different European cities, a lot of countries started investigating the Entities, opening Special Agencies and Departments in their Secret Services, to clarify the situation. When they understood that something bad was really happening, the local agencies and Home Offices asked for a pan-European program of investigation into what was going on.

Then, two years ago, the EU started the “Vallum Program”, as a special and classified part of its Security and Defence Policy. This program mainly resulted in the creation of the European



Bureau for the Management of “Internal Infiltration”, as they call *what’s going on* in their legalese. The Bureau has now its Headquarters in Amsterdam and branch offices in every EU city with a relevant number of phenomena.

The default assumption of this Setting Book is that every player character Occult Detective is an “EU Inspector”, working for the Vallum Program. However, Inspectors use more colloquial terms: they call themselves “Detectives” and their office “The Bureau”.

In future releases, you will find more possibilities and backgrounds for Detectives.

## Milan

Right now, you are Detectives assigned to the Milan office and you will operate in this Italian metropolis until your next deployment. You can be from any country and any background, if it’s congruent with the setting and the Bureau.

Milan is the second city of Italy, a foggy and cold city in the north of the country. It’s the beating heart of Italian business, commerce, finance and fashion... and it is tainted by criminals, traffickers and dangers moving to and from every part of Europe.

Not to mention Entities, of course...

You fell in love with Milan at first sight. Now you hate it deeply. With good reason.







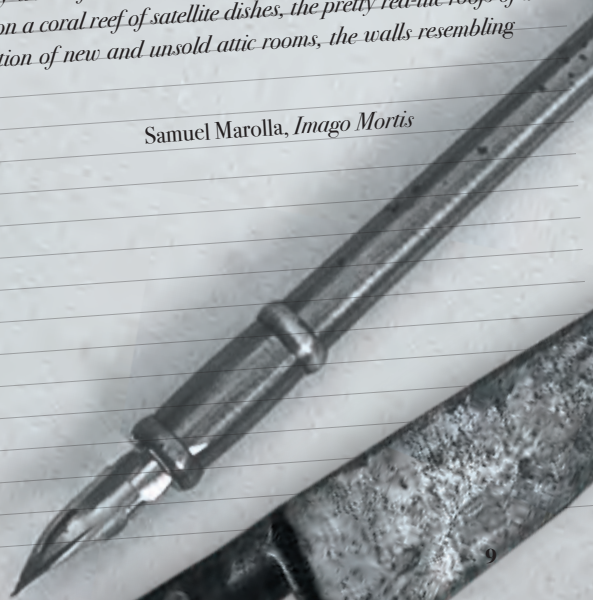


# CHAPTER 1 ENTERING A ROUGH, GHASTLY WORLD

## 1. WHERE WEIRD THINGS HAPPEN

*"The sky hung low over the city, bloated and sodden like a rag wiped over a filthy floor. The appointment was in two hours and I didn't have anything better to do, so I drove around for a while. With the massive housing complexes under construction, the working at a standstill for years due to the infiltration of the 'ndrangheta (mafia) or because the money had run out – it all looked like the ruins of an alien society without a hint of good taste that fled the planet right before the apocalypse. Black water dripped on dead trees planted beyond the fences and barbed wire, brown puddles connected in gurgling trickles, trade union banners on the grey walls of closed-down factories billowed in the bitter breeze; chimney pots belched out black smoke on a coral reef of satellite dishes, the pretty red-tile roofs of the old Milan were ravaged by the infestation of new and unsold attic rooms, the walls resembling asbestos-painted dung."*

Samuel Marolla, *Imago Mortis*





Welcome to the Bureau, Detectives. They've assigned me to brief you on your tasks.

My name is Ghites, Augusto Ghites. I'm a Private Eye, you could say. I only work by word of mouth. My name isn't in the phone book or on the internet.

I'm Italian, I live in Milan, and I'm an Occult Detective. I'm not a part of the Bureau, just a consultant.

I gladly leave all the paperwork, bureaucracy and teamwork to you. I mind my own business. But if you need someone to explain this city and *what is going on* here, nobody in the whole Vallum Project is more qualified than me.

I've been doing this job, if you can call it that... I've lived this life since 2009, when ghosts were still Creepypasta tales for teenagers. I've been in this crap from before the GhostWeb, from before there was a Milieu, from before Vallum and the Believers MeetUps.

I do not claim to be the first one to have some psychic "gift" or to have noticed *what's going on*... Lombrosians and other covert groups have been active for over a century. But for sure, most of the others here came later.

Nice shot, Ghites, go get your medal...

They asked me to tell you about entities and paranormal phenomena, and here we are. Some of you are also taking notes or recording what I say. Well, good nerds. We can make a nice ghost-hunting handbook, like the Junior Woodchucks.

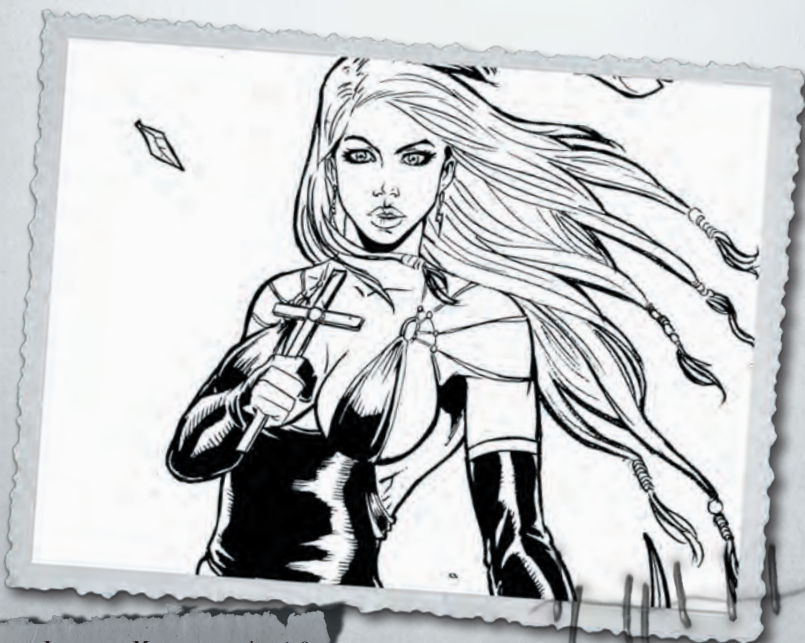
First, let's start with you.

## Occult Detectives

If you are here, you have already had seen something, you have met a Spooky, you have been victims of some paranormal phenomenon. Every Detective must have had such an experience before being enlisted in the Bureau. Congratulations, not everyone can deal with the purest cosmic horror and still be alive, sane and ready to react. Assuming you are, of course. I mean alive and sane. Do not think you are the weirdest people I've met, my friends. Not at all.

In any case, you have glanced into the dark, you have touched the cold, dead things that are out there, you have fallen into the black pit from which those things come.

Whether you like it or not, now you are different from everyone else. Now you know





*what's going on* and you'll never forget it.

At this point, you have only two options.

You can surrender and wait for them to come back and pick you up. Because they will come back, you can count on that.

Or you can fight back, put on some nice boots with reinforced cold iron toecaps and go down there to kick them in the backside all the way back to the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Since you're here with me today, it is clear you've already made your choice. You will continue the fight, vanquished but not subdued, ready to play this game to the end, the terrible price of having a dull light in your eyes... a darkness that others do not have, the black sheen of someone lost in his thoughts every time he looks out of a window. The dark, disillusioned eyes of those who've seen things in life that others have only perceived.

My compliments, you've joined the Scooby Gang. Once the Occult Detectives were Silence, Carnacki and Hesselius, or, if you have never read a book in your life, the English guy in the trench coat and the two brothers with the black car. Today it's you.

Yippee Ki Yay!

## The Bureau

With all that is going on, even if governments do not know or pretend not to know, the national intelligence services are certainly aware.

Already eight EU countries have equipped themselves with Special Agencies for studying and analyzing these phenomena, when they are not directly involved in the cases. Actually, there are rumors some of these have existed for decades. A friend of mine, Stefano Drago, once told me he works for a Department of Italian forensic police interested in "strange phenomena" that has existed since the nineteenth century.

That could be true, but it's not our concern right now.

What does matter is that the EU started the Vallum Program two years ago, after a request from eight different countries.

Now the Bureau works as a sort of "Federal Interpol of ghost-hunters," with a dozen offices

across the Union and great authority given to its Detectives in every country. Its symbol is the "Triskelion", the three interlocked spirals; you will find that glyph everywhere around here. It is recruiting psychics, GhostWeb hackers, Lombrosians and other people who have experienced something paranormal, training them and using them... you... as EU inspectors.

Each of us has his own story and background. I could also say that you have been hired mainly for your previous experiences, as sources, analysts and think-tankers of *what's going on*. But that would be a half-truth. Because if you're in the Bureau you cannot limit yourself to study, classification, navigating the GhostWeb and reading old books.

Sooner or later you will be sent into the field. Sooner or later you will have to get your hands dirty, take to the streets and help those who need you. There is no one else who can do it. It is your job.

## Authority

From now on you will be working for the Bureau and you will have greater authority and discretionary powers than the police officers of the various countries, comparable to those of intelligence agents. You may not interfere in a normal investigation, and it is strongly recommended you act without ever being noticed. To be clear, here's what you can and can't do:

- \* You can access investigation, ballistic and forensic files and police department information, even during an investigation, but according to police timetables.
- \* You can visit crime scenes and places related to investigations, together with and after the forensic experts, but you *should not* trespass on private property uninited.
- \* You can talk to witnesses, persons of interest and sources, but you can't make them talk to you.
- \* You can help police in solving cases, as consultants, but you don't have to solve them instead of the police. Common crimes and the mundane aspects of investigation are their job. You just have to solve paranormal problems and report on them. If the case has



both mundane and paranormal elements, just focus on the latter.

- \* You can't share any information about "Internal Infiltration" with anyone, including officers, magistrates or politicians of higher rank. You report only to the Bureau and the Bureau will protect you and cover for you.

## Cases

Well, what kind of Detectives would you be, without cases to solve?

You want to know how I started? I was a private eye specializing in interrogating the ashes of the dead, summoning the ghost of the incinerated guy and getting clues from him to find out who killed him... Then, once I got the wrong case (OK, they were all wrong ... but that one was the *worst*, believe me...) and I barely got away with my life and soul...

But never mind. Do you know about Cineromancers? Well, right in front of you, you can see the most famous example! Give me the ashes of your grandfather and I will tell you the old miser's life, works and miracles. Yes, of course, even the place where he hid the money...

Half of my clients called me for that, actually.

But you are from another generation, and this is another time. You will deal with the weirdest things: haunted hotels in the city center, which some billionaire wants to get back to normal, ghost trains appearing in peripheral metro stations, people riddled with bullets by gangs who get up and go after revenge on their murderers, simple business like that.

I know you're new here, and perhaps you expect all sorts of bad things: werewolves in the sprawl, white collar vampires, gill-men from the sewers, flying sharks and so on, like those guys in Texas that you might have heard about, or all those stories of UFOs down in San José...

Sorry guys, no sparkly vampires here. We have Spookies, damn' ghosts with a white sheet on and their feet in chains.

Indeed, by the way, when you are ready we'll take a walk on the dark side...

What did you say? You were born ready? Great quote, pal. Then let's go!



## 2. SPOOKIES, OR WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT ENTITIES

*"As to the first kinde of these spirites, that were called by the auncients by diuers names, according as their actions were. For if they were spirites that haunted some houses, by appearing in diuers and horrible formes, and making greate dinne: they were called Lemures or Spectra. If they appeared in likenesse of anie defunct to some friends of his, they wer called vmbre mortuorum: And so innumerable stiles they got, according to their actiones, as I haue said already. As we see by experience, how manie stiles they haue given them in our language in the like maner: Of the appearing of these spirites, wee are certified by the Scriptures, where the Prophet Esay 13. and 34. cap. threatening the destruction of Babell and Edom: declares, that it shal not onlie be wracked, but shall become so greate a solitude, as it shall be the habitacke of Howlettes, and of Züim and Iim, which are the proper Hebrewe names for these Spirites."*

King James I of England, *Daemonologie*

The real nature of paranormal phenomena is something I prefer to leave to alienists and metaphysical scholars. All I can tell you for sure is what we do and how we can stop them.

But, there are many theories, and many new details on these phenomena are added every day. That will be your job, actually.

Before talking about cartridges filled with salt and exorcisms, here's what you should know about Spookies, and which more or less everyone agrees on.

And yes, I call them *Spookies*, don't mind that. I guess Lombrosians have a whole classification in Latin on them, with over fifteen different types of entities and phenomena, with names such as *Lemures*, *Larvae*, *Lamiae* and so on. I often do not quite understand where a Chained ends and a Wraith begins, or if Paramentals are another type of entity, or just a paranormal phenomenon that is triggered by real entities. Do we need these classifications? I say

yes, but only as long as it helps us to send them back to the afterlife again... everything else is mumbo-jumbo.

In the Milieu we call them all "Spookies", just to be clear: Ghosts, Poltergeist, Paramentals, Husks... I am not interested in listing their traits or enumerating their special abilities. If you want, you can put a nice "Bestiary" or "Phenomenology" in your Junior Woodchucks' Guidebook, at the end. Then maybe I will also give you a glossary, but for now let's talk about serious things.

### Entities

All paranormal phenomena are connected and have a single origin: the Entities, and their kingdom. We call the latter the Netherworld or the Afterlife.

Do not believe that there are other worlds, beyond the Netherworld and the Earthly one where we are now. As far as I know, there is no hell out there, no flames or horned demons.

No Paradise either, unfortunately ... Not even that. No angels, golden clouds or divine armies.

Everything I have seen is limited to our dirty, polluted and ruined world, and the realm of the dead. And sometimes I'm not sure which is worse...

Forget the Netherworld for the moment: right now, we are not interested in what the dead souls do in their realm. You can think about it when you go to church or lie alone in bed at night, unable to sleep.

Now we'll speak of ghosts, or what those same souls do when they are in our world.

Ghosts, specters, entities... they are the souls of the dead: a fragment of a person's spirit, which persists in some way after death. Many of them are physically linked to their Remains and get weaker as these decay. But destroying Remains does not mean erasing the dead soul forever. Although

it's reduced to ashes and the ashes scattered and another thousand years pass, in the Netherworld that soul continues its existence.

We don't much care what they do in their Afterlife. But when for some reason they come back and appear in the Earthly world, we speak of entities and paranormal phenomena.

We are interested only in the Infiltrations in our cities. At home they can do what they like.

## Ephemeris and Recurrence

Whatever their nature, when Entities are in the Earthly World, including the most powerful, they can act only at certain times (Ephemeris), that occur in a continuous cycle (Recurrence).

This means that they are "active" and can use their paranormal phenomena only when they are in their Ephemeris (whatever period of time it lasts), then they have to "recharge" and are inactive until the next one.

Some of them have the shortest Recurrence possible, or "every night until I get what I want", and the longest Ephemeris, or "all night long, from sunset to dawn." In other cases, the Recurrence can be "every Friday", "every moonless night", "every anniversary of his death", "every time someone enters the house", "every 666 years" and so on. Similarly, their Ephemeris can be "between midnight and half past midnight", "from midnight to dawn" and so on. Do not ask me what regulates this stuff, because I don't have the faintest idea.

Typically, no Entity can stay in our world during the day. If you are in the midst of a particularly obscure and difficult case, remember that you can always sleep, heal or relax during the day, in relative safety.

## Dormant, Hidden & Manifest

According to its Ephemeris and Recurrence, a Spooky can only be in one of the following conditions at a time:

- \* **Dormant:** This condition occurs during the day, when the Entity is not in its Ephemeris, when it has exhausted every phenomenon

at its disposal, or when it has been faced and "defeated" until its next Ephemeris. The Entity "is" in the Netherworld, it is back behind the Curtains, and it cannot interact with us or be perceived, even by those who have psychic powers. When a Spooky is Dormant or, generally, in the Netherworld, the only way to interact is summoning it with a Séance (see Section 4).

- \* **Hidden:** For all purposes, the Entity is in the Earthly World, but it is invisible, hidden, and just waiting for the right moment to strike. It's night, probably, and in its Ephemeris. A Hidden entity can be fully active and is definitely planning evil he intends to do, or is actually doing it, using some of the phenomena at his disposal: Dark Tricks, Apparitions, Poltergeists, Omens and so on.
- \* **Manifest:** The Entity appears in a physical form and can hit and be hit (see Manifest in the Paranormal Phenomena). But be careful: even if its Shroud is destroyed, it can return Hidden or, if all the available phenomena are gone, Dormant until its next Ephemeris.

## Cold Spot

The Cold Spot of an Entity is the place where it appears at the beginning of its Ephemeris, a personal Slit in the fabric of reality that leads directly from the Netherworld to the place the Entity haunts or hides. The Cold Spot is not an open passage for every Spooky, it works only for that Entity. As the name says, if you search the Cold Spot to face a Spooky directly, find the place where the temperature is lowered, the light dims and everything looks bleak, terrible and distorted. It will be there, Hidden, waiting for you. If the Entity is a Fader, its Cold Spot will probably be the place where its remains are, and this could be useful for you. But when it matters, for Wraiths and Chained, it will be the darkest and ghastly place around. From there, these Entities will move to reach their Hook.



## The Stuff Specters Are Made Of

Dead souls from the Netherworld which appear and disappear in our Earthly World depending on incomprehensible cycles. OK. But what are they made of? I do not think that there are any scientific magazines out there that talk about it. But there are some scientists in the Bureau and Lombrosians that have racked their brains for generations, so we have some clues.

All these ghosts and phantoms are an intangible will persisting after death, held together by a dark force that is called Phantom Energy or Perispirit. Hey, don't get mad at me, the names weren't my idea; Phantom Energy is a physical phenomenon studied in all universities and the other term comes from old-timer mediums... All the Netherworld is soaked in this dark force and it recreates the forms and appearances of our world, on the other side. Every single Spooky, everything that appears or exists in the afterlife is caused by Phantom Energy, the same force that sometimes flows directly into our world from the Slits and is called the Wind of the Dead.

We think this dark force can do the following:

- \* Preserve our soul, or whatever it is, after the death of our body, like a disembodied reflection of the mind that we had in life.
- \* Act as the physical form of a dead soul in the Netherworld, giving him an appearance drawn from his previous life and his current state, serving as a shape by which spirits see each other;
- \* Allow Entities to physically manifest in our world, collecting all the soot, dust, ash and rust around and giving them Shrouds - a form made of these fine materials.
- \* Allow Entities to act in our world over matter other than that of its appearance, operating dark tricks, decay, poltergeists, paramentals and other effects.

When an Entity decides to manifest physically, this dark force draws to it the impure and impalpable matter all around, generally dirt, soot and dust, and weaves it into what we call the Shroud, the "physical" and nebulous form of the

Entity itself. This form is subject to a fast decay and can generally only last for a few minutes, but this may be enough time for the Spooky to physically act against you, other victims or animate and inanimate objects.

There is one thing you must never forget about Shrouds: these are not the Entity, but its physical shell, a simulacrum, just another one of its tricks. When the Shroud is destroyed, the Entity is still there somewhere around you, Hidden, and can still use other tricks. Destroying the Shroud will give you an advantage and will gain you some time. But the work isn't over yet.

## What a Shroud Can Do

Shrouds can walk or crawl on the ground, or, supported by Phantom Energy, float in mid-air. They can pass through cracks and holes as if they were made of smoke or fog, but cannot pass through solid walls or materials. It's also true that they can dissolve and leave their Residue in a room, pass through walls in an ethereal way, and then resurface on the other side regaining corporeality.

Shrouds can pursue or chase you, but they cannot maintain material form for too long. In addition, many Entities are linked to a particular place, to their mortal remains or to a specific object, and will not move too far away, even in the form of a Shroud. If you can keep them away or run for a few minutes, you'll be safe ... at least until the next Ephemeris.

Shrouds have various ways to hurt you, but be aware that almost all of them will basically use two.

The first is Dread. These apparitions are terrifying, inhuman and horrible. Not only do they look scary, but they also force us to think about the real meaning of life and death, and the pure, senseless cosmic horror waiting for us in the Afterlife, where we are all going to end.

In the grim darkness of the Netherworld there is only torment.

And every time a ghost appears in front of you, you will remember this detestable cosmic truth. And you risk going crazy. My advice? Do not think of it, at least when it's time for

shooting. First, you Banish the entity back to the Netherworld. Then, you will have plenty of time to talk about your concerns with your priest or your shrink.

Their second weapon is touch. If their Phantom Energy should enter into close contact with you, this will corrupt your flesh and make you decay. You will lose strength, grow old, and rot. Don't ever let them touch you or, at least, not for long. If you're touched, you will feel a deathly chill descending along your spine, your hair standing on end and your skin freezing like frostbite. Move, run! A long enough touch can kill you.

## What You Can Do to a Shroud

If you find yourself in front of a Shroud, whatever type of Entity has manifested it, the way to deal with it is the same. There's no use shooting at it unless you have iron filings or coarse salt cartridges. Don't even say the words "melee combat", please. In short, the only physical way to counter them is something of the right material that explodes, spreads like buckshot, or covers a wide area. Fortunately, the damned Shrouds burn. If you can, take a Molotov cocktail or a flamethrower with you. They will do the dirty work.

What did you think we had? Proton packs? Magic formulas?

Shotguns and fire, I say, and the job is done!

I do not know other physical methods to defeat them: some have tried acids and electric shocks and they have all met a horrible end... Perhaps actinic rays hurt them somehow, but I suggest you to avoid experiments, at least initially.

## A Shroud by Any Other Name

The typical Shroud you will face is a thing of dirt and ash, smoke and steam, with a grayish or dark color. It will have a vaguely humanoid likeness and usually its face vaguely resembles the face of its former living body.

But do not think that this is the only

appearance it can have. An Entity could aggregate to its Perispirit any substance of the material world, for use as a Shroud. Fortunately, only the most powerful of them can afford to be creative.

For example, a Wraith could manifest inside a television, seep down from the screen with a body composed of plasma, pixels, phosphorus or electronic components, and then flicker with the appearance of some Japanese girl with hair over her face. Or a Charonian could emerge from a dirty pond with a Shroud made of mud, water and slime, like the damn' Monster of the Lagoon.

In my career I've heard all kinds of stories: ghosts made from smoke and sand, from pitch and bird feathers, from salt and seaweed, black dogs made of peat and ladies in white emerging from cellars, tar monsters, and humanoid shapes made of millions of worms joined together.

You'll get used to it.

Well, not really.

## Paranormal Phenomena

Manifesting as a Shroud is not the only trick available to Spookies, although it is often the most striking. There are dozens of other phenomena that an Entity, whatever its nature, can use against you or to pursue its dark purposes: possessions of objects and living things, hauntings, poltergeists and so on. Some can ignite your bodies from within and cause fire wherever they want. Others can summon winds and storms. Still others can raise the dead and throw them against you as revenants, or create Paramentals made of garbage, or even corrupt places, objects, or weapons.

And unfortunately, if you are dealing with powerful Entities, the number of tricks at their disposal is high and potentially lethal.

Against Revenants, Hauntings and Possessions you can always try an exorcism, but you also need to find the right way to Banish them forever, before ending up torn to pieces by some animated chainsaw or riddled by a haunted nail gun.



## Vengeful Spirits and Dark Intent

I have told you so far who the Entities are, when they appear and how they manifest. But something is still missing: the main issue, the one that will allow you to do your job and solve your case. The big question to ask about a Spooky is “why”?

Why do these dead souls crawl through the Slits and infest our world, instead of remaining there, beyond the Curtains?

The answer is different for each entity and often we use their own intentions and motivations to describe them.

Chained and Wraiths, for example, are tied to a passion or a something unresolved, even in death. We call this bond “Chains” and the subject of the bond, their target, is the “Hook”.

If the Hook is an individual, the Chained probably is chained to our world to protect, persecute or kill him. If the Hook is a place or an object, the Chained is in our world to guard, infest or curse it... and so on.

Faders are those entities who watch over their earthly Remains, until these become ashes or mush. Their will is holding on to our world by the fingernails, and they persecute anyone who disturbs or even passes close to their Remains.

Shades are here because someone summoned them and then let them escape.

Husks just want to drink the water of life that flows inside us.

And then there's the Legion, pursuing some obscure purpose we still do not know, and which many identify with the Midnight of the Century, whatever that means.

Unfortunately for you, although some entities are here just to protect their families or let us deliver an old family necklace to their poor granddaughter, most of them are motivated by resentment, hate, revenge, murderous rage and malice.

All feelings that they will direct at you as soon as you get in their way.

## Banishment

This is pretty much all there is to know about Spookies, at least for now. You will learn the ropes in the field. But there is a final fundamental question that must be answered: how do you drive them back into the Netherworld?

There is no single answer to this question and you have to find the right method for each entity.

Defeating the Shroud with your shotgun will not be enough, nor even finding their Cold Spot.

Searching out and destroying their Remains? Perhaps, especially with Faders.

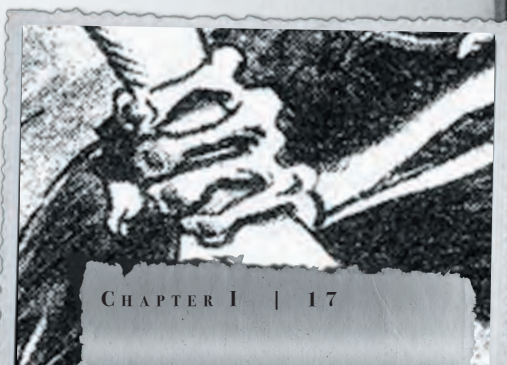
Finding and closing a Slit? Hardly ever, at best that might work against Husks and the Wind of the Dead.

If your Spooky has a Hook, if it belongs to those types of entities we call Chained and Wraiths, then the trick is right there. You'll have to figure out what its Hook is and use that against it. Somehow. It wants revenge for something or someone, and kills until it gets its revenge? You take revenge for it. Of course, I do not mean that you need to execute their target, but finding out who was responsible for the crime the entity is angry about, nailing him and bringing him to earthly justice... most of the time that should work.

And when that's not enough... be creative. The most important thing is that the Hook nailing the Entity to our world is broken, then their Chains fall inert to the ground and finally the Spooky is free to go to the hell it came from.

This is, more or less, the theory.

Let us now talk in more depth about the main types of Entities you will encounter.



### 3. PARANORMAL ENTITIES

*"Have you ever thought what a ghost of our times would look like, Miss Millick? Just picture it. A smoky composite face with the hungry anxiety of the unemployed, the neurotic restlessness of the person without purpose, the jerky tension of the high-pressure metropolitan worker, the uneasy resentment of the striker, the callous opportunism of the scab, the aggressive whine of the panhandler, the inhibited terror of the bombed civilian, and a thousand other twisted emotional patterns. Each one overlying and yet blending with the other, like a pile of semi-transparent masks? (...)*

*It would grow out of the real world. It would reflect all the tangled, sordid, vicious, things. All the loose ends. And it would be very grimy. I don't think it would seem white or wispy or favor graveyards. It wouldn't moan. But it would mutter unintelligibly, and twitch at your sleeve. Like a sick, surly ape. What would such a thing want from a person, Miss Millick? Sacrifice? Worship? Or just fear? What could you do to stop it from troubling you?"*

Fritz Leiber, *Smoke Ghost*

Before starting on the list of losers I want to reiterate something. Most entities are similar, as far as their nature goes. If we leave out the Legion and the bigwigs, all the Spookies you meet have the same nature: they are the dead souls of people who were once alive, and are now back from the Netherworld to bother us, for one reason or another, in one way or another.

What changes is the reason why they returned, the ways in which they decide to appear and act, and the tricks at their disposal. For the rest, "the same face, the same race" as they say.

So here comes the damn' freak show.

#### Faders

Faders are nothing more than simple tormented souls, who cannot leave this Earthly World. The reason for this binding is not clear,

and could change from Entity to Entity: usually they are victims of murder, brutal violence and torture, or the dead whose corpses are missing or have not received proper burial. Other times they have no particular reason to stay in the Earthly World, except that they have some way forgotten or ignored that they have to go beyond the Curtains. In any case, Faders tend to take on the same look they had in life, are tied to their own Remains, and cannot stray too far from them. Forced as they are to stay here without being able to interact with the living, they become more miserable and rabid day by day; and the greater their anger, the more transfigured their features, making them scary creatures devoid of humanity.

A Fader is perhaps the easiest thing to get rid of: just find its remains and incinerate them, or, if appropriate, bury them where the Fader wants. Once the Spooky is appeased this way, it will go away and return to the Netherworld.

#### Chained

Together with the Faders, Chained are the most common type of Entity in our cases. To be present in the Earthly World they must have some Chains that hold them here or brought them back from the Netherworld. Usually they are lost souls, who moan for their Chains; feelings, passions, desires they could not leave behind; the typical scary and vengeful ghost.

Or, they were recalled to our world for some reason in a Séance, or maybe they were sent and relegated to our world by a more powerful Entity which subjugated them.

Chained are the Spookies with more "originality" in appearance. Instead of taking a simulacrum with the face they had in life, they prefer to manifest in a form expressing their will, torment or hate. Often, therefore, they assume a disguised form, faded colors, or even the appearance of monsters and animals, with horrendous and gruesome details: black dogs, ladies in white, creepy girls and so on...

To get rid of a Chained you have to



understand first its Chains and Hook: the object, person, fact or place tying it to our world. Then you have to solve its problem, whatever that is. If the Hook is the weapon that killed it, it must be destroyed. If it is the person who has brutally massacred it, what happened must be publicly demonstrated and the guilty brought to justice. If it is a place where terrible things have happened, it must be burned or destroyed. If it is a horrible fact, it should be brought to light and reported everywhere. In short, you have to understand what ties your Spooky here and solve his problem, like a goddamn shrink.

## **Wraiths**

Wraiths are the elderly, powerful and malevolent among Chained. Every Wraith has its Chains and its Hook, like the Chained, but they are much more powerful and fierce. These creepy phantoms are spirits of revenge, hate and cruelty, which could curse and harass a dynasty for generations, haunt a place for centuries, or come back every decade to kill their victims, for over a millennium. As their existence stretches out and they feed on death, Wraiths become more and more powerful and terrible.

You deal with Wraiths just like the common Chained. Only, be more careful...

## **Husks**

Who the Husks were in life, and what they wanted, no-one is capable of knowing anymore. Today these souls, empty of any identity, simply wander in the Netherworld, dragged around by the Wind of the Dead, waiting to be swallowed by Nothingness. When a Slit opens, sometimes they are simply drawn into our reality.

Their appearance is that of a diaphanous shadow devoid of features and personality, a simple light or an indistinguishable simulacrum: a forgotten slag of will held together by Perispirit, wandering around the Slit it came from, in search of living beings to torment.

They are almost an abstract and impersonal phenomenon that causes dangerous effects just by their nature, not by intent. That said, they are a

danger you must not underestimate: Husks often appear in swarms and can cause nasty surprises for the unwary. Also, they quickly learn that the vital energies of the living reinvigorate them, and so, like sharks tasting blood, they assault the living to drain their life force with their touch.

The only way to drive them back into the Netherworld is to find and close the Slit they come from. Doing so is not easy and sometimes you have to do it from the inside.

## **Shades**

Shades are shadows of the deceased, like Chained and Faders, but commonly residing in the Netherworld. Not particularly insane (like Faders), or passionate, furious and vengeful (like Chained), or foolish and hungry for life forces (like Husks), Shades are not generally hostile to the living, just indifferent.

In short, Shades would not be in this material world if we did not summon them, usually through Cineromancy or a Séance, when we need to know details about their life and, above all, death. Under certain conditions, however, even Shades may turn into foes.

## **The Legion**

If you think Wraiths are terrible enemies, then you have never met the Legion.

The main thing you must remember is that the Legion is not composed of the dead souls of people once alive. None of them has ever been human. Some say that they are not even native to our world, but come from the other side of the Acheron River, or the Farthest Shore. And what there is over there, my friends, no one knows or wants to know.

If there is a hell, I would say that these scum are devils, demons or whatever from that place. The Legion is the army of the Unhuman: a host of servants of undetermined numbers, who carry out without doubt, hesitation nor rest any command and plan the Unhuman is plotting.

The members of the Legion are so indistinguishable and in accordance with each other that we suspect they actually are the

same individual or infinite copies of the same, or perhaps even an infinite subdivision of the Unhuman in many different appearances, made in order to pursue its plans.

Whatever the truth, they are dark and malevolent beings, without any glimmer of humanity or feeling. Fortunately, it seems they cannot infest the Earthly World or torment mortals, unless they are specifically invited and enslaved by spiritualists and cultists, for terrible purposes.

In that case, my friends, find the guy who summoned them and keeps them in this world, and solve the problem once and for all.

## Charonians

If what we understood of Charonians is true, from a certain point of view it is a blessing that there are such entities. They are a sort of keeper of the Netherworld and usually constrain the plans of the Legion, in addition to acting sometimes against Faders, Shades, Husks and Chained, taking all these dead souls back where they belong: the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

These merry guys are tall, dark, big and menacing, giants compared to normal Spookies. Often they also have weapons with them, materialized by agglomerating any pieces of stuff they find around... and of course these jokers prefer sickles, so everyone in the Milieu calls them Reapers. But sometimes even the Charonians go mad, run away from the Acheron or perform other missions and tasks in the Earthly World. In these cases, woe to those in their way.

When a Charonian roams our world, the best way to get rid of it is to help it complete its task, then accompany it back to the Slit and let it return to the Netherworld, waving "goodbye".

## The Wind of the Dead

Can we call that... *space* in the Netherworld "air"? In any case, a kind of light wind seems to blow in that place and, when a Slit opens in the Curtains, sometimes this cold, infected *air* comes out and reaches our world. It's what we call the

Wind of the Dead, and actually it's another way to define Phantom Energy.

Sometimes, the Wind of the Dead is the first signal that there is a Slit open between the Worlds and, although no other Entities come out, the Wind creates paranormal phenomena just the same: cold, faster decay of matter, physical discomfort, sadness, anger or other negative emotions in the mind, inclination to evil and death in people.

As I said, some of us identify the Wind of the Dead with the Phantom Energy, which is the cosmological force of decay and destruction, as well as the energy that allows paranormal phenomena.

## Paramentals

The Wind of the Dead that blows through the Netherworld can in some cases change reality or corrupt whole parts of our cities. Other times, its effect is manifested in a more physical and immediate manner, in the form of Paramentals.

Paramentals are not proper Entities, but special effects created by real Entities or, as I said earlier, directly by the Wind of the Dead. They are aggregations of common matter: usually trash, garbage, waste material or whatever, that binds together thanks to Phantom Energy and becomes a construct blindly ravaging against everyone around, or obeying a Spooky, if one is involved.

## Poltergeists

Like Paramentals, Poltergeists also are a stage trick made by real Entities, a paranormal manifestation of their power, which can hurt you very badly.

You've seen it in the movies: the ghost remains hidden, but uses his Perispirit to throw books, kitchen knives and chairs at you. Sometimes even cars and running chainsaws.



## 4. BIG SHOTS:

### THE MOTHERS AND THE UNHUMAN

*"Let us call them, therefore, Our Ladies of Sorrow. I know them thoroughly, and have walked in all their kingdoms. Three sisters they are, of one mysterious household; and their paths are wide apart; but of their dominion there is no end. (...)*

*The eldest of the three is named Mater Lachrymarum, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, where a voice was heard of lamentation — Rachel weeping for her children, and refused to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened forever, which, heard at times as they tottered along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven. Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds, oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard that sobbing of litanies or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. The second sister is called Mater Suspiriorum, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops forever, forever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to*

*herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest.*

*But the third sister, who is also the youngest!*

*Hush! Whisper, whilst we talk of her. Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all.*

*And her name is Mater Tenebrarum — Our Lady of Darkness."*

*Thomas de Quincey, Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow*

### Our Ladies of Sorrow

We call them The Mothers or the Tres Matres. Someone in the Lombrosians seems to have read de Quincey's book or watched Dario Argento's movies and decided to give them this bombastic name.

For all we know, they are the Queens of the Netherworld, the Goddesses, sovereigns or whatever else may represent absolute power in that place.

Are they Death itself? Yes. Are they also something else? Again, yes. Do they have their own personalities? It seems so. Are they three aspects of the same entity? One more time, yes.

Don't ask me anything more about them, rookies, for I really know very little of them. Maybe in books written in Lingua Ignota there is



more information but I do have a few more clues to give you.

Fortunately, they are not evil, but they are Death, always remember that. Charonians are their servants and so are other entities called Sisters of Sorrow, which don't usually appear in the earthly world. The Unhuman and the Legion are their enemies and, although the latter are powerful, in the Netherworld Mothers are still the law.

Sometimes they appear in dreams or omens, or even walk among us mortals. Certainly, they can open and close the gates of Netherworld at their own command and impose order among all the lower entities, or even on the Legion.

## The Unhuman

They say the Unhuman is the final enemy of the human race, the Master of the Legion, the Defier of the Mothers, the crawling menace of the Netherworld and the origin of evil in the earthly one.

It is the main architect of the corruption of the dead and the living, the obscure seed that generated the Netherkin. Its obscure plot unfolds over millennia, it is realized in our monstrous cities and in the growing evil of their alleys, in the madness of minds, in the insane violence of these days and in the continuous openings of Slits in the Curtains.

If you want you can call it the Devil, Nyarlathotep, the Deceiver, Satan or maybe with all those names there, you've got the idea.

The Legion is its, and I mean that those servants of its (if that's what they really are) are like robot slaves without free choice, pure emanations of its will. At least, you may face and fight them. You can't face the Unhuman.

I met it once, and I almost crapped myself. If you think a Wraith is scary, talk to me again after you've met the Unhuman.

Again, there is little to add. You can try to fight the Legion. With the Unhuman you can only run like hell and wait until it goes.

There is another thing you should know, and I'm sorry I have to say it.

From the moment you began stirring in

these troubled waters, since you have seen *what's going on*, you have caught the attention of the Unhuman, and now he will not take his eyes off you.

You know the saying not to gaze long into the Abyss or the Abyss will also gaze into you?

Well, the Unhuman is the damn' Abyss.

## The Midnight of the Century

Aside from pestering humanity since its origins, corroding the world from within, corrupting the souls of men and plotting for the restless spirits to arrive in our world, there is something else the Unhuman has a hand in.

Spookies call it the Midnight of the Century, but even they have been unable or unwilling to reveal what it is, exactly.

For sure, it will be something terrible, dark and evil... probably some hell of a Ghost Apocalypse of Death, something like that...

The Legion and the Unhuman have been secretly concocting it for years, and *what's going on* is just the appetizer, a small sample.

The Midnight of the Century is coming and we have no idea what it is or how to stop it.

Good luck!





## 5. THE NETHERWORLD

*There sighs, complaints, and ululations loud  
Resounded through the air without a star,  
Whence I, at the beginning, wept thereat.*

*Languages diverse, horrible dialects,  
Accents of anger, words of agony,  
And voices high and hoarse, with sound of hands,*

*Made up a tumult that goes whirling on  
For ever in that air for ever black,  
Even as the sand doth, when the whirlwind  
breathes.  
(...)*

*And when to gazing farther I betook me,  
People I saw on a great river's bank;  
Whence said I: "Master, now vouchsafe to me,*

*That I may know who these are, and what law  
Makes them appear so ready to pass over,  
As I discern athwart the dusky light."*

*And he to me: "These things shall all be known  
To thee, as soon as we our footsteps stay  
Upon the dismal shore of Acheron."*

*Then with mine eyes ashamed and downward  
cast,  
Fearing my words might irksome be to him,  
From speech refrained I till we reached the river.*

*And lo! towards us coming in a boat  
An old man, hoary with the hair of eld,  
Crying: "Woe unto you, ye souls depraved!"*

*Hope nevermore to look upon the heavens;  
I come to lead you to the other shore,  
To the eternal shades in heat and frost.*

*And thou, that yonder standest, living soul,  
Withdraw thee from these people, who are  
dead!"*

Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*

That's how the Netherworld appeared to me, the few times I have had the misfortune to look through the Curtains.

### Curtains and Slits

First, you need to pass through a Slit. It is not always easy to see where Slits are, or to realize that you have crossed through one. The first time I was in Tormentadha I thought I had just gone crazy, while I was gone somehow on the other side.

Once an Irish fellow explained me how he always finds Slits in Belfast, when he suspects that another one of them is open.

"You have to go in the most revolting place of the neighborhood where you are," he said. "Then look around and find the most squalid, dirty and dark alley that you see around there. Then dig in and search for the filthiest, smelliest and most sordid hole you see. Go on and you'll probably find a fetid hole or a door or a manhole or some other crap like that. Then dig in there and keep moving more and more in the wrong direction.

At the end of that, you'll find yourself there."

Slits are not like Cold Spots. The latter only serve to let only one Spookie pass through, while the Slits are generally stable and solid, so as to allow to anything - including us - to get in and out. Some are even fixed for years, or appear according to Recurrence.

The Curtains do not really exist, or rather are not visible... we're not in a theater! But sometimes I think that this invisible veil between life and death is the most important thing there is, the only thing that holds the two worlds together.

### Limbo

If you have passed the Curtains, you are in what we call Limbo, or the Antechamber of the Netherworld, a non-place in between the material world and the world of ghosts. If you think of the two worlds as two sides of the same coin, Limbo

is the thickness of the coin.

I've been there a few times. Certainly it's no place for a holiday; it is full of crazy souls, restless ghosts, creepy and moody entities, together with the risk of going crazy or being dragged away at any moment. Still, it is a place where we can go as living beings and hope to come back still on our feet.

The Tormenthada of Milan is our version of Limbo, as well as the Rue du Sortilège in Marseilles.

But before jumping on the train to Horrorwatts, you also have to remember a few key things about Limbo.

First, time and space work differently there... non-Euclidean geometries, impossible angles, dimensional folds, time that flows more slowly or quickly... in other words, all the magic tricks that come to mind. Try not to get lost and spend as little time there as possible, or there will be consequences. And, above all, remember to get out of there the same way you came in, not by the other side.

Another important thing is that in Limbo you play with other rules. Entities can appear as ordinary people and pretend to have the same corporeality and physicality as the living. Most of your powers and your weapons will not work: Séances and Exorcisms have no effect there and you cannot light fires or sparks of any kind; forget your shotgun and Molotov cocktails. If you smoke, forget the cigarettes too.

Above all, in Limbo foes face off with persuasion, gossip, deception and tricks. Do not think about fighting your enemies there. Not only is fighting useless because your opponents cannot die or be injured, but you will also upset the Charonians you might find there.

So, remember: talk and tricks!

## The Graveyard

On the other side of Limbo is the real Netherworld. You'll give it hardly a look before exhaling your last breath. And then, believe me, it isn't worth it.

The part closest to Limbo and the Curtains is basically our world as ghosts see it: a gray and dull

parody of reality, where everything is decaying and moribund, the buildings are encrusted with blood and dirt, and rust, dust and mildew are everywhere. If you come from a city, you'll find yourself in what looks like a monumental Necropolis: instead of houses and streets there are tombs and driveways, instead of skyscrapers and buildings, mausoleums, columbariums, niches.

And all around the Necropolis, everything seems like a monumental Graveyard, a parody of the country where you live, turned hellish. This is why we call it what we do.

The sky over there is black, and devoid of stars. The ground appears earthy and grass grows there, but from the ground roots of plants and trees emerge.

Here and there, you can see dead souls, in their grey and faded appearance, wandering around. A lot of them have chains on their ankles or wrists, extending up and through the Slits of the Earthly World.

Those Chains are the ties that they have left in the world and these are the entities that sooner or later will come back or that have not ever gone.

As you move away from the place from which you sprang, you will not encounter other cities or countries, but only a chipped enclosure, the Graveyard Wall.

There are no other places beside it, except a dry slope going down to a dark valley.

In whatever direction you go, away from the point where you have arrived, if you can even speak of directions in the Netherworld, you will arrive at the same slope and the same valley.

## The Valley of the Shadow of Death

Beyond the Graveyard Wall the slope descends steeply to a gloomy and dark valley. It is a dingy and dark plain of ashes, mist and empty darkness.

The valley is a gray and desolate place. There is some sort of terrain, at the bottom: a dark lifeless soil, almost always covered with a layer of viscous gray haze, which wraps around the ankles.

Do you want to know how dead souls



appear, in the Valley? They are diaphanous, ethereal, made of the same substance of that kind of fog that covers the ground and comes from the river, if you can call them “ground” and “river”. They still have faces and human expressions, the very same they had on the event of their death. This is why many of them look like old caryatids, shriveled elderly or sick. Others bear the signs of mutilation or the wounds that killed them, forever carved on their dead soul.

They all look gray, pale or dark, wan and more faded than in life. They can talk and listen, see and touch the other dead, but rarely do. Most of them aimlessly wander or move slowly away from the Graveyard, lost forever in the fog. Others lie down on the ground for years or centuries, apparitions of cold haze on chilled dark land, mingling with the fog for ages, without speaking, watching those who pass with dead eyes, sometimes moaning and crying for their lives...

## The River Acheron

When a dead soul has no more Remains or Chains tying it to the Earthly World, then it is eventually free to roam the Valley and reaches on the other side the shore of a river with slow waters, which seem only a bit more solid than the mist. Then, it plunges into the water or goes up on the boats of the Charonians and disappears, swept away by the current.

Do not ask me where the river goes. Some say that at the bottom there is the Palace of the Mothers, but I do not want to know anything about that. Not yet, anyway. What I know is that we are all going to the Netherworld, after death. There’s no difference between good and bad, at least not in the final destination of our souls. We will meet out there in the cold, over the Graveyard Wall, we will descend the slope, we will roam the Valley and we’ll dive into that icy, gray river, which will slowly drag us further and further away...

Were you asking for cosmic horror? Well, that is the greatest one: the awareness that after a lifetime of suffering there only will be an eternity of empty, meaningless squalor.

## The Farthest Shore

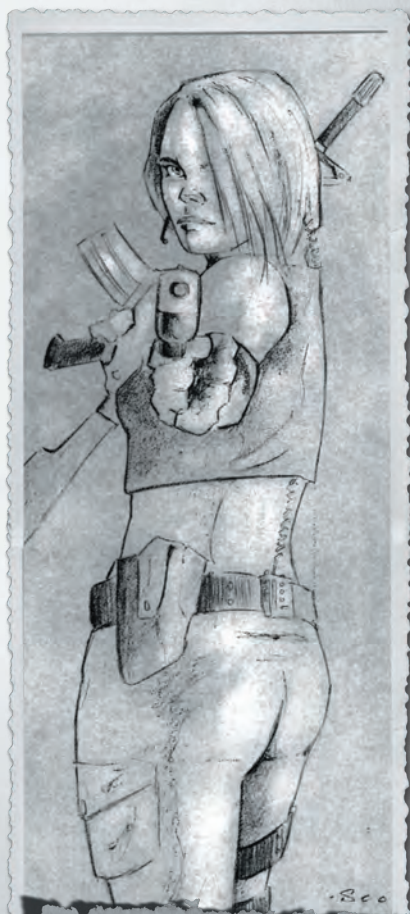
There’s one more thing to say, before returning to speak of the Earthly World. When dead souls are forgotten and emptied of all memory and desire, they’re finally ready to dive into the river and disappear.

But it is a river, right? And what’s on the other side, on the Farthest Shore?

None of us knows or wants to know. Another side should not even exist, in my opinion.

Yet some say that the Unhuman and the Legion come from there, from that most distant place. They crawl through the valley, up the slope, climb over the Wall and scour the Necropolis searching for Slits leading to our world.

And never once do they get lost...





## 6. DEATH AND THE CITY

*"The electro-mephitic city-stuff whereof I speak has potencies for achieving vast effects at distant times and localities, even in the far future and on other orbs, but of the manipulations required for the production and control of such I do not intend to discourse in these pages.*

*(...)*

*At any particular time of history there have always been one or two cities of the monstrous sort -- viz., Babel or Babylon, Ur-Lhassa, Ninere, Syracuse, Rome, Samarkand, Tenochtitlan, Peking -- but we live in the Megapolitian (or Necropolitian) Age, when such disastrous blights are manifold and threaten to conjoin and enshroud the world with funeral yet multipotent city-stuff. We need a Black Pythagoras to spy out the evil lay of our monstrous cities and their foul shrieking songs, even as the White Pythagoras spied out the lay of the heavenly spheres and their crystalline symphonies, two and a half millennia ago.*

*(...)*

*The ancient Egyptians only buried people in their pyramids. We are living in ours. Since we modern city-men already dwell in tombs, injured after a fashion to mortality, the possibility arises of the indefinite prolongation of this life-in-death. Yet, although quite practicable, it would be a most morbid and dejected existence, without vitality or even thought, but only paramentation, our chief companions paramental entities of azoic origin more vicious than spiders or weasels."*

Fritz Leiber, *Our Lady of Darkness*

I have told you something about the Netherworld, but you must remember that your cases will have much more mundane scenery. Most of the cases that you have to solve will be set in this metropolis or one of the other big European cities. You will investigate not only entities and paranormal phenomena, but also more common problems: crime, gangs, serial killers, madmen and even some sects of lunatics and terrorists.

I'll explain what you need to know.

### Milan

Milan is my city, and I say it is a great brothel. Second largest city in Italy, but first for business, finance, *la bella vita* and its underworld. The biggest channels of corruption to politicians and businessmen, the biggest drug trafficking and money laundering in the country, the biggest dirty businesses in Italy are centered here. You do not need me to name one of our politicians, who ruled over Milan and Italy, right?

Rivers of money, models, parades, corporations, banks, clans of camorristas and mafia from the South, bribery, business, immorality, degradation: Milan is the festering brain of Italy, much as Rome is its buggy heart.

### Megapolisomancy

Every year the number of paranormal phenomena in our cities grows, and so does the violence, cruelty and madness of men. I'd swear with my hand on a Bible that the two events are connected, but I can't say which is the cause and which the effect.

Yet some people talk of a secret occult science which acts on the architecture and the form of the big cities, making them real 3-D physical summoning circles. In short, the very form and nature of our cities, clusters of hundreds of thousands of living and dead gathered together, could stretch the Curtains, like a weight that bends a rubber sheet, making these places ideal for Slits.

Palaces and skyscrapers built in a certain way, materials, subways and tunnels dig according to special occult geometry, even the shape of squares and streets... All this would make our cities huge conduits ready to pour Entities into our world, or immense radio receivers that intercept and accumulate Phantom Energy in tight spots, as a side effect driving men crazy and corrupting society from within.





Geomancy, necromancy, Leylines, Occult Architecture: all these converge in a dark science called Megapolisomancy, studied and described in the past by Babylonian architects, by Vitruvius and Leonardo da Vinci, up to the mysterious Thibaut De Castries who re-codified it in the early 1900s.

This legendary art lets adepts plan (and recognize) buildings, streets, underground passages and architectures that amplify and channel Phantom Energy, making the city an especial place where all sorts of crime and paranormal events occur.

Maybe at the beginning you will not notice these elements in your investigations, but soon you will realize that Megapolisomancy is a reality and it has a profound effect on all our cities.

## **The Hermetic Order of the Onyx Dusk**

But, if our cities are built according to the principles of Megapolisomancy, who did that?

Who and how had so much power to succeed in modifying the town plans of the major cities in Europe for a whole century, in order to make them the greatest evocation pentacles ever conceived?

Those who believe in this story and love conspiracies talk about the Onyx Dusk. I do not know whether to believe it or not, but I will tell you what I have heard. You decide whether it's part of your big picture or not.

Have you ever heard about Freemasonry? The very word "Masonry" alludes to secret construction techniques: the magic geometry of Pythagoras, Gothic art, the mystery of the cathedrals, the pyramids... All of this should be part of an occult art that can use stone and concrete to create esoteric architectural shapes that can invoke the spirits in the heart of our cities. At the end of the nineteenth century, some powerful and wealthy Europeans joined the Onyx Dusk, a secret breakaway lodge of the European Freemasons, developed first in England and France, then spreading throughout the continent.





The devious Thibaut de Castries was part of it, but his contribution was not very decisive in France, and he left the Old World for the US. But in the meantime, through the following decades, the Onyx Dusk secretly remained at Europe's reins, collaborating with powerful groups, parties and lobbies to give many cities the shape necessary for their purposes.

Today this secret society is like a sect, with occult and certainly terrible purposes. The Dusk Lodges are widespread in all major cities and all taking orders from the Black Pythagoras, its supreme leader.

## **Crime, Corruption and Madness**

I've told all these stories about the Onyx Dusk and Megapolisomancy so you can have some understanding, however superficial and inaccurate, of those who are the greatest among our earthly enemies. But the truth is that you will rarely touch the intrigues of the Lodge directly.

Most of the time, your cases will focus on some Entity haunting our world or on a gang of criminals, gangsters and common thugs in your cities. Because, unfortunately, while Spookies are doing their best to make the world an even worse place, men are also doing that on their own for the same purpose. Since your cases will lead you to the darkest places and most infamous cities, you can expect that one way or another you will face also Earthly enemies.

The kind who shoot.

For some years everything has been getting dirtier, harder and more violent: gangs shoot and kill more than ever, the police can't stop them and no longer even enter some city districts, the trafficking and the exploitation of the vulnerable increases, rackets around the world are more powerful than ever, while criminal methods become more and more sadistic, ruthless and cruel.

And as well as big and small gangs, the number of lunatics increases each month: serial killers, maniacs, terrorists, or even crazy believers.



Remember this rule: in your cases, half of your problems will come from the living, not the dead.

## Netherkin

Spookies and mobsters, possessed and maniacs are unfortunately our bread and butter, and the number of lunatic killers is growing year by year. But there is also something else that is going on and I have to tell you, although for many this is just another urban legend.

Sometimes the cruelest madmen and slayers have revealed disturbing details, or have understood something about who they are and what they do. Often they do it on purpose to scare us, fool us and throw us into despair. It seems that among the worst of these lunatics lurks what we call the Netherkin, outwardly human, inside deeply corrupted by the evil, enough to commit devilish acts without apparent reason.

Netherkin can be anywhere and have any appearance or social status. They do not seem to be related or know each other, but Lombrosians have found some fragments of shared genealogies, and this might mean they could result from a single family, perhaps even from an indescribable union with a twisted Entity which occurred centuries or millennia ago.

In short, those beings are probably the seed of the Unhuman or the Legion, scattered among ordinary people like wolves among lambs. When they understand what they are or finally decide to start killing, they commit the most horrendous and cruel acts, dramatically increasing the gore and violence in a city and generating more horror and despair.

Hunting down and putting an end to the misdeeds of a Netherkin could be one of the most horrible tasks you'll have to accomplish.

## MeetUps and Believers

Whether because of a conspiracy or simple human stupidity, these ghost stories have not yet hit the national spotlight. Nobody on TV is talking about *what's going on*, no priest in the church is warning that the end of the days is coming, no-one is screaming "Fader!" in the newspapers.

However, in one way or another, the news is leaking out. As paranormal phenomena are becoming more widespread and scary, the surviving witnesses of these appearances and infestations have started to talk to each other, to form discussion groups and forums, to post photos and videos on *YouTube*, and of course to be ridiculed by professional debunkers, who wouldn't believe in ghosts if they had one in their bed.

And so, everyone on the Internet insults and makes fun of the so-called Believers, those who believe in ghosts, who have seen them, who think they know what is happening. Very often, those Believers are not even eyewitnesses, but they have seen or heard news at second or third hand, and tell the most absurd and inappropriate versions of what is going on.

Given the general hostility (driven or otherwise) against the Believers, they create increasingly closed circles and now meet and communicate only with each other, in so called MeetUps that take place today in all cities. These groups are mostly frequented by curious and doubtful people, but among them always are true believers, charismatic leaders and even dangerous lunatics. The peculiarity of these groups is that there is no common vision of *what's going on*, but each one follows its own path and from time to time adds to its theory: reptilians, chemtrails, political conspiracies, psychological manipulation, human population control, weather modification and other such things. And maybe they are right and they know better than us...

Ironically, many Believers know the Milieu or are even part of it, have heard of Lombrosians and GhostWeb and suspect the existence of the Bureau. In short, they will put us in adjacent cells when they lock us up in the psychiatric hospital.

Meanwhile, if you meet these guys in your cases, consider that among them you could find very different people: from the useful informant to the raving lunatic.

## The Milieu

Now that you have seen *what's going on* and are an agent of the Bureau, whether you like it or

not you are also part of the Milieu: we are not a secret society or anything, just a kind of “informal group of people who know each other.” And, of course, united by the fact of believing in ghosts...

The Marseillais began to call each other this, mimicking the gangs of the coast, and from there the name has spread among the European groups.

The Milieu is all of us, in and out of the Bureau, all those crazies who have actually seen *what is going on* and have decided to fight back. Sometimes we give each other a hand, sometimes we shoot each other on sight.

The most convenient thing about the Milieu, if you know how to avoid fools and hotheads, is that with only word of mouth you can find a couple of buddies for the case you’re investigating. Do you need a medium who shakes the table for a Séance or a veteran of the Balkan wars to fill a gang of bank robbers with lead? Take a walk in the right places and choose your guy.

In Milan we of the Milieu are maybe a few dozen. Aside from you, Detectives of the Bureau, and some smart Believers, there’s me and some cops I know, for example Stefano Drago and Carlo Ferro... two real tough-guys... Then several scoundrels in the suburbs, half a dozen mediums and psychics who go back and forth to Turin, at least one crew of GhostWeb hackers and some occultists and Lombrosians. There is also a chef, who works in a restaurant where they serve things it’s best not to know and the owner of the Chibli, a jazz-bar. These are the ones that come to mind on the spot, but I’m sure the list is at least twice that.

## Lombrosians

Between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, Cesare Lombroso was one of Europe’s leading anthropologists and one of the fathers of modern criminology. His studies led to the hypothesis that correct or criminal behavior was mainly related to a person’s genetic origins, like malformations and physical atavism. Lombroso developed theories such as Physiognomy, Social Darwinism and Phrenology, but went so far in his research as to be expelled by his colleagues, and considered a fool.

Then, he probably came into contact with the secret spiritualist societies of the nineteenth century, or learned the secrets of the Onyx Dusk. From that moment, he understood *what’s going on* and shifted his studies mainly into spiritualism, medianic and psychic research.

Over a century has passed since his research, and his occult scientific heritage was not lost, but developed in secret, separated from other criminological theories. In the beginning it was his direct students and assistants who followed his studies and experiments: the scientists who had assisted him in his first unexplained and paranormal research. Knowing how these secrets would be able to isolate and discredit them, the Lombrosians continued to hidden study paranormal phenomena, loyal only to each other, and spreading their truth only to a narrow circle of individuals. Now there have been four generations of scholars, and today there are a few hundred Lombrosians, scattered mainly in Europe and the USA. They do not refer to themselves as a secret society, but only as a confidential alliance of like-minded academics, doctors and scientists. The truth is that they really know a lot about Entities and what is going on, but always lacked the courage to take action directly, at least up to the last few years.

The Lombrosians are a sort of aristocracy of the Milieu, which they generally disdain, and some of them have recently become Occult Detectives. Generally, consider them as an organization on its own, often disturbing and with its own agenda, halfway between us and the Dusk Lodge.

If you were able to enter their Athenaeum, the clubs where they meet, you would see a mountain of books on Entities and Hoaxes of all kinds, along with spiritualistic Cabinets, Safezones and whatnot.

## GhostWeb

If TV and newspapers do not talk about *what’s going on*, and the internet mocks those who see Entities, where can you go to talk about it, upload pictures and video, meet up and download useful information?

They called it the GhostWeb, of course. It’s



a locked and reserved corner of the DeepWeb, located side by side with sections where people sell weapons and drugs and explain how to build a bomb in your basement. The GhostWeb is a “relatively” safe zone to attend, and only the best geeks with appropriate computers and a GhostWeb Device can access it.

On the GhostWeb you can find useful information, sightings, clues and various tricks, but you can also buy special equipment: cold iron, salts and actinic flashlights.

Of course, they are not all our friends on the GhostWeb, so be careful: as well as us, you will find the Milieu and Believers, the security experts of the agency, the infiltrators of Dusk Lodges and many other dangerous individuals. Like our cities, the GhostWeb is a dangerous and deadly jungle.

## **Mediums, Cineromancers, Psychics and Spiritualists**

Paranormal phenomena are intensifying in recent years, and this is awakening (or directly triggering) the dormant capacity in many of us:

when you see Spookies or any of them touch you and leave you frozen on the ground, your perception of the world can only change, right?

Sometimes it is an innate but latent phenomenon that suddenly manifests on its own, sometimes it's a near-death experience or a shock that triggers it. In any case, some among us are developing powers similar to those of the Entities.

Probably, before discovering there are others like you, you have been on your own for a while, without understanding where your powers come from and what you could do with them: freaks, stage mediums, TV parapsychologists who pretend to bend spoons, police special consultants who find missing persons (or bodies), or occult detectives in trench coats and sunglasses, strutting with the paranormal.

If you have some power of this kind, then maybe you will tell us your story, perhaps during a case, when we have some downtime. I'll tell you mine now.

Today people like me are called Cineromancers, but in the beginning I had no idea







that there could be others. I do not know from where my power comes but I think I have always had it. In a few words, I can summon Shades from their ashes. The first time I saw something I was fourteen. For a long time I felt like some kind of weirdo, a goth and a desperado.

Then I met another like me, who soon became my mentor, explaining what we can do.

When he died, I started to work like he did, and I started to use this “gift” to get money. I think it was 2008. Since then things have got worse and worse, damn it, but I’m still standing and ready to fight.

That matters, right?

## The Ghibli

When you need to meet some friendly face, to talk to someone who really understands or have a strong drink to forget the last case, the Ghibli is the place for you.

This jazz bar is run by a Libyan wise guy called Mamoulia and it is the most popular den for those in the Milieu in the town. Yes, it’s also OK for Bureau Agents.

Until midnight, the bar is open to everybody and serves kebabs and stuff like that, for all those who pass by. From midnight to dawn, instead, you can only get in if you’re part of the Milieu or if you are with one of them who recommends you.

The back room is small and private, made of dark wood, with chessboard tables with green and black jade and Moroccan-style booths, where you can drink aniseed or juniper liquor, served in those little cups of colored glass. Old Mamoulia puts on some vintage jazz on vinyl and opens the garden at the back, a little open space on the Martesana, one of the most beautiful canals in Milan. But above all the place is a real Safezone, a place where the damned ghosts cannot enter, frequented only by people from the Milieu.

I often go there; let’s meet up sometime...





## CHAPTER 2 THE BUREAU: CHARACTER CREATION

*I got to the office just as the sun was rising. I'd been sleeping there for months now. There were two guys in front of the main entrance wearing jeans and black sports jackets, smoking and leaning on a BMW sports car as low as a racing car. I can be so dumb. I should've smelt the rat a mile away. Instead I slipped the key into the door and as soon as I set foot in the hall they followed me in.*

*"Is this the time to come back, Chites?" one of them asked. The other immediately stood behind me and whenever I turned he moved so as to be out of sight. "We've been waiting for you since last night."*

*"And who might you be?"*

*The guy in front of me pulled out a Ministry of Interior badge and waved it in my face. "General Investigative and Special Operations Division."*

*"Yeah, tell that to someone else."*

*Samuel Marolla, Imago Mortis*



Welcome, rookie.

The game you are going to play is very dangerous and you're going to jeopardize not only your life, but your very soul.

You are now a Detective of the Bureau and soon you will be investigating ghastly, violent cases of death and paranormal activities in the darkest cities of our century.

People die.

People come back from death.

People kill.

And sometimes they do it in that order.

You probably used to be a wisecracking, tough private eye, a real psychic, a member of some esoteric club, or an agent of some law-enforcement department in your country. In any case, now you are in the Vallum Program and a Detective for the Bureau. You will act against paranormal phenomena and bloodthirsty criminals, and you will solve your case.

In this hard-boiled horror Europe we live in, all the special people like us, who know about *what's going on* and have faced it, are a great resource for the Bureau. So, you have been recruited on merit.

Whether you were already working in some agency or as a freelancer, whether you are looking for easy money or are inspired by some ideal, or you are just always in the wrong place at the wrong time, follow these easy steps and your character will be ready in a blink.



# 1. ARCHETYPES

The first thing to do is understand which kind of Detective you are. Here is a list of some inspirational examples I've met in my cases. They could be helpful to get you started. Remember that the most memorable and interesting Detectives often come from mixing two (or more) different ideas or backgrounds, to make a unique personality. Also, feel free to choose whether these archetypes represent what your character was (or did) or what he still is (or does).

Lastly remember that, if you've read up to here, you already are an Occult Detective, you already work for the Bureau and you already know *what's going on*. Whether you like it or not.

You might be a rookie, but you have already been cold burned by Spookies and lived to tell about it, right? Perhaps you'll succeed next time as well, who knows?

**Alienist.** You are a psychiatrist or psychologist secretly specializing in the effects of paranormal horror on everyday life. People see ghosts, people experience dread, and people need help with that. And there you are. Probably your esteemed colleagues think you are a charlatan, but they haven't see what you've seen, right? The Bureau usually recruits Alienists to study how paranormal phenomena interact with the human mind, and to help your colleagues with psychotherapy.

**Believer.** You have seen chilling paranormal phenomena and you were shaken, forever changed, but alive. Now, finding out more about these ghosts coming from the Netherworld is your vocation. For a while you also attended MeetUps with people like you, but eventually you got a bit uncomfortable with them: some are frequented by fools and fanatics. The Bureau usually recruits Believers to understand and infiltrate the MeetUps, and to have a different point of view on phenomena.

**Ex-Criminal.** You were just a knave, able to survive and thrive in the underworld of your city. But then you saw things changing, and your world became more and more bloody and twisted.

And one day, you saw who the real masterminds controlling you all were, moving your bosses like puppets. Since then, you no longer want to deal with your former friends, and you have cut off all ties with the past. Too bad your past has not forgotten you at all... The Bureau usually recruits Ex-Criminals because they are hard men and tough guys, very useful in dirty situations.

**Ex-Militia.** Ex-criminals say they saw things becoming twisted. Poor girls. The world you come from was twisted before all this spooky stuff began. Dirty wars, unauthorized conflicts, undercover operations. You really saw the worst of humankind. Now you're retired. Now you've found something inhuman to fight. The Bureau usually recruits former black ops and contractors to help with the most dangerous tactical situations.

**Exorcist.** Ordained priests, men of faith who understand the damned spirits that haunt places and possess men are just another face of the devil, secular parapsychologists acting against Entities with formulas and rituals; your background can be one of many types, but your mission is always the same: drive the Spookies back to the cold, dark place they came from. The Bureau usually recruits exorcists to do their dirty jobs and help the Vallum to understand the how and the why of these infiltrations.

**Ghost Hunter.** In the past, people like you traveled across the moors to abandoned mansions, to spend the night wandering through dark rooms with EMF meters, thermometers and tape recorders. Today there is no need to travel so far. The ghosts have moved from the countryside to the city, as the living did, and today they haunt train stations, modern buildings and skyscrapers. Even the tools of the trade have changed: Kirlian cameras have been replaced by shotguns. The Bureau usually recruits ghost hunters to find and Banish Entities.

**Lombrosian.** The Italian doctor Cesare Lombroso was one of the greatest criminologists and anthropologists of the nineteenth century. In the latter part of his career, Lombroso began



studying spiritualism, paranormal and medianic mysteries. He found new sponsors and created a secret Athenaeum of physicians and scholars who focused on the most mysterious sides of medicine and the effects of the paranormal on the bodies and minds of people. The Athenaeum still exists and has spread to several European and American cities, counting a few hundred affiliates. These doctors are called Lombrosians and you're one of them. The Bureau usually recruits Lombrosians to help understand paranormal phenomena from a scientific point of view.

**Medium.** You used to practice as a medium. You could be a real Psychic, collaborating with the police to find clues about missing people, or summoning dead relatives for rich clients. Or you could be a stage medium, pretending to be possessed by the "White Ones" and moving tables with your knees. In any case, you were very good at your job and the Bureau recruited you for your expertise.

**Occult Investigator.** You were the stereotypical Occult Detective. You knew *what's going on* and you usually handled it for one hundred Euros a day, plus expenses. People found you by word of mouth and your colleagues gave you every case they did not want to anything to do with. You were used to carry a gun and a rosary for exorcisms, and you can't say which of the two has saved your life more often. Now you work for the Bureau, and the job is better paid and safer.

**Occultist.** For years you studied Things Man Was Not Meant to Know in old, forbidden books, thinking that those cosmic horrors were relegated to distant times and places. Then you understood that things are happening right there, in your city. You left your books on the shelves and went out into the night. And then you finally saw *what's going on*...The Bureau usually recruits Occultists to understand the real meaning of supernatural events and what the hell the Midnight of the Century is.

**Police Officer.** Day after day you have seen the streets of your city becoming more and more violent, bloody and terrifying. Something is changing in people's minds, and criminals

are becoming ever more deviant. One day you followed a particularly dreadful lead and had a brief vision of *what's going on*. No one believed you and you were almost thought to be crazy, until someone gave your name to the HR Department of the Bureau and you made the application that saved your life.

**Psychic.** Among all these analysts and agents here at the Bureau, you are the one with a real paranormal power. Over the years, this so-called "gift" has been a problem and a pain, but in the Bureau you are finally learning how to handle it. It's time to use your curse against the Entities that caused it.

**Special Agent.** You are part of one of the first classes of professionals joining the Vallum with full understanding of *what's going on*. They selected you from some special agency of your country, and admitted you to top level classified training, to prepare you for facing and investigating the infiltrations. Your task is to go where they send you, find out details of *what's going on* and Banish any Entity beyond the Curtains.

Remember that your background determines your Common Knowledge and serves to differentiate you from other Detectives.





## 2. CHARACTER CREATION

Once you have decided which kind of Occult Detective you are, it's time to figure out his statistics. Creating a hero for *Imago Mortis* is as easy as for any other *Savage Worlds* setting: just follow the steps.

### Race

Characters in *Imago Mortis* are humans from all over the world, so you can choose any ethnicity you prefer. Being human, your character receives a free starting Edge.

### Traits

Now determine your Attributes and Skills. Your Detective begins with a d4 in each Attribute, and you have 5 points to distribute among them to increase the die types of your Attributes, as usual.

Next, you have 15 points to buy your Skills. Raising a skill by one die type costs one point, as long as it's not higher than the Skill's linked Attribute. Raising a Skill beyond the die type of the linked Attribute costs 2 points.

Attributes and Skills cannot be raised beyond d12.

All the standard skills in *Savage Worlds* are available in *Imago Mortis*. Moreover, the following skills are added or modified to reflect the setting:

- \* **Guts:** Guts is very important in *Imago Mortis*. It is the Skill used to test your courage when in front of a paranormal phenomenon, an extremely violent or gory situation. Every Test of Dread (and other secondary effects) in the game is based on a Guts roll.
- \* **Knowledge (Occult):** This is the appropriate skill for everything concerning Spookies and paranormal phenomena. Forget about magic, esoterism, rituals and other mumbo-jumbo. The only occult materials actually existing or relevant in your world are the ones about Spookies. As a special rule for *Imago Mortis*, every player character in the game starts with Knowledge (Occult) d4 in addition to the normal 15 initial points and can increase this Trait according to the normal rules. This knowledge reflects the Detective's former experience with the paranormal and your training in the Bureau. It is mostly represented by the information in Chapter 1.
- \* **Knowledge (Psychotherapy):** This skill covers both the theoretical and practical sides of modern-day analysis and psychology, seasoned with a good bit of knowledge of *what is going on*. It is an essential Skill to recover from dread and the terrible effects of fighting the supernatural.





## Languages

Now decide your nationality and native tongue. Thanks to the Vallum training program, all Agents know English, their National language and one additional European language as part of their Common Knowledge. If you want to know others, you need to buy them as Skills.

Probably, if you are going to investigate in one of your homeland's cities, almost everyone you meet will speak, read and write the same language as you.

## Secondary Statistics

Your secondary statistics are based on your traits, and can be modified by Edges and Hindrances.

**Charisma** is +0, unless modified by Edges or Hindrances.

**Pace** is 6".

**Parry** is equal to 2 plus half your Fighting die. If you haven't taken the Fighting skill, your Parry is 2.

**Toughness** is equal to 2 plus half your Vigor die.

## Edges and Hindrances

Now it's time to decide what flaws and perks make your Detective unique. If you chose any Hindrances, you can use your Hindrance points to receive the benefits listed below. You can take up to one Major Hindrance (worth 2 points) and two Minor Hindrances (worth 1 point each). Actually, you can take more Hindrances, but you won't receive more than 4 points for doing so.

For 2 points you can:

- \* Raise an Attribute by one die type, or
- \* Take one Edge.

For 1 point you can:

- \* Gain 1 Skill point, or
- \* Gain more money, as much as your starting money (e.g. if you start the game with €500, you gain €500 more).

Don't forget to check the new options in the Edges and Hindrances sections below!

## LINGUA IGNOTA

THE MOST IMPORTANT AND EFFECTIVE BOOKS OF MAGIC IN IMAGO MORTIS ARE WRITTEN IN LINGUA IGNOTA (LATIN FOR "UNKNOWN LANGUAGE"). THIS MYSTIC LANGUAGE WAS FIRST RECORDED IN THE MIDDLE AGE BY ABBESS HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, AND IT'S MADE UP OF 23 LITTERAE IGNOTAE (UNKNOWN LETTERS). IF ENTITIES SPEAK A LANGUAGE AMONG THEMSELVES, IT WOULD BE LINGUA IGNOTA.

IF YOUR GAMES ARE PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON OCCULT SCIENCE AND MYSTIC ELEMENTS, I SUGGEST YOU ADD LANGUAGE: LINGUA IGNOTATO THE LIST OF POSSIBLE ONES YOUR CHARACTER CAN

LEARN. IF THE ESOTERIC IS NOT SO IMPORTANT IN YOUR SESSIONS, OR FOR YOUR DETECTIVES, YOU CAN JUST ASSUME THAT YOU CAN READ AND UNDERSTAND LINGUA IGNOTA AT TWO DIE STEPS BELOW YOUR KNOWLEDGE (OCCULT); IF THIS DROPS THE DIE BELOW D4, YOU SIMPLY AREN'T SKILLED ENOUGH TO KNOW LINGUA IGNOTA.

SO, IF YOU HAVE D8 IN KNOWLEDGE (OCCULT) YOU ALSO HAVE D4 IN LINGUA IGNOTA, SO YOU COULD READ, WRITE, AND SPEAK RITUAL WORDS AND PHRASES IN THAT TONGUE.



## Gear

Your Detective starts with the clothes on his back and €500, unless you have Edges and Hindrances that modify this value. The Bureau provides a lot of useful gear, but you might want to spend your money on weapons and other gear anyway, so check the Gear section on page 50. We assume €500 a month is the money you have at your disposal after everyday expenses (house, food, clothes, bills, vices).

## Background

Complete your character with a name and an appropriate backstory: think about where you are from, what your life is like in the city and whether you are ready to risk life and soul for money, ideals, the thrill of the action or something else.

## EURO, METERS, KILOMETERS

IMAGO MORTIS IS MAINLY SET IN EUROPE, SO YOU WILL FIND PRICES IN EURO BECAUSE IT'S THE MOST COMMON CURRENCY IN EUROPE. FOR SIMPLICITY, YOU CAN CONSIDER IT EQUIVALENT TO DOLLARS OR POUNDS. WE DID NOT MODIFY PACE, SO IT STILL REPRESENTS THE SAME NUMBER OF INCHES ON TABLETOP AND TWICE THAT NUMBER OF YARDS IN THE REAL WORLD.

IF NECESSARY, USE THE FOLLOWING CONVERSIONS:

1 INCH = AROUND 2.5 CENTIMETERS

1 FOOT = AROUND 30 CENTIMETERS

1 YARD = AROUND 90 CENTIMETERS OR 0.9 METERS

1 MILE = AROUND 1.6 KILOMETERS

WE DID THE SAME FOR POUNDS AND WEIGHT. YOU WILL FIND THE WEIGHT OF GEAR EXPRESSED IN POUNDS, JUST REMEMBER 1 POUND MEANS AROUND 0.5 KILOS

### 3. NEW HINDRANCES

#### Modified Hindrances

The following Hindrances from *Savage Worlds* are available to *Imago Mortis* characters, with the effects shown:

##### Doubting Thomas (Major)

Some of you can't accept Spookies are real even if they have seen them with their own eyes. Doubting Thomases are skeptics who try their best to rationalize paranormal events. Even once a Doubting Thomas is working for the Bureau and faces *what's going on*, he still tries to deny these events, following red herrings or ignoring evidence. Doubting Thomases suffer -2 to their Tests of Dread when confronted with undeniable paranormal horror. In addition, every time you take part in a Séance or Exorcism, you apply a -2 modifier to all of your rolls.

##### Yellow (Major)

Not everyone has ice water in his veins. Your Detective is squeamish about blood and gore and terrified of coming to harm. Every time he is in a situation of gore, violence and risk, like a shooting or a chase, in the first round of the scene you must make a Test of Dread.

##### Poor (Minor)

Your character has extra expenses in his everyday life and starts with €250. Every month you can manage €250 for things other than your common expenses: adventuring gear, tickets, extras and so on.

#### New Hindrances

The following Hindrances are new and available to all *Imago Mortis* characters.

##### Dark Side (Major)

You have a terrible secret in your past, you committed a horrible crime or hide a side of your personality which is much worse than just a "flaw".

As well as defining your personality, this dark side is used by the Entities to make you suffer. Once per session, a Spooky may openly remember your dark side. While you're facing that Spooky, you can't use your Bennies to reroll tests, though you can still Soak Wounds. In addition, every Test of Wills you make against enemies using your guilt against you (which is everyone that can, every time it's possible) suffers a -2 penalty.

##### Debunker (Major)

You think you are the smartest guy in the Bureau and that nothing in this story of *what's going on* is like the other Detectives say it is. Even while facing evidence of Entities and poltergeists, you will find another "truth". Your Detective's Charisma suffers a -2 modifier among your colleagues and any people of the Milieu, and every time you take part in a Séance or an Exorcism, you have a -2 modifier on all rolls.

##### I Want to Believe (Major)

Your approach to Spookies and *what's going on* is blurry and delusional. You really want to trust and devote your life to a spiritual faith involving them. If an Entity or a Believer tries to convince you of something (such as the Legion is benevolent, Entities are actually angels, or blood offerings are right and proper), you will probably believe it. You suffer -2 to any Notice and Spirit roll (or similar) to see through this kind of lies, illusion, or influence, both from Believers and Spookies.

In addition, the GM, once per session, can give you a Benny to actually convince your character that something supernatural-related is actually true. You can try to resist, if you want, with a Spirit (-4) roll. In the case of success you aren't persuaded, but you don't receive the Benny, of course.

##### Nightmares (Major)

Your detective doesn't sleep well. You've seen too much horror and you are always tired



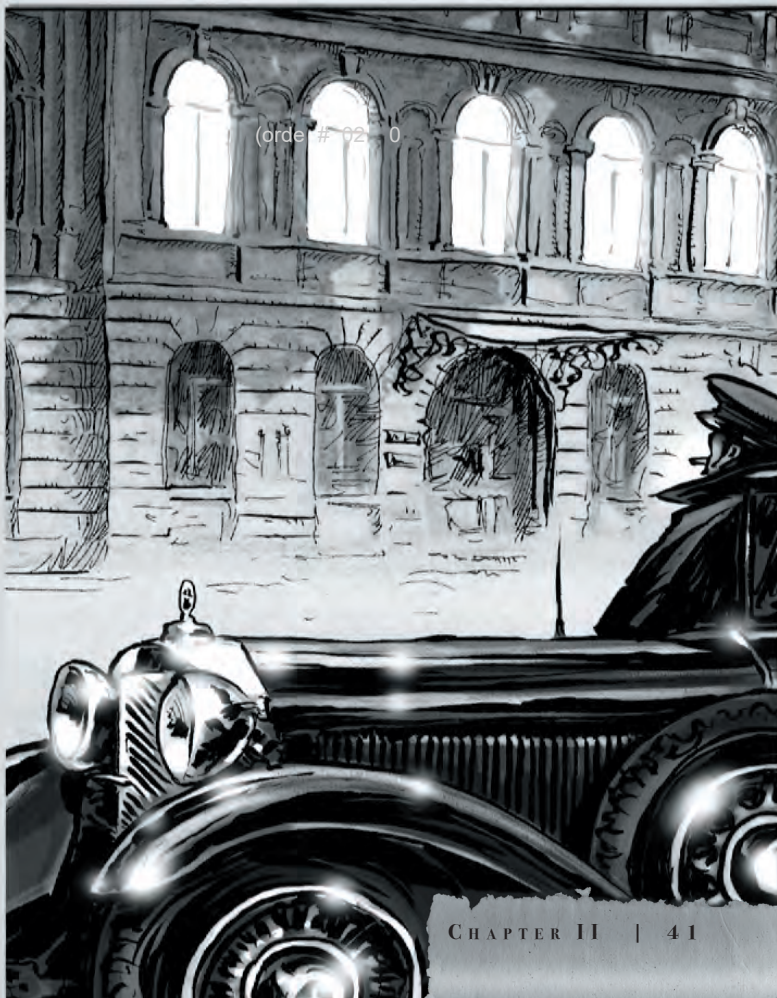
and pale. Once per session, at the beginning or the first time you try to rest, you have nightmares and must make a Test of Dread. If you succeed at the Guts roll, there is no lasting effect. Should you fail, you receive no rest (see the *Sleep* rules in *Savage Worlds*). If you roll 1 on the Guts die, regardless of the result of the Wild Die, you need to apply the proper Breakdown/Trauma effects.

### Resignation (Major)

Some Detectives suffer from depression, angst or anguish. It's very hard for them to recover from the effects of Dread and so every Psychotherapy roll made to help them is at -2.

### When You Gaze Too Long Into the Abyss (Major)

Your Detective has met Entities too many times and attracted the attention of the Unhuman or the Mothers. And that's not good. Your name and face are known by the Spookies and you and your team can only get Hostile/Unfriendly Reactions from them. In addition, anytime the team encounters an Entity of any kind, or one of its phenomena, and there's no clear indication another individual should be the target, you are the first one attacked or affected by the hazard.





## 4. NEW EDGES

### Unavailable Edges

The following Edges from *Savage Worlds* aren't available to *Imago Mortis* characters:

**Background Edges:** Arcane Background, Arcane Resistance, Improved Arcane Resistance.

**Combat Edges:** Giant Killer.

**Power Edges:** Any.

**Professional Edges:** Adept, Champion, Gadgteer, Holy/Unholy Warrior, Mentalist, Wizard.

**Wild Card Edges:** Power Surge.

### Modified Edges

The following Edges from *Savage Worlds* are available to *Imago Mortis* characters, with the stated modifications:

#### Brave

This Background Edge works as usual, but it affects Tests of Dread.

#### Connections

You can use this Edge for various Organizations in game, for example the Athenaeum, the Milieu, or a national Special Agency. To use your Connections first requires that you are an actual member: a Professional Edge like "Lombrosian" could be specified by the Game Master as a requirement.

Then, you do not need to make a Streetwise roll for having a favor. You can reach your organization or contact it at any time, via phone, or in the office or lodge in your city. You can use your Connections once per session,

asking your Organization for formal help in what you are doing or in your case: this way you will obtain one specific thing from this list:

- \* Information or a secret about your case;
- \* A clue, a hint or a source, useful for your case;
- \* Items, weapons or gear useful for an action scene;
- \* A Relic or a Hoax for a Séance or an Exorcism;
- \* Access to a Cabinet or a Safezone, once.
- \* A political or legal favor, help or privilege.

#### Mr. Fix It

The Arcane Background (Weird Science) edge and the Weird Science skill are removed from the Requisites for this Edge.

#### Noble

In *Imago Mortis* a character with this Edge can be an actual member of nobility, but also a famous star, a VIP, a powerful crime-lord or even a high-ranking member of some organization (corporations, police and so on...).

#### Rich

You live in a luxury hotel, in a large apartment located in a good district, and your lifestyle is very high. You can start the game with €4,000 for your extra expenses. Every month you have €4,000 of disposable income without problems.

#### Filthy Rich

You live in one of the best suites, villas or skyscraper apartments of the city and your

NOBLES AND RICHES IN THE BUREAU  
IT IS VERY UNCOMMON TO HAVE SOME OF THESE PEOPLE IN THE BUREAU, SO IF YOU REALLY WANT TO USE THIS  
EDGES YOU NEED A GREAT BACKGROUND STORY FOR THAT. THE SAS NOVEL SERIES OR THE PERSUADERS TV SHOW  
ARE GREAT EXAMPLES OF HOW TO INTRODUCE SUCH CHARACTERS AS DETECTIVES.



lifestyle is appropriate. You can start the game with €10,000 for your extra expenses. Every month you have €10,000 available without problems.

## New Edges:

The following Edges are new and available to all *Imago Mortis* characters.

### Background Edges

#### I've Seen Things...

**Requirements:** Novice, Guts d8+

Your Detective is no longer afraid of the dark. You have seen too many things and learned how to handle your fear. Add +2 to any Test of Dread when facing Entities and paranormal phenomena.

#### Mark of Fear

**Requirements:** Novice, Guts d6 or less, Spirit d8+

You've seen too much, and you've hit rock bottom a number of times. But you learnt to get up and keep fighting.

Every time the hero fails a Test of Dread, put a mark on the character sheet. When you have three Marks cancel them and receive a Bennie.

Unused Marks are saved between sessions.

Note that you cannot use this Edge if, for any reason, your Guts goes higher than d6.

#### Chill Resistance

**Requirements:** Novice, Vigor d8+

You're particularly resistant to Shrouds' Chill Touch and similar effects. You have +2 to any Vigor roll connected to this kind of Fatigue rolls.

#### Improved Chill Resistance

**Requirements:** Novice, Chill Resistance

As above but your character ignores the first level of Fatigue he gets from Chill Touch and similar effects..

#### Psychic

**Requirements:** Novice, Spirit d8

You are somehow connected with the Paranormal and you can sense phenomena. The

Game Master may allow you to make Notice rolls to detect something wrong (i.e. connected with Entities) in a LBT: temperature changes, touching hands, fogging, a sour taste on the tongue, a sweetish smell (but nothing related to sight or hearing). The perception could come from a place, item or person, and in this way you can have "a bad feeling about this". In addition, you can always make a Notice roll if something paranormal is about to surprise you.

### Combat Edges

#### Hard Man

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Vigor d8+, Fighting d8+

You are tough guy who has seen so much violence that it no longer affects you. You have a +2 to Guts rolls in any Tests of Dread caused by mundane gore or violence. You also have +1 to any Intimidation and Taunt rolls, as well as to your Spirit and Smarts rolls when making a Test of Wills. Last but not least, when you reach Veteran Rank, you gain a +1 damage bonus in hand-to-hand combat against mundane enemies.

#### Specter Slayer

**Requirements:** Veteran

You've faced a lot of Spookies and you've started to understand their weak points.

Your Detective does +1d6 damage when attacking Shrouds, Poltergeists and Paramentals.

### Leadership Edges

#### Master of the Hunt

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Command, Guts 8+

Your courage and coolness inspire your fellows in ghost hunting. They add +1 to any Test of Dread when facing Entities and paranormal terrors, so long as they are in your Command Radius.

### Professional Edges

#### Alienist

**Requirements:** Novice, Healing d6+, Knowledge (Medicine or Psychotherapy) d6+ Knowledge (Occult) d6+

As a psychotherapist specialized in traumas generated by *what's going on*, you receive +2 to Psychotherapy rolls.

## GhostWeb Hacker

**Requirement:** Investigation d6+, Knowledge (Computer) d6+

People like you created and still rule the GhostWeb. You have +2 to any Investigation and Knowledge (Occult) roll when you have access to a computer, and to Knowledge (Computer) and Repair rolls for any task related to the internet, hacking or computers.

You start the game with a GhostWeb Device and a Mod Computer, in addition to your other equipment and money.

## Grifter

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d8+, Knowledge (Occult) d8+, Persuasion d8+, Streetwise d8+

You are a real confidence man, capable of persuading people and even Spookies just by talking. Your tricks and scams leverage the worst feelings of whoever you are dealing with, so in this twisted world you can't fail. You add +2 to any Persuasion and Streetwise rolls. In a Social conflict, even with a Spooky, you can always roll the higher of your Persuasion or appropriate Knowledge roll: that's enough to know what you're talking about, when cheating people.

## Lombrosian

**Requirements:** Novice, Knowledge (Occult) d6+, Knowledge (Medicine) d6+, Notice d6+

When you examine a living human being, or his corpse, with a Notice roll and at least three rounds of time, you can detect from his gestures, malformations, limbs and eyes, his general attitude, if he is (or was) a good or bad guy, if he is generally truthful or untruthful in what he usually says or does, if he is cheating or trying to hide something, if he is connected to the Spookies and how, if he is currently possessed or tormented in his dreams, and finally, if he has any Weird Edges.

You also get +2 when trying to Taunt an opponent you have "examined" in such a way.

Lombrosian science isn't very accurate, and, anytime you use this Edge, the GM picks a card from the Action Deck and secretly looks at it: if is a Joker, your deduction is inaccurate in some way.

## Occultist

**Requirements:** Novice, Spirit d8+ Knowledge (Occult) d8+

You add +2 to Knowledge (Occult) rolls, as well as to any Notice and Investigation rolls made to search newsfeeds, books, evidence or details concerning paranormal phenomena. Your understanding of the *Lingua Ignota* increases by one die step.

## Weird Edges

### Aura Reading

**Requirements:** Psychic

By touching a living person skin to skin, you can read his aura and determine his emotional state, health, Reaction to you, if he is lying, and whether he is possessed or involved in any way with Spookies.

This Edge grants information at the exact moment of the touch, while a raise provides more details on something important in the past of the person touched. If the subject is a Psychic himself or a Possessed, you need to succeed at an opposed Spirit roll.

### Cineromancy

**Requirements:** Novice, Spirit d8+

You lucky guy. You are a Cineromancer, just like me. You can use the ashes of the Dead to summon their Shades by inhaling, ingesting or otherwise consuming them. You need a pinch of ash from a funerary urn or other source to summon and question a Shade from the Netherworld. In this practice, the pinch is intended to be consumed. If needed, you can assume that a "pinch" corresponds to an ounce and that there are on average 60 doses in a common urn. The Shade manifests in a personal aspect and can be questioned for one minute. What a summoned Entity does or says to you depends on its Reaction: see page 81. You must succeed at a Persuasion roll or a Test of Intimidation against its Spirit to change its attitude, as in the core rules.

The Game Master must decide what information the Shade knows: typically, it reveals clues on the circumstances of its life and death. If the Entity is not in the Netherworld at that moment, you will not succeed at any summoning or gain any answers.



## **Exorcist**

### **Requirements:** Psychic

Even if exorcisms are often carried out by people without Psychic faculties, you are really consecrated in this practice and you know how to use your “gift” against the Entities. You can add a +2 bonus to any Exorcism roll you make as the Exorcist, or +1 if an Attendee, in addition to the normal bonus granted for being a Psychic. In addition, you possess a well-stocked Cabinet where you can carry out your rituals.

## **Ghost Whispers**

### **Requirements:** Psychic

A ghostly voice makes itself known and may be questioned, letters appear on a mirror or in blood, a Ouija board or a similar object starts to work. Choose your trappings, but the fact is that you can speak with an Entity for one minute. It must be present in the same place (one room, one house, one graveyard or similar, usually in a LBT) and can be Hidden or Manifest. You don't see it, you just hear and speak with it. What an Entity says depends on its Reaction: see page 81. You must succeed at a Persuasion roll or a Test of Intimidation against its Spirit to change its attitude, as in the core rules.

You can call the Entity more times, again and again, but after a while it has nothing else to say and starts to be pissed off: every additional time you summon it during the same session, its Reaction worsens by one step.

## **Sixth Sense**

### **Requirements:** Psychic

You can see a Hidden Entity in the Earthly World in its personal aspect for one minute and in a LBT. What a Hidden Entity does in front of you depends on its Reaction: see page 81. You must succeed at a Persuasion roll or a Test of Intimidation against its Spirit to change its attitude, as in the core rules. The Game Master decides what it does in this time but it can't speak or use words to communicate. You can follow and watch the Entity more times, again and again, but after a while it has nothing else to show you, changing its Reaction for the worse.

## **Medianic Reading**

### **Requirements:** Psychic

Interrogating your own personal focus (carved runes, bones, tea leaves, cards, dice, crystals, candles or whatever) you can take a look beyond the veil of reality and spy a truth. Once per session, the reader may perform a reading and answer three questions, each of them with a Yes or No. The questions must be connected to each other in some way and the Game Master must provide the answers.

## **Medium**

### **Requirements:** Psychic

You are really good at communicating with Entities. You can add a +2 bonus to any Séance roll you accomplish as the Channeler, or +1 if an Attendee, in addition to the normal bonus granted for being a Psychic. In addition, you possess a well-stocked Cabinet where you can carry out your rituals.

## **Mesmerism**

### **Requirements:** Psychic

This edge only works if you have your victim at your disposal for 30 minutes (i.e. bound), if the victim is voluntary or if you disguise your intentions beneath a normal conversation (in this case you must win a preliminary opposed roll, your Persuasion versus the victim's Notice). Then, you need to succeed in an opposed Spirit roll to enthrall the target. A mesmerized person will act as a friend to you as long as you keep your concentration on him and are in the victim's sight, as for the *puppet* Power. This effect lasts for another 1d6 minutes after the loss of control.

## **Precognition**

### **Requirements:** Psychic

This phenomenon manifests only if the object, living person or place has been already visited or touched in some way by Spookies and is part of a plan of theirs that is not yet complete. By touching or visiting them, you can have a vision of what is going to happen. A success grants basic information (what is going to happen), while a raise provides more details on the fact, intent or personality involved.

## Psychic Healing

### Requirements: Psychic

You are capable of summoning some spiritual healing force and using it to heal normal wounds, leaving behind cold, pale scars. You can use this effect at will, making a Spirit roll instead of a Healing one when trying to heal someone (every modifier and rule for Healing works as usual). Then, if you succeed, 1 Wound turns into a Fatigue level. After each use, you must also make a Vigor roll yourself; on a failure, you suffer a level of Fatigue too, which wears off after a day.

## Psychometry

### Requirements: Psychic

By touching a Relic or an object used in a crime, you can have a vision of how that object has been used to commit crimes or how it is involved or useful in your case. The object has to be of primary importance in what happened, not just "in the same room during a crime". Also, the episode that imbued it with Phantom Energy must have ended in a death, not just violence. A success grants basic information (why the object is a Relic or how it is involved in the killing), while a raise provides more details about the facts or the killer.

## Reanimator

### Requirements: Novice, Lombrosian

The most expert of the Lombrosians are capable of reanimating corpses and obtaining interesting information from them. If you have at your disposal a complete corpse, and at least ten minutes of time, you can use your science to summon its lost soul back into it, with a Healing (-2) roll. In the case of success you call the spirit of the dead one into the corpse. The reanimated move with difficulty and tend to remain lying down. It can tell, in a deep voice, what it saw or heard in the last moments of its life. In this way, a Shade can be questioned for one minute per Rank of the Lombrosian. What a summoned Entity does or says to you depends on its Reaction: see page 81. You must succeed at a Persuasion roll or a Test of Intimidation against its Spirit to change its attitude, as in the core rules.

The Game Master must decide what

information the Shade knows; typically, it reveals clues about the circumstances of its life and death. If the Entity is not in the Netherworld at that moment, you cannot summon it.

## Relic Trickster

### Requirements: Novice, Luck

Once per session your Detective may "suddenly remember" he has the hoax, book, information, person, item or hint everybody is looking for. It could be his place or somewhere else he knows, where he could enter and take it without problems. The Game Master has the final word on what can be found this way. In mechanical terms they are Hoaxes or Relics (see page 71).

## Requiem

### Requirement: Cineromancy

You possess an amount of ash from a special dead person, usually an artist, a musician or a poet you really like and appreciate, or a relative.

When tired or desperate, a dose of this ash lets you relax and recharge your spirit and strength. Your favorite poet will recite his poems, your guitar hero will give his best solo performance, or your lost mother will sing a lullaby to you.

Once a day, you can spend half an hour relaxing this way, cancelling one Fatigue Level (from any source). You also have +1 to rolls for recovering from Traumas.

## Retrocognition

### Requirements: Psychic

By standing in or visiting a room or a place (MBT in size), you can have a vision of something that happened there in the past, connected with a death. A success grants basic information (what happened in that place), while a raise provides more details about the facts or the killer.





## CHAPTER 3 THE DEPOSITORY: NEW GEAR

Well, rookies, now it's time to have a look at the Depository of this facility. You can find a lot of nice toys there, and choose what you need for your case each time.

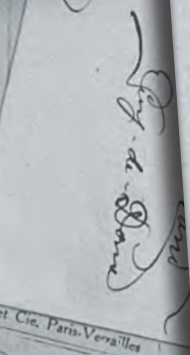
Just remember to bring everything back undamaged, or you'll have to fill out a mountain of paperwork and get a long lecture.

This chapter describes the equipment used by Detectives and NPCs and expands the second chapter in *Savage Worlds Deluxe*. Here you can find the descriptions, prices and availability of new weapons, vehicles, gadgets and ordinary equipment.

The list is divided into three parts: Investigation, Action and Paranormal.

Each item described in this chapter has its own Availability Code, indicating how easy it is to obtain.

Prices are in Euro, because it's the most common currency in Europe, but for convenience you can consider it equivalent to dollars or pounds.



# 1. AGENTS' EQUIPMENT

## AND COMMONLY AVAILABLE ITEMS

### Agents' Equipment

As Special Agents of the Bureau, you will be issued the equipment needed (or expected to be needed) for your case. The Bureau provides standard and operational gear, but doesn't have limitless funds and every issue and loss must be reported. We live in a time of economic crisis; hadn't you noticed?

The assigned items can only come from the lists in sections 2, 3 and 4 of this chapter.

It is assumed that, during a case, each of you:

- \* Does not pay for service trips, lodging or meals with his own money.
- \* Receives one Operational Kit of his choice at the beginning of the case.
- \* Can choose, in addition to his Kit, any gear in the following lists with A and B Availability. This could also be requisitioned during a case.
- \* Can choose, in addition to his Kit, one item in the following lists with C or D Availability. This could also be requisitioned during a case.
- \* Receives all the ammunition he asks for.
- \* Will bring everything back to the Bureau after the case, reporting on and justifying every lost or damaged item.

You can ask for more specific and rarer gear, but the Game Master, as the Vallum Quartermaster, always has the last word on requests.

In extreme or special circumstances this standard allocation could be modified.

### Commonly Available Items

The costs of items only matters to you when you need to buy something yourself. Their availability, on the other hand, is useful both when you ask for gear from Logistics and when you need to find something useful by yourselves.

Here's what each letter means:

- \* **A - Common:** This item is available in almost

every store. You can obtain it in ten minutes in any district of the city and in most shops anywhere. You can also buy it online, with a one-day delivery and +10 cost.

**As an Agent** you can get all the Common items you need from the Bureau before starting the investigation. During your case you can also ask for more items, but you could wait some hours for them and they can only be issued during office hours. You need to bring everything back at the end of your case.

- \* **B - Sellable:** This item is for sale openly, but you need to find the right shop. In the city you might spend 1 or 2 hours searching for it, but no more. Probably, it is not easy to find outside the bigger towns. You can also buy it online, with a 2-3 days delivery and +10 cost.
- \* **As an Agent:** you can get all the Sellable items you need from the Bureau before starting the investigation. During your case you can also ask for more items, but you could wait some hours for them and they only can be issued in office hours. You need to bring everything back at the end of your case.
- \* **C - Limited:** This item is not widely available; probably it is a spy gadget, a big weapon or something illegal. You can only get it if you are connected with the people that manage and assign it (the army, scientists, contractors, criminal gangs and so on). Or you need to find it on the black market, somewhere in the city or whatever the "right place" is. You must make a Streetwise (-2) roll. You can try this Streetwise roll only once per week.

You can also buy it on the GhostWeb, with 7 days' delivery and +40 cost. In this case, use a Knowledge (Computer) roll instead of Streetwise, with the same conditions.

**As an Agent** you can only have one Limited or Exclusive item you need from the Bureau before





starting the investigation or during the case (in this last case, usually you need to wait for one day). You need to bring everything back at the end of your case.

\* **D - Exclusive:** These items are not normally for sale, very rare, or available only to regular armies, military organizations and intelligence services. You can have one if it is issued to you by the Bureau or someone else, or if you manage to steal it or find it in some very special place, like the hideout of an underworld gang or via a well-connected smuggler in town. You must make a Streetwise (-2) roll just to know who might have the item and, if it really is available, it will cost at least an additional 50% of the listed price.

You can also find the same information on the GhostWeb, using a Knowledge (Computer) roll instead of Streetwise, with the same conditions.

As an Agent access to these items uses the rules for Limited Availability above.

## Savage Worlds Item Availability

A lot of items detailed in *Savage Worlds* are also available in *Imago Mortis*, with the following availability:

- \* Mundane Items - Adventuring Gear: Common (except for medieval and archaic items, which are usually Sellable)
- \* Mundane Items - Clothing, Food and Computers: Common
- \* Mundane Items - Animals & Tack: Limited
- \* Mundane Items - Surveillance: Sellable
- \* Hand Weapons and Armor - Medieval: Sellable (usually in antique shops)
- \* Hand Weapons and Armor - Modern: Sellable
- \* Ranged Weapons - Medieval and Black Powder: Sellable (usually in antique shops)
- \* Pistols, Shotguns and Rifles: Limited
- \* Assault Rifles, Machine Guns, Submachine Guns: Limited
- \* Special Weapons: Exclusive
- \* Vehicle mounted and AT Weapons: Exclusive
- \* Civilian Vehicles and Aircraft: Sellable
- \* Watercraft: Sellable, except those with "Military" price, which are Exclusive
- \* World War II and Modern Military Vehicles and Aircraft: Exclusive

The Bureau does not have these items. If you want or need some of them, you have to find and buy them yourself.

## 2. NEW GEAR: INVESTIGATION

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability	Rugged
Binoculars	100	2	A	*
Binoculars, Night Vision	200	2	B	*
Binoculars, Infrared	200	2	B	*
Bug, Audio & Receiver	200	-/1	C	-
Bug, Video & Receiver	400	-/1	C	-
Bug, Audio/Video & Receiver	600	-/1	C	-
Camouflage Clothing, Night	100	3	A	-
Desktop Computer	1000	10	A	-
Desktop Computer, Mod	2500	10	C	-
Disguise Kit	200	4	B	-
Drone	800	10	B	*
Flashlight	20	1	B	*
Flashlight, Tactical	80	1	B	*
GhostWeb Device	250	1	D	*
Goggles, Night Vision	600	2	B	*
Goggles, Infrared	600	2	B	*
GPSTracker	150	-	C	-
Handcuffs	15	1	B	-
Laptop Computer	500	4	A	*
Laptop Computer, Mod	1500	4	A	*
Lighter	2	-	A	*
Lockpicks	200	1	C	-
Metal Detector	150	1	B	-



Item	Cost	Weight	Availability	Rugged
Mobile Device	300	-	A	*
Motion Detector	50	1	B	-
Satellite Phone	1000	0.5	B	*
Video Camera	450	1	A	*
Walkie-Talkie	100	1	B	*
Zip Ties (10)	10	1	B	-

## Rugged

Rugged gear is designed and made to keep operating under all the worst environmental conditions.

Only a few companies



produce this kind of gear and the price is usually double that for the common version. If you decide on a Rugged version of an item (available only if the option is flagged) the Availability is one step higher where possible (e.g. a Rugged Limited item is Exclusive), and the price is doubled. In exchange for that, you will have an item which is waterproof (protected against submersion, at depth, under pressure), proof against bumps, temperature fluctuations, electromagnetic shocks, dust and mud. If subjected to the Phenomenon called "Interference", the gear has 50% possibility of remaining operational.

### Investigation Kit

In every Investigation Kit you find: 1 Binoculars, night vision; 1 bug audio/video & receiver; 1 rugged laptop computer; 2 flashlights, tactical; 1 goggles, infrared; 1 motion detector; 1 stun gun; 1 video camera; 1 walkie talkie.

### Gear Notes

**Binoculars:** 12X, waterproof and anti-fog. Useless in absence of light. The night vision model removes Dim and Dark lighting penalties, and halves Pitch Darkness penalties. The infrared model works only in Pitch Darkness and removes its penalty.

**Bug:** This digital micro-device catches audio only, video only or audio/video within 10 yards, then transmits it to its receiver, at any distance. Find a bug requires a Notice roll (-2 if looking for anything else). Using a bug stealthily requires a Stealth roll (at +2 if the opposition doesn't suspect anything) opposed by a Notice roll.

**Camouflage Clothing, Night:** Comfortable black clothes, including a hood and some lampblack. At night they grant +1 to Stealth rolls.

**Computer, Desktop & Laptop:** A useful tool for gathering information on Common Knowledge matters or making Investigation rolls on the internet. The battery of a laptop usually lasts for eight hours before it needs recharging, which takes around two hours. The Mod versions are overclocked and modified to improve their performance: +2 on Investigation and hacking activities with them.

**Disguise Kit:** This kit includes professional makeup, silicon to prepare masks, wigs and other accessories. It offers a +2 bonus to Persuasion rolls when in disguise, opposed by the opponent's Notice roll.

**Drone:** This professional quadcopter drone with camera is ideal for patrolling open spaces and surveillance. It can fly for 30 minutes in a radius of half a mile from its controller. Its camera can also switch to night vision, if needed. It has Toughness: 4, Climb: -1. Due to its small size ranged attacks against it suffer -2.

**Flashlight:** Hand torch lasting around two hours, generating dim light. The tactical version is waterproof and lasts for two hours of full light and 18 hours of dim light.

**GhostWeb Device:** An electronic device used to connect safely to the GhostWeb. It requires a Mod Computer and protects against GhostWeb tracking or backfire.

**Goggles:** A device that can be secured to the head leaving the hands free. The night vision model removes Dim and Dark light penalties, and halves Pitch Darkness penalties. The infrared works only in Pitch Darkness and removes its penalty.

**GPS Tracker:** Similar to a bug, but allows anyone using a suitable computer and software to know its position.

**Handcuffs:** Hard and professional. Picking them requires a Lockpicking roll at -2 (-4 if you are the one restrained).

**Lockpicks:** The modern version of this timeless, classic tool. +2 to Lockpicking rolls.

**Metal Detector:** This portable scanning device can detect the presence of guns and blades within one foot.

**Mobile Devices:** Smartphones, tablets, handhelds and similar. You can use it to communicate with your allies at any time, record audio and video, shoot photos, find GPS locations and find information like a Laptop. The battery usually lasts for 8 hours before it needs recharging, which takes around 2 hours. It can't let you log on to the GhostWeb. Yet.

**Motion Detector:** This sensor is designed to pick up movement of any sort, even in pitch darkness, and record it, showing it on another



device or computer, and/or sounding an alarm. It has an effective range of 20 yards in its front arc.

**Satellite Phone:** These phones allow communication wherever satellite communication is available and provide good encryption.

**Walkie-Talkie:** The model listed has an effective range of 5 miles. Double the price for models with a 15 mile range. Also, note the price is for a set of two and has headsets included.

**Zip Ties (10):** Plastic ties, which can be used to restrain prisoners. They can be forced with a

Strength roll (-2) or easily cut with a proper tool.



**US Assault Rifle**

### 3. NEW GEAR: ACTION

Hand Weapons						
Weapon	Damage	Wt	Cost	Avail.	Mn.St.	Notes
Baseball Bat	Str+d6	3	30	B	d6	
Chain	Str+d4	2	15	A	Reach 1	
Combat Knife	Str+d4	3	50	C	AP 1	
Crowbar	Str+d4	2	20	B		
Carrote Wire	Special	0.5	10	C	-	Parry -2
Mace Spray	2d6	1	20	B	-	Parry -2
Stun Gun	2d6	1	100	C	-	Parry -2

#### Ranged Weapons

The following table describes the only common (generic) weapon models specific to this category.

**BALCAZAR WEAPONS**  
BALCAZAR IS A LOW-PROFILE WEAPON BRAND, LOCATED IN LISBON, PORTUGAL. THIS LITTLE FACTORY IS WELL-KNOWN IN THE EUROPEAN UNDERWORLD, ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN WHAT'S GOING ON. THEY PRODUCE SEVERAL WEAPONS THAT ARE EFFECTIVE AGAINST SPOOKIES AND, FOR THIS REASON, ARE VERY COMMON IN THE MILTEU. EVEN THE BUREAU OBTAINS SUPPLIES FROM THEM.  
ACTUALLY, BALCAZAR GUNS HAVE AN UNCOMMON BUT MUNDANE LOOK: THEY CAN JUST BE EASILY EQUIPPED WITH SPECIAL OR HANDMADE AMMO. EVEN IF THAT'S MADE WITH SLUGS, FILING AND SALT. SO, BALCAZAR WEAPONS CAN BE USED WITH RESULTS AGAINST COMMON ENEMIES: THEIR AMMO WORKS LIKE A SHOTGUN'S. BUT PUT SALT OR IRON FILINGS IN THE CARTRIDGE AND YOU CAN ALSO OVERPOWER A TWISTED WRAITH!  
IN THE FOLLOWING TABLES, BALCAZAR WEAPONS HAVE THE STATS FOR COMMON AMMUNITION AND ARE DESCRIBED SEPARATELY FROM THE OTHERS. LOOK AT THE SPECIAL AMMUNITION SECTION FOR DIFFERENT EFFECTS.



Weapon	Range	Dmg	RoF	Cost	Wt	Shots	Avail.	Notes
Molotov Cocktail	5/10/20	2d6	1	2	1	-	A	
Taser	3/6/-	2d6	1	300	1	20	C	
Pistols								
Balcasar, Faust	12/24/48	3d6-3/2d6-2/1d6-1	1	500	6	9	D-	AUTO, 3RB
Balcasar, Mephisto	10/30/40	1-3d6	1	260	2	6	C	AP1
Light sidearm	10/20/40	2d6-1	1	100	1	10	C	DT
Anmmo: .380 ACP, 7.65x17mm, .22LR. Examples: Walther APK, Ruger Mk II								
Medium sidearm	12/24/48	2d6	1	200	2	15	C	AP1, DT
Anmmo: 9x19mm Para, 9x18mm PM, .45 ACP. Examples: Beretta 92FS, Glock 17, PM Makarov								
Heavy sidearm	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	200	2	10	C	AP1, DT
Anmmo: .357 SIG, 10mm AUTO. Examples: Sig-Sauer P229								
Spec-ops sidearm	15/30/60	2d8	1	300	4	7	C	AP1, DT
Anmmo: .44 Magnum, .50 AE. Examples: Desert Eagle								
Submachine guns								
Light SMG	12/24/48	2d6	3	300	3	30	C	AP1, 3RB, Full Auto
Anmmo: 9x19mm Para. Examples: Beretta 93R, Glock 18, Mini-Uzi								
SMG	20/40/80	2d6+1	3	350	5	30	C	AP1, 3RB, Full Auto
Anmmo: 9x19mm Para, .45 ACP. Examples: UZI, H&K MP5, Thompson M1928								
Shotguns								
Balcasar, Lucifer	12/24/48	1-3d6	1	600	8	12	D	AUTO, 3RB
Double barrel	12/24/48	1-3d6	1-2	150	7	2	C	see SWD
Sawed Off	5/10/20	1-3d6	1-2	150	4	2	C	see SWD
Pump action	12/24/48	1-3d6	1	150	8	8	C	see SWD

Ammo: 12g. Examples: Mossberg 500, Remington 870, Franchi SPAS-12								
Streetsweeper	12/24/48	1-3d6	1	450	8	10	C	see SWD, DT
Ammo: 12g. Examples: Saiga-12, Striker								
Rifles								
Anti-materiel rifle (AMR)	60/120/240	2d10	1	2000	30	10	D	AP 7, scope, snaphire penalty
Ammo: .50 BMC, 12.7x108mm Soviet. Examples: Barrett M82, PCM Hecate II, M-2 Gepard								
Heavy AMR	65/130/260	2d12	1	4000	38	5	D	AP 9, scope, snaphire.
Ammo: .20x83mm Mauser, 14.5x114mm Soviet, Examples: M-3 Gepard, Dendel NTW-20								
Sniper rifle	35/70/140	2d8	1	500	10	10	C	AP 4, scope, snaphire.
Ammo: 7.62x51mm NATO, 7.62x54mmR. Examples: M-21, M-14 DMR, Sako TRG-22, L96A1								
Heavy Sniper rifle	40/80/160	2d8+1	1	750	14	5	D	AP 5, scope, snaphire.
Ammo: .300 Winchester Magnum, .338 Lapua Magnum. Examples: Sako TRG-42, AI Arctic Warfare								
Assault Rifles								
Balczar, Diablo	24/48/96	1-3d8	3	1250	12	30	D	AP 2, AUTO
Assault Rifle	30/60/120	2d8	3	450	8	30	C	AP 3, auto, 3RB
Ammo: 5.56x45mm NATO, 7.62x39mm Soviet, 5.45x39mm Soviet, 5.8x42mm DBP87. Examples: M-16, FAMAS, L35A2, AK-47, AK-74, QBZ-95								
Assault carbine	24/48/96	2d8	3	450	6	30	C	AP 2, auto, 3RB
Ammo: 5.56x45mm NATO, 5.45x39mm Soviet. Examples: M-4, AK-74SU								
Selective fire battle rifle	35/70/140	2d8	3	500	10	30	D	AP 4, auto, 3RB
Ammo: 7.62x51mm NATO. Examples: HK G-3, FN-FAL, M-14								
Grenade								
Balczar, Cold Iron	5/10/20	3d6	-	120	2		D	SBT 2 Against living; Nonlethal damage. Against Spookies: +1 damage per die.
Balczar, Salt Grenade	5/10/20	3d6	-	120	2		D	SBT Against living; Nonlethal damage.



## Ammunition

### Cartridges (only for Balcazar weapons or shotguns)

Weapon	Cost	Wt	Notes
Balcazar 50 normal cartridges (slugs)	10	1	Against Spookies: Cone Template area (damage as for short distance)
Balcazar 50 cold iron slugs	60	1	Against Spookies: Cone Template area (damage as for short distance) +1 AP
Balcazar 50 salt cartridges	12	1	Against Livings: Nonlethal damage. Against Spookies: Cone Template area (damage as for short range)
Balcazar 50 iron filings cartridges	12	1	Against Livings: Nonlethal damage, +1 damage per die. Against Spookies: Cone Template area (damage as for short range), +1 damage per die.
Balcazar 50 cold iron filings cartridge	60	1	Against Livings: Nonlethal damage, +1 damage per die. Against Spookies: Cone Template area (damage as for short range), +1 damage per die.

### Bullets (for every other gun)

Cold iron bullets cost twice as much and automatically miss the target with a 1 on the Shooting Die.

### Ammunition Reloaders

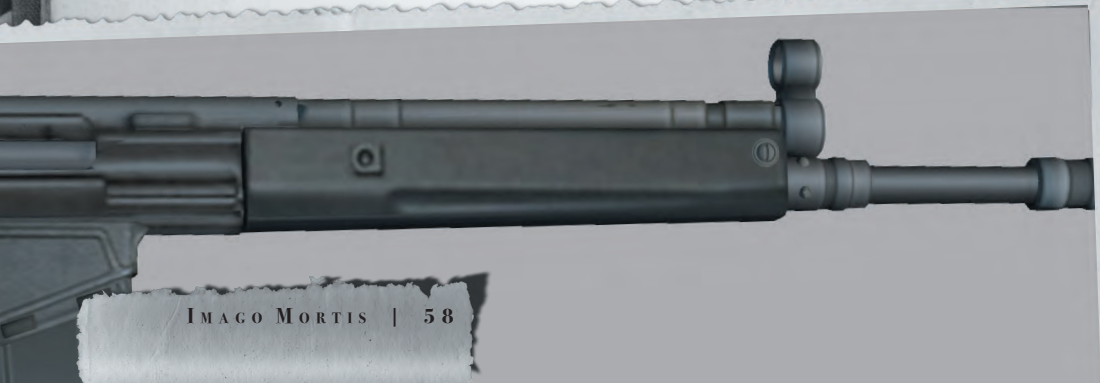
Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Ammo reloader toolkit	150	15	B
Ammo reloader toolkit, Balcazar	200	15	C



Armor				
Item	Armor	Cost	Weight*	Availability
Leather Jacket	+1 on Chest/Arms	80	3	B
Ballistic Vest	+2/+4 Chest, Negates 4 AP	150	8	B
Improved Ballistic Vest	+3/+6 Chest, +1 Arms/Legs. Negates 4 AP	350	12	C

*\*This is effective weight when worn. Most armor weighs quite a bit more when carried rather than worn.*

High Explosives							
Explosive	Range	Dmg	RoF	Cost	Wt	Avail. Notes	
Dynamite							
1 stick	4/8/16	2d6	1	10	0.5	C	SBT
2 sticks	4/8/16	3d6	1	20	1	C	SBT
4 sticks	3/6/12	4d6	1	40	2	C	MBT
8 sticks	2/4/8	5d6	1	80	4	C	LBT
Nitro 8oz bottle	4/8/16	3d6	1	10	0.5	C	MBT
Plastic							
1 pound	4/8/16	4d6	1	50	1	C	MBT
2 pound	4/8/16	5d6	1	100	2	C	MBT
4 pound	3/6/12	6d6	1	200	4	C	LBT
8 pound	2/4/8	7d6	1	400	8	C	LBT





## New Vehicles

Vehicle	Acc/TS	Toughness	Crew	Cost	Avail.	Notes
<b>Aircraft</b>						
Helicopter, small	20/48	10 (2)	1+1	150k+	C	
Helicopter, large	20/48	12 (2)	1+9	700k+	C	
<b>Land Vehicles</b>						
Limo	20/36	11 (3)	1+7	60-250k B		
Pickup	15/40	14 (3)	1+2	20-50k	B	
Van	15/30	12 (3)	1+7	10-30k	B	
<b>Watercraft</b>						
Fan Boat	5/25	8 (2)	1+2	10-30k B		
Sea Scooter	2/7	5	1	800+	B	See notes

## Action Kit

In every Action Kit you find: 1 Balcazar, Mephisto; 1 Balcazar, Faust, 1 Balcazar, Lucifer; 1 Balcazar, Diablo; 4 Balcazar, salt grenades; Balcazar 50 normal cartridges (slugs); Balcazar 50 salt cartridges; 1 binoculars, nightvision; 1 flashlight, tactical; 1 walkie talkie.

## Gear Notes: Action

**Ammunition Reloader Toolkit:** If you want to make or reload ammunition yourself, you need an ammo reloader kit. With this kit, every cartridge or shell for shotguns or Balcazar weapons costs you half the usual amount, because you are only buying the raw materials. Then, you need a Repair roll to make 50 cartridges or bullets (1 hour). With a failure on the roll, you lose all the raw materials and need to buy them again before rerolling.

Penalties may also apply to the roll:

-2 for making cold iron, salt or iron filings shotgun shells

-2 for making cold iron bullets

The Balcazar version of this toolkit removes these penalties.

**Dynamite:** Up to 8 sticks of dynamite can be thrown as a single thrown weapon. For quantities not listed in the table, simply add +1 damage per additional stick.

**Explosives:** All explosives are Heavy Weapons.

**Garrote Wire:** Using a garrote requires two hands. The attacker must attempt a Grapple attack with -4 (aiming to hit the throat). If successful, he gains +4 to Strength opposed rolls against the victim for the duration of the grapple, and adds +d4 to his Grapple damage. In order to be able to speak, the victim must make a Vigor roll at -4, and can scream only on a raise.

**Mace Spray:** This self-defense pepper spray only works if shot at the face of the target, which counts as an aimed (-2), touch (+2) attack, resulting in no modifiers to the Combat roll. The damage inflicted

is non-lethal, and incapacitated characters suffer no injuries. After ten uses, the can is empty and a new spray must be bought.

**Molotov Cocktail:** A Molotov cocktail is a crude incendiary device consisting of a bottle filled with flammable liquid and a rag as means of ignition. Molotov cocktails are not sold in shops and the listed price refers to the costs of the components. If the target is hit with a successful Throwing roll, the cocktail inflicts the listed damage and the target may catch fire. If the target is missed, the bottle deviates from it for a number of inches equal to the amount the Throwing roll missed by, in a random direction. In either case, the bottle shatters and causes a small area of fire, the size of a Small Burst Template, burning for 6 rounds. A fire area attack like this can damage Shrouds.

**Nitro:** Nitroglycerin is the liquid used to produce dynamite, and it is highly unstable.

**Pickup:** Pickup trucks ignore most difficult terrain with a successful Driving roll and typically offer a large open-top rear cargo area.

**Plastic:** Plastic explosive is a puttylike explosive, capable of being molded by hand. It goes under various names: C-4, Semtex, Demex, and others. Plastic explosives are especially suited for explosive demolition of structures as they can be easily formed into the best shapes for the job. Plastic explosives can only be set off using a detonator. Fire and Impacts, including bullets, have no effect. On the other hand, it works perfectly well underwater.

**Sea Scooter:** These battery-powered electric propellers can typically run for about three hours. The diver adds +2 to all Swimming rolls.

**Stun Gun:** Despite the name, the stun gun is not a gun. This device uses high-voltage electricity to disable muscle control. It simply requires a Touch Attack to inflict damage. The damage, however, does not cause wounds; it inflicts Fatigue levels instead. The Shaken condition applies

normally (i.e. if the damage at least equals the target's Toughness). Fatigue inflicted by a stun gun is recovered at a rate of 1 level per minute. Incapacitated characters fall unconscious. Batteries last for 20 uses, and after that they need recharging.

**Taser:** This device uses high-voltage electricity to disable muscle control, shooting two electrodes at the target. The damage, however, does not cause wounds; it inflicts Fatigue levels instead. The Shaken condition applies normally (i.e. if the damage at least equals the target's Toughness). Fatigue inflicted by a taser is recovered at a rate of 1 level per minute. Incapacitated characters drop unconscious. After use, the electrodes must be rewound into the gun, taking one action. Batteries last for 20 uses, and after that they need recharging.





## 4. NEW GEAR:

### PARANORMAL

#### **Ghost Hunting**

Item	Cost	Avail	Wt	Rugged
Actinic Lamp	4000	D	4	-
Digital Therm.	20	B	-	-
Goggles, thermal	8000	C	2	*
Kirlian Detector	1500	C	1	*
Video Camera, thermal 800	B	1	*	

#### **Ghost Fighting**

Usually, Entities can't be harmed in melee combat. They don't suffer damage from standard attacks and only area attacks can harm them. Cold Iron weapons, however, can hit them and inflict normal damage.

Cold iron is a rare kind of pure iron that has not been heated in a forge before it is worked. Cold iron melee weapons cost twice as much as normal and shatter if the fighter rolls a 1 on his Fighting die.

Cold iron bullets for common ranged weapons cost twice as much as normal and miss if the shooter rolls a 1 on his Shooting die. If the shooter uses a ranged weapon specifically made for this kind of ammunition (for example shotguns and Balcazar guns), use the prices on page 57 and ignore the other negative effects.

#### **Paranormal Kit**

In every Paranormal Kit you find: 1 Actinic ray lamp; 1 binoculars, infrared; 2 Balcazar salt grenades; 1 flashlight, tactical; 1 goggles, thermal; 1 Kirlian detector; 1 rugged laptop computer; 1 walkie talkie.





## Gear Notes: Paranormal

**Actinic Lamp:** This useful prototype emits of a sort of blacklight/purple-ultraviolet luminescence filling a SBT and can reveal any “spot” of Residue or other ectoplasmic stuff on objects and surfaces, as luminol does for blood traces. If something has been “touched” by an Entity, this lamp detects the traces for weeks. If turned on in the presence of a Hidden or Manifest Entity, it inflicts negative effects on the Spooky giving it a -2 penalty on every roll.

**Digital Thermometer:** The simplest tool for a ghost hunter. It reveals thermal variations in a room via infrared. A sudden lowering of the temperature is usually a clue to the presence of a Spooky. It's also useful to find the Cold Spot.

**Goggles, Thermal:** More accurate than a thermal camera and with a night-long battery charge. They can be secured to the head, leaving the hands free.

**Kirlian Detector:** This device can reveal the anomalies generated by Phantom Energy in electromagnetic fields and, therefore, whether there is a Spooky around. It is a handheld device and comes with a display. It works in a Cone Template and can detect the presence of a Hidden Entity or Paranormal Phenomenon. It can give a rough determination of the intensity of the Phenomenon. It's also useful to find the Cold Spot.

**Video Camera, Thermal:** This detector and videocamera allows the user to see thermal images in any lighting condition and, above all, to detect thermal variations all around. Shrouds and Paranormal Phenomena are always colder than their surroundings, so this device is very useful to detect them and the Cold Spot.

## Spooky Floss


One of the weirdest effects of Infiltrations and of the upcoming Midnight of the Century is the diffusion of a new drug in our bigger cities: Spooky Floss. They say it comes from Residue, even if it is processed with all sorts of additives and other ingredients.

Floss is very expensive and rare: a typical dose costs €150 and has a C Availability.

For an hour after swallowing (it comes in pills, with the consistency of cotton candy) it grants Low Light Vision (no penalties for Dim and Dark light), +2 to any Vigor Roll against Cold effects and the Brave and I've Seen Things Edges. After that hour, when its effects wear off, the consumer needs to succeed at a Vigor Roll or he gains one Fatigue Level, two Levels with a critical failure.

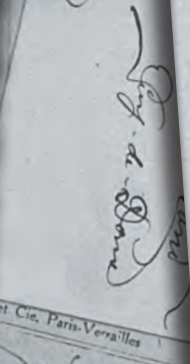








## CHAPTER 4 - SETTING RULES

*Imago Mortis* is a game of dread and investigation in the dark and twisted underworld of the worst cities of our century. This chapter offers specific rules to make your *Imago Mortis* games even more exciting and terrifying, with Setting Rules for Lifelike Detectives, Dread, Psychotherapy, Séances, Exorcisms, Quick Combats, Interludes, and other things.



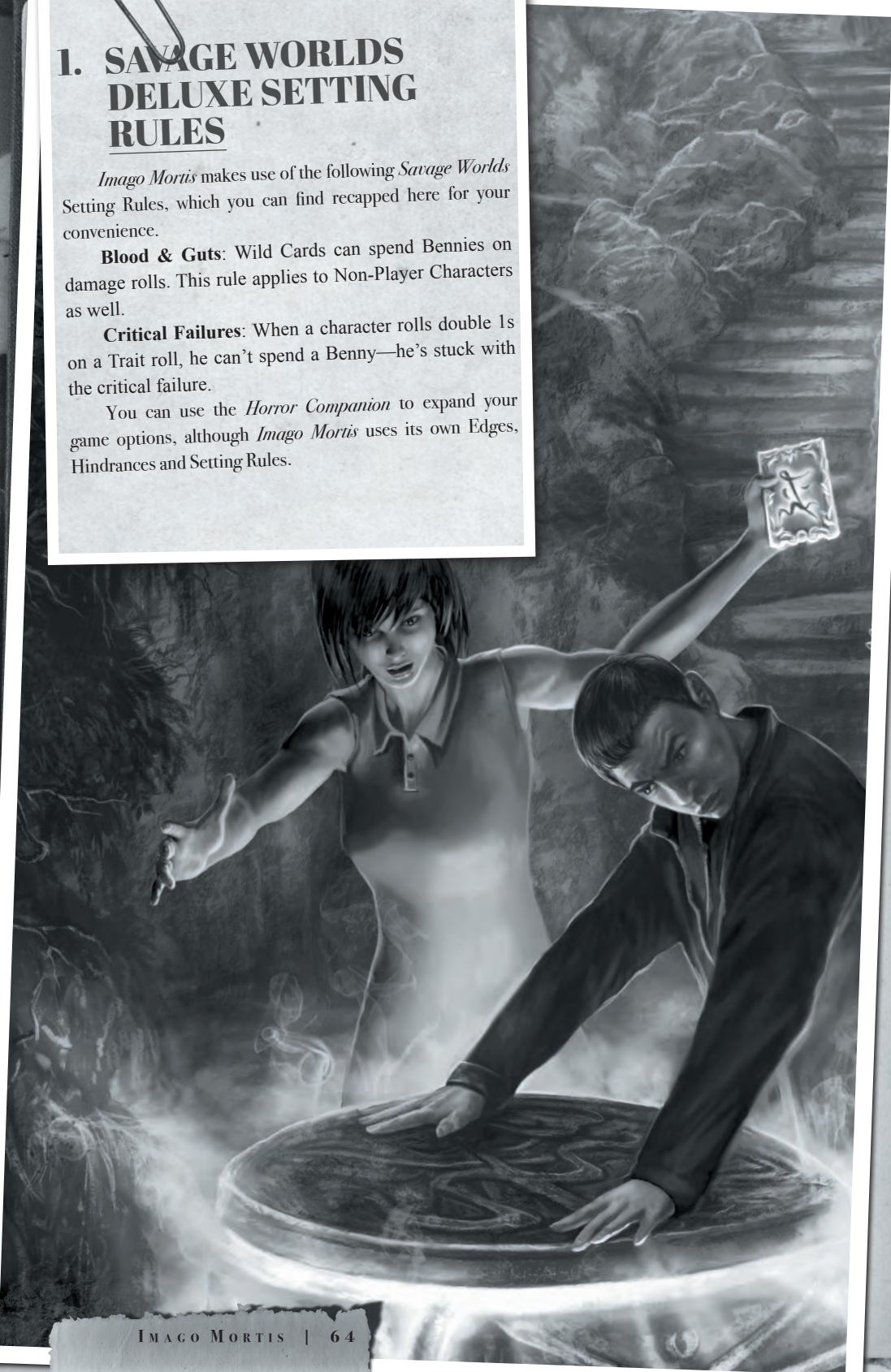
# 1. SAVAGE WORLDS DELUXE SETTING RULES

*Imago Mortis* makes use of the following *Savage Worlds* Setting Rules, which you can find recapped here for your convenience.

**Blood & Guts:** Wild Cards can spend Bennies on damage rolls. This rule applies to Non-Player Characters as well.

**Critical Failures:** When a character rolls double 1s on a Trait roll, he can't spend a Benny—he's stuck with the critical failure.

You can use the *Horror Companion* to expand your game options, although *Imago Mortis* uses its own Edges, Hindrances and Setting Rules.





## 2. QUICK COMBAT RULES

### – NEW APPLICATIONS

We really appreciate the Quick Combat rule variant (a free download from the PEG website) and we strongly encourage you to use it in your investigations.

As a summary of these rules, when you need to speed up a combat encounter and the battle is not very important, you can use this quick system to sum up the results of a fight and still keep a little tension and drama in the scene.

### New Uses of this Rule in Imago Mortis

The Quick Combat rules also work well for situations other than a surprise night ambush in a parking lot or a gunfight at the gangsters' hideout.

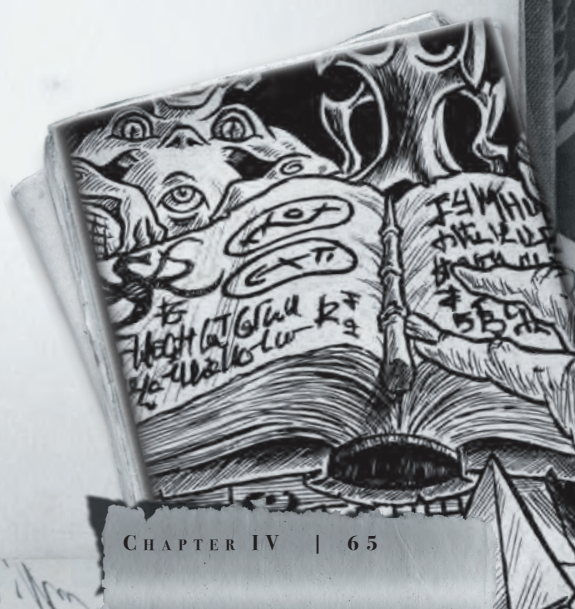
**The rumble in the bar:** when you are following the trail of the "Chopper Killer" down into a private club frequented by insurrectionary anarchists, you are probably going to start a rumble. When the riot begins, you don't need to play out a fight in detail, you can have a Quick Combat. Fighting, Intimidation, Taunt, Persuasion, Stealth, Throwing, Agility and Strength are great choices here.

**The annoying Poltergeist:** There are different kinds of Poltergeist and every situation needs its own. You can face the three most common types described in the Phenomenology as a common enemy or assume it works as a secondary hazard that can only cause a little trouble, which you don't have to spend a lot of time on. The Quick Combat Modifiers are a great idea to set the power and duration of the Poltergeist:

-2/0/+2 for a Minor, Major and Apocalyptic Poltergeist

-2/0/+2 for a short/average/long duration Poltergeist

**A faster dogfight:** Some chases are like combats and you can use the Quick Combat Rules with them. Consider the modifiers for Speed (+2/0/-2) and Terrain (+2/0/-2) and then make your Trait roll according to your plan. You don't need to draw Cards or 5/10 rounds action for this kind of Dogfights, just one quick roll.





### 3. INTERLUDES IN IMAGO MORTIS

Interludes are a great idea for *Imago Mortis* cases and a good way to slow down a bit after a climax or a twist, before it's time to restart the investigation.

*Imago Mortis* has its own Interlude Table, but the rule is the usual one: you draw a card and its Suit determines the general topic as follows:

**Clubs – A Ghost Story:** It's time to reveal some creepy case you dealt with in your past. If it's the first time you've told this kind of story, it can be interesting telling about the very first time you saw a Spooky or came into contact with paranormal. It could be your first case or something before joining the Bureau. This kind of story should also involve an Edge or Hindrance of yours, a deep fear or a dark secret.

**Spades – The Commode Story:** It's an amusing anecdote about a mundane adventure or situation you had, before or after you knew about the Spookies. Something funny that happened to you while on a case. Think of it as a classic chat from a Tarantino movie, part action, part joke, part completely out of context.

**Hearts – Love:** It's time to tell a story

of a dark, impossible or sad love, something you have lost. It could be a passionate, pure, platonic or deep feeling, but should always be something melancholy.

**Diamonds – A Past Case:** A case you were involved in, that didn't involve the paranormal. Just a bad, thrilling action-crime episode in your life: hails of bullets, a gang of militia mercenaries, extreme violence and broken glass everywhere...

**Joker – Retire:** Tell your detective's dream, what you are hoping for after the end of your career, when and where you would like to leave your current life for a better tomorrow.

As usual, each entry requires you to tell a story in the voice of your character. The tale should be substantial enough to take a few minutes and may draw in other characters' participation as well.

The Game Master should note some details of any story and use it in the future for a new adventure, a complication in a case or a fatal twist. Then, he will reward you with a Benny or an Adventure Card.





## 4. NEW SETTING RULES

### JUST MEN AGAINST THE UNKNOWN: LIFELIKE DETECTIVES

Some players find that the normal *Savage Worlds* heroes, larger than life, are not the best characters for gritty ghost stories, because the main characters in these tales are usually weak, fallible and scared of the unknown, not reckless daredevils. If you wish to recreate the effect of human fallibility and weakness when facing armed gangs, violent murderers and chilling horror from the afterlife you can use the following optional rule.

During character creation your Traits cannot be raised beyond d8. Your Detective also has 1 Major or 2 Minor Hindrances in addition to the normal ones, without earning creation points for that. And good luck with your cases.

### Psychic Powers as Edges

Magic doesn't exist, I'm sorry, rookie. No superpowers, no telepathy around. We have no espers here, no psionics. If a God does exist, and I am certainly not the one who can confirm something like that, he does not show up a lot these days, and his followers have no miracles to cast.

For that matter, there's no Santa Claus either, sorry.

There are some who use tricks and gimmicks to find and fight the Entities, but if you were the nerd of the school I have bad news for you: no weird scientists or proton packs around here...

There are only life and death, boy. And what there is in between.

Although paranormal phenomena in *Imago Mortis* are numerous and often complex and inscrutable (and increasing day by day,

dammit...), the men on this side of the Curtains have the opportunity to tap into only a fraction of those unknowable forces.

I was used to date a girl from New York, Melinda, who could talk to the Chained whenever any of them was around. That chick could convince any Spooky to cut its bonds to the Earthly World, sending it back to the Netherworld with a smile and some small talk. There is also a boy who sees dead people every time he walks in front of a haunted house. I myself could speak a little with your grandfather, if you give me the urn with his ashes...

So psychic phenomena exist, but I don't have a new Arcane Background for you, nor a rewriting of the classic ones.

They all are innate faculties, triggered by some near death experience in the Detective's life, a paranormal event that occurred in your youth, a greater trauma or something similar. Some are also born with one of these "gifts".

For this reason, psychic phenomena work like Edges and you can find them in Chapter 67, among the Weird Edges. There could be other powers in our dark, decadent world, used either by gifted people or minions of the Netherworld, but here we focus on the ones directly within the reach of your Detectives, in their most common activities.

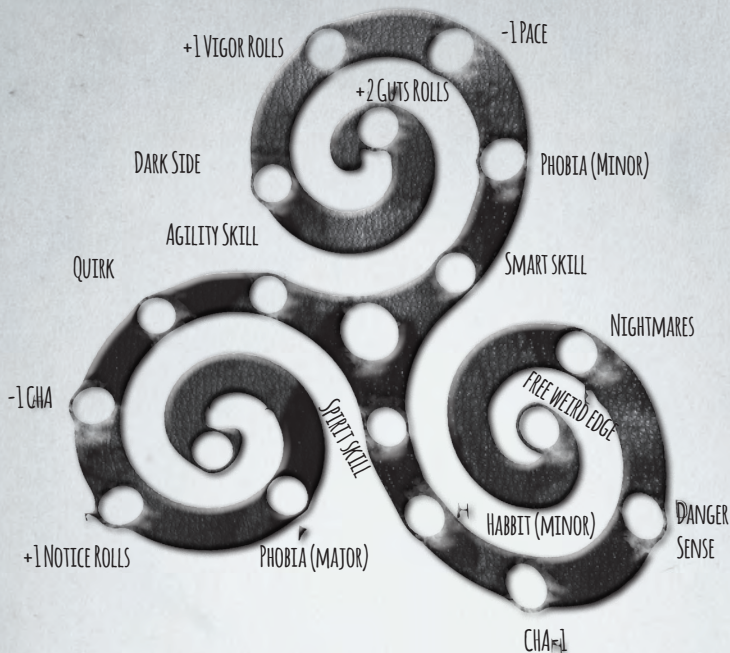
A character with the Psychic Edge is considered a Psychic.

### Spiral of Dread Rules

Imago Mortis stories are based on ghastly apparitions and frightening phenomena, acting as momentary scares, as a progressive corruption of bodies and spirits, as a path that leads from lucidity to delirium, and finally as an accumulation of experiences and phobias that can lead the Detectives into madness, insanity and despair.

This rule replaces the Fear rules of *Savage Worlds* and the Sanity and Corruption rules from the *Horror Companion*, and applies only to Wild Cards. Extras use the standard Fear rules.





**Dread Tests.** Dread is something that happens when an Entity or other Paranormal Phenomena enters the scene or when you are exposed to large amounts of gore and/or violence. A Dread Test is simply a Guts roll; if the hero fails it, he is affected by Fear/Nausea, as per the Savage Worlds core rules. In addition, he starts going deeper into the Spiral of Dread.

**The Spiral.** Do you see that strange diagram on the Agent's Sheet? It is the Spiral of Dread, or, to be more accurate, the Dread Triskel. The Spiral has three "arms", as you see, each of them representing a type of madness your hero can acquire. They are called the High, Left and Right Arm. Every time you fail a Dread roll, starting from the center, you must cross off a circle on the spiral and apply the result, two circles with a critical failure. You can choose which arm you place the cross in, but you must follow the order. Not every mark has bad effects, some of them have positive effects, because in madness there is genius too.

**Going Mad.** Whenever you complete an Arm of the Spiral, your hero is caught by a bout of madness, and the GM runs him for

the remainder of the scene. At the end of it, you regain control, but lose any Bennies you still have.

When you've completely filled in all three Arms, there is nothing we can do for you, pal: you are hopelessly mad, becoming an NPC in the hands of the GM.

**Recovering from the Spiral.** It can be done, friend, but it isn't easy. After each adventure, you can undergo Psychotherapy (see Psychotherapy rule). In addition, at the end of a scenario in which you defeat a substantial supernatural evil, the GM can allow you to erase a mark as an extra reward. Don't expect this to happen too often, ok?

## Spiral Explanation

Below are further explanations of some Spiral effects.

**Doomed Attribute.** When you see an underlined attribute, it means you must choose a Skill linked to that attribute and make it Doomed. Underline it on the character sheet.



You must choose a Skill in which you currently have at least d6. If you can't, simply pick another skill. When using a Doomed Skill, you don't roll the Wild Die.

**Hindrances.** If a character already has the Hindrance a mark on the Spiral would give him, he suffers no further effects from that mark. After all life is already bad enough for him!

## Psychotherapy

If you are going mad, the best thing you can do is visit a "shrink", and a good one, hopefully.

Before rolling, the doctor must decide what Arm of the Spiral he is going to heal. At this point he rolls on Knowledge (Psychotherapy), with a penalty equal to the number of marks the patient has progressed along the Spiral.

If he scores a success, the patient removes the most recent mark on that arm of the spiral, two if the doctor scored a raise or better.

*Example. Santana Vicenzi, a former police officer, has seen too much during the last adventure, and now she has three ticks in one arm of the Spiral of Dread. Doctor Von Stronberg (Psychotherapy d8) tries to expel some of the demons from her soul. He rolls at -3 and scores a 7-3=4. A success! Santana erases the last mark from the High Arm.*

## Séances

Séances are considered as a pastime for the bored radical-chic, the legacy of a superstitious past or a stage mediumship attended by charlatans.

The distressing truth is that well-arranged Séances actually work and open up the Curtains between our world and the next, allowing restless spirits, and often harmful influences, to come into our reality.

This kind of ritual is therefore dangerous and often used in the worst way, but sometimes it is necessary for the Detectives to pursue their

cases.

In most instances, in fact, Séances are organized to make contact with Shades or other entities able to answer questions and issues related to the cases Detectives are working on. So they are therefore an alternative and dangerous way to gather information.

You can perform a Séance to summon and speak to any sort of Entity, usually to ask it for information about its death, its murderer or the Hooks and Chains that bind it to our Earthly World.

A Séance should not usually be the final resolution of your case, but instead a possible source of information to move forward with it.

### What a Séance is

In *Imago Mortis*, a Séance is a special ritual whose aim is the evocation of an Entity or other intangible force to obtain information, or (more rarely) some other special kind of aid.

With a Séance you can summon and speak to an Entity: powerful or weak, unknown or well-known to you, from the Netherworld, Limbo or the Earthly World. In this last case, you can summon only Hidden Entities: if the Entity is manifesting as a Shroud, it's too late for a Séance!

### How a Séance Works

A Séance works as a Ritual and it is actually a Dramatic Task (see *Savage Worlds* and *Horror Companion*).

To have effects, the Séance must be conducted by a well-defined "Channeler" who personally performs the Dramatic Task. The Channeler may be one of the Detectives or a NPC; ideally, one with the Medium Edge.

The Channeler may be alone or with Attendees and may use special items, words and gestures.

All these elements may offer a bonus to the Dramatic Task, but in theory the Channeler could also accomplish the Séance alone, on his feet and without any ritual items or elements, just by concentrating.

The Trait to use is always Spirit. The time for each Action is typically 10 minutes.



As usual for a Dramatic Task, the Channeler has 5 Actions in which to obtain five Success.

Each round, the Channeler first draws an Action Card. If the card is a club, there will be Complications (see sidebar on page 71). Edges such as Level Headed or Quick have no effect in a Séance. After resolving these effects, if necessary, the Channeler makes his Spirit roll.

If the Dramatic Task succeeds, the Séance works as planned and the Channeler can speak with the Entity he summoned. If present, Attendees may also take part in the conversation and a Persuasion roll may be performed to change the Entity's Reaction. You must remember the Entity is forced to answer your questions and can't lie, but it can try to tell you any kind of half-truth or give an enigmatic answer, unless it is Friendly or Helpful.

With any kind of failure, you need to check on the Paranormal Incident Table below.

### Preparation

As a Dramatic Task, the Séance begins when the Channeler and the Attendees seat around a table (or on the ground or wherever is appropriate) and start to focus on calling the Entity.

If you have special words to pronounce, special items to lay out in front of you (such as Relics), symbols to draw, candles to light or other elements like those, you need to prepare them before the Séance begins.

Before the Dramatic Task, the Channeler and Attendees can "activate" all these elements to gain some bonuses for their ritual, spending 1 hour for every final +1 modifier they are obtaining this way. This time can be divided between all those involved in the preparation. You do not need to "prepare" the modifier provided by the Channeler and Attendees themselves.

### Séance Modifiers

**Timing:** A Séance carried out in the broad daylight will never succeed, nor will secondary appearances and side effects occur. Spectral forces simply do not manifest in daylight. The ideal timing is at night, indoors or outdoors.

You also need to apply a -2 penalty to any

roll in these circumstances:

- \* At night, but in artificially lit or crowded areas.
- \* Outdoors just after sunset or just before sunrise.
- \* During the day, but in deep underground or burial chambers. A simple room with closed windows in an ordinary building will not allow the Séance to succeed.

**Summoning Difficulty:** The basic penalty for the Séance is the Spirit die of the Entity to summon: i.e. a Shade, the most commonly summoned Spooky in a Séance, has Spirit d6 and so evoking one of them gets a basic -6 modifier.

**Psychics:** Any team of people can attempt a Séance, if they know how to do it (Occult Detectives always do), but with Psychics everything is easier. If someone with the Psychic Edge takes the role of a Channeler, every Séance roll gains a +2 bonus. For each other Psychic in the Séance, as Attendees, every Séance roll gains a +1 modifier. These Psychic Attendees also may aid the Channeler by making cooperative rolls at each step like any other qualified Attendees.

**Entity Reaction:** If an Entity for any reason is Friendly or even Helpful, every Séance roll gains a +1/+2 bonus. On the other hand, with an Unfriendly or Hostile entity, every Séance roll suffers a -1/-2 penalty. You must remember the apparent Reaction might be a trick: a Hostile Wraith could pretend to be Helpful just to lie to the Channeler. For Reactions, see page 81.

**Qualified Attendees:** As a general assumption, every Occult Detective knows *what's going on* and has already faced Spookies. Those who want to help with the Séance but haven't got the Psychic Edge may do so by making cooperative rolls via Knowledge (Occult) at -2.

**Neutral Attendees:** NPCs who have never faced *what's going on* do not provide a modifier to the rolls and can't make cooperative rolls.

**Debunkers and Doubting Thomases:** Everyone with the Debunker and/or Doubting Thomas Hindrances participating in a Séance inflicts a -2 modifier on the ritual, and can't make cooperative rolls.

**Cabinets:** Many Psychics have their own



"Cabinet" where they perform Séances, and even the various involved organizations have special rooms for this kind of practice (see below). If the Channeler has the opportunity to use a cabinet of this kind (whatever its furnishings) and prepares it properly (see above: Preparation) he can take advantage of a +1 bonus to every roll.

**Hoaxes:** During their cases or via the Relic Trickster or Connections Edges, Detectives can obtain some special items or spells useful for their investigation, with any kind of mumbo-jumbo mystical power: we call these Hoaxes. These objects can be of any kind, according to the situation or your imagination: books, talismans, catalysts, components, symbols, spells, powders, essences, bones, dice, coins or whatever.

If the Channeler has the opportunity to use a Hoax of this kind (whatever its nature) and prepares it properly (see above: Preparation) he can take advantage of a +1 bonus to every roll.

The use of multiple Hoaxes in a single ritual does not offer a cumulative bonus, but you can combine 1 Hoax and 1 Relic. Many of these objects are also consumed during use and so grant their bonus only for one roll or one Séance.

**Hooks and Other Relics:** Relics are any kind of special object or remains that could be useful to summon a specific Entity: a part of its mortal body (bones, ashes, skin, hair), a special item belonging and closely linked to the person in life (diaries, letters, medallions, pictures, a vinyl record heard over a hundred times, a portrait), something that the Spirit could wish for, want or strongly hate from beyond the grave (a bitter enemy, the weapon that killed him, a gift from a loved one, a letter of eviction from the Bank). The Relic could be the Hook of the Entity but also something different, as long as it is closely related to it. In other words: every Hook is a Relic, but not every Relic is a Hook.

If the Channeler has the opportunity to use a Relic (whatever its nature) and prepares it properly (see above: Preparation) he can take advantage of a +1 bonus to the Séance roll (if

this Relic is the Hook, the bonus is +3, but the Preparation time is still 1 hour/person). The use of multiple Relics in a single ritual does not offer a cumulative bonus, but you can combine 1 Hoax and 1 Relic. Many of these objects are also consumed during use and so grant their bonus only for one roll or one Séance.

**Blood Offerings:** Since ancient times it has been known that an offer of warm blood is most pleasant to the Entities. For any amount of blood spilled from a participant's veins and poured still warm into a cup, 1 roll of the Séance gets a +1 bonus, while the donor suffers one Fatigue Level.

*Example: During their investigation, while on the trail of the Hacksaw Crone, the Detectives find a named portrait and the creepy remains of one of her victims. They decide to summon and speak with the poor girl's Shade (-6).*

*One of them is a Medium and a real Psychic and Detectives agree to assign her the role of Channeler (+2 and +2). They wait for nightfall and go to the Medium's Cabinet (+1), also preparing the Relic they have (portrait and/or remains: +1) for the summoning. One of the other Detectives has a Connection with the Athenaeum but is also a Debunker, so he decides not to be an Attendee and go searching for some useful Hoax at his club. He comes back with a special essence useful for that "spooky quackery of yours" and the Medium thanks him, preparing that too for the ritual (+1). No other Detective is a Psychic, but the Cineromancer and the Alienist can be useful as Qualified Attendees. No one wants to provide blood offerings.*

*So, while the Debunker goes for a drink, the Séance begins and every roll has a final +1 bonus.*

**Supernatural Complications**  
Every time a supernatural complication happens during a Séance, an Exorcism or some similar activity, the GM should describe a scary event happening: table trembling, minor poltergeist effects and so on. In game terms, all the heroes involved in the Complication suffer -2 to all their rolls till the end of the next round



## Exorcism

Exorcism is the opposite of the Séance. While the latter usually summons Entities to the Channeler's presence to be interrogated, Exorcism is a ritual intended to drive away an Entity from a place, a possessed person or thing, a revenant or a vessel, preventing it from causing harm.

What in many movies is represented as a curious and superstitious practice is still an important heritage of many religions and accepted by millions of people. In this dark spooky world, Exorcism works, believe me, and many times it has saved our skins. Some of the things you see on television are not true and others that never appear are fundamental, but in general it really works that way: Latin, silver, Hoaxes, mumbo-jumbo, the containment unit in the basement and all that stuff.

During your investigations, I'm afraid you'll soon have the opportunity to practice it, but you must remember one very important thing: the Exorcism is not the end of your case. It can remove a Haunt or a Possession, but the Entity will still be there and you still need the correct way to Banish it. In other words, an Exorcism is a good idea to weaken or slow down an Entity, or to gain time, but then you still need to find the right way to Banish it from our world.

### What an Exorcism Is

In *Imago Mortis*, an Exorcism is a special ritual that addresses a single Entity present in the Earthly World, prevents its most harmful actions, is opposed to its will, and then forces it to:

- \* Leave the person it is Possessing (see Possession, Living Things in the Game Master section).
- \* Leave a corpse it is Reanimating (see Reanimation in Game Master section).
- \* Leave the place it is Haunting (see Haunting in the Game Master section).
- \* Leave the vessel it is Possessing (see Possession, Objects in the Game Master section)

In terms of rules, the Exorcism is a ritual

in the form of a Dramatic Task. To be effective, the Exorcism must be conducted by a trained "Exorcist" who personally performs the Dramatic Task. The Exorcist may be one of the Detectives or a NPC; ideally, one with the Exorcist Edge.

The Exorcist may be alone or with Attendees and may use special items, words and gestures.

All these elements may offer bonuses to the Dramatic Task, but theoretically the Exorcist could also accomplish the ritual alone and without any ritual gear or elements, just by concentrating.

Contrary to what happens in the Séance, where the summoned Entity may also have different Reactions, any Entity targeted by an Exorcism is always considered Hostile and the ritual always has a -2 penalty to each roll.

### How an Exorcism Works

An Exorcism works like a ritual and is actually a Dramatic Task (see *Savage Worlds* and *Horror Companion*). The Trait to use is always Spirit, and each action requires performing an opposed roll against the Entity. The time for each Action is typically 10 minutes.

As usual for a Dramatic Task, Exorcist has 5 actions in which to obtain five successes.

Each round, the Exorcist first draws an Action Card. If the card is a club, there will be Complications (see Supernatural Complications on page 71). Edges such as Level Headed or Quick have no effect in an Exorcism. After resolving these effects, if necessary, the Exorcist and the Entity perform their opposed Spirit roll. Every time the Exorcist wins the confrontation, he gains one success for the ritual (+1 for every raise).

If the Dramatic Task succeeds within 5 Actions, the Exorcism works as planned and the Entity leaves the (living or dead) body it was possessing or reanimating, or the place it was haunting. It can't possess, reanimate or haunt the same person, corpse or place again.

With any kind of final failure, you need to check on the Paranormal Incident Table below.

If on your last roll, you beat your opponent with a raise, you can also obtain some bonus



goal: the Entity may should answer some questions, be forced to do something it doesn't want to do, calm down and be cooperative for a while (if possible) or even leave the Earthly World until its next Ephemeris.

## Preparation

As a Dramatic Task, the Exorcism begins when the Exorcist and the Attendees face the Entity and its phenomena: Possessed, Infested, Revenant or Haunt. If you have any Latin words to pronounce, special Hoaxes to put in front of it, prayers to be recited, candles to light or other elements like those, you need to prepare them before the Exorcism begins.

Before the Dramatic Task, the Exorcist and his Attendees can "activate" all these elements to gain bonuses for their ritual, spending 1 hour for every final +1 modifier they are obtaining this way. This time can be divided between all those involved in the Preparation. You do not need to "prepare" the modifiers provided by the Exorcist and Attendees themselves.

## Exorcism Modifier

**Timing:** An Exorcism can be carried out at any hour, but broad daylight can help (+2 to any Exorcist roll).

**Opposed Spirit Roll:** The Exorcism is based on opposed Spirit rolls between the Exorcist and the Entity. The Entity targeted by an Exorcism is always a Wild Card. Be sure you understand the difficulty of your task before beginning.

**Psychics:** Any group of people can try an Exorcism, if they know how to do it (Occult Detectives always do), but with Psychics involved everything is easier. If someone with the Psychic Edge takes the role of Exorcist, every roll made by him gains a +2 bonus. For each other Psychic in the Exorcism as Attendees, every Exorcist roll gains a +1 bonus. These Psychic Attendees may also aid the Exorcist by making cooperative rolls at each step like any other qualified Attendees.

**Entity Reaction:** Entities always are Hostile to anyone trying to Exorcise them: apply a standard -2 penalty to every roll of yours.

**Qualified Attendees:** As a general assumption, every Occult Detective knows *what's going on* and has already faced Spookies. Those who want to help with the Exorcism but don't have the Psychic Edge may do so by making cooperative rolls using Knowledge (Occult) at -2.

**Neutral Attendees:** NPCs who have never faced *what's going on* do not provide a modifier to the rolls and can't make cooperative rolls.

**Debunkers and Doubting Thomases:** Everyone with the Debunker and/or Doubting Thomas Hindrances participating in an Exorcism inflicts a -2 modifier on the Exorcist's rolls and can't make cooperative rolls.

**Cabinets:** Many Exorcists have their own sacred place where perform their Exorcisms (when possible), and also various churches and involved organizations have special rooms for this kind of practice. In any case, if the Exorcist has the opportunity to use a Cabinet of this kind (whatever its furnishings) and prepares it properly (see above: Preparation) he can take advantage of a +1 bonus to every roll.

**Hoaxes:** If the Exorcist has a religious affiliation or a strong faith, he probably will use his sacred symbols and prayers during an Exorcism. In addition, during their cases or via the Relic Trickster or Connections Edges, Detectives can obtain some special items or spells useful for their investigation, with any kind of mumbo-jumbo mystical power; these are all considered Hoaxes. If the Exorcist has the opportunity to use a Hoax of this kind (whatever its nature) and prepares it properly (see above: Preparation) he can take advantage of a +1 bonus to every roll.

The use of multiple Hoaxes in a single ritual does not offer a cumulative bonus, but you can combine 1 Hoax and 1 Relic. Many of these objects are also consumed during use and so grant their bonus only for one roll or one Séance.

**Relics:** Relics are every kind of special object or remain that could be useful to control and compel a specific Entity: a part of its mortal body (bones, ashes, skin, hair), a special item belonging and closely linked to the person once in life (diaries, letters, medallions, pictures, a vinyl record heard over a hundred times,





a portrait), something that the Entity could wish for, want or strongly hate from beyond the grave. A Relic is similar to a Hook, but in this case is not the actual Hook of the Entity; if the Detective possess the Hook, they can directly Banish the Entity and do not need to exorcise it.

If the Exorcist has the opportunity to use a Relic (whatever its nature) and prepares it properly (see above: Preparation) he can take advantage of a +1 bonus to his Spirit rolls. The use of multiple Relics in a single ritual does not offer a cumulative bonus, but you can combine 1 Hoax and 1 Relic. Many of these objects are also consumed during use and so grant their bonus only for one roll or one Exorcism.

*Example: The Legion has possessed a young girl and her mother has asked you to save her. You will later understand its plan and how to banish it, but right now you need to save the poor girl.*

*You are not a real Exorcist but you know the words and have the stuff, right? You can use your Hoaxes (+1) and Relics (+1) and you will definitely perform the ritual during the day (+2) in the girl's bedroom. You know the Legion will be hostile (-2), obviously, but you trust in your friends performing great cooperative rolls during the ritual.*

*So you will make every roll with a +2 bonus, against the Legion's Spirit (d12). Good luck with that.*

## Paranormal Incident Table

As for every Dramatic Task, if during any step of a Séance or an Exorcism the Channeler/Exorcist draws a Club, something goes horribly wrong.

Use this table during your paranormal Dramatic Tasks or wherever you think it is appropriate. Some results are different depending on whether you are doing a Séance or an Exorcism.

**Deuce – Slit!** A Slit in the Curtains opens wide, trying to pull the investigators inside: each round they must make a Strength (-2) roll. If they fail two times in a row, they are dragged into the Netherworld! Recovering them (if possible) could be the goal of a new scenario. The Slit remains open for 2d4 rounds.

**Three – Decaying.** If the card drawn is red, it affects Hoaxes, if it is black it affects Relics. The



owner of each item affected must immediately make a Spirit (-4) roll. In the case of failure, the item is destroyed. If the Relic is actually the Entity's Hook, the ritual suddenly fails. If there are no Relics or Hoaxes in use, ignore this result.

#### **Four – Spiritual Isolation / Attack.**

During a Séance the Channeler undergoes a sort of spiritual isolation, and his soul is now alone in front of the Curtains. From now on, he continues the ritual in a trance. During an Exorcism the Possessed vomits upon the Attendees, they are whisked away by spectral blows or poltergeists, or ectoplasm filaments surround and distract them. In both cases, from now on, any bonuses conferred to the ritual by the Attendees no longer apply. If this has already happened, draw another card from the Action Deck

**Five – Hostile Environment.** If the card drawn is red a terrible frost starts spreading in the place of the Ritual: every person on the scene must succeed at a Vigor roll or suffer a Fatigue Level and their contribution to the Ritual is interrupted. If the card is black every electrical device in the room is destroyed and every light source is switched off. Those present are now in the thickest darkness. From now on, until someone fixes the situation, every roll made by the Exorcist/Channeler will suffer a -2 penalty.

**Six – Psychic Matter.** During a Séance the Channeler produces ectoplasm from his mouth, while during an Exorcism a swirl of phantom energy surrounds the Exorcist and consumes his energies. In both cases, the victim must succeed at a Vigor (-2) roll or gain one Fatigue Level (as for a Chill Touch).

**Seven – Mysterious Voices.** The characters begins hearing whispers, voices, speaking in Lingua Ignota. Characters without knowledge of this tongue must make a Dread Test (+2), while anyone who knows the language must subtract half his Lingua Ignota die type from the roll. For example, an investigator with Lingua Ignota d6 must roll at -3.

**Eight – Tremors.** The earth (or the

building) starts trembling. Characters must roll on Agility or fall. If they roll 1 on the Agility die, regardless of the Wild Die, they suffer Bumps and Bruises. Animals, on the other hand, are very susceptible to tremors, and must make an immediate Dread Test (-4). The second time this card is drawn, the Tremors intensify (-2 to Agility rolls), the third time, if in a building, it starts Falling Apart (see Jack entry).

**Nine – Poltergeist!** The area is attacked by a Minor Poltergeist (if the card drawn was red) or by a Major Poltergeist (if the card drawn was black). From now on, the Channeler/Exorcist and Attendees must perform a Quick Combat every action against it, just before making the Spirit roll. If this card is drawn again, the Poltergeist grows in intensity by one step, becoming first Major and then Apocalyptic.

**Ten – Manifestation.** The Entity the Channeler/Exorcist is trying to speak with or Banish manifests as a Shroud, is Hostile and attacks those present to the best of its abilities.

**Jack – Falling Apart.** The Cabinet or any other room or place where the Séance is happening starts to become corrupted: rotten sewage drips from the roof, blood stains seep through the walls and everything seems about to collapse. The Cabinet bonus to the roll, if present, is canceled from now on. The second time this card is drawn, the whole building starts to collapse: persons inside suffer 2d8 damage per turn until they leave. The place is fully destroyed in 2d6 minutes.

**Queen – Possession!** A randomly selected person present on the scene must immediately make an opposed Spirit roll against the Entity he is trying to summon/banish, with a penalty of -4. With a failure, he is possessed by the same Entity he was trying to speak with or Banish. Now he is a Marionette and will attack his former allies trying to kill them all.

**King – Charonian.** A terrible Charonian manifests as a Shroud, is Hostile and attacks those present to the best of its abilities.

**Joker – Wild Surge!** If the card drawn is red, every character in the scene must make



a Spirit (-2) roll: with a success they gain a Bennie. If the card drawn is black, the situation is ugly; draw two other cards, check the table again and try to combine the effects!

## Safezones, Ghost Traps and Cabinets

Entities can enter and exit anywhere in our Earthly World, and there are no consecrated grounds that can keep them away, as far as I know. But some of us understand how to create Safezones against the Spookies, and they actually work.

A Safezone is not something you can easily build during a night in a haunted mall: it needs a huge quantity of iron panels, strong ultraviolet lights and some other arrangements. Every Lombrosian Athenaeum and Bureau Office has a Safezone...

Even the Ghibli is a Safezone, and my favourite place after all.

These places are like bunkers against Spookies. They just cannot enter, or send in some paranormal effect (like a Revenant, you know...). Even if they manage to sneak in, they will suffer a -2/-4 penalty to all Trait rolls while inside.

Remember that you can't organize a Séance in a Safezone (or... you can, but it will have no effect) and even Psychics may have problems and penalties using their weird faculties there.

But, if you know how, you can set your Séance in a semi-prepared Safezone, summon a Shade and *then* close the Safezone around it, constraining it there.

This way you can turn Safezones into Ghost Traps. A very dangerous game, I can tell you.

Ghost Traps stop a Spooky from vanishing, reaching the Graveyard or even Limbo. They must stay Manifest all the time and this turns them into painful and hungry entities, screaming and crying all the time from their suffering.

This way, they often obey given commands given, to the letter, in exchange for a promise to be freed again after that. Because of their confinement, there are very few things they can

do in a Ghost Trap, and usually they are asked to answer some questions and nothing more.

A Cabinet is the opposite of a Safezone, a well-prepared place where Séances and Exorcisms work better, due to the amount of Hoaxes and other mumbo-jumbo arrangements you put there. Usually these places are decorated rooms with exotic vestments and furniture, round tables engraved or painted with arcane symbols, candlesticks and tea lights, scented wood to burn in special censers, or simple walls inscribed with psychic formulas. Probably, in your Cabinet, you have books of magic, some parchments in Lingua Ignota, talismans, special devices, tablets for speaking with the dead, mirrors, essences and other stuff you use in your rituals: this makes you more confident and gives you a lot of ideas and help when things go wrong.

In a Cabinet, you have +1 on any roll for Séances and Exorcisms (see below) and the Game Master may also award a +1 for any Knowledge (Occult) or Lingua Ignota roll.

You could have a Cabinet and/or a Safezone as a benefit of one of your Edges, or you can build one, spending around €10,000 and 1d6 weeks on this task.

## Shadowing

Shadowing someone could really help in your cases, so here is a quick rule for it.

- \* If the person followed is not aware of the follower, you make an opposed roll: stalker's Stealth vs target's Notice. Should the stalker win, he succeeds and follows the target to his destination. In the event the target wins, he notices the stalker.
- \* If the target (currently, or from the beginning) is aware of the stalker, the former can escape by running (the scene becomes a Chase), ambush his follower or try to sneak away from him. In the latter two cases, you make an opposed roll: stalker's Notice vs target's Stealth. Should the target win, the stalker can be left behind or be the victim of an ambush. In the event the stalker wins, now both know they are in a Shadowing and can fight or start a Chase.





## CHAPTER 5 - ~~GAME~~ MASTER SECTION

*"You ever feel the prickly things on the back of your neck?  
And the tiny hairs on your arm, you know when they stand up?  
That's them. When they get mad... it gets cold."*

*Cole Sear, The Sixth Sense*

In this section you will find advice on how to prepare and run your game sessions, hints for creating your cases and Spookies, and a long list of paranormal phenomena that you, as a Game Master, can use in your stories.





# 1. THE FAST, THE FURIOUS AND THE FRIGHTENED

*Imago Mortis* is a Hard-Boiled Horror game. It's about crimes, supernatural horror, violence, detection and dread.

We distinguish three distinct elements, which we recommend you use in any adventure or campaign you decide to play with this Savage Setting: Investigation, Action and the Paranormal.

In the deep, corrupted heart of our metropolis, twisted violence is often driven by the creepy and unveiled influences of the Netherworld, and the increasing crime rate generates new paranormal phenomena, in an endless spiral.

Occult Detectives are all analysts and operatives of the Bureau and part of the Vallum Program. They are assigned to the resolution of mysterious cases, with full license to face gangsters and banish evil from our world.

Investigation, Action and the Paranormal could be scattered through different scenes of your session, but they are in any case the three main ingredients of your game.

Every scenario should involve some mystery to solve, with clues, evidence and suspects, and an element of detection. Who hired the hitman that shot the mayor? Why was there a robbery in an abandoned warehouse? Who is the serial killer that is ripping all those childminders apart? We would like the players to use their own brains in an Investigation, operating either within the law or outside it. There is no need for a long and detailed detective story, if you don't like those; just put some twisted crime on stage and create suspense and thrilling detection around it.

When the Detectives have their lead to follow, it's time for Action! You are in the middle of a hard-boiled noir story, so you need chases, shootings, shadowing, sources to convince to talk, fights and explosions everywhere. And remember that European cities are not a no-man's land: even if Detectives have access to and support from the local police, due to their status

as Bureau Agents, they can't act openly against laws or local enforcers. If they raise their heads too much or cross the line, the Vallum Executive Director will be a more consistent danger than Spookies and mobsters. After all, these latter both keep a low profile, don't they? Be smart... be like them!

Then we have the Paranormal. It should be the hidden reason behind the crime the Detectives are investigating, the creepy events happening during the action and part of the final showdown, revelations or twists. There is a reason why our Detectives are called in or involved in the case and somewhere during the game the Game Master will need to show it.

Eventually, you also can imagine a Scooby-Doo situation, where at the end of the story, the Detectives find there isn't any paranormal phenomenon involved in the case. This can definitely be a variation or a twist, but be careful not to overdo it. After all, it should be a twist, not a common situation. Furthermore, our heroes are Occult Detectives and it's weird to involve them in mundane investigations too often.

Rather, you can play with stereotypes and change the more classic themes and structures of these stories, shifting the order of the events to obtain an original plot: perhaps Shades in your stories were just victims of a mundane killer and help the Detectives to find him...

So, prepare your *Imago Mortis* cases with an intelligent mix of these three elements and your session will be great!

## Spectral Traits

In RPGs and other Savage Settings in which phantoms and ghosts are just like other monsters, with their own traits, strengths and weaknesses, encountering and battling against them generates very little emotional tension: the Entity has statistics, wounds and special abilities. It is not a symbol of an unknown and terrifying world, it is



just another monster in the bestiary.

In *Imago Mortis*, you will find statistics for monsters too, in the Phenomenology section, but those are used only for the “Shroud” of an Entity: one of a dozen of possible phenomena it can use. And, also if you fight and win against a Shroud, the Entity is still there and will come back over and over again...

The truth is that all those Entities and paranormal phenomena in *Imago Mortis* are not monsters from a bestiary, but story elements: a box of gruesome tricks to choose from at will, while creating an intriguing case and a frightening ghost story.

When you want to create a truly chilling encounter in *Imago Mortis*, use the rules with great flexibility, simplify them to the most vital rolls and tests, and request those only when it is really necessary.



## 2. CURTAINS OPEN, ENTER THE VILLAIN

### A Horror Story

In the next section of this book you'll find a Case Generator that can give you many ideas to create your own adventures. But, whether you use it or not, you still need to define your villain, his powers, resources and capabilities.

Take your time to do this properly. The final enemy of your story, the villain of your case, is probably the main element of the adventure and you must create him in the best way you can.

First of all, decide if the villain should be a mundane or otherworldly menace, or even something in the middle, such as a Possessed or a Netherkin. Its motivation and acts are important, but before thinking about these you should characterize the opponent - what he does and says, how he dresses or looks, his vices and weaknesses, his strengths and his most effective weapon.

If your villain is a mere common criminal, make him more interesting by adding one or more of these features:

- \* His gimmick and method of killing is particularly original and violent.
- \* The objective or result he is looking for is something related to the paranormal.
- \* He and his group are an expression of modernity: neo-Nazi groups, international arms smugglers, transhumanists; or a new version of classic antagonists: terrorists using the paranormal to kill, traffickers who deal in Floss, serial killers motivated by a blind faith in Spookies ...
- \* All his means and resources are somehow caused or created by *what's going on*.

If your villain is somewhere between mundane and paranormal, like a crazy believer, a serial killer touched by the madness of Spookies or a Netherkin, make him more disturbing by adding one or more of these features:

- \* His modus operandi is in some way original but extremely violent, requiring Tests of Dread at each of his murder scenes.
- \* His knowledge of the paranormal is limited, but he knows for certain the real truth about *what's*

*going on*. He also has some kind of distorted view of things, which hides an element of truth.

- \* His lair is the den of a madman beyond any human understanding, filled with horrors, traps and gore that require other Tests of Dread from whoever visits it.
- \* Someone protects and covers his tracks, perhaps because they do not realize that he is a monster... or precisely because of that.

If your villain is an Entity, first determine what it wants and how can be banished. Usually these two elements will also help you to understand what kind of Entity in the Phenomenology you should use. Remember that the Paranormal is not a precise science, so you can mix up stats from more types of Spookies, strengthen or weaken them. Once this is done, add one or more of these features:

- \* It appears with a new and grotesque form, for example composed of different material than usual, or in animal appearance, or as some revised "horror classic".
- \* It has a particular combination of paranormal phenomena at its disposal, which also define the way it acts and persecutes the Detectives.
- \* Its Cold Spot or Remains or Hook are particularly original or in completely unpredictable places.
- \* Its Ephemeris and/or Recurrence is particularly quirky and unforeseeable. Detectives will need to understand its logic before they can predict the next appearance.
- \* Its role is not simply "another Spooky to Banish"; it could be a lesser element in a bigger picture, a manipulated entity, or a one accidentally involved in the case, or it could even help in the investigations that then lead elsewhere.
- \* The way to Banish it is different from the usual: the Detectives' previous experience is not enough to figure it out, they have to find something new.

### Spookies and Other Villains

The Detectives are on a new case, in which a



creepy villain is involved: an Entity, a murderer, a Netherkin or a lunatic.

What does their enemy do while they follow his tracks? Where is he hiding or where is his Cold Spot? Is he preparing any counter-move? Is he prepared for their assault?

Usually Husks, Faders, Chained and lunatics are “passive” opponents: they blindly pursue their goals and do not expect, nor do they care, that someone is trying to stop them. Only when the Detectives put themselves between one of these villains and his prey, or threaten him directly, does he turn his fury on them also.

Others are cases in which the Legion, Netherkin, jackals and common criminals are involved: these villains are not blindly focused on their goals. They always expect that someone will try to stop them and prepare countermoves.

Consider these two different approaches when planning their actions.

Also remember that, in the case of the Entities, you can freely decide their Ephemeris, Recurrence, Hooks, Relics, Remains, Cold Spots and other features of their phenomenology, according to the demands of your cases.

These elements are at your disposal to make your stories consistent, and are not subject to tables or scales of predetermined values.

## Entity Reactions

How do Entities act with respect to the Detectives or other characters involved in their activities? That varies from case to case and the task of the Game Master is to create situations by applying different choices, surprises and twists.

Typically, most Shades are Neutral but they become Friendly and Helpful if they understand the Detectives are there to help. This should be the same with Faders and Chained (after all, they all are the same thing), but actually these Entities are in the Earthly World when anguished, vengeful or in pain, so they are usually Hostile or Unfriendly. Wraiths and the Legion are generally Hostile, while Husks are Neutral. Even Charonians are usually Neutral to the living, but they can turn Hostile against those who oppose them and Friendly to those who help in their task.

So, you should remember what the Reactions usually mean:

**Helpful:** A Helpful Entity shows itself as it is and speaks truly; if silent, it walks to some place linked to its problem or points out an object the Detectives are looking for (or similar); it can help the Detective without asking anything; in a fight or during its manifestation, it tries to preserve the living from its Phenomena.

**Friendly:** Typically, a Friendly Entity talks about the reason for its presence in the Earthly World and asks the Detective to act in some way to free it or help it; it shows its real nature and, if possible, the aspect it had right before its death; in a fight or during its manifestation it could cause indirect damage to the Detectives and doesn't really care about that.

**Neutral:** A Neutral Entity shows its real nature, and the aspect it had at the very moment of its death (even if it is creepy); if questioned, it often uses puzzles or riddles in its answers; in a fight or during its manifestation it doesn't care about the Detectives and may attack or damage them, if they are in the middle of the Phenomenon or are somehow obstructing it.

**Unfriendly:** An Unfriendly Entity is the typical angry ghost or lost soul, enraged or angry about something and ready to destroy, damage or persecute the living whenever it can. If questioned, an Unfriendly Entity pretends to be friendly and lies all the time, just to cause problems for the Detectives, or asks something bad; it often disguises itself and tries to cheat the Detectives.

**Hostile:** If free to act, a Hostile Entity attacks or persecutes everyone or broods on terrible plans; if forced to manifest, it terrifies the living with a horrible shape or a massacre scene; if forced to talk, it insults and terrifies those present with creepy whispers, screams and ghastly sounds: a Test of Dread might be needed.

A Detective that can communicate with an Entity (for example, during a Séance) can try a Persuasion roll to change the Entity's Reaction, as usual. As a Game Master you also decide what information the Entity knows: typically it knows only the same information it knew in life up to the moment of its death, or the reason for its presence in the Earthly World.

### 3. PARANORMAL PHENOMENA

We outlined above how cases should be in *Imago Mortis*, especially about focusing on horror and fear.

While planning your case, you should not consider paranormal entities that you will put into the plot as common monsters with default statistics, but rather as supernatural threats with a confusing and incomprehensible nature, not strictly related to numbers and precise traits. Their stats may increase or decrease to meet the needs of your plot, and the final clashes should be fought more with gimmicks, tricks and unique ideas, than through a face to face battle against a Shroud or its servants.

Even paranormal phenomena that Spookies can use against Detectives or NPCs are not intended to be “normal” powers, but rather a welter of dark powers and possibilities you’ll need to manage as Game Master. It is also true that, at the moment of interacting with the Detectives and to be relevant in terms of the game, the phenomena must result in clear and measurable effects.

The following is a list of these phenomena, with rules for using them and some examples. Although many of these phenomena are tools in the hands of the Game Master, to keep the players vigilant and put a spoke in their wheels, Spookies should not have available an infinite number or an unlimited range of these powers.

Normally, the number of available phenomena should be the following:

Husks and Shades: 1 phenomenon  
Chained and Shaders: 2 phenomena  
Wraiths: 3 phenomena  
The Legion and Charonians: 5 phenomena

These phenomena must be used during an Ephemeris and regenerate at every Recurrence. You cannot rack up the phenomena at the Entity’s disposal from one Ephemeris to another. The Game Master may use Bennies at his disposal to add new available phenomena to a Spooky or more uses of the same ones for an Ephemeris.

#### Apparition

One of the most common and widespread phenomena. A Shade appears in mid-air, in a mirror, in a picture or a video, manifests as a voice or other effect, and faces those present. The nature of the apparition is quite illusory and fundamentally is a deception of the senses, even if generated by a real Entity. There is no Ectoplasm involved, nor will there be Residue left at the end.

*Examples: A TV turns itself on and constantly shows the face of a dead girl who follows you with her eyes; an ugly old woman appears in selfies, behind (or literally on the shoulders of) the photographer; a mysterious hand writes death threats in soot.*

**Rules:** Spookies use Apparition to terrify Detectives, and the Game Master should use these tricks to unnerve players and feel them uncomfortable, as said on page 80. Usually, the Apparition also causes Tests of Dread.

#### Dark Tricks

Electromagnetic sprains, images appearing and disappearing in video and photographs, doors opening and closing, moving or immovable objects, blood and sewage dripping down from walls, footsteps, moans or noises of chains, keys turning in locks by themselves, wind blowing where there should be no air, shutters suddenly descending from above, paintings falling from the walls, spoons or weapons that bend and deform. These and others are the Dark Tricks that Spookies can use against the Detectives. There is no comprehensive list and each time the Game Master should invent new ones, related to the Spooky’s nature and the place where it operates. But there are some general things to consider about these tricks:

- \* They are not illusions, they are real! A test of Guts will not be enough to overcome them, Detectives will have to really be careful not to get hurt.
- \* They cannot last long: these tricks are instant effects or last only the time needed to scare



or hit. Maybe they are able to burst bulbs or burn electrical cables from the inside, but they cannot destroy hundreds of torches, one after another, if Detectives have brought with them a supply...

- \* They can kill: sometimes these tricks are intended to scare, and sometimes they are meant to kill. A Dark Trick cannot throw a bunch of swords from a wall at a person or let a machine gun levitate and shoot at the team (there are other phenomena for that), but sometimes it's enough just to break a rung of the ladder someone is standing on, or make a stone vase drop on someone's head, to take him out, right?

*Examples: The staircase leading down to the basement breaks and drops over sharp gardening tools; from the taps at home only blackish liquid manure comes out; a ball bounces up the stairs.*

**Rules:** Dark Tricks should be used by the Game Master as a collection of special effects to cause discomfort. Sometimes, in the case of tricks that can result in physical damage to the characters, Detectives may roll to be aware of what is happening and avoid it: normally Notice and Agility rolls. Other times, the effect is environmental (no light, being locked in a suffocating place) and you can use common environmental hazards. Usually, whenever one Spooky has Dark Tricks available as a

phenomenon, it has 2d4 of these "special effects" for each Ephemeris and cannot use them in full daylight.

## Decay

Spookies are imbued with Phantom Energy and can sometimes use this corrupting force to destroy physical objects. Just as the touch of a Shroud inflicts Fatigue, when Entities interact with items and things, these decay and decompose. Masonry crumbles, becomes brittle, and tends to be reduced to dust: walls, floors and ceilings are filled with cracks and crevices and can collapse. Wood rots and leather goes moldy. Metal rusts. Liquids become slurry. Glass and ceramics wear out and crack. Flames fade or go out.

The difference with the Dark Tricks is that, while those create effects on objects and items and act as individual "strikes", Decay comes back several times on the same object or place, corrupting it more and more:

- \* At first the phenomenon appears and brings only fear and awe. It can cause doubts about the nature of an object and its resilience.
- \* The phenomenon goes on degrading the material, taking it to the verge of ruin and breakage.
- \* Eventually it destroys the target, causing it to



break or collapse.

*Examples: The foundations of an impressive downtown hotel are being decayed and soon will break, bringing down the entire structure and killing hundreds of people; Detectives' equipment and computers begin to deform and be covered by stains - soon they will stop working; all the church candles begin to flicker and go out.*

**Rules:** Decay is a very dangerous phenomenon, because it can lead for example to the collapse of entire structures, and so easily cause physical harm to the Detectives. Fortunately, the Spooky who masters this phenomenon can only attack a single target each Ephemeris (but a wise and sudden use of Bennies can be very useful). In addition, the target needs at least one hour to completely decay, so even if this dark phenomenon manifests itself three times, Detectives should have time to notice the problem and seek a solution - or a way out - before it is too late.

## Haunt

A sufficiently powerful and motivated Spooky, with proper Chains and Hook, can decide to haunt a place: the crypt with his earthly remains, the shed where he died of an accident at work, the old cellar where he was locked up and beaten as a child, the whole house, hotel or building in which his spirit roams seeking revenge.

The size and complexity of the place that can be haunted are proportional to the power and motivations of the Spooky, but there are no tables for this: choose the most suitable solution for your story. A simple tortured soul might haunt the apartment inhabited in life, while a malevolent Wraith sent by the Unhuman to infect the world could take possession of an entire hospital.

When a Spooky succeeds in doing this, it creates what we call a Haunt: the place is haunted.

*Examples: An apartment haunted by the Chained soul of the man who has been killed here; a disused firefighters station, hiding in its basement a Ghost Trap from which tens of Spookies are flying; a hotel built according to the rules of Megapolisomancy and haunted by the Legion.*

**Rules:** The Spooky has certain powers over the whole haunted area, as follows:

- \* When Hidden, it perceives everything that happens in the specified place, as if it is constantly "spying" on whoever is there.
- \* When its Cold Spot is in its haunted place, it becomes a kind of "control center" for the Spooky. In this case, the Entity has available 1 additional paranormal phenomenon, to be used when someone enters the Cold Spot.
- \* The Spooky cannot leave the haunted place or produce effects outside of it, except Omens, but those can only be used against people who have previously come in contact with it.
- \* The whole place is imbued by the evil will of the Spooky: Tests of Dread and Trait rolls, including opposed ones, made by those inside suffer a -1 penalty.
- \* If the Entity also has the Maze phenomenon at its disposal, can use this inside the haunted place and Detectives suffer a -2 to each roll to get out.

An Entity can be expelled from a Haunt by an Exorcism. In the case of a successful exorcism, the Entity returns to its Cold Spot, and can no longer haunt the same place again.

## Interference

Sometimes, Detectives arm themselves to the teeth to deal with Spookies, with the gear assigned by the Bureau, electronic gadgets, Balazar weapons and flamethrowers. Occasionally, the Game Master can let the players get organized in this way, other times he can remember that the Spookies are capable of damaging electrical equipment, computers and all kind of devices, interfering with signals and electromagnetic fields, turning switches on or off, even jamming weapons and mechanical objects at the appropriate time.

This variant of the Dark Tricks can be used 2d4 times per Ephemeris and can work either as an area effect (all phones in a room stop working) or a targeted effect (the gun that is going to shoot at the Shroud jams, night vision goggles looking at it suddenly stop operating).



*Examples: The former militiaman is going to unload a burst of salt and cold iron against the Faceless Woman... but just then his Balcazar gun jams - damn!*

*Detectives are moving along an abandoned tunnel chasing a fugitive Husk, when their night vision goggles and communicators suddenly stop working; the Psychic of the team is performing an exorcism in a crypt, reading the words from a breviary... but suddenly all the lights explode and he is no longer able to read anything!*

**Rules:** Jamming works automatically, so you only need to know how to patch up broken things, unless the target item is Rugged; in this case draw a card from the Action Deck, if it's red, the item keeps operating. Usually, all you need to fix a jammed weapon is a Repair roll, with a -2 penalty if the character is in the midst of the action or has a Spooky on him who seeks to annihilate the victim by touch. For any other damaged gadgets the roll is Repair, but normally it will take longer (such as 10 minutes or 1 hour). If the effect is an area one instead of a targeted one, it ends at dawn, when the Ephemeris of the Spooky terminates or the "malfunctioning" object goes out of the range. Or when the Entity is defeated, of course.

## Manifestation

One of the most terrible phenomena and probably one of those at the climax of an adventure; the Entity manifests itself in earthly form, thanks to an ectoplasmic pseudo-matter, aggregated together by Phantom Energy. The Perispirit that keeps it cohesive obeys the malevolent personality of the Spooky and partly decays into ectoplasm. This pseudo-substance cloaks the malevolent essence of the Entity in dust, ash, rust, waste and any other kind of matter, giving a consistency to his material form.

When this occurs, the Entity becomes a physical enemy and as such it can be dealt with using weapons (see Phenomenology section), it can be wounded and its Shroud, its envelope, even destroyed. Just remember that defeating and destroying a Shroud does not automatically defeat and banish the Entity itself, but only one of the phenomena that it has at its disposal.

*Examples: At last, the Entity that haunts the Renaissance art gallery shows itself: a sort of disheveled human figure with four arms and four legs, looking you in fury; a yellowish liquid manure begins to drip from the ceiling... but it congeals in the air and forms a screaming face; a swirl of litter and soot begins to spin out of nothing, until it congeals into a horrendous and cackling form.*

**Rules:** Usually, this effect enables Detectives to fight the Shroud physically, so the normal rules for combat apply to the fight against it (see the Phenomenology section). In other cases, it is time to use other approaches.

## Maze

This is one of the deadliest and disturbing tricks in an Entity's bag. The victims' perceptions are so misdirected and distorted that they believe they are in a maze, with no exit. Usually they get lost among rooms and corridors without end, lose contact with each other and end up locked away alone underground, dying of starvation, unable to find their way out anymore.

As well as being caused by the will of an Entity, this phenomenon can manifest also by itself, near a Slit in the Curtains... as it is another effect of Phantom Energy, just like the Wind of the Dead.

In a Maze, rooms get colder, darker, scary and dirty; walls, ceilings and floors begin to decay; the electrical appliances start to have problems; nails, wires, pipes and metallic objects get rusty; wood and organic matter rot; then finally matches and lighters stop working, space ends up bending back on itself around the Cold Spot or the Slit, and getting out of there becomes impossible.

A Maze could also be another way to reach or find a Slit or a Cold Spot, if this is interesting and suitable for your story.

*Examples: The cemetery Detectives are exploring suddenly seems to extend endlessly in all directions and there is no way out anymore; the criminal asylum where a group of ghost hunters decided to spend the night turns into a death trap: windows and doors appear to be walled up and there is no way out, while the*



*day will never come again; under the city, there is a labyrinth of passages and stairs without end known as the Undercity, haunted by a Charonian renegade and his court of miracles.*

**Rules:** Being caught in a Maze could be avoided by a Notice / Spirit roll, or not; if it's just another trick of your villain, you can let detectives make a roll or notice something is going wrong in some other way... If it will be a decisive element of your story, just let them fall into it without any chance of that.

A person lost in a Maze is entrapped in a state of disorientation (he is Shaken all the time and can't recover) until he leaves the area affected. Escape from a Maze requires success at a Dramatic Task over 5 rounds, with a -2 penalty if the location is also haunted. The rolls are based on Spirit, to find the mystical details or the force of will to escape from a certain place, without getting even deeper into this spiral of mental alienation concocted by the Specter. If the acting character's Action Card is a Club, something creepy happens to him: he must make his roll this turn at -2 (in addition to any other modifiers). If he fails, he has to perform a Test of Dread (-4).

If time runs out and the Detective has not acquired five successes, the victims of the maze will experience a terrible ghastly horror (Dread Roll -4) and get lost in the maze, until the end of the Ephemeris. Or forever...

## Omen

Sometimes Spookies haunt their targets with terrifying visions, nightmares, ghastly omens and signs of all kinds, alluding to their nature, their motivations or what they're doing. In this case, Entities can only do so if the victim is located in the same place as them, if they have had contact with him before, or if there are other strong connections like these.

In the latter cases, the omen may be at any physical distance from the Entity. Any use of this phenomenon must be counted individually and can be available once per Ephemeris.

*Examples: Those who fall under the gaze of the Burning Man see him appearing in their nightmares every night, but the place of persecution*

*is the one where he was burned alive years earlier; as Detectives go into that cabin in the woods, they meet a strange man who babbles nonsense and seems fanatical; family photos of a shady baby show strange signs, always just before one of the depicted people dies in mysterious circumstances, always when he is with the child.*

**Rules:** An Omen is always obvious as such to the one receiving it, even if others cannot see or feel the same things. First, depending on the omen, the target might have to accomplish a Test of Dread: chilling nightmares require it. Once successful at this test, what the victim can get in exchange for this remote persecution is some important information about his enemy, its motivations or its weaknesses. If things are not obvious to the players, the Game Master may allow a Smarts roll to let them understand the crucial details of the foreboding. It is important that the Game Master plans the omens specifically for this purpose and prepares the crucial clue: after all, the omens are useful for this, right? If you want, you can also use the Portents Table in the *Horror Companion* in these situations.

## Paramentals

Some Spookies can use a variant of the more "common" Poltergeist and create what are called Paramentals, aggregations of miscellaneous items found on site, together with ash, soot and waste of all kinds. These piles of garbage and dead matter are animated by the evil will of the Spooky and can attack using their material components. Since the substance that composes them is material, as soon as the Paramental suffers enough damage to force it out of combat, the Phantom Energy that animates it disperses, the Paramental falls to the ground in a disorganized pile of rubbish and the paranormal phenomenon ends.

*Examples: A cluster of telephone wires hanging from a control unit tries to strangle those who pass within range; an entity made up of thousands of yellowed pages torn from dozens of books, with a vaguely human form; a hairy, smelly thing, like a unnatural monkey created by the gush of all the waste that engorges the pipes of sewers and drains.*

**Rules:** Paramentals must be faced in combat





as enemies. In the Phenomenology section you will find three examples of Paramentals.

## Poltergeist

Poltergeists are a violent phenomenon and limited in duration; to create them Spookies charge a place with Phantom Energy which moves objects and throws them around, almost always at the Detectives, in order to hurt or kill them.

The difference in “power” between Poltergeists is essentially a difference in its duration, the overall mass of the objects moved and the space involved.

*Examples: In Senator Ardizzone’s villa, silver cutlery begins to swirl around the diners, covering them in thousands of tiny cuts and punctures; in the abandoned shipyard next to the railroad bags of cement, shovels and wheelbarrows start to rise and fly in your direction; in the heart of the junkyard, the rusted carcasses of abandoned vehicles rise and levitate over your heads!*

**Rules:** In game terms, Poltergeists act like swarms of flying objects, that strike the people in a given area (or a Template), according to the standard rules for the Swarms. See examples in chapter VII.

If it’s necessary to quantify the effects of Poltergeists power, you can assume that every Spookie able to manifest this phenomenon has 3 “Poltergeist points” to spend on each Ephemeric (+3 per Benny spent on Poltergeists).

For each point the Entity can:

- \* Manifest 1 Minor Poltergeist for 1d6 rounds in a SBT
- \* Increase the Poltergeist Template by one category (Medium, then Large)
- \* Increase the Poltergeist power by one category (Major, then Apocalyptic)
- \* Increase the Poltergeist’s duration by 1d6 rounds

It makes little sense to manifest a Poltergeist in an area where there are no objects to use as weapons, but technically an Entity could decide to do this, maybe just to turn off a few candles or disturbing a Séance.

## Possession, Living Things

One of the most famous Paranormal Phenomena. The Spooky gradually takes control of the body of a living individual and alters his perception, his intentions, his moods and his will,



eventually making him a sort of meat puppet to maneuver during its Ephemeris.

*Examples: The Entity of a killed mafia boss returning to the Earthly World to possess the new clan leader; to lead the gang from beyond; a child who has become the marionette of a Wraith to terrify his family; the Legion haunts a herd of many swine and makes them jump in the river...*

**Rules:** First of all, a Spooky can try to possess any sentient being somehow connected with its Chains or nature: one of its descendants, one of the pets it had in life (if still living), an animal disturbing its remains, a tree with roots digging into its grave, someone who entered its Cold Spot or connected with its death and so on... Then, the Spooky and its victim make an opposed Spirit roll (at -2 for the Spooky). If the Spooky fails, it may not try to possess that victim again until the next Ephemeris. If it rolls a 1 on its Trait die, the failure is automatic and it can never try again with the same victim. With a success, the victim is "Touched".

*Touched:* A touched victim is not yet a puppet in the hands of the Spooky, but he has part of its unnatural will and influence corrupting his mind and soul. During its Ephemeris, as a Hidden Spooky, it notices and perceives the world via the senses of its victim and has access to his memories and thoughts. The victim feels that something is wrong with him, and may experience psychological disturbances, nightmares, physical or mental injuries. He counts his Smarts and Vigor dice as one step lower (minimum d4), and suffers -1 Charisma. When the Spooky is not Hidden around the victim, but Dormant or Manifest as a Shroud, the victim is "alone" with himself and experiences a temporary sense of freedom.

The Spooky using this phenomenon can possess only one victim at any Ephemeris and can "upgrade" its Possession only once per Ephemeris (but the GM can use Bennies to do that faster).

If the Spooky wants to turn a Touched victim into an Infested (see below), it and its victim make an opposed Spirit roll (without penalties). If the Spooky fails, it may not try the upgrade that victim again until the next Ephemeris. If it rolls a 1 on its Trait die, the failure is automatic and its victim is not "Touched" anymore. With a success, the victim is "Infested".

*Infested:* The victim's personality and actions visibly change, at least for all those who know him. The victim still acts with his own rationality and will, but he begins to see the world through the eyes of the Entity. Generally, he becomes crueler, colder and insensitive to human life, starts looking for death or macabre experiences. He also can try to perform acts of violence and cruelty, especially in secret or in a way which won't arouse suspicions about the nature of his possession. Even when the victim is alone because the Entity is Dormant or Manifest, these temperamental inclinations may persist for several days. The victim becomes thinner, hunched and gloomy, he ceases to take pleasure in food, drink and common experiences, and begins to prefer the most macabre and disturbing activities. However, after committing any particularly heinous act in the "Infested" or "Marionette" condition, the victim may make another opposed Spirit roll to wrest back control and downgrade his Possession to "Touched" once more. He still considers his Smarts and Vigor dice a step lower (minimum d4), and suffers -1 Charisma. If the Spooky wants to turn an Infested victim into a Marionette (see below), it and its victim make an opposed Spirit roll (at -2 for the victim). If the Spooky fails, it may not try to upgrade that victim again until the next Ephemeris. If it rolls a 1 on its Trait die, the failure is automatic and its victim reverts to the "Touched" condition. With a success, the victim is now a Marionette.

*Marionette:* The complete Possession of a living body by a Spooky is not permanent but it lasts only for the Spooky's Ephemeris and then the victim goes back to the "Infested" condition again, until the next Ephemeris. It works only if the Spooky is Hidden in or near the victim (not Dormant or Manifest). At that point, the victim becomes "Possessed" and can be used as a puppet by the Spooky. See the stats for Possessed in the Phenomenology section.

An Entity can be driven out of a body with an Exorcism. In the case of a successful Exorcism, the possessed returns to normality in a few days and the Entity will no longer possess him in the future.



## Possession, Objects

This rare combination of Dark Tricks, Possession and Poltergeist is just an Entity haunting an object (also called “the vessel”), not a living being, a corpse or a place. Not so dangerous, is it, until “the object” is an unbreakable car, a chainsaw or a rifle?

*Examples: An awful doll who animates at every Ephemeris and kills everyone in the house; a red violent vintage Alfa Romeo named “Giulietta”, haunted by the Entity of the girl who died in it; an M60 machine gun holding everyone in a truck stop hostage.*

**Rules:** Possessed Objects can’t levitate, communicate or do anything divergent from their nature and function. A gun can shoot and slowly rotate by itself on a table, but can’t jump all around the room or reload itself. A chainsaw can’t operate without fuel. But yes, the damn’ doll with the knife can walk, jump and kill you...

Usually, when a Spooky has this phenomenon available, it has 2d4 activations of these “special effects” for each Ephemeris and cannot use them in full daylight.

An Entity can be expelled from an Object through an Exorcism. In the case of a successful exorcism, the Entity returns to its Cold Spot, and can no longer haunt the same object again.

## Reanimation

If taking possession of a living body is a long and complex affair for a Spooky, lasting several Ephemeris and never definitive, reanimating a corpse, taking possession, and using it as a flesh marionette is theoretically easier.

First, the victim must have been killed by the Spooky, or connected in some way to the Entity: he must have died in the haunted house or near the Spooky’s grave, or he must be connected with its Hook or Chains. Once the Game Master determines that this connection exists, the Spooky may be directly able to haunt the cadaver, without too much effort.

What has been created at this point is a Revenant (see the Phenomenology section).

*Examples: You thought that your buddy’s*

*death would be the most terrible thing that happened that night, until his corpse was reanimated and attacked you...; a terrible pack of Husks invaded the lower subway lines... and all their victims are now going to leave the train; you are at the cemetery, and believe it is a ghost story, but suddenly those hands coming out from the graves turn everything into an undead apocalypse!*

**Rules:** The reanimation of a Revenant lasts for the Ephemeris of the Entity, and throughout that time the Revenant stops decaying. The process resumes when the corpse is not controlled by the Spooky anymore. The Spooky is not required to revive the same corpse every time, at every Ephemeris: it can also use the cadaver once for a few minutes and then “throw it away” in a bin or in an alley. If the Spooky becomes Manifest or Dormant, the corpse can no longer be supported by its Phantom Energy. If the Revenant is destroyed or defeated by Detectives in combat or by other means, the Entity can no longer reanimate the same corpse. An Entity can also be driven out of a corpse with an Exorcism. In case of a successful exorcism, the Revenant reverts to a normal corpse and the Entity can no longer possess it in the future.

## Spontaneous Combustion

Spookies are entities of decay and frost, haze and Phantom Energy. Fire is essentially their enemy and damages them. Yet, some of them are able to turn Dark Tricks into a spontaneous fire that emanates from inanimate objects, organic matter or even living beings.

A Spooky may therefore induce internal combustion in a human being, animal or plant, or in a flammable object, or even melt a small amount of inanimate objects that normally would not burn (plastic cables, unplugged power units, plastic or glass items, disconnected electrical equipment, metallic fiber) once in each Ephemeris. This phenomenon can double its effects if the target is an object connected to a power source or composed of flammable material: grease, oil, a tank full of gas, wood furniture, cables, electrical control units or objects connected to electricity...

The Spooky could also use this phenomenon



to irreparably damage a weapon or an item at the Detective's disposal.

*Examples: A woman ignites while bathing in the whirlpool bath in a rich apartment, infested with malicious Husks; during a party at the end of the school year, a possessed girl causes the death by internal combustion of a dozen of her peers; in an outlying district of the city switchboards and wires, even disconnected ones, catch fire every night, while the ground smells of sulfur and coal.*

**Rules:** There is no way for the Detectives to avoid the spontaneous combustion of an object, if the Spooky has decided to ignite it, even by immersing the target item in water. If the flames can cause other damage, the standard rules for Fire you can find in the "Hazards" section of *Savage Worlds* should be used. Remember Spookies fear fire, so it's uncommon they would decide to use this phenomenon in the same place or situation where they are manifesting as Shrouds.

To cause the internal combustion of a living creature, the Entity must win an opposed roll between its own Spirit and the Vigor of the intended victim.

If the Spooky wins, for each Success and Raise, the victim suffers 1 Fatigue Level as for the standard *Savage Worlds* rules for Heat. If the victim becomes Incapacitated, he immediately catches fire from within and cannot be saved in any way from death, even by immersion in water.

## Swarms

The malevolent will of Spookies can take control of, or compel to act in their own interest whole swarms of creatures of limited intelligence, which can attack the Detectives or do considerable damage inside the old buildings of the metropolis.

*Examples: A flock of crazed birds peck violently at all who pass through the streets of downtown; an endless swarm of cockroaches leaves the sewers and breaks into the homes of a wealthy district; a pack of ravenous rats invades a shopping center built on an ancient Roman cemetery on its opening day.*

**Rules:** Once "activated" by a Spooky, swarms act like common animals and manifest

very little of the paranormal. If launched in combat against Detectives, these creatures act as per the official rules.

## Weather Control

The Phantom Energy that Spookies possess and manipulate is able to change the Weather in a large radius around them.

In this way they can evoke and retain rainstorms for hours, if this can give them some form of advantage or harass their victims. With two usages of this power, the rainstorm can become a real hurricane.

*Examples: the streets are swept by an unnatural wind, which collects all sorts of wastepaper and rubbish and shoots it into the Detectives' faces; it's still four hours before dawn, and the heroes are locked outside on the balcony of a skyscraper in Dueliz Bank along with four Faders... it could be worse: it might rain! Apparently on the very night that the Dusk Lodge is to invoke the Unhuman, a hurricane is heading toward the city...*

**Rules:** The time required to evoke a storm depends on the previous weather conditions. It will take several hours to draw clouds and winds if the sky above the city is clear, but just an hour of conjuration, if the weather is already cloudy or rainy. It's much easier and faster to raise windstorms pounding the city with dust, garbage, litter or sand. The Entity will call the storm up only at night. It lasts until the end of its Ephemeris, or until dawn, whichever event occurs first.

The storm reduces visibility (treat as Dark for lighting penalties), extinguishes most normal fires within 1d10 rounds, and only volatile materials have a random chance of igniting from fire-based attacks. Storm conditions inflict a -1 penalty on most actions due to slipping, difficulty hearing, strong winds, and so on. The Game Master must decide which actions are affected.





## CHAPTER 6 GHOST

### FILES: A GRITTY GHOST STORY GENERATOR FOR IMAGO MORIIS

My man was at the last bay. He was driving balls some 650 feet, his skin glistened with sweat, his biceps were like two melons, his arms bore miserable and out-dated tribal tattoos. All the golfers were quiet, the only sound was the rhythmic thud of the clubs striking the balls. I took a basket of balls from the dispenser, went to the farthest bay where I was well hidden by the panels, and messed around for some twenty minutes.

The lights bled out more heat, the air was impossible to breathe due to the tornado of mosquitoes bearing down on us. The golfers started spraying themselves with Afta, but I didn't have any. The mosquitoes gnawed away at me like piranhas. I was almost about to call it quits, I couldn't stand those little bastards. Someone passed by behind me, followed by a couple, my man was the only one left. Things were working out my way, for once, well, except for the mosquitoes. I moved to the bay next to his. I could hear his breathing, his gasps at every strike of the ball. I moved behind him with the wooden club and, at the exact moment his club struck the ball, I smashed my club into his jaw.

There was a dry crack. He collapsed against the wooden panel and fell to one knee. I looked around, nobody was there, the ducks were still sleeping and the green was engulfed in the raw light belched out by the neon lamps behind us. I picked up his club, a nice heavy iron, lifted it with both hands and swung it down on his knee as he was trying to get up. He cried out and fell again. Jesus, I was enjoying every second of it. "That's for breaking my arm," I said. I knelt down to check the backpack next to him. I found his gun and put the backpack on my shoulders. I took out my gun, it was locked and loaded, and pointed it at his head.

"How did you find me?" he said as he knelt down, a hand on his head, warm blood trickling down his neck and on the plastic bay, as bloodthirsty mosquitoes swarmed around us.

"I'm magic," I said.

Samuel Marolla, Imago  
Mortis



Playing *Imago Mortis* is solving hard-boiled horror cases in a modern metropolitan noir setting, with the ghastly presence of paranormal phenomena.

It's one part ghost story, one part noir detective fiction, one part hard-boiled thriller and one part cosmic paranormal horror.

To put you in the right mood for the game and to help you to create your adventures, here is a random case generator.

Shuffle the Action Deck, draw five cards, and put them in front of you in a row.

The suits of the cards will determine the Assignment: where the case comes from, the setting of the investigation, who the enemy might be and the first clue Detectives have.

The values will determine the Plot: what kind of story they are to play, their enemy's motivation, complications, the plot twist and the final showdown.





# 1. SUIT: THE ASSIGNMENT

## First Suit: The File

*Who is entering your office, looking for you?*  
The first card represents the person who brings the File to your desk.

**Spade – Yourself:** You are not someone who sits at his desk doing nothing. While looking over crimes and menaces occurring in the city, you make an interesting discovery, which likely will eventually lead you to an Infiltration. After all, it's your job, right?

**Heart – Just Another Case:** “Guys, we have a possible Infiltration to verify.” It's just a routine job; someone noticed a pattern in crimes and accidents in the city and your team is the one assigned to the case.

**Diamond – Your Boss:** “A case for you. Try not to make another mess like last time.” Your direct manager comes in and explains the case, as an ordinary job.

**Club – a Colleague in Trouble:** “I knew I'd find you here, old boy!” A colleague comes in and asks for your help. There is a case he can't/won't solve and nobody else can help but the Detective. Usually this happens because the case is a terrible pain in the ass, but of course your colleague omits this detail.

**Joker – Something Personal:** A phone call, with terrible news. Something bad happened to one of the Detectives' relatives or friends, or a menace from the past is rising again, after having ruined the Detective's life years ago. Nobody can reject a case like this.

## Second Suit: The Briefing

*“So, this is what happened...”* The second card is the kind of case the group is required to solve. Usually there will be a Briefing with all the details.

**Spade – Find:** The Detectives have to find and/or capture something or someone: information, either in a physical form (papers or electronic files), or as a secret; a Person of Interest missing, vanished, kidnapped, or held

prisoner by the villain; a long-forgotten grave, a secret warehouse or a serial killer's “kill room”; a fugitive, a stolen work of art, a hi-tech prototype or a document with sensitive information.

**Heart – Protect:** Something or someone must be safely taken from one place to another, or protected in his home; a client living in a haunted place that needs your protection for one night (the century's Ephemeris for the family ghost), a guy is clearly menaced by a curse or some criminals.

**Diamond – Reclaim:** There is a place or an object to free from someone or something; a long-cursed hotel in the city center, an abandoned warehouse in the slums, a whole district troubled by a new gang, a Relic that the owner wants to use again in a mundane way without fear.

**Club – Destroy:** The Detectives must eliminate something or someone: a Spooky persecuting a family for generations, a mob, a Netherkin finally targeted, an elusive killer possessed by a Wraith, a Relic, the Hook that binds the Spooky to the Earthly World or an entire location.

**Joker – Just Take a Look Around:** Detectives are required to explore a place and gather information about it, and/or infiltrate a group or gang and/or establish some other kind of advantage; mapping an abandoned underground railway, reporting the exact nature and details of a haunted mansion, finding all possible threats in a block hold by a gang, uncovering the inner workings and relationships of an organization, or finding the weakest link in a terrorist cell.

## Third Suit: The Place

*“Roger Chief, we're on our way. But where is this hovel you are prattling about?”* The Third Suit describes in which part of your metropolis the case is mainly set. You can actually choose the metropolis itself, according to your preferences. In these mean, twisted years, one metropolitan city is much like the others.

**Spade - Underworld:** The case will be set in the city's slums, dormitory suburbs and poorer outskirts: the worst of the city districts, infested with outlaws, indifference, trash and misery.

**Heart - Downtown:** The case will be set in the Central Business District of your metropolis or in the historical city center, frequented during the day by corrupt politicians, high class people and ruthless white collar workers.

**Diamond - Uptown:** The case is set in the residential districts, between parks, villas, luxury houses and resorts.

**Club - Periphery:** The adventure will take place in the country surrounding the city: an industrial area, a small town linked to the main city, a motel on the highway, a resort close to the metropolis.

**Joker - Far Away:** This time the case is set far from the city: another country, a medium level city, even a remote village, a cabin in the woods or a wilderness zone.

## Fourth Suit: The Villain

*"That man is really scary, guys. There's something... strange... in his eyes."* The suit of this card determines the identity of the main opponent, *according to the file*. In good stories this information is not just true or false: Detectives will find there is some truth in this, together with puns, double plays, surprises and twists.

**Spade - Spooks:** Something paranormal is happening and Detectives are the most qualified people to investigate. The file usually can't describe the timing of the Spooky's appearance, but could tell something about its apparition, dark tricks or manifestations.

**Heart - Scum:** Cheap thugs without experience, low-level terrorists, street gangs, any group of fanatics or vigilantes, corrupt cops, maniac believers or brutal serial killers. Usually, facing this kind of enemy will require direct action and gunfights.

**Diamond - CrimeLord:** A mundane enemy, but greater and more prepared than Scum: the boss of a high-level gang, an international mob led by a mastermind, a group of former

soldiers, paramilitary, professionals or rogue agents, a white collar manager or a rich man who is perpetrating crime in the shadows.

**Club - Weird Menace:** A paranormal menace, but worse than a common Spooky: a curse that has afflicted a family for generations, a bloodthirsty Netherkin who has killed for decades, a very popular MeetUp secretly controlled by the Legion, a whole train station haunted by Charonians, a dark and involved scheme concocted by the Unhuman to destroy the whole city.

**Joker - Enemy Within:** The problem is the Vallum itself; an unacceptable policy, some past ruthless operation or a deviant section. This should be shocking for the Detective.

## Fifth Suit: The Clue

*"OK, so what have we got?"* The Fifth Suit is the starting point of the investigation, the clue that the client puts on the table to show the Detectives what he has on the case.

**Spade - Evidence:** A physical item useful in the investigation, such as a weapon, an ornament, a jewel, a work of art, even a Relic (but the client doesn't know it is a Relic) or a matchbox with an address on.

**Heart - Source:** A person who knows something more about the case. The person could be missing, difficult to reach, or not willing to talk.

**Diamond - Message:** A picture, video or text where there is an enigma, something to discover or a secret to unveil; a diary, a note, a code, even a file protected in a computer, smartphone or the cloud.

**Club - Crime Scene:** The address of the place to start: the room where the child disappeared, the haunted apartment in the city center, the library where the Paperknife Killer slaughtered twelve people.

**Joker - Eyewitness:** There are not clues but things someone has seen for herself, and nobody wants to believe her. What she saw could also be just a nightmare or an omen.

*So, now you have your case, Detectives: head down to the Depository for your gear and then on your way!*



## 2. CARD VALUE: THE PLOT

If the players now know everything needed to start their adventure, the Game Master needs to plan their investigation. So, take a look again at the five cards you've drawn. They will define the secret background of the adventure.

### First Value: The Detection

Which kind of story are you going to play? *Imago Mortis* is a game of Investigation, Action and Paranormal, but how are you going to implement this paradigm? There are many types of Hard-Boiled Horror stories and here are the most common:

**Deuce - Ghost of the Week:** A Spooky is in its Ephemeris and it will kill and kill again, like it does every Recurrence. The Detectives need to stop it once and for all. It has its own creepy and twisted *modus operandi*, and the Detectives probably have to find its Hook and Chains before understanding how to banish it forever from the Earthly World.

**Three - Survival Horror:** The case soon brings the Detectives to a place they cannot run away from before defeating their enemy. They have limited ammunition and will be challenged by dangers, attacks, obstructions and dark tricks. And their enemy wants to kill 'em all, one by one.

**Four - Haunted Mansion:** The focus of the story is a whole place, haunted by spookies, where the greater part of the case will be set. The Detectives have more freedom of movement and are less often under attack than in a Survival Horror situation, so they can go walking around, searching out clues, finding a way to understand and defeat the menace haunting the place.

**Five - Possession and Exorcism:** The focus of the case is a victim of a possession and her dark, ghastly possessor. The Detectives must accomplish a proper exorcism on the victim, to save her. A poor girl walking on her back is not a great problem, compared to some crime lord or rich politician, possessed by a Wraith.

**Six - Locked Room Mystery:** The Detectives have to investigate an "impossible

murder". It happened in a way or in a place that seems impossible for the killer. Something spooky is probably involved in the case... or not?

**Seven - Whodunit:** A common case to investigate; there is a murderer, and the trail to him is made up of clues, hints, suspicions, red herrings, revelations and twists. The Detectives have to find out the killer's identity and motivation.

**Eight - Howcatchem:** Everybody knows who the villain, the enemy, the killer is, but there is no proof. This time, the game is to find evidence against him and nail him by law. Or, if the villain is a paranormal entity, the objective could be to figure out the reason it's acting this way or how to defeat it.

**Nine - Hunting:** A serial killer to find, a Netherkin to catch, a possessed to identify before it's too late. The whole case is a hunt on the trail of the enemy, moving around the city, exploring the underworld or searching in lost places, before the final reckoning.

**Ten - Avenge Me!:** The victim(s) of a violent and insane murder manifests in some way as a Spooky to the Detectives or some other NPC, asking for vengeance, justice (clearing the name of the Spooky), punishment or even just the truth about the killing. Contacted by a ghost, the Detectives have to accomplish this weird task.

**Jack - Family Curse:** Something wrong has been happening for generations to a family, a group or an organization, and it's time to stop it. The Detectives will meet the only one in the family interested in this (for good reasons) and need to understand the whole picture before taking action.

**Queen - Dark Love:** A strange, pure or twisted romance is at the center of the case. The Detectives meet the lovers (or are part of the romance) and need an answer to some moral dilemma about their situation.

**King - Rising Crime:** A new gang is conquering the underworld or a new politician is running as mayor, a new crazy MeetUp Leader is making acolytes or a terrorist cell has started operating in the city. In any case, someone is going to be the new king of the metropolis and

must be stopped as soon as possible.

**Ace – Conspiracy:** The cops or other security/military/intelligence forces are conspiring in something, or a corporation wants to close its best ever deal in town. There is a national or international intrigue underway and the Detectives need to dismantle the network of their enemies, piece by piece.

**Joker – Midnight of the Century:** That's bad, guys... really bad. The greatest conspiracy of all time is in motion: the bloody Apocalypse itself. The Unhuman is moving its pawns on the Earthly chessboard and the Detectives are in the eye of the storm! Of course, they are called to stop the end of the world. Again.

## Second Value: Villain's Motivation

Why is the Villain doing this? What is the final object of his scheme? Use this motivation to make actions and decisions of the enemy coherent and detailed. If the motivations include some twist or secret, this should be explained or understood at the time of the Twist (see below).

**Deuce – McGuffin:** Everything is about the McGuffin of the story - an item, a Relic, a Hook, a Hoax, a briefcase full of diamonds, that damn' statuette of a hawk.

**Three – Greed:** The whole story is about money and/or power, and the Villain will do anything he can to put his hands on that treasure, deal, or traffic. Or he will die trying.

**Four – Covering Up Secrets:** The Villain wants his terrible secret covered up forever. It could be a dirty state secret, a personal weakness, a crime (or a good deed) in his past, the terrible truth about his own death.

**Five – Revenge:** We are talking about a vengeful spirit, a victim turned into a crazy punisher or a crimelord pursuing a personal vendetta. The enemy's dark will is completely focused on revenge.

**Six – Ambition:** The Villain is in the middle of his climb to power, in our world or the other; the actions he put in motion at the beginning of the case are his last and only chance for the ascension he craves.

**Seven – Necessity:** The Villain is sick and in need of a cure, in debt, blackmailed or enslaved, he did a deal with a power darker or worse than himself, and/or is just a servant of the Legion. What he did was his only chance, and failure means that a greater evil will destroy him. In the end, he acted out of fear.

**Eight – Manipulation:** The Villain doesn't actually know he is a puppet of a darker power. He is manipulated by a Greater Evil (a crimelord, a powerful politician, the Unhuman itself) for its evil scheme. If the enemy is a madman, a believer, a terrorist, he probably thinks his faith or utopia justifies the means.

**Nine – Just a Lot of Death:** Nothing else to say, the Villain does evil things because that's what he wants. He is beyond humanity: one of the Netherkin, a cultist of an evil faith, a lunatic or a servant of the Unhuman.

**Ten – Secrets of the Netherworld:** This time the most hidden mysteries of the Netherworld are at stake. Every occultist, esoterrorist, cultist, spiritualist or mad scholar would kill for this lost and cursed knowledge. Of course, it's a secret Man Was Not Meant To Know.

**Jack – Artifact of Doom:** A more powerful version of the McGuffin; a book, weapon or item so powerful that can destroy the world, hidden for centuries and now in the middle of the plot.

**Queen – Passion:** The whole story starts with a great passion: an eternal love or a terrible hate. Even lost souls and mundane criminals can fall prey to these emotions.

**King – Great Darkness is Coming:** The Villain knows what Man Was Not Meant To Know: a bloodcurdling event is going to happen (mundane or psychic), and he is the one who can stop (or open the door) to it.

**Ace – Immortality:** The enemy knows the way to transcend his common nature and become something more. A common Spooky could be acting to become a Charonian or a Wraith, or have some kind of mysterious reincarnation, while a living enemy is looking for everlasting life.

**Joker – End of the World as We Know It:** The Midnight of the Century is coming and the Villain is its Herald. The end of the days is here; on your knees, you miserable fool!



## Third Value: Complications

Someone once said that in a good story you need three tragedies and an ending. Our suggestion for your case is to put a Complication when the Detectives are at the beginning, searching for the first clues, then add a twist 2/3 of the way through the case, and finally let the Villain enter with a bang just before the ending.

So here are ideas for your complications: while Detectives are following their trail, something happens to put a spoke in their wheel.

**Deuce - Hostile District:** Everyone in the neighborhood seems to know the Detectives and does not appreciate who they are or what they do. Local police, inhabitants or a gang try to stop, arrest or ban them, and there will be more than one conflict with them. If they are used to being appreciated in that neighborhood, soon a scandal happens to change the crowd's mood.

**Three - Extra Responsibility:** The case involves innocent people that may need to be rescued or kept safe from harm.

**Four - Absence of Evidence:** The trail is a dead end. Hints, sources or clues are useless and the Detectives need to find a new lead.

**Five - Overwhelming Force:** The Villain's opposition is too great to be faced directly, and enemies directly use his strength or resources to stop the Detectives; they need to change their approach.

**Six - Personal Matters:** The Detectives find the case involves a friend, relative, old enemy or contact of one of them, or in other ways involves their personal interests, often related to their background, Edges and Hindrances.

**Seven - Race Against Time:** Suddenly and in the worst way, Detectives find in their case time is of the essence; a bomb is about to explode, the enemy is on the run, or there are "rivals" trying to reach the objective before the group. If the Detectives already thought they had a certain amount of time to solve the case, halve that time.

**Eight - Betrayal:** One of the group's allies or resources becomes a danger or hindrance. An ally might actually work against the group; a Relic or Hoax might become ineffective or dangerous.

**Nine - No Violence:** For some reason, violence must be avoided at all costs. This can be requested by the Bureau or by necessity, and might not apply to the enemies. Depending on the situation, Non Lethal or unarmed attacks might still be used.

**Ten - More Bad Guys:** A completely different set of enemies tries to compete with the group in completing the same mission, for a different purpose. They are not linked to the main menace and must be dealt with before going on.

**Jack - Lights Off, Somebody Dies:** A new crime/problem/murder happens, exactly alike the one that started the investigation. The victim could be someone involved in the case.

**Queen - Cherchez la Femme:** A Femme Fatale, Lady in Red, Woman in Black or Action Girl enters the story as a Wild Card. She has a completely different scheme in mind and will do anything she can to accomplish her plot.

**King - The Hostage:** The Villain captures and holds an important NPC as a hostage, promising to kill him if the Detectives do not drop the case.

**Ace - Cover-Up:** Someone pulled strings and now the law, the government or the Bureau itself wants the investigation stopped.

**Joker - Storm:** Something dangerous for the whole setting and its balance is happening, right now; a hurricane hits the town, an earthquake, a riot, a blackout, the dismantling of the Detectives' organization. Everything is changing fast and Detectives find themselves completely out of their comfort zone.

## Fourth Value: Plot Twist

Around 2/3 of the way through investigation, when Detectives are close to determining all the elements of their case, it's time for a twist that will change everything.

**Deuce - Strange Bedfellows:** The menace requires the group to cooperate with some bad guys (for example, the ones from the Complications).

**Three - The Man Behind the Man:** The Villain is not the worst problem in the world. He's just another victim of a Greater Evil. Now

the Detectives have to face this new, bigger threat. This escalation could be the start of a new adventure.

**Four – It’s a Trap!** The whole case is a trap for the Detectives. They are the next victims, the Villain’s target!

**Five – Old Enemy:** The Detectives have faced this Villain before. It’s their old enemy, that somehow escaped (or came back from) death and is ready to strike!

**Six – Big Bad Duumvirate:** The Villain is not alone: there is another menace in the city, connected with the case, and the two of them are plotting together.

**Seven – Setting Change:** Suddenly, the investigation has to continue in a different place or part of the city. Use the Suit of this Card to determine the new setting as for the table “The Place” (see above). If the place is the same, treat this card as a Joker.

**Eight – Game Change:** Investigation reveals the case is different from what was expected. Use the Suit of this Card to determine the new job as for the table “The Briefing” (see above). If the job is the same, treat this card as a Joker.

**Nine – The Cake is a Lie:** The Detectives find out that there will be no reward for their job. Their client has no money to pay or can’t provide anymore what she has promised during the hiring, she disappeared, died or just changed her mind. Why should they go on?

**Ten – The Time is Over:** Suddenly, the Detectives face the Villain. Time for the showdown.

**Jack – The Reveal:** At this very moment of the case, Detectives suddenly understand that nothing is how they thought it was. The Villain is actually somehow “on their side” and whoever seemed to be helping them is the real bad guy. They don’t just have to deal with the new Villain, but also need to repair any damage they have done.

**Queen – The Femme Fatale:** The daughter/sister/lover/ally of the Villain decides to betray him and becomes a new ally of the Detectives, usually with the purpose of being the new villain after the previous one is defeated.

Anyway, she will be helpful. If the Villain is an Entity, the Femme Fatale could be one of Our Ladies of Sorrow, in disguise or not.

**King – The Tomato in the Mirror:** Something in the case was wrong... everyone was wrong... they keep repeating the same strange words, they have no reflections in the mirror... But the truth is that what’s wrong is the Detectives! Perhaps they were dead from the beginning, revenants, ghosts or possessed, or something similar is happening. Challenging the villain will be the final acknowledgment of this creepy truth.

**Ace – The Final Dilemma:** Sometimes it’s good to put the players in front of a dilemma which will alter the future plots of adventures. It could be an unexpected offer from the Villain, something they cannot refuse, or a compromise between parties that seems very interesting.

**Joker – Beyond the Curtains:** The whole place where the Detectives are collapses and a Slit opens, leading the team to the Netherworld. The climax will happen there, or the Detectives must find their way back to the Earthly World before reaching the Villain.

## Fifth Value: The Showdown

The climax of the case is usually the confrontation with the Villain. In your adventure, at this point you will have the final revelations, a Banishment, and/or a fight. Everything seems lost and the team is at a disadvantage. But what is the only way to win?

**Deuce – Running Away:** The team can’t win this time. The Detectives need to focus on how to save themselves, escaping their enemies. Perhaps they will have another chance, another time.

**Three – Understanding:** Finally, Detectives see a detail or understand a secret of their enemy, just thinking about the scheme of what has happened during the whole adventure they’ve had. Only by using this information can they prevail.

**Four – Leverage:** The Detectives have to find some way to convince or force the Villain to give up.



**Five - Fight, Last Chance:** The Team has a very little time to destroy the Villain; the night is coming or the whole gang is on its way. So, the team needs to win the fight quickly, in a few minutes in Realtime ... the shortest in their life.

**Six - Fight, Cavalry:** At a certain time, allies arrive and help the Detectives to get rid of (part of) their enemies.

**Seven - Fight, Heroic Sacrifice:** The combat is impossible to win, and only if one of the Detectives sacrifices his life can things change.

**Eight - Fight, Corruption:** During the combat, the evil touches or changes one of the Detectives, who will be changed forever.

**Nine - Fight, Chase:** The Villain or the Detectives start a chase and the final battle happens during this.

**Ten - Fight, Last Stand:** The Villain has very little time to destroy the Detectives; the sun is rising or the police are coming. So, they only have to hold out for a few minutes... the longest in their life.

**Jack - Doomsday Clock:** The Detectives need to perform a dramatic task to win, in just a few minutes.

**Queen - The Deal:** The Villain doesn't want the Detectives dead, he just wants to make a deal.

**King - We Will Meet Again:** The villain is defeated but not destroyed and disappears in a way the Detectives can't stop. So they've won, but their enemy will come back, soon or later.

**Ace - Trick:** The team can prevail only by cheating or persuading their enemy; they may use a trick to convince him to confess, recording his words, or use some other kind of gimmick.

**Joker - It's Too Late...** Time has run out. The Detectives can save their lives but cannot solve their case in the ideal way. In later adventures they will face the results of this failure.







### 3. AN EXAMPLE

#### **The Evil in the Woods**

**Draw:** 5 Hearts, 8 Spades, Joker, 7 Spades, 8 Hearts

**Results:** Just a case, Find, Away, Spookies, Source. Exorcism and Possession, Manipulation, Storm, Setting Change: Downtown, Fight: Corruption

**Assignment and Plot:** A vengeful spirit called "The Lumberjack" is harassing a remote, wooded area in the mountains. It is a Wraith and it searches for revenge after its death, caused by a lack of safety precautions in a logging company. The neglect was due to the company manager embezzling funds intended for safety equipment, and now the Wraith is killing everyone around. The file arrived on the Detectives' desks as an ordinary job, due to the number of gory murders

in those woods. During the briefing, the Chief sends them to a source, a logger who understood everything going on in the forest. Then the team finds that the Lumberjack possess a different woodcutter every time, to kill another one of them, and face it – at first during a storm. After a while, the Detectives understand the real target of the Wraith is the corrupt manager, who has an office in the city, downtown. So, they have to race against time to reach the manager before the Wraith. The Detectives also understand that the manager was convinced by the Legion, who is the real villain of the case, having manipulated the Lumberjack. In the final confrontation, the Lumberjack possesses one of the Detectives, forcing him to attack his comrades.



## CHAPTER 7 - PHENOMENOLOGY

"Inside there was something ghostly and horrible, and it moved in my hands. It felt like the body of a drowned man - cold, soft, and wet from a long time in the water. I held on to it tightly but it was as strong as ten men. And it moved, a smooth, wet thing with a putrid smell, and dead white eyes that stared at me, and wet hair over its dead face. It pushed against me, put its arms around my neck, and forced me back. I fought with the thing, but it was too strong, and finally I fell and let it go. It moved quickly towards the captain. He tried to hit it, but he fell down with a cry of horror. As the thing stood over the captain, I almost screamed with terror, but I had no voice. Suddenly the thing disappeared. It seemed to go through the window, but I don't know how that was possible.

The captain and I lay on the floor for a long time. When I moved at last, I knew my arm was broken. I stood up and tried to help the captain; he wasn't injured, but he was in a bad state of shock.

That's the end of my story."

F. Marion Crawford, *The Upper Berth*

Werewolves? He had read up on such things at the library, fingering dusty books in uneasy fascination, but what he had read made them seem innocuous and without significance—dead superstitions—in comparison with this thing that was part and parcel of the great sprawling cities and chaotic peoples of the twentieth century, so much a part that he, David Lashley, winced at the endlessly varying howls and growls of traffic and industry—sounds at once animal and mechanical; shrank back with a start from the sight of headlights at night—those dazzling, unwinking eyes; trembled uncontrollably if he heard the scuffling of rats in an alley or caught sight in the evenings of the shadowy forms of lean mongrel dogs looking for food in vacant lots. "Sniffing and sniffing," his mother had said. What better words would you want to describe the inquisitive, persistent prying of the beast that had crouched outside the bedroom door all night in his dreams and then finally pushed through to plant its dirty paws on his chest. For a moment, he saw superimposed on the yellow ceiling and garish advertising placards of the street car, its malformed muzzle... the red eyes like thickly scummed molten metal... the jaws slavered with thick black oil...

Fritz Leiber, *The Hound*

By following your cases you will constantly find yourself facing the dark shadows of the Netherworld, villains of all kinds, brutal commandos, disturbing phenomena, killers and nightmarish entities. More rarely, you will swap lead with badges and uniforms and will go beyond the Curtains that separate the Earthly World from the Graveyard.

Here \* there are your opponents.





# 1. SPOOKIES

We call all the paranormal phenomena or entities “Spookies”, as a nickname for the Infiltrations. We also distinguish between Entities themselves and their activities. Below you can find enemies of both categories.

## Main Entities

There are a number of paranormal entities you can face. They have different traits and purposes, but a similar nature. We call them all Entities and every Entity has the following abilities and weaknesses:

- \* **Banishment:** Every Entity can be purged from the Earthly World by a proper Banishment (see page 17). This usually happens when the Detectives break the Chains or destroy the Remains of the Spooky, eventually dispelling its bond with the Earthly World.
  - \* **Chill Touch:** Entities do not have normal attacks, just Touch Attacks with the usual +2 bonus. If the Attack is successful, the victim must succeed at a Vigor roll (-2 if the success was with a raise) or suffer one level of Fatigue. They can use this ability only as Shrouds, when they manifest.
  - \* **Deathvision:** Entities “see” life around them and do not actually use eyes or other senses. They ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting and for Pitch Darkness. Ironically, if in full daylight and still Hidden or Manifest, they have -6 for full lighting.
  - \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing an Entity manifesting as a Shroud suffers a Test of Dread. More tests can be required for their other paranormal phenomena.
  - \* **Ephemeral:** In the Earthly World, an Entity has a Recurrence and Ephemeris (see page 14) and can be in one of three possible conditions at a time: Dormant, Hidden or Manifest. When Dormant, it is not actually here, but in the Graveyard, and can’t harm or be harmed directly. When Manifest, Detectives can destroy its Shroud, but then it will return again, Hidden. When Hidden,
- it is incorporeal and invisible, and can use its other phenomena. Only a few effects can harm it when in this condition, such as an Exorcism. This strange status is called Ephemeral.
- \* **Fearless:** Entities are immune to Dread, Intimidation and Tests of Will.
  - \* **Immunity:** Entities are immune to poison and disease.
  - \* **Invisibility:** When Hidden, Entities are invisible and cannot be seen by the naked eye. Some Psychics have specific Edges negating this effect.
  - \* **Invulnerability:** In the Netherworld, dead souls cannot be destroyed or harmed, except using very special medianic items and weapons. In the Earthly World, they can only be physically harmed during their Manifestation, when in the form of a Shroud, but they just return later, Hidden or Dormant. The only way to definitely win and exile them from the Earthly World is by Banishment.
  - \* **Lost Soul:** Those Entities whose Smarts value has a (S) beside it are powered by dark and unnatural minds. They cannot value things as a living being does and their will is completely inexplicable by our logic. In addition, they have no physical body and can’t touch or move anything in a normal way, so they have no Strength.
  - \* **Residue:** When a Shroud is destroyed, it leaves some ectoplasmic matter on the ground. If this *pseudomatter* is left there, it decays and disappears in a minute. If it is collected in special boxes, it is preserved and retains medianic properties; it’s called “the Residue”.
  - \* **Shroud:** When an Entity manifests in the Earthly World, it creates a “Shroud” around its dreary will. Shrouds are made by ectoplasm attracting and agglomerating any kind of dust, ash, soot and rust around there, held together by the Phantom Energy. A Shroud is partially incorporeal and this is part of their Ephemeral nature. This gives every Shroud a +2 Toughness bonus. They cannot be harmed by





normal attacks, but only by area attacks made using some specific materials, like iron and salt. No additional damage from called shots. No wound penalties. They may be Shaken by other attacks, but never wounded.

- \* **Weakness (Cold Iron):** For some strange reason, Phantom Energy dissolves in the presence of a rare kind of pure iron (not iron alloys, such as steel). When Manifest, Entities suffer normal damage from weapons made from Cold Iron. Other rare kinds of iron could have even better effects.
- \* **Weakness (Fire):** When Manifest, Entities suffer normal damage from fire or flaming weapons. Never forget your Molotov and flamethrower.
- \* **Weakness (Salts):** Some kinds of chemical salts can harm Entities, if used as ammunition against their Shrouds.
- \* **Weakness (Sunlight):** Usually Entities can be Hidden or Manifest only at night or in a dark place. Even if their Ephemeris lasts for more than one night (for example “the three

nights of the full moon, every lunar month”), during the day they are Dormant otherwise they suffer a -4 penalty to all Trait rolls. In any case, they cannot produce their phenomena in full daylight. If in indirect sunlight, in an area of Actinic light (see page 62) or if hit by the sun’s rays, they receive a -2 penalty to all Attacks and Rolls.

Although all Entities share the same nature, Occult Detectives usually divide them into several types:

### Chained

Lost souls, who groan for their Chains: ties, passions, earthly desires they cannot leave behind: a scary and vengeful phantom.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6 (S), Spirit d8, Strength n/a, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d12+2, Taunt d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8



### Special Abilities:

- \* **Banishment (Hook):** The usual way to banish a Chained in the Netherworld is to find its Hook and destroy it, or break the Chains anchoring it in the Earthly World.
- \* **Chains:** A Chained will always try to locate and reach its Hook. If reached, it may not move further than 50" (100 yards) from its Hook.
- \* **Dread -2:** A Chained usually manifests in a terrible and surprising aspect, and uses this as well as its Chill Touch to harm its enemies.
- \* **Entity:** A Chained is a typical Entity and has all the Special Abilities of the Entities.
- \* **Levitate:** Chained fly at a rate of 6" with a Climb of 3. They may not run.

### Charonian

A dark and towering shadow, wielding a diaphanous blade: the very image of a grim reaper.

**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d10 (S), Spirit d12+2, Strength n/a, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d12, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Intimidation d12+2, Notice d12, Stealth d10, Taunt d8

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Banishment (Mission):** The most common way to purge a Charonian from the Earthly World is to let it, or help it, to complete its mission.
- \* **Command the Entities:** As a paranormal phenomenon, a Charonian can call forth aid; it can summon 1d12 Husks who will do its bidding. The Charonian has the following Edges with these summoned Husks only: Command, Fervor, and Hold the Line!
- \* **Dread -2:** A Charonian appears as a powerful reaper, and use its aspect as well as its Chill Touch to harm its enemies.
- \* **Entity:** A Charonian is a keeper of the Netherworld and has all the Special Abilities of the Entities.
- \* **Levitate:** Charonians fly at a rate of 8" with a Climb of 3. They may not run.
- \* **Reaper:** The same way other Spookies can manifest a Paramental, a Charonian can, at will, assemble a blade of any sort in his hands

(usually a scythe or a sword: 1- or 2-hand blade(s), Str+d8 or Str+d12) and fight with that. It can have any sort of helpful Edge about its usage. It can create this effect only if in a place with some useful matter around.



### King Stramadhezo

The Stramadhezo (an ancient word for "Delight") is the true ruler of the Tormenthada, the Dark District of Milan. Nobody knows where it came from or why, but they say it is a Charonian which left its duties to run the Tormenthada. In every story about the Tormenthada, even before Leonardo da Vinci planned its current shape, the Stramadhezo was already there. It looks dreamy, melancholy and absent. It has a top hat on its head, but the head is actually severed and put upside down on the neck. So it has the top hat over its neck, then its head overturned, and from the top, dark blood splatters, continuing to gush from the cut throat. It also has two eyes for cufflinks, a stick made from a spine, and a "gardenia" in its buttonhole made of cancerous flesh.

\* **Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d12 (S), Spirit d12+2, Strength n/a, Vigor d12

\* **Skills:** Fighting d10, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Knowledge (Milan) d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d12+2, Stealth d12, Taunt d10

\* **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

### Special Abilities:

**Banishment (Mission):** If the Stramadhezo appears in the Mundane World (very rare), it's only to catch an Entity that should not be there, or some similar purpose. It is very fast and efficient in this kind of task. Sometimes it gives its allies a special silver ring to call it and it always answers the call.

**Command Entities:** If needed, the Stramadhezo can call any Dead Soul in the Tormenthada in its line of sight and command it.

**Deal and Price:** Every occult source describing this renegade Charonian also says that it usually makes deals with Detectives or other requesters. If the dealer does not pay the price, the Stramadhezo will pursue him forever with all its means.

**Entity:** The Stramadhezo is a Charonian

and has all the Special Abilities of Entities.

**Levitation:** In the Tormenthada it usually walks, but King Stramadhezo can fly at a rate of 8" with a Climb of 3. It may not run.

**Ruler of the Tormenthada:** Nobody knows why the Stramadhezo left the Netherworld and decided to spend its time in the Tormenthada, but now it's the undisputed ruler of the Dark District. It cannot be defeated or banished from there in any way.

**TakeOff the Hat:** if disappointed, or just as a creepy joke, the Stramadhezo can remove its top hat as if in greeting and force everybody looking at it directly to make a Test of Dread at -2.

## Fader

Ghosts that have lost their way to the Netherworld and persist upon the Earth. Day by day, they become more and more diaphanous and incorporeal, guarding their bones until their dissolution.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4 (S), Spirit d6, Strength n/a, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Stealth d12, Taunt d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Banishment (Remains):** The usual way to banish a Fader to the Netherworld forever is to find its Remains and destroy them, usually by incineration.
- \* **Dread:** A Fader usually manifests in a creepy aspect, and uses that as well as its Chill Touch to harm its enemies.
- \* **Entity:** A Fader is a typical Entity and has all the Special Abilities of the Entities.
- \* **Levitate:** Faders fly at a rate of 6" with a Climb of 3. They may not run.
- \* **Remains:** A Fader may not move further than 50" (100 yards) from its Remains.
- \* **Screams:** When a Fader manifests, it screams its unnatural pain all the time, and this sound is really disturbing. Anyone within 10" (20 yards) must make a Spirit roll. Those who fail suffer -2 on every Smarts and Spirit roll until the destruction of the Shroud.

## Husk

Indistinct apparitions with no face, devoid of specific intent, who were drawn into the Earthly World through a Slit.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6 (S), Spirit d4, Strength n/a, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d6, Intimidation d6, Stealth d12

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Banishment (Slit):** Husks finish their existence in the Earthly World when the Slit from which they come is closed.
- \* **Dread:** A Husk usually manifests as a grey shroud or a will o'wisp, without any mark or outlines. It use it's apparition as well as its Chill Touch to harm its enemies.
- \* **Entity:** A Husk is a typical Entity and has all the Special Abilities of the Entities
- \* **Levitate:** Husks fly at a rate of 4" with a Climb of 3. They may not run.
- \* **Life-draining:** Husks reinforce by consuming the vitality of the living. Whenever a Wild Card Husk inflicts damage with its Chill Touch, it recovers a Wound Level.
- \* **Slit:** A Husk may not move further than 500 yards from the Slit by which it entered our World.

## The Legion

Obscure and malevolent entities, without any glimmer of humanity or feeling in their dark will.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength n/a, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Intimidation d12, Notice d12, Stealth d12, Taunt d12+2

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Banishment (Summoner):** The Legion can persist in our Earthly World only while its Summoner wills it. If he dies or sends the Legion back, it can't resist the banishment.
- \* **Black Curse:** The Legion can curse an enemy with a successful opposed Spirit roll, but only when Manifesting or Possessing a living or dead body. On a success by the Legion, the



victim loses all his Bennies and cannot earn any more during the session. Non-Wild Card characters must make a Spirit roll or suffer a terrible accident sometime within the next 24 hours, which usually results in death.

- \* **Dread (-2):** The Legion is an entity made of pure terror and uses its presence as well as its Chill Touch to harm its enemies.
- \* **Entity:** The Legion is a dark inhabitant of the Netherworld and has all the Special Abilities of the Entities.
- \* **Levitate:** The Legion fly at a rate of 8" with a Climb of 3. They may not run.
- \* **Soul Reading:** The Legion can scan the souls of living things with a successful opposed Smarts roll, but only when Manifesting or Possessing a living or dead body. They can only use this power to gain insight into the targets' wishes and desires.

### Shade

Shadows of the dead, apparitions and disembodied souls which have retained some traits and memories of when they were alive.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6 (S), Spirit d6, Strength n/a, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d12+2, Taunt d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

#### Special Abilities:

- \* **Banishment:** Usually a Shade is on the Earthly World because it was summoned by someone, by a Cineromancer or during a Séance. If there are no complications, it will leave our World when released.
- \* **Dread:** A Shade usually manifests as a shadow of its living aspect, and can use this as well as its Chill Touch to harm its enemies.
- \* **Entity:** A Shade is a typical Entity and has all the Special Abilities of the Entities.
- \* **Levitate:** Shades fly at a rate of 6" with a Climb of 3. They may not run.

### Wraith

Terrifying shadows of death, cruel and malicious ghosts who appear much more powerful and cruel than the common Chained, of which they





are a variant.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10 (S), Spirit d10, Strength n/a, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Knowledge (Occult d8), Notice d10, Intimidation d12, Stealth d12+2, Taunt d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Banishment (Hook):** As a more powerful version of a Chained, Wraiths can be banished only by finding their Hook and destroying it, or breaking the Chains anchoring them to the Earthly World in some other way.
- \* **Chains:** A Wraith will always try to locate and reach its Hook. If reached, it has no distance limits from the Hook.
- \* **Dread (-2):** A Wraith usually manifests in the most terrible way. It uses its apparition as well as its Chill Touch to harm its enemies.
- \* **Entity:** A Wraith is an Entity and has all the Special Abilities of the Entities.
- \* **Levitate:** Wraiths fly at a rate of 8" with a Climb of 3. They may not run.

## Secondary Spookies and Other Phenomena

These opponents and effects have a paranormal origin, but they are not actual Entities. They are not dead souls, they have never been living and they do not have a will as such. So they do not share the basic features of Entities.

### Paramental, Litter Whirlwind

A swirl of garbage and dirt appears in the alley, rising from the ground like a pile of rags picked up by the wind. But there is no wind.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Throwing d6

**Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (2)

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from called shots; Paramentals do not suffer from poison or disease.
- \* **Deathvision:** Paramentals "see" life around them and do not actually use eyes or other

senses. They can see in any condition of visibility.

- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing for his first time a Paramental suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Fearless:** Paramentals are immune to Dread, Intimidation and Tests of Will; they'll attack anyone around without any fear.
- \* **Garbage Attack:** Str damage either by Fighting or Throwing. The Litter Whirlwind can attack up to 4 opponents at time.
- \* **Immunity (Cutting and Piercing):** Cutting or piercing weapons inflict no damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally.
- \* **Paramental Nature:** +2 Toughness; they're made of garbage compressed by an unnatural force.
- \* **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Paramentals suffer normal damage from weapons made of Cold Iron. Other rare kinds of iron could have even better effects.
- \* **Weakness (Fire):** These Paramentals are vulnerable to fire and fire based attacks; they take double damage from them.

### Paramental, Pale-Brown Thing

This apparition is a kind of shapeless sack covered with soot, full of human bones or charcoal or whatever. It looks like a clumsy and useless thing, thrown by mistake in a corner. Until it gets up and attacks you.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from called shots; Paramentals do not suffer from poison or disease.
- \* **Deathvision:** Paramentals "see" life around them and do not actually use eyes or other senses. They can see in any condition of visibility.
- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing a Paramental for the first time suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Fast:** The Thing has a Pace of 8 and rolls a d8 for running.
- \* **Fearless:** Paramentals are immune to Dread,



Intimidation and Test of Will; they'll fearlessly attack anyone around.

- \* **Grind:** Str+d6 damage; these weapons can't be disarmed. On a raise on its attack, the Pale-Brown Thing has grappled the victim. An entangled victim may only attempt an opposed Strength roll each round to escape. Once grappled, the Thing causes its Strength damage automatically by grinding its victim.
- \* **Immunity (Impact and Piercing):** Impact or piercing weapons inflict no damage. Cutting and area-effect weapons work normally.
- \* **Paramental Nature:** +2 Toughness.
- \* **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Paramentals suffer normal damage from weapons made by Cold Iron. Other rare kinds of iron could have even better effects.
- \* **Weakness (Salts):** Some kinds of chemical salts can harm this Paramental, if used as ammunition against it.

### Paramental, Cable Tangle

A tangle of electrical wires and workshop waste material, that smells of old oil and releases electrical bolts.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from called shots; Paramentals do not suffer from poison or disease.
- \* **Deathvision:** Paramentals "see" life around them and do not actually use eyes or other senses. They can see in any condition of visibility.
- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing a Paramental for the first time suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Fearless:** Paramentals are immune to Dread, Intimidation and Tests of Will; they'll fearlessly attack anyone around.
- \* **Immunity (Weapons):** Normal attacks inflict no damage. Area-effect weapons work normally.
- \* **Paramental Nature:** +2 Toughness.
- \* **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Paramentals suffer normal damage from weapons made by Cold Iron. Other rare kinds of iron could have even better effects.
- \* **Wire Tentacles:** Str+d6; these weapons can't be disarmed. The Paramental can make 1d4 Wire Tentacles attacks per round. On a raise on the attack roll, the victim is entangled by the cables and strands of wire wrapped around him. He suffers 2d4 damage until the he breaks free (with an opposed Strength roll, the victim rolls at -2).





### Poltergeist, Minor

A Minor Poltergeist is treated just like a Swarm. When it is “wounded”, the Poltergeist is effectively dispersed. Otherwise it ends after a number of rounds fixed during its activation. Poltergeists cover an area equal to a Burst Template and attack everyone caught in it every round.

Poltergeists do not move nor split. They just manifest and stay in the same area throughout.

A Minor Poltergeist can lift objects weighing less than 2 pounds or so, up to a maximum of 100 lbs. Usually these are glasses, plates, cutlery, stationery, towels or tablecloths. This is not safe; think of a hurricane hurling

bottle shards, forks and kitchen knives all around you...

**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d4 (S), Spirits d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Notice d6.

**Pace:** -; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

#### Special Abilities:

- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing for the first time a Poltergeist suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Ethereal:** Poltergeists are immaterial and can only be harmed by their Weakness.
- \* **Hits:** This Poltergeist inflicts hundreds of blows, hitting all the creatures in the template area automatically and inflicting 2d4 damage



to the least armored location.

- \* **Poltergeist Nature:** +2 Toughness.
- \* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict half damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally.
- \* **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Poltergeists suffer normal damage from weapons made of Cold Iron. Other rare kinds of iron could have even better effects.

### Poltergeist, Major

A Major Poltergeist is treated just like a Swarm. When it is "wounded", the Poltergeist is effectively dispersed. Otherwise it ends after a number of rounds fixed during the activation. Poltergeists cover an area equal to a Burst Template and attack everyone within it every round.

Poltergeists do not move nor split. They just manifest and stay in the same area throughout.

A Major Poltergeist can lift objects weighing less than 10 lbs or so, up to a maximum of 400 lbs. Usually these are small items of furniture, appliances, loose bricks, large stones, drawers, books, iron tools, curtains and weapons hanging on the wall. The blows inflict damage mainly by impact.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4 (S), Spirits d4, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Notice d6.

**Pace:** -; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 9

#### Special Abilities:

- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing a Poltergeist for the first time suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Ethereal:** Poltergeists are immaterial and can only be harmed by their Weakness.
- \* **Hits:** This Poltergeist inflicts hundreds of blows, hitting all the creatures in the template area automatically and inflicting 2d6 damage.
- \* **Poltergeist Nature:** +2 Toughness
- \* **Trip/Shove:** When the Poltergeist causes a Wound, it also knocks people over, with a range of 12". The Poltergeist and the target make opposed Strength rolls. If the Poltergeist is successful, the defender is knocked prone.
- \* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict half damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally.
- \* **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Poltergeists suffer

normal damage from weapons made of Cold Iron. Other rare kinds of iron could have even better effects.

### Poltergeist, Apocalyptic

The Apocalyptic Poltergeist is treated just like a Swarm. When it is "wounded", the Poltergeist is effectively dispersed. Otherwise it ends after a number of rounds fixed during the activation. Poltergeists cover an area equal to a Burst Template and attack everyone within it every round.

Poltergeists do not move nor split. They just manifest and stay in the same area throughout.

An Apocalyptic Poltergeist can pull and lift objects of any weight. Usually this means furniture, plumbing, cars, appliances, corpses, construction equipment and so on... The blows inflict damage mainly due to the impact.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (S), Spirits d4, Strength d10, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Notice d6

**Pace:** -; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 10

#### Special Abilities:

- \* **Crush:** At the time the Poltergeist is dispersed or ends, all flying objects fall down. Everyone in the Template must succeed at an Agility roll or be crushed (2d8 damage).
- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing a Poltergeist for the first time suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Hits:** This Poltergeist inflicts hundreds of blows, hitting all the creatures in the template area automatically and inflicting 2d8 damage.
- \* **Ethereal:** Poltergeists are immaterial and can only be harmed by their Weakness.
- \* **Poltergeist Nature:** +2 Toughness
- \* **Swarm:** Parry +2; cutting or piercing weapons inflict half damage. Impact and area-effect weapons work normally.
- \* **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Poltergeists suffer normal damage from weapons made of Cold Iron. Other rare kinds of iron could have even better effects.

### Possessed

A Possessed is a "template" you can apply to any normal person or animal. Even if animal Marionettes have the Smarts and knowledge of the Possessor, they still can't talk or use related Abilities.

The victim becomes a Wild Card, if he wasn't before.

**Attributes:** Smarts and Spirit are now those of the Possessor; all other attributes gain +2 die steps.

**Skills:** Fighting, Knowledge (Occult), Intimidation, Notice and Taunt, gain +2 steps; if needed, Possessed can roll any other skill as if it has them at d4.

**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** +2; **Parry:** +2; **Toughness:** +4 (+1)

**Bonus Edges:** Brawny, Improved Martial Artist, Improved Sweep

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Creepy:** The creature is extremely disgusting and its speech is violent and offensive. It provokes a Test of Dread (-2).
- \* **Green Vomit:** As an action, the creature may vomit a gush of green slime. All the characters within a Cone Template must make an Agility roll opposed by the creature's Vigor roll. If the roll fails, the character is coated with this gruesome substance and is Shaken.
- \* **Taunt of the Dead One:** If the Possessed can talk, it can use Taunt to annoy and confuse its enemies. This is a normal Test of Will but the character suffers a -2 if he has the Dark Secrets Hindrance.
- \* **Speaking in Tongues:** The Possessed has new knowledge and, if it can talk, it speaks more languages than the ones actually mastered by the vessel. They come from the memories of the Possessor and from any other sources of knowledge it can reach.
- \* **Turning Neck:** The Possessed is always on the alert and can see 360° around itself. Anytime it's about to be the victim of a surprise attack, ambush, or other nasty surprise, it gets a Notice roll at -2 just before the attack or event occurs. If successful, it is on Hold for the first round of a combat. Should it fail its roll, it still follows the normal Surprise rules, if applicable.
- \* **Wall-Walker:** The Possessed can walk on stairs, ceilings and vertical surfaces at Pace 8. It has a running die of d8.

Here there are three examples of the Possessed template applied to standard enemies (the altered Stats are in *italics*):

**The Black Dog of the Abandoned Mall** (*Dog possessed by a Fader*)

**Attributes:** Agility d8 [d12], Smarts d6 d4 [S], Spirit d6 d6, Strength d6 [d10], Vigor d6 [d10]

**Skills:** Fighting d6 [d10], *Intimidation d6*, Notice d6 *dro*, *Taunt d6*

**Pace:** 8 [9]; **Parry:** 5 [7]; **Toughness:** 4 8 [1]

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Bite:** Str+d4.
- \* **Fleet-Footed:** Roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- \* **Go for the Throat:** Dogs instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly armored location.
- \* **Size -1:** Dogs are relatively small.
- \* **Creepy, Turning Neck, Wall Walker**

**The Girl in White** (*a poor kid possessed by the Legion*)

**Attributes:** Agility d6 *dro*, Strength d6 [d10], Smarts d6 [d8], Spirits d6 [d12], Vigor d6 [d10]

**Skills:** *Fighting d6*, *Intimidation d6*, *Knowledge (Occult)* [d6], Notice d6 [d10], *Taunt* [d6]

**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6 [8]; **Parry:** 4 [6];

**Toughness:** 5 9 [1]

*Bonus Edges and Special Abilities: see above, all of them*

**The Boss from the Netherworld** (*a crimelord possessed by the Wraith of its predecessor*)

**Attributes:** Agility d6 *dro*, Smarts d10 *dro*, Spirit d8 *dro*, Strength d8 [d12], Vigor d8 [d12]

**Skills:** Fighting d8 *d12*, Intimidation d10 *d12+2*, *Knowledge (Occult)* [d6], Notice d10 *d12+2*, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8 [d12].

**Charisma:** +2 -; **Pace:** 6 7; **Parry:** 6 8;

**Toughness:** 6 10 [1]

**Hindrances:** Vengeful, Greed

**Edges:** 2+ Leader Edges

*Bonus Edges and Special Abilities: see above, all of them*

**Revenant**

When an Entity re-animates a corpse, either killed by it or found in another way, it has complete control and can move it like a puppet. Usually, the



Entity can keep the control up until it is defeated or completely destroyed, as explained on page 89.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts Special, Spirits Special, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Deathvision:** Revenants “see” life around them and do not actually use eyes or other senses. They can see in any condition of visibility.
- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing a Revenant for the first time suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Fearless:** Revenants are immune to Dread, Intimidation and Tests of Will.
- \* **Gear:** The Revenant wears and uses the gear

he has on. In any case it treats everything as an improvised weapon and doesn’t shoot.

- \* **Possessed Dead:** A Revenant has the same Smarts and Spirits as the Entity possessing the corpse.
- \* **Resistance to Damage:** Wild Card Revenants suffer no wound penalties. Bullets and other piercing weapons inflict only half damage.
- \* **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from being Shaken, called shots don’t do extra damage. Undead do not suffer from poison or disease.



## 2. LUNATICS

Your cases usually involve Entities and paranormal phenomena: it's what the Bureau investigates. But, during your detection and adventures, you will often face different kinds of enemies: murderers, mobsters, serial killers and madmen, somehow connected with your case.

The following are people who have gone crazy because of their beliefs, the Spookies or the corruption of our cities, and now they have become deranged believers, maniacs, slashers who adore bloodshed, terrorists and twisted serial killers.

These are the characteristics for most types of NPCs. Of course, individuals can vary largely, so feel free to adapt the stats to represent unique characters.

**Wild Cards:** Feel free to change the NPCs that you need for your adventures into Wild Cards. Some Wild Cards are included, and can be used as examples of how you can vary a basic template to create a unique NPC.

### Believers

Many people begin to see and understand *what's going on* and some are starting to gather in groups and covens, when not in actual cults, becoming sectarian and dangerous. People need to believe in something, and in the void left by the faiths and other ideals, beliefs about Entities are growing more and more.

The typical Believer is nothing more than an ordinary person. However, the following are the crazy ones, the dangerous ones...

#### Believer, Borderline

They are maniacal, also ready to use violence or other means against the enemies of their leader.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d4, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Notice d4, Stealth d4

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5  
**Edges:** -

**Hindrances:** Delusional, Loyal (to his MeetUp)

**Gear:** Taser

#### Believer, Leader

Whether manipulated by a real Entity, for personal interest or madness, he is the most organized person in the MeetUp and will use all its subtle influence against his enemies. When necessary, he will send his Borderline Believers and the Maniac against them.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Guts d6, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Notice d8, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

**Edges:** Command

**Hindrances:** Delusional, Overconfident, Vengeful

#### Believer, Maniac

The Maniac is the monster of the MeetUp, a madman who will chase you night and day to kill you and offer your blood to Entities. Maybe at the beginning he follows the MeetUp Leader, but soon he will obey only the voices in his head, the ones who tell him to slaughter you.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Notice d8, Stealth d6

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** Brawny, Hard to Kill, Nerves of steel

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty, Delusional

**Gear:** Melee Weapon (Str +d4).

### Murderers

Murderers are great at inflicting especially painful wounds and terror. Their victims might suffer Tests of Dread.

#### Serial Killer

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Lockpicking d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d4

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, First Strike, Improved



**Trademark Weapon** (weapon of choice)

**Hindrances:** Cautious, Wanted.

**Gear:** Melee Weapon (Str+d4).

## Slasher

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8,

Strength d10, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Cuts d8, Intimidation d10,

Notice d6, Stealth d4, Throwing d8, Tracking d8

**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

**Edges:** Harder to Kill, Improved Frenzy,

Improved Nerves of Steel, Improvisational Fighter

**Hindrances:** Death Wish, Bloodthirsty

**Gear:** Any object or weapon, without penalties:

Str+d6.

## Terrorist

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4,

Strength d8, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Cuts d6, Intimidation d6,

Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d4

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:**

7(2)

**Edges:** -.

**Hindrances:** Death Wish, Loyal (their beliefs)

**Gear:** Combat knife (Str+d4), SMG (20/40/80,

2d6+1, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, 3 RB, Full Auto),

ballistic vest (+2), explosives.

## Terrorist, Leader

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6,

Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Cuts d6, Knowledge

(Occult) d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d8,

Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d8

**Charisma:** 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8(2)

**Hindrances:** Greedy, Bloodthirsty.

**Edges:** Charismatic, Command, Fervor, Inspire

**Gear:** Combat knife (Str+d4), SMG (20/40/80,

2d6+1, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, 3 RB, Full Auto),

ballistic vest (+2), explosives.

## Netherkin

Netherkin is a "template" you can apply to any normal people, usually other Lunatics. The Netherkin is always a Wild Card.

**Attributes:** Smarts, Spirit and Vigor gain +1 Step.

**Skills:** Fighting, Knowledge (Occult),

Intimidation, Notice and Taunt, gain +1 Step.

**Parry:** +1; **Toughness:** +1

**Bonus Edges:** Alertness, Danger Sense, Harder

to Kill, Killer Instinct, Psychic, Strong Willed

**Bonus Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty, Wanted

(Major, but only if discovered)

**Special Abilities:**

\* **Creepy:** The Netherkin usually is twisted and estranged from common human nature and sensibility. Being one of his victims, looking at one of his crime scenes or visiting his den provokes a Test of Dread (-2).

\* **Taunts of the Dead:** If the Possessed can talk, it can use Taunt to annoy and confuse its enemies. This is a normal Test of Will but the character suffers a -2 if he has the Dark Secrets Hindrance.

Below you'll find an example of Netherkin.



## Granny Pins

This abominable crone pretends to be a kind old lady, knitting all day in her poor flat to earn some money. Actually she kidnaps the youngest and most innocent victims to torture them for days with her pins, offering their blood to the Legion.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8,

Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Cuts d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d10,

Stealth d8, Taunt d8

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 3; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Edges:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Danger

Sense, First Strike, Harder to kill, Killer

Instinct, Improved Trademark Weapon (Pins),

Psychic, Strong Willed

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty, Cautious, Elderly,

Lame, Mean, Wanted

**Special Abilities:**

\* **Creepy:** The "Catchall" of her flat is her deranged den and torture room. Everyone entering there suffers a Test of Dread (-2) due to the gore.

\* **Taunts of the Dead:** Can use Taunt to annoy and confuse enemies. This is a normal Test of Will but the character suffers a -2 if he has the Dark Secrets Hindrance.

**Gear:** Pins (Str+d4).

### 3. JACKALS

From low-life knaves to underground ruffians, from well-organized militia to the rulers of the sprawl, in recent years solo criminals and mobsters have been increasing their power, greed and violence. Now, old and new gangs are swarming in our cities and you could face them in the dark alleys of the metropolis.

#### Crime Lord

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8  
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Cuts d10, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d12, Taunt d8  
**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8(2)  
**Hindrances:** Greedy  
**Edges:** Block, Brawny, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Command, Harder to Kill, Killer Instinct, Natural Leader, Quick Draw, Steady Hands  
**Gear:** Concealed knife (Str+d4), medium sidearm (12/24/48, 2d6, RofI, Shots 15 AP 1), ballistic vest (+2).

#### Gunman

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8  
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Cuts d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)  
**Edges:** Rock and Roll  
**Hindrances:** Greedy  
**Gear:** Medium sidearm (12/24/48, 2d6, RofI, Shots 15 AP 1), crowbar (Str+d6), leather jacket (+1).

#### Henchman

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10  
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Cuts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4, Streetwise d10, Taunt d4  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9 (1)  
**Hindrances:** Greedy or Loyal  
**Edges:** Block, Brawny, Hard to Kill, Martial Artist, Nerves of Steel

**Gear:** Heavy sidearm (12/24/48; 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 10 AP 1), streetsweeper shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6 RoF 1, Shots 10), combat knife (Str+d4, AP 1), leather jacket (+1).

#### Militia

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10  
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Cuts d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10 (2)  
**Edges:** Block, Harder to Kill, Improved Nerves of Steel  
**Gear:** Light SMC (12/24/48, 2d6, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, 3 RB, Full Auto), heavy sidearm (12/24/48, 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 10, AP 1), combat knife (Str+d4, AP 1), ballistic vest (+2).

#### Ruffian

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8  
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Cuts d12, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d10  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (1)  
**Edges:** Block, Dodge, First Strike, Quick Draw, Rock and Roll  
**Hindrances:** Mean, Greedy  
**Gear:** Medium sidearm (12/24/48, 2d6, RofI, Shots 15 AP 1), chain or other cheap weapon (Str+d4), leather jacket (+1).

#### Scum

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Cuts d4, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Streetwise d6, Taunt d4  
**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5  
**Edges:** -  
**Hindrances:** Greedy, Mean  
**Gear:** Chain or other cheap weapon (Str+d4), light sidearm (10/20/40, 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 10).



## 4. AGENTS, LAW AND ENFORCEMENT

### Bureau Agent, Enforcer

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8  
**Skills:** Driving d4, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d6.  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)  
**Hindrances:** Overconfident  
**Edges:** Brave, Extraction, I've Seen Things..., Nerves of Steel  
**Gear:** Action kit.

### Bureau Agent, Ghost Hunter

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Guts d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d4  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6 (1)  
**Hindrances:** Nightmares  
**Edges:** I've Seen Things..., Prostration Resistance  
**Gear:** Light sidearm (10/20/40, 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 10), paranormal kit.

### Bureau Agent, Surveillance

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Knowledge (Computer) d4, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Repair d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Streetwise d4, Tracking d6  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5  
**Hindrances:** Cautious  
**Edges:** Alertness, McGyver  
**Gear:** Light sidearm (10/20/40, 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 10), investigation kit.

### Citizen

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Knowledge (Trade or profession) d6, Notice d4  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5  
**Hindrances:** Various

**Edges:** Various

**Gear:** Various, according to situation and profession.

### Police Officer

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d6, Guts d4, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Law) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Streetwise d4  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5  
**Hindrances:** Various  
**Edges:** Various  
**Gear:** Light sidearm (10/20/40, 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 10), taser (range: 3/6/-, damage 2d6), handcuffs, walkie-talkie.

### Police, SWAT

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8  
**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Investigate d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d8  
**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)  
**Hindrances:** Loyal  
**Edges:** Block, Dodge, Marksman, Martial Artist, Nerves of Steel, Rock and Roll  
**Gear:** SMC (20/40/80, 2d6+1, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, 3 RB, Full Auto), medium sidearm (12/24/48, 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 15 AP 1), stun gun (2d6; Parry -2; see Gear Section notes), handcuffs, ballistic vest (+2).



### Augusto Ghites

One of the most famous Cineromancers of the Milieu, Ghites is a private eye from Milan, using his "gift" to solve his cases. For some time he has been a consultant for the Bureau.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6,

Shooting d6, Streetwise d8, Tracking d6.

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Nightmares, Habit, Loyal

**Edges:** Danger Sense, Investigator, I've Seen Things..., Cineromancer, Requiem

**Gear:** Light sidearm(10/20/40, 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 10), investigation kit.



### Pietro Orziero

Orziero is a former captain of the Italian Carabinieri Unit of Scientific Investigations, in Milan. With the creation of the Vallum Program, he was assigned to the Bureau as Director for the Italian sector.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:**

Fighting d6, Guts d8, Knowledge (Occult) d4,

Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6,

Shooting d10, Streetwise d8, Tracking d6.

**Charisma:** 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

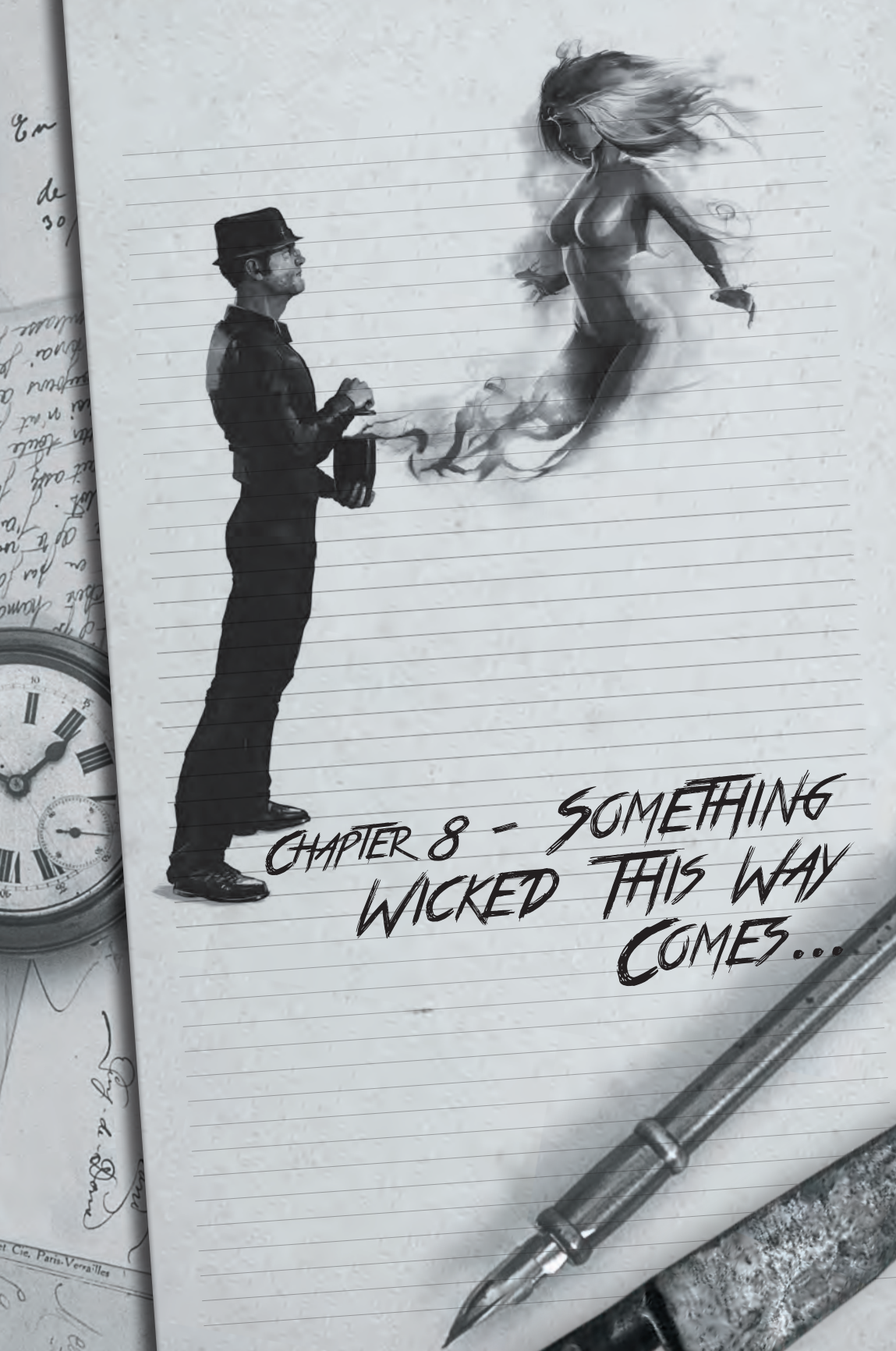
**Hindrances:** Nightmares, Heroic

**Edges:** Charismatic, Command, Fervor, Ghost Hunt Leader, Hard Man, Hold the Line, Inspire, Leader of Men, Level Headed, Marksman, Rock and Roll.

**Gear:** Action kit.







## CHAPTER 8 - SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES...

# 1. A NIGHT AT THE GHIBLI

*"It's a strange night, captain, a night when dreams, as well as nightmares, can realize. A night stormed by the Ghibli, the black wind, if we were in my country."*

*"It happened, Mamouliau, it is exactly what happened tonight. The nightmares have become reality." Mamouliau gave him a long look, under the cast-iron lantern. It seemed an oasis of light in the black vastness, spreading out around them, and swallowing the bar, the neighborhood, the city, the continent, the planet, the universe.*

Samuel Marolla, *A Night at the Ghibli*

A night at the Ghibli is an introductory *Imago Mortis* case for three to six Novice Detectives.

Entities made of rotten garbage, hails of bullets and a dark and winding road that descends to the Antechamber of the Netherworld.

## Background for the Game Master

Carmine Branca, the former boss of the Branca family, died five years ago in a gunfight, leaving his criminal organization to his three sons Bastiano, Lorenzo and Vito. The three have split the band and the city, but Bastiano is unable to manage his gang and is leading it to the verge of ruin. A year ago, however, Bastiano came into contact with a mysterious medium that promised to make him an honored leader, with enough authority to put the three parts of the gang together again. Bastiano agreed and the elderly spiritualist summoned the Wraith of Carmine in a Séance, so the Spooky could provide new instructions to his incompetent son.

At first hesitant, Bastiano eventually followed its instructions, and the gang became prosperous and respected, even if the new boss gained a new reputation as a "crazy, bloodthirsty lunatic".

In the following months, Bastiano came back many times to the medium's Cabinet. In

this way, slowly and secretly, the old boss became the head of his mob again, leading his family and organization from the Netherworld, through his incompetent son.

Finally he regained Bastiano's confidence and in agreement with the insidious medium, the Wraith pushes its former son to work towards a new ritual, which would bring it back forever into the Earthly World. What Bastiano does not know is that the ritual actually works by letting the Entity permanently possess his body, and that his "beloved father" is indeed playing him a dirty trick. In order to complete the ritual, the Brancas need to obtain a large amount of "Cruor": blood extracted from a tortured woman while she is still alive. For this reason, in recent days, Bastiano and his most heinous henchman, Dragomir, kidnapped some women, tortured them, extracted Cruor from them and then killed them in a way that would confuse the police who have to deal with it. Thanks to the Cruor of the two women, the Wraith is already possessing his son, first as a Touched, now as an Infested. With a third dose of Cruor, Bastiano will become a permanent Marionette of his dead father.

The dead bodies were mutilated and placed on the ground in patterns that resemble some sort of ritual, but are actually meaningless.

Because of this strange *modus operandi*, the case arrives first at the Bureau, then the Milan Office, and then the local Director entrusts it to the players' Detectives.

## The Briefing

This could be the very first case for the Detectives, so Director Orziero calls them into the Briefing Room and first of all introduces them (and the players) to any operational details they need to know.

It's the right time to explain how the Bureau works and what the Detectives can and can't do in their investigation (see page 11). It's also the perfect moment to introduce the characters and their abilities, so everybody can understand who



does what, and how to work as a team when in the field.

Concerning the case itself, Orziero simply outlines the situation in very general terms: two girls were found dead in their own apartments, tortured and placed over occult symbols drawn on the floor in blood.

He also shows pictures from the crime scenes and explains that:

- \* The Bureau's experts have not recognized the ritual or the drawn symbols.
- \* It seems the victims did not know each other and they belong to different neighborhoods and social classes. Loredana Minarghini was the daughter of a rich manufacturer and Sveta Slepneva a management student from Moscow, living in Milan to attend the Bocconi University.
- \* (If requested) There is very little blood at the crime scenes; the symbols were drawn with just a pint of it, more or less.

Orziero has no police files or other information on the case, but he has made an appointment for the Detectives tonight at the Ghibli with Augusto Ghites, because this Bureau consultant can give them some information and details on the case.

Each Detective can choose his or her Equipment from the Depository, according to the usual rules (see page Chapter III).

## Scene 1 - The Ghibli

The Ghibli is a jazz bar, lost in the fog of the Naviglio Martesana, a slow canal in the north-east of Milan. Its owner, an old Libyan called Mamouliau, knows *what's going on* and collects any sort of ghost stories from his customers. After midnight, when the place is closed to common diners, the old man offers a drink to those who tell the most terrifying stories. The Ghibli is a popular meeting place for the people of the Milieu, one of the few places in Milan considered a "Safezone" against the Spookies. There Detectives can meet and talk about *what's going on*, without being considered fools.

When they arrive, Ghites is drinking

sambuca, a sweet anise-flavoured liqueur. From an old turntable Chet Baker is playing "My Old Flame".

Ghites greets the Detectives and tells them what he has discovered so far. According to what is said in the slums, the Branca Family is involved in the case, in one way or another. This gang is part of the Ndrangheta, the most powerful crime syndicate of Italy and among the richest organised crime groups in the world. The Branca has operated in Milan for decades and deals in racketeering, drugs and arms trafficking.

It seems that it was the henchmen of this family who seized and killed the two victims, but nobody knows why, and the ritual and symbols discovered on the crime scenes have nothing to say even to Ghites.

The two corpse are in the morgue of one of the city hospitals. The bodies are not particularly under control, but to examine them Detectives need special permission from the police department or a "sneaky" way to get inside. Similar permission is needed to visit the crime scenes.

Talking with Ghites at the Ghibli about the case, in the foggy night of Milan, is the best way to enter into the mood of the investigation. Ghites is also a good "patron" for a short tutorial before the detection starts in earnest, if needed: he is the perfect person to clarify what Detectives should do or try, how to move in the metropolis, where to start and so on.

The leads that emerge might be:

- \* Find and follow the gangsters trying to meet Bastiano,
- \* find clues and sources in the underworld,
- \* find something about the ritual: strangely, the ritual will not seem familiar from any text or to any specialist; the only clue it seems may be to go and talk to someone who knows these rituals, the Stramadhezo down in the Tormenthada,
- \* examine the crime scene or the corpse, to find clues,
- \* summon the Shades of the two victims (either by Cineromancy or Lombrosian Procedure), to learn something more.

In any case, after deciding on how to proceed, go on to Scene 2.

## Scene 2 - Hail of Bullets

While leaving the Ghibli, Detectives are greeted by a hail of bullets: it's an ambush by the Branca gunmen right in front of the door of the bar!

You can play this fight as a Quick Combat, with a -4/-2 penalty due to surprise and/or enemies' outnumbering the Detectives, or as a normal combat against the following:

**Branca Gangster (2 per hero):** see the "Gunman" on page 116.

They have medium cover behind parked cars (-2) and their main purpose is killing Ghites and scaring his allies. They followed the private eye after he started to question people in the slums about the case and the Branca, and now Bastiano wants him dead.

After the first hail of bullets, Ghites announces that more enemies are coming, and that is not healthy to stay around there; he will draw away the gang, while Detectives can follow

their leads up. They will meet tomorrow at the Cathedral at midday, if possible with something more to talk about.

If the Detectives want to keep fighting, three more cars arrive and then Dragomir plus two more gunmen for each Detective join the fight.

If defeated and questioned before the police come, the gangsters say they have no idea about the murders. One or two of them followed and helped Dragomir in the killings, but they don't know why he is performing the murders and "rituals". They only know the women are taken from the Iguana, a nightclub run by the Branca family. Dragomir will not speak about the topic or at best he just says that "Bastiano should let the Dead stay where they belong".

After a while, police sirens can be heard and everyone tries to run away.

## Scene 3 - Ashes to Ashes

It's time to follow the clues and the leads





mentioned above. During this part of their investigation, the Detectives could also learn that a third girl is going to be kidnapped that night and killed soon. They should hurry up, not just wait for the meeting with Ghites.

- \* **Find and follow the gangsters** (this could require Shadowing): The Detectives will arrive at the Iguana, a fashionable and kinky night club run by the Branca family. Bastiano Branca stays there until sunrise, searching for the next girl to kill. If the detectives don't make their move, he will sedate and kidnap another woman, first calling her into his private rooms, then drugging her with GHB. From there, Bastiano, Dragomir (if present) and the victim will go to Branca's Villa, just outside Milan. A frontal attack on Bastiano at the Iguana or at his Villa will be very dangerous, because of the many bodyguards and the fact that he can always call the police out against his unknown attackers.
- \* **Find clues and sources in the underworld (requires Streetwise rolls):** People can send the Detectives to the Iguana or to Branca's Villa. There they can see Branca and/or Dragomir kidnapping the next victim (before sunrise), or bringing her to the Villa and isolating her (after sunrise).
- \* **Find out something about the ritual (this will need investigation or Knowledge (Occult) rolls):** As said above, the glyphs and the signs on the floor are nonsense and a red herring, BUT if the Detectives focus on the missing blood and understand that is the key, they could find something more. According to occultists, books and esoteric knowledge, a procedure involving the Cruor is used to permanently summon an Entity into the Earthly World *and it would be bad*. Every source also says that the Stramadhezho in the Tormenthada has three times ripped apart someone who tried to accomplish that ritual. That creepy entity could be a great ally to help find and defeat the murderer.
- \* **Examining the crime scene or the corpse, to find clues (this will require sneaking in and searching).** There are no mundane clues, but a psychic might

learn something about the ritual and the murders (see the next point for the possible information).

- \* **Summon the Shades of the victims:** the bodies are preserved in the morgue of one of the greatest hospitals in Milan. Detectives will not obtain permission to enter and examine the bodies before tomorrow afternoon, and even then they will not be allowed to perform a Séance or similar ritual. If they need to summon the Shades, they will have to sneak in and do everything during the night. Outside the morgue there are two bored policemen and a suspicious matron. If the heroes manage to enter the morgue and interrogate the two Shades, they get the following information:
- \* Loredana Minarchini says whoever killed her *is and is not of this world*, that *he wants to betray his own son* and finally that *the Cruor, the blood of the tormented, is the key*.
- \* Sveta Slepneva says that while being tortured she heard her killer talking with himself in two different voices, saying that *the man with top hat would have dismembered them if he found out what they were doing* and again that *the Cruor, the blood of the tormented, is the key*.

"The man with top hat" is the Stramadhezho, so everything should point to finding something about the ritual and heading to the Tormenthada to talk with it.

## Scene 4 - The Path of Sand and Bones

To talk to the Stramadhezho, the Detectives have to enter the Tormenthada, the Dark District of Milan. It's a secret ward within Milan's old Cerchia dei Bastioni (Circle of Bastions) along the old "Spanish Walls", in the middle between our world and the Beyond.

Depending on who the Detectives are and which challenge they prefer, there could be three ways to reach the Dark District.

**A: The Arcimboldo's painting.** Among the numerous street art graffiti on the wall surrounding the Sansiro Racetrack there is a very old, camouflaged mural. It was created





by the famous Milanese Renaissance painter Arcimboldo, known for creating portraits made entirely of objects such as fruits and vegetables. The painting hides one of the entrances, a true Slit in the Curtains, and it is “camouflaged” in the sense that it constantly changes shape and position, needing a Notice roll (-2) to be found. The portal-painting is protected by an ancient Paramental made of rotten fruits and vegetables (like an Arcimboldo monster) that activates after the Detectives find the portal.

**Paramental (1):** Use Paramental, Litter Whirlwind from the Phenomenology section, but with Vigor d6 and Toughness 7; its Garbage attack can address up to 2 opponents at time. It manifests due to the Wind of the Dead coming from the Slit.

**B: Rovani’s Shade.** Giuseppe Rovani was a Milanese novelist and took part in the Italian Risorgimento. This famous moonstruck writer visited the Tormenthada more than once and his Shade can lead the Detectives there. They need to summon the Shade in a Séance or use his

ashes, preserved in the memorial chapel of the Monumental Cemetery in Milan (there could be Husks there, if the Game Master wants a creepy encounter). Rovani’s Shade is Neutral but can become Friendly if it is promised a visit to some night club full of young rebels before going to the Tormenthada. In any case it can’t explain the way but will lead the Detectives there personally. During the walk, it manifests as an apparition and some problems could arise, when people see a guy dressed in clothes from 150 years ago walking along the street and singing songs of a rebellion lost long ago up at the houses.

**C: The Boggia’s Head.** The infamous Antonio Boggia, “the monster of Milan”, active in the second half of the nineteenth century, was considered the first Italian serial killer and was probably a Netherkin. His severed head was donated to the famous criminologist Lombroso and it was then stolen from its cabinet by Lombroso and his assistants themselves, to secretly keep it in the Athenaeum. The reason is clear: Boggia’s head never stopped talking



to everyone around, and it's still doing so after more than a century. It can lead the Detectives to the Tormenthada, if held like a lantern, but walking this way in the city center could be a bit "inappropriate", as the head goes on screaming and trying to bite all the time.

In any case, after finding the right path, the Detectives descend into a strange, twisted place, along a canal (impossible in the actual topography and with the water flowing towards the top) that goes downhill between old and bowed buildings. On the banks of the canal, among tunnels and passages, there are sand and bones. Finally, a rusted door opens onto the Tormenthada.

## Scena 5 - Thirteen to Midnight

The Tormenthada appears as a kind of subterranean Renaissance Milan, an architectural nightmare that reminds one of a gigantic and deranged dungeon. Everywhere you can see impossible engineering details, such as bridges suspended over nothingness and roads twisting back on themselves. Many are the gloomy shadows walking through it or the grotesque entities who roam between distorted palaces, colossal basements and streets interlaced with iron chains. Others seem to be Shades, or even reflections of people from every nationality and

age. They say that this place was designed by Leonardo da Vinci as the threshold between our world and the afterlife, to contain the Entities beyond the Curtains but also to allow living men to be able to visit.

In its internal time, The Tormenthada exists for the span of a single night, and all those who come from every century find themselves roaming together in the same moment of time, even if more or less in a diaphanous form.

A huge winding watch, whose gears are made of bone and lubricated with blood, keeps the time in the central square of the District, where all the people there seem to be gathering. When the Detectives get there, it shows 23:47. If they ask around, people say that it is the Doomsday Clock and nobody should *want* to stay there when the Midnight of the Century comes.

For this reason, the Heroes have a few minutes to find the Stramadhezo (it is in the central square) and talk with it. The Stramadhezo slowly approaches with an elegant gait (you can find its description and statistics at page 105).

Every occult source describing this renegade Charonian also says that it will ask for a price AND that nobody can survive its disappointment: if it removes its top hat as if in greeting, everybody who see this will have his brain melt and run out of his ears.

Stramadhezo is a grotesque encounter: it

### DOOMSDAY CLOCK

IN THEIR FUTURE ADVENTURES IN MILAN, THE DETECTIVES WILL PROBABLY VISIT THE TORMENTHADA AGAIN AND AGAIN. PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING: EVERY TIME THEY GET THERE, THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK IS ONE MINUTE CLOSER TO MIDNIGHT. SO, NEXT TIME IT WILL BE "TWELVE TO MIDNIGHT", THEN "ELEVEN TO MIDNIGHT" AND SO ON. THIS WAY, THEY HAVE A FINITE NUMBER OF VISITS AT THEIR DISPOSAL, BEFORE THE "END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT". FOR THE SAME REASON, THEY SHOULD HAVE LESS AND LESS TIME TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR TASKS IN THE DARK DISTRICT.

THEY ALSO CAN SEE, EVERY TIME, DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THEMSELVES TRAPPED IN THE SAME MOMENTS AND CREATE EVERY KIND OF PARADOX BY INTERACTING WITH THEM.



always tries to take off its hat (and head) and kill those who look; it activates all the Detectives' Dark Side Hindrances; it moves around them trying to waste their time and showing the wrong physiognomy; it tells of when it met them for the first time, in their future; and so on...

For Stramadhezo just knowing why the investigators are there is enough for it to provide help: the fact that the Brancas are performing that ritual is a source of anger to the ruler of the Tormenthada. If the heroes do not want to reveal this information, Stramadhezo asks in exchange for Boggia's head, Rovani's Ashes or some Hoaxes that Detective could have (or their little fingers).

If the toll is paid, Stramadhezo reveals that the boss of the Branca gang is not Bastiano, but the Wraith of his father Don Carmine, and explains everything else.

Eventually, Stramadhezo gives a burnished silver bell - which makes no sound - to the Detectives and tells them to ring it when they meet Don Carmine (not Bastiano, but the Entity that possess him!) Then it will come to "collect their luggage."

Suddenly, Stramadhezo looks at its pocket watch and says it has an appointment, then leaves with long strides. In that very moment the Tormenthada starts to get more twisted: palaces and towers are getting longer and bending towards the square, and the streets seem to knot on themselves, clearing the path followed by Detectives.

They must escape from Tormenthada before it's too late!

Handle this scene as a Chase against the Tormenthada writhing and twisting on itself while the Detectives are trying to leave it. The "Collapse" is a Wild Card opponent. It has Agility d4 on the first round, and the die type rises one step every round to a maximum of d8. The Tormenthada does not attack, but any Detective with an Action Card less than the one assigned to the "Collapse" needs to pass a Spirit roll or has to make a Test of Dread (-2).

At every round something special happens:

- \* **Creepy Vision:** All the Dark District is collapsing and every hidden Entity there is gathering in the central square. Everyone needs to pass a Test of Dread to keep calm.

- \* **Dark Alley:** Dark Lighting Conditions, which inflict a -2 on all rolls.
- \* **Rolling Stairs:** Anyone attempting to climb these stairs while they are coiling in on themselves must succeed on a Climbing roll or suffer a -2 to the Agility roll.
- \* **Masquerade Party:** A creepy ball in a square, with all the masked attendants waiting for Midnight. They try to stop the Detectives and convince them to stay and wait for Midnight with them, while their faces become more and more ghastly at every moment. This time Detectives need to roll Spirit instead of Agility to move.
- \* **The Gate:** The old rusting gate is finally in front of the Detectives. The portal has three different locks, and each of them can be opened with a specific roll or a different object: a Hoax or a Relic, even random ones or those provided by the Relic Trickster Edge, which will remain in the lock.

## Scene 6 - Saving the Day

If the Detectives leave the Tormenthada, or if they understand the truth in another way, they should try to save the third girl from being murdered and prevent the completion of the ritual.

If they didn't understand some details, the appointment with Chites should be useful to learn what is still missing in the whole picture.

The reckoning should happen at Branca's Villa or at the Iguana, as soon as possible. They need to stop the torture and save the third woman.

The fight should involve:

**Bastiano Branca** (see Crimelord on page 116)

**Dragomir** (if still alive, see above)

**Gunmen** (1 per Detective: they will fight until Bastiano's defeat, then run away)

After the Detectives win the fight and save the woman, Bastiano opens his eyes again and restarts the fight as a Revenant, possessed by its father's Wraith: see

**Bastiano Branca, Revenant.** See below.

If the Detectives decide to wait, ask for help, call the police or do something cautious and



procrastinating, wherever they are, even at the meeting with Ghites, it's time for a twist:

*"Suddenly, electrical wires around you suffer interference and there are some power surges. Bastiano Branca enters, in high spirits. He is advancing towards you, gun drawn, and starts shooting, even in public and in broad daylight."*

In this situation, Bastiano is not a Revenant but a Possessed. The ritual has been accomplished and now Carmine's Wraith possess Bastiano's body as a Marionette.

This fight should involve:

**Bastiano Branca, Possessed** (see below)

**Dragomir** (if still alive, see below)

In any case, the Detectives defeat the Wraith, or when they ring the bell (which makes no sound), out of nowhere the Stramadhezo appears, still holding his pocket watch. It grabs Bastiano's body, puts it in a dark suitcase, and then returns to Tormenthada, dragging the Wraith with it back into the Netherworld.

The case is over, but Ghites and Orziero do not look happy: "Carmine Branca's Wraith will get what it deserves, but the Apocalypse Clock in the Tormenthada has never been so close to Midnight. Something Wicked This Way Comes..."

## Conclusion

With Carmine caught by the Stramadhezo or banished forever into the Netherworld, for the Detectives the case is closed. Even if they should have trouble with the law because of the shootings, the Bureau will solve the issue, although the Director will insist they are more careful in the future.

But there are still a couple of outstanding issues, which could be the starting point for further investigations: the ritual that describes the Cruor, and the identity of the spiritualist who helped Carmine and Bastiano, are two dangerous perils that could require future intervention by the Detectives.



### Dragomir

This ruthless Eastern European guerrilla

fighter has a conviction for crimes against humanity in his home country and fled to Milan to hide; now he works for the Branca gang. Currently he is Bastiano's main enforcer and takes care of the dirtiest work, such as the torture of the two women.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Cuts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8

**Charisma:** -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

**Hindrances:** Greedy

**Edges:** Block, Brawny, Hard to Kill, Martial Artist, Nerves of steel

**Gear:** Heavy sidearm (12/24/48; 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 10 AP 1), streetsweeper shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6 RoF 1, Shots 10), combat knife (Str+d4, AP 1), leather jacket.



### Bastiano Branca, Possessed

As a Possessed, Bastiano is a Marionette of Carmine's Wraith.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d12, Intimidation d12+2, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Notice d12+2, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d10, Taunt d12.

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10 (1)

**Hindrances:** Vengeful, Greedy

**Edges:** Brawny, Command, Harder to Kill, Improved Martial Artist, Improved Sweep, Killer Instinct, Quick Draw, Steady Hands.

**Gear:** Crowbar (Str+d6), medium sidearm (12/24/48, 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 15 AP 1), ballistic vest (+2).

#### Special Abilities:

- \* **Creepy:** The creature is extremely disgusting and its speech is violent and offensive. It provokes a Test of Dread (-2).
- \* **Taunts of the Dead:** The Possessed can use Taunt to annoy and confuse its enemies. It makes an opposed roll against the chosen target. The defender uses Smarts and the Game Master should apply a -2 to him if he has the Dark Secrets Hindrance. A success means the





Possessed gets a +2 bonus to his next action against the defender during this combat. A raise on the roll gives the attacker the bonus and makes the defender Shaken as well.

- \* **Turning Neck:** The Possessed is always alert and can see 360° around itself. Anytime it's about to be the victim of a surprise attack, ambush, or other nasty surprise, it gets a Notice roll at -2 just before the attack or event occurs. If successful, it is on Hold for the first round of a combat. Should it fail its roll, it still follows the normal Surprise rules, if applicable.



### **Bastiano Branca, Revenant**

As a Revenant, Bastiano is possessed by his father's Wraith.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10 (S), Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

**Gear:** Crowbar (Str+d6), ballistic vest (+2)

#### **Special Abilities:**

- \* **Deathvision:** Revenants "see" life around them and do not actually use eyes or other senses. They can see in any condition of visibility.
- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing a Revenant for the first time suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Fearless:** Revenants are immune to Dread, Intimidation and Tests of Will.
- \* **Gear:** The Revenant wears and uses the gear he is carrying. In any case it treats everything as an improvised weapon and doesn't shoot.
- \* **Possessed Dead:** As a Revenant, Bastiano is possessed by Carmine's Wraith and has its Smarts and Spirit. It does not suffer extra damage from called shots.
- \* **Resistance to Damage:** As a Revenant, Bastiano does not suffer wound penalties.
- \* **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from being Shaken, called shots don't do extra damage. Bullets and other piercing weapons inflict only half damage. Undead do not suffer from poison or disease.



## 2. LAST SAMBUCA AT THE ORTICA BAR

*He glanced around. There was a window facing the courtyard. He opened it, and the cold of the night slapped in his face and made him recover from slumber. He slipped out, the jacket closed, the collar turned up, two towels stuffed under his shirt to stanch the blood, and he ran out into the rain, in the night. He ran along the bridges of the Lambrate railway and realized that with those seven bullets in his body for a whole day, he could not be alive, he had to be dead for sure, there was no possibility of error. And so he understood, then, he was really dead.*

*Only he did not have time to bother with it.*

Samuel Marolla, *Last Sambuca at the Ortica Bar*

Another introductory *Imago Mortis* Case for three to six Novice Detectives.

Gangsters, stabbings, bullets and a man with a Beretta, who won't stay dead.

### Background for the Game Master

Walter Coma, "the Raven" is what you might call one of the "usual suspects": sixty-five years old, twenty-two of them spent in jail. He was convicted several times for robbery, theft, attempted murder, extortion, and manslaughter. He was an Old Timer, one member of the vanished "Mala" of Milan; an old-school bandit who had worked with the legendary gangsters Lutrino, Vallanzasca, and Turatello. Then, when the dirty crime arrived in Milan, he was still there and was hired by all the mafias: Cosa Nostra, the Camorra, the Marseilles mob. And then the Raven, even with white feathers, had turned into a fierce killer.

One day, his only son is left dying, for unknown reasons, by the son of the boss Lorenzo Branca (brother of Bastiano Branca – see the previous case), Pietro, and hospitalized in a coma. Learning of this, the Raven understood that the only way to save his son, who does not know who his father is, is to stop Pietro before he could decide to finish the job. And the only way

to stop a criminal lunatic like Pietro Branca is to kill him.

So, the Raven ambushed Pietro Branca at the Lambrate Station and killed four of his gorillas, sending a fifth to intensive care. But he missed Pietro, and the young crime lord escaped the massacre and killed the Raven himself.

But the Raven did not stay dead. With six lethal shots in the chest, Walter Coma has risen and has gone into hiding, becoming the Revenant of its own Chained, tied to the Earthly World to save his son and kill Pietro.

The next night, the Raven is spotted in a street bar at the "Ortica", an old-fashioned district 4 miles north-east of the city center. He spends two hours drinking sambuca, the typical Milanese anise-flavored liqueur. Then, when two members of the Branca gang enter the bar in search of him, he kills them and leaves the bar, disappearing into the rain again.

Because of the weird circumstances, the case arrives at the Bureau's Milan Office, and the Director entrusts it to the players' Detectives.

### The Briefing

Director Orziero explains that Walter "the Raven" Coma is an old school gangster, someone who knows how to shoot, who does not talk to lawyers or police. In his own way he respects unarmed citizens and the police. In and out of prison for over twenty years, even as an old man he was one of the best hit men for the new masters of Milan, unsurpassable with his gmm Beretta. No one has any idea of the reason for the shootings except that the Raven seems to be angry with the Branca family, and that, apparently, when riddled with bullets he won't stay dead.

Orziero provides all the files on the shooting at the train station, but there are still no official files on the one at the Ortica Bar. He also provides the name of the Commissioner Ferro, who is handling the case. "Not one of ours," Orziero says. "He doesn't know *what's going on*."

As usual, each Detective can choose their

Equipment from the Depository, according to the usual rules (see Chapter III).

## Scene 1 - Preliminary Investigations

Lambrate Station has already been examined by the police, and now the crime scene is completely cleared up and compromised, because the station has been reopened to travelers.

The Detectives, with or without the file, may find and talk with the gangster left in intensive care (Mariano Remigi), who is still in the hospital, to a witness to the shooting (a railway worker who was right there at that moment), or even to one of the dead riddled by bullets. If the Detectives can get them to talk, in one way or another, they find that the official version is true: the killer was Coma, he took a half dozen shots to the chest, fell to the ground dead and then he got up as if nothing had happened and walked away.

The witnesses saw he was not wearing any protection, only his usual black leather jacket. The wounds were bleeding and he was groaning and cursing at every shot, but he is not dead. Or maybe he is.

At the Ortica Bar it's possible to use Notice, Streetwise and Persuasion to get some more clues. Among the current patrons of the bar is someone who seems to want to remain aloof. If identified and questioned, he turns out to be an old comrade-in-arms of Coma, also a former convict. He did not talk to the police and will never talk to the Detectives, if they use a formal approach, because it's just not something he does. But if they are friendly and persuasive, he says that last night he saw Coma at the bar, shooting. It was just him, shooting like a devil as usual, and he took several bullets in the chest, but then he left as if nothing had happened. The Old Timer knows nothing of Raven's reasons or nature, nor *what's going on*.

But he can tell Coma sometimes sees a middle-aged prostitute named Rina Novelli: maybe she knows something more, but it is a while since she has been seen around.

## Scene 2 - No Country for Dead Men

While the Detectives' and Commissioner Ferro's investigations continue, night after night the Raven kills other members of the Branca gang. First, he makes an incursion into an illegal gambling den run by the family, then shoots the boss, the crime lord Lorenzo Branca, who lived in hiding in a secret apartment in the center of Milan. In both massacres, the Raven hits only criminals.

What the Raven wants is to find Pietro Branca and kill him. Finally, it will be Pietro's father, shortly before his death, who tells the Revenant where it can find him: at Armando's.

Meanwhile, by night and by day, the Raven is impossible to find and its Shade can't be summoned.

The heroes may, however, find the same information that the Raven is looking for, alone or through the Commissioner. There is only one person that knows where Pietro is and where he will be: his friend Armando, who lives in a "crack house" in Arquà Street, in a bad district of the city.

Moreover, the most important lead is that of the killer's motivations: Rina Novelli died a month ago and is buried in the Musocco, the greatest cemetery of Milan, but left a son, Sandro. A few days before the Lambrate shootout, Sandro caught four stab wounds in a fight in Arquà Street, where his apartment and his mother's are. Sandro is still hospitalized at the San Raffaele. The police interrogation was postponed until the boy has recovered.

By asking around or talking with Sandro (or even with his mother's Shade), Detectives may learn that:

- \* Sandro is the only son of Walter Coma, conceived when Walter attended his mother as a prostitute. Sandro does not know this and Walter just learned of it when the woman was dying and told the truth, even asking him to care for their son.
- \* A few nights before been stabbed, Sandro spotted Pietro Branca visiting Armando in his neighborhood. Pietro and Armando are



not just friends, but the latter is a mulatto transsexual gigolò and Pietro's secret lover.

- \* Sandro and Pietro are the same age and know each other from their University years. Sandro has recognized Pietro and vice versa.
- \* If the Pietro's sexual preferences should be known to his clan or enemies, for the crimelord's son it will be a disgrace and the end of his position in the gang; his own father will boot him out, spitting in his face.
- \* Pietro Branca therefore decided to eliminate the witness to his forbidden love, trying to kill Sandro. Sandro knows what has happened and why, and is now afraid to leave the hospital, or discuss the matter with the police.

### Scene 3 - Vespa Ride

Just as the Detectives are reaching Armando's at Arquà Street, he runs away on his Vespa and slips into the stream of Milan's heavy

traffic. If the Detectives understand Armando is the key to finding Pietro, the best solution is to shadow him (see page 76).

Armando could be aware of the stalkers or not, according to their approach. In any case, first the Detectives must find one (or more) scooter(s) and run with it. It's impossible to follow someone on a scooter in Milan without another one.

Then, they have to succeed at a Driving roll (-2) if they are not to lose their quarry. Finally, they make an opposed roll: stalker's Stealth vs quarry's Notice. Should the Detectives win, they succeed and follow Armando till sunset, when he heads to the Greco Station.

If Armando is or becomes aware of his stalkers, he tries to run away and the scene becomes a Standard Chase using Driving, with a -2 penalty to all participants' Trait rolls due to the traffic.

Armando has Driving d8 but he will not fight, shoot or do anything else if caught.



## Scene 4 - A Rendezvous in Greco Station

By Shadowing or chasing Armando, their contacts with police, Séances or psychic gifts, their skill in following leads or their Streetwise, Intimidation and Persuasion abilities, the Detectives may discover the same information that the Raven is looking for: Pietro Branca will go to the old Greco Station this very evening. This abandoned train station is a crumbling concrete structure that looks like a kind of dinosaur skeleton. Every night low-level drug dealers, street robbers, drug addicts and card and dice players gather there. This is Pietro's main territory and after some days in hiding, he has to show himself to his people.

When the Detectives arrive at the abandoned station, Pietro is already there, with an elegant fur jacket, two Argentinian mastiffs on a leash and a dozen shady guys standing around laughing with him. At that exact moment the shooting begins.

The Raven appears in the crowd and tries to reach and kill Pietro with his Beretta, while everyone around tries to stop it.

Pietro then extracts an H&K MP5 from under his jacket and starts shooting wildly all around, then runs to hide in the abandoned station. While all the others run away, Pietro, the Revenant and the Detectives find themselves inside and have to resolve the matter once and for all.

**Pietro Branca (see below):** He is not a brave man, but now he is fighting for his life, even if scared of the Raven. He will do anything to save his life.

**Walter Coma, the Raven (see below):** The Revenant is completely focused on killing Pietro and cares very little about the Detectives. It will shoot them only if they try to stop it. Even as a Chained manifesting as a Revenant, it is not a crazy paranormal slasher but it keeps all its lost will and personality and tries not to kill innocent people.

**Mastiffs (2):** They are Dogs (see *Savage Worlds* core rules). They defend Pietro but run away scared if facing the Raven.

**Armando aka Jessica** and other enforcers:

Use Scum from the Phenomenology section. They are none too faithful to Pietro and run away as soon as possible.

Notes: The interior of the station is dark, cluttered with all sorts of garbage and piles of materials. Consider:

- \* **The place is dark:** Normal darkness with some ambient light from the broken windows inflicts a -2 penalty, and targets aren't visible outside of 10".
- \* **Cover:** It's easy to find Light, Medium or Heavy cover everywhere and hide behind it. Pietro will look for Medium Cover and shoot from there.
- \* **Difficult Ground:** Garbage, cables, rubbish and other elements inflict a -1 penalty to Pace and skills linked to Agility.

## Conclusion

Although the Raven might seem one of the "good guys" of the story, it is still a vengeful Chained that will not stop until it has slain Pietro Branca.

The Detectives should ideally stop it, even though Pietro is shooting at them too. But stopping the Revenant will not be enough to stop the revenge of the Chained, which will continue to torment Pietro in the future, until his death or its banishing.

What the Detectives can do to prevent the ongoing massacre and to stop the Raven is forcing or persuading Pietro to confess having tried to kill Sandro and why. Once he has admitted this crime and therefore his homosexuality, the gang will reject him, he will go to jail, Sandro Rovelli will be safe from future retaliation and the Chained will feel properly rewarded, abandoning forever the Earthly World on its own. But not before one last sambuca at the Ortica Bar, maybe with the Detectives themselves.

This complex final strategy should be rewarded by the Game Master with additional experience points.





## The Raven

Walter Coma was 65 years old. Tall, thin, gray hair, he always carried his 9mm Beretta. Now, as a Revenant, he is pale, dresses in a leather jacket full of bullet holes and looks tired, even if his eyes are blazing.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirits d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Taunt d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

**Gear:** Beretta 9mm (medium sidearm: 12/24/48; Dmg 2d6; RoF 1; Shots 15; AP 1, DT, unlimited ammo); leather jacket (+1).

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Banishment (Sandro/Pietro):** The only way to banish this Chained to the Netherworld is to kill Pietro or to convince him to confess and spare Sandro forever.
- \* **Chained:** If the Revenant is destroyed, treat the Raven as a Chained.
- \* **Chains:** Throughout the case, the Raven always tries to locate and reach Pietro.
- \* **Deathvision:** The Raven “sees” life around it and does not actually use eyes or other senses. It can see in any condition of visibility.
- \* **Dread:** Anyone seeing a Revenant for the first time suffers a Test of Dread.
- \* **Fearless:** The Raven is immune to Dread, Intimidation and Test of Will.
- \* **Gear:** The Revenant wears and uses the gear it has on. It never forgot how to shoot and it will use its Beretta all the time.
- \* **Possessed Dead:** The Raven does not suffer extra damage from called shots.
- \* **Resistance to Damage:** The Raven suffers no wound penalties.
- \* **Undead:** +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from being Shaken, called shots don’t do extra damage. Bullets and other piercing weapons inflict only half damage. Undead do not suffer from poison or disease.



## Pietro Branca

Pietro is the youngest son of the boss Lorenzo Branca and the nephew of Carmine

Branca (see the previous case). He likes parties, being in vogue, and the *dolce vita*, but actually he is just a low-level ruffian, trying to save his life, at any cost.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Cuts d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d10

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

**Edges:** Attractive, Block, Dodge, First Strike, Quick Draw, Rock and Roll

**Hindrances:** Mean, Greedy

**Gear:** SMG (20/40/80, 2d6+1, 3, 30, AP 1, 3 RB, Full Auto), leather jacket (+1).





### 3. THE CELESTIAL EMPIRE

*"Green explosions, people flying in and out. That was not real, and I want to talk to the cops. I want my truck back. Now where the hell am I?"*

Jack Burton, *Big trouble in Little China*

*"Fear not the Heavens, fear not the Hells, but fear the Wenzhou man speaking Wenzhounese."*

Old Chinese saying The Celestial Empire is an introductory *Imago Mortis* Case for three to six Novice Detectives.

A clandestine hospital hidden in Milan, ruled by a creepy crone who survived for too many years in secret chambers of unforgettable horrors.

#### Background for the Game Master

Under the Paolo Sarpi district, called "the Milanese Chinatown", an underground complex is hidden. Wenzhounese immigrants have organized a labyrinthine underground hospital there, where their people from all over the North-Italy come to be treated when they don't want to go to a normal Italian hospital, for any reason: lack of a residence permit, being injured in clashes between gangs or triads, needs for abortions, or mysterious diseases that the Chinese community wants to keep confidential...

Undisputed Mistress of the Empire is "Madame Wu", an elderly Wenzhounese matron who some say is a hundred and fifty years old, and an expert on clandestine abortions. The chambers where she has lived for decades without ever seeing the sunlight, called the "Unborns' Playground", are infamous even in the rest of the hidden hospital; it is said that no sane man should ever see it. Sometimes even Italian gangsters make use of the services of the Empire. Some say that not everyone who enters that hospital can get out again...

Actually, Madame Wu is a Netherkin, a crazy, heartless creature with an unnaturally prolonged life and the soul of an inhuman

monster. The things she does in the secrecy of her chambers are unmentionable and even the key to this abominable longevity.

The Detectives will find the Celestial Empire and face its abominable mistress.

#### The Briefing

As a consequence of the aid given in the case of "the Raven" (see the previous case), Commissioner Ferro contacts the Bureau or the Detectives directly, for another odd issue that it has fallen him to manage.

For some time, a few members of the Chinese community have reported the existence of a clandestine hospital somewhere in Milan called The Celestial Empire, where immigrants without residence permits, injured criminals and women who want an abortion can get secret treatments.

The greater part of Chinese immigrants in Milan come from Wenzhou, a district in a mountainous region in the eastern part of China. Wenzhou has been isolated for centuries from the rest of the country, making the local culture and language very distinct from the rest of China. Most of Wenzhounese people in Milan are still very tight-knit and closed towards outsiders. They all speak their unintelligible dialect, which other citizens of Chinese origins call "the Devil's Language".

The community is close-mouthed and no one is helping the police in this case, but perhaps the Detectives could help *in their way*.

Ferro provides the identities of three people who might have something to say:

- \* An Italian woman married to a Wenzhounese and then divorced, the first to testify.
- \* The master of a martial arts gym, repeatedly beaten and a little bit crazy.
- \* One girl recently hospitalized for complications after an illegal abortion in the Empire.

Each Detective can choose their Equipment from the Depository, according to the usual rules (see Chapter III).



## Scene 1 - Big Trouble in Little China

Investigating among the Wenzhounese community is not easy. Every non-Wenzhounese character is considered as an Outsider (-2 Charisma) and the reaction is usually Unfriendly towards anyone who comes to ask unwelcome questions.

The investigation may start from any of the three witnesses.

- \* Addolorata, the Italian woman, was married for years to a Wenzhounese trader but eventually asked for a divorce because of suffocating family habits. When the Detectives reach her, she tells how her husband had called a strange ambulance for his parents when they were too old, and how he let them be taken away by two Wenzhounese nurses. She still remembers the screams of her mother-in-law, who roared in their impossible language while his son was trying to get her into a White Van. Then she approached Addolorata and shouted in Italian "Hell! Hell! Do not let them take me to hell!"
- \* Sun Chaohao is an elderly master of Kung Fu and other disciplines, who lives in his shabby and smelly gym. His inner correctness requires him to report every little misdeed of his community to the police, and for that he has lost almost all his students and friends, but it matters little to him. He tells of the White Van, of the Empire and Madame Wu, and is full of grisly and paranormal details about her, but he never learned where the clandestine hospital is. He believes it is in some building of the district, which from the outside looks abandoned. According to him it is a place of horrors that should be burned to its foundations, and he is ready to help out if needed with some unrequested Chinese wisdom.
- \* Sui Wei, the girl who had an abortion, tells of a white van without windows, into which she was loaded and taken to an unknown location. She remembers an underground car park, an elevator and a bright and shiny

hospital, but with narrow corridors and smelling of bleach. After the operation, she got up and tried to get out by herself, but she was sedated again and put back into bed, not before noting that all the hospital's windows were bricked up.

Whatever the order chosen by the heroes to interrogate witnesses, consider the following:

- \* The first witness will speak without any problems, telling her/his story.
- \* When the Detectives are heading to the second witness, they will be surrounded by a small crowd of Wenzhounese residents, who will try to send them away like a human wall. The Detectives will have to pass a Social conflict against the locals, to convince them that closing ranks as a tight community and defending their tormentors is not a good thing. The residents' three refrains are:

A) There is nothing for you here. Go away and mind your own business.

B) We have already talked to the police. Who are you? We do not want meddlers here.

C) If only you were more open with our community; the fault is yours!

Detectives will reach the second witness only if they can win the Conflict.

- \* When the heroes are with the third witness, they receive a call from Ferro, telling them that the first witness they have met seems to have disappeared, with signs of a struggle, and that he is heading there. But when the Detectives go into the street, they see darting out in front of them a White Van!

## Scene 2 - Chasing the White Van

If the Detectives want to follow the White Van, start a standard 5 round Chase with one exception: nobody shoots in the streets.

The driver drives like a madman, ignoring all traffic laws, and he's not so good at it: Driving d6.

On the first round and on any following round in which the Detectives fail to score at least one success, they lose sight of the Van, but they can still locate it again with a Driving (-2) roll.

If on any round the Detectives score a

Critical Failure, or if they draw a lower card than the Van in the fifth round, they have lost it.

At the end of the Chase, the Detectives can see the Van entering an underground parking lot under an old abandoned building, but when they try to follow it, the bar does not go up and they lose critical minutes. Protesting is useless: the elderly Wenzhounese in the guardhouse pretends not to understand what they say.

If the Detectives lose the Van or do not chase it, the third witness or Ferro gives them the same clue: "They saw the Van entering that underground parking lot."

When the detectives finally reach the Van, nobody is there.

There are elevators in the parking lot and they can take Detectives to the higher floors of the building. Actually, every window is walled up, lights flicker and here and there are abandoned, creepy stretchers and operating rooms. No smell of bleach.

It's time for the Detectives to experience something dreadful.

Madame Wu's Unborns from the underground use their phenomena against the Detectives and eventually any cops who are with them: as a Game Master, create some ghastly situations here using Apparitions, Dark Tricks, Interference and Decay.

They will never find the men of the Van and the missing witness here.

### Scene 3 - Hell of Boiling Oil

Soon or later the Detectives will understand the Celestial Empire is somewhere else, right below the buildings they have found. The revelation could come from a call with a new detail by one of the witnesses, from a man in the crowd they have convinced during their investigation, from an Omen, from a MeetUp Forum or from the GhostWeb, or from some other kind of psychic or physical clue (do they remember the smell of bleach?). The most important thing is understanding that they have to hurry up to save the kidnapped witness and catch Madame Wu, that very night!

First of all, they need to come back to the underground parking lot and find the only elevator that can also go down (Notice roll or other hints - "the smell, follow the smell..."). Then they have to crack the security system (Repair) and operate the elevator.

Finally, they will arrive in a dark underground dungeon, the real "Celestial Empire".

It is a creepier version of the building above: no windows, flickering lights, dirty and decaying walls, blood and dirty spots everywhere, surgical equipment encrusted with filth...

The very first thing that happens is that all the people down there, even the patients, try to run away in panic when the Detectives are seen.

If there are police with the Detectives, the officers try to stop some of them, but the cops are not ready for a round-up and there are a lot of secret exits, so it's difficult to get all of them.

If the Detectives are alone, a bunch of bad and angry nurses and laborers attack them.

Nobody has firearms, but they try to punch, stop or beat the Detectives, and they come from every direction!

It's a Quick Combat and the Detectives have a -4 penalty for being outnumbered by their enemies and lack of knowledge of the Empire's narrow passages and secret rooms.

While in the middle of this situation, the Detectives see an old woman leaving those antechambers for the deepest part of the "hospital", with the hostage under her arm. Following the crone, the Detectives soon leave behind enemies and allies and find themselves in a Maze (see page 85). This nightmarish part of the case should involve terrible visions of tormented people, horrific rooms, mutilated patients, dirty blood dripping from the walls and every other kind of deranged terror, in a dark, disgusting and labyrinthine underground, in which groans, screams and chilling moans resonate from every direction.

### Scene 4 - The Unborns' Playground

Once they've found their way out the Maze, far from everyone else, Detectives find



the horrible den of Madame Wu. The scene is gruesome: it seems Madame Wu has found a system to preserve dead fetuses and to somehow let them grow up in an abominable and unnatural way after the moment of death. She continues to torture them forever, with hollow pins which slowly drip their blood into filthy bowls.

The final fight against Madame Wu and the Unborns, the tormented souls of those poor creatures, happens in the middle of these rooms.

**Madame Wu** (see below): the crazy, undying crone is a Netherkin and will fight like a beast, using her teeth and elongated nails like an enraged tiger.

**The Unborns** (2 for each Detective): Use Faders from the Phenomenology section, but with Vigor d4 and Toughness 6. Their chosen phenomenon is Manifestation but they are very easy to Banish to the Netherworld, because their Remains are all in those rooms.

## Conclusion

When the Unborns are banished to the Netherworld and the crone dead once and for all, the Decay of the whole building and underground causes the first collapses and cracks in the wall. Everything is falling down and the Detectives have little time for running away, together with the last people in that creepy dungeon. After the complete collapse of the building over its secret foundations, nobody will find any other clues about the Celestial Empire and everything will soon be forgotten.

Commissioner Ferro probably will cover up all the weird things that happened and start to understand there is something wrong happening in his city. He can be a useful future resource for the Detectives and the Milan Office, if he can just accept *what's going on*.



### Madame Wu

The monstrous Netherkin came to Milan years ago, attracted by the Wenzhounese community here and the possibilities offered by the metropolis, according to Megapolisomancy.

She has resumed here the terrible practices adopted for ages in her hometown. Her den is a place of horrors that requires a Test of Dread (-2) from everyone entering.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Cuts d12, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Persuasion d8, Stealth d10, Taunt d6

**Charisma:** -4 **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

**Edges:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense, First Strike, Harder to Kill, Killer Instinct, Martial Artist, Psychic, Strong Willed.

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty, Cautious

#### Special Abilities:

- \* **Creepy:** Madame Wu is twisted and deranged, far from common human nature and sensibility. Just entering the “Unborns’ Playground” provokes a Test of Dread (-2).
- \* **Elongated nails:** Str+d4.
- \* **Taunts of the Dead:** Madame Wu can use Taunt to annoy and confuse her enemies. She makes an opposed roll against her chosen target. The defender uses Smarts (at -2 if he has the Dark Secrets Hindrance). A success means Madame Wu gets a +2 bonus to her next action against the defender during this combat. A raise on the roll gives her the bonus and means the defender is Shaken as well.





# INSPIRATIONS

## Books

*Imago Mortis* and other horror books by Samuel Marolla; ghost and horror stories by M. R. James, Oliver Onions, J. B. Harwood, T.E.D. Klein, W. H. Hodgson, J. H. Chase, Laid Barron, J. S. Le Fanu, F. Marion Crawford and others; *Meddling with Ghosts*, edited by Ramsey Campbell; *Smoke Ghost*, *The Pale-Brown Thing*, *The Hound*, *Conjure Wife*, *The Girl With the Hungry Eyes* and *Our Lady of Darkness* by Fritz Leiber; hard-boiled stories by J. M. Cain, Raymond Chandler, James Ellroy, Jean-Christophe Grangé, Jean-Claude Izzo, Dashiell Hammett, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Giorgio Scerbanenco and Cornell Woolrich.

## Comics

*Dampyr*, *Ghosted*, *Hellblazer*.

## TV Shows

*666 Park Avenue*, *American Horror Story*, *American Gothic*, *Apparitions*, *Bedlam*, *Braquo*, *Constantine*, *Ghost Hunters*, *Ghost Whisperer*, *Grimm*, *Haunted*, *Les Revenants/The Returned*, *Outcast*, *Supernatural*, *The Fades*, *The Kingdom*, *The Residue*, *The X Files*, *True Detective*, *Twin Peaks*.

## Movies

*Angel Heart*, *Annabelle*, *Blair Witch series*, *Chinatown*, *The Crimson Rivers*, *Darkness*, *Deep Red*, *Empire of the Wolves*, *Hate*, *Inferno*, *Insidious series*, *Ju-On series*, *Odd Thomas*, *Paranormal Activity series*, *Phantasm*, *Poltergeist series*, *Pulse*, *Ring*, *Session 9*, *Suspiria*, *The Amityville series*, *The Beyond*, *The Big Sleep*, *The Changeling*, *The Conjuring*, *The Devil's Backbone*, *The Eye*, *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*, *The Exorcist*, *The Haunting*, *The House by the Cemetery*, *The House with Laughing Windows*, *The Nameless*, *The Omen series*, *The Orphanage*, *The Others*, *The Possessed*, *The Rite*, *The Sixth Sense*, *Thirteen Ghosts*.

## Videogames

*Calling*, *Fear*, *Gabriel Knight: Sins of the Fathers*, *Heavy Rain*, *Max Payne series*, *Murdered*, *Project Zero*, *The Vanishing of Ethan Carter*.

1. **Acheron:** Part of the Netherworld: a “river” that drags souls away to... something we still don’t know.
2. **Afterlife:** see Netherworld.
3. **Antechamber, or Limbo:** A sort of place in the middle between the Earthly World and the Beyond. It is physically reachable by the living and appears like a deranged version of reality. There are a lot of different places that can be called “Antechambers”, like the Tormenthada in Milan.
4. **Athaeneum:** The club in which Lombrosians gather.
5. **Attendee:** Anyone taking part in a Séance or an Exorcism, as an assistant to the Exorcist or Channeler.
6. **Banishment:** The only way to permanently drive an Entity back to the Netherworld. It could be different according to the kind of Entity: destroying the Remains, closing a Slit or dealing with a Hook are the most common ways to Banish Entities.
7. **Believer:** People who believe in Entities and/or know about *what’s going on* due to some leak, but who have never actually faced a ghost. They can have any kind of distorted or incomplete information on Entities and their beliefs could be very dangerous.
8. **Beyond:** See Netherworld
9. **The Bureau:** The operational structure of the EU’s Vallum Program. The Bureau has Offices in various EU cities, like Milan. Its Inspectors are commonly called “Detectives” or “Agents”.
10. **Chained:** A kind of Entity, pining for its Hook.
11. **Chains:** The bond that keeps the Entity tied to the Earthly World. It’s usually their Remains (Faders) or a Hook (Chained).
12. **Channeler:** Someone leading a Séance and directly performing the related Dramatic Task
13. **Charonian** (or Reaper): Powerful entity with an unclear origin. They usually act as watchdogs of the Netherworld, following the dictates of the Mothers.
14. **Cinceromancy:** For some reason different from the Psychic Edge, Cinceromancy is the practice of Cinceromancers. It mainly consists of using the ashes of dead to summon Shades and question them.
15. **Cold Spot.** The room, grave or place where the Entity has its inner secret den.
16. **Curtains:** The veil separating our and the other World. The term also means “death”. Sometimes Slits open in the Curtains and let Entities enter our reality.
17. **Dusk Lodges:** Many European cities have a local group of Onyx Dusk affiliates hidden and active in the city. These circles are called Dusk Lodges.
18. **Earthly World:** Our mundane world, our reality. It is separated from the Netherworld by the Curtains.
19. **Entity:** The most correct term for any sort of Entity, ghost or phantasm when they are in our Earthly World. Entities can provoke paranormal phenomena.
20. **Exorcism:** A ritual intended to drive away an entity from a place, a possessed person or thing, a revenant or a vessel, preventing him from causing more harm.
21. **Fader:** A kind of Entity, haunting the place around its Remains.
22. **GhostWeb:** A section of the Deep Web only used for paranormal-related topics, business and information.
23. **Graveyard:** A creepy, twisted version of our world in the Netherworld. It’s the part of the Netherworld closest to our world, the Curtains and the Slits. Moving away from the Slits, you end up past the Graveyard Wall and descend into the Valley of the Shadow of Death.
24. **Hoax:** Special item or spell with any kind of (supposed) mystical power. These objects can be of any kind, according to the situation or the culture/religion they come from: books, talismans, catalysts,



components, symbols, spells, powders, essences, bones, dice, coins or whatever.

25. **Hook:** Anything that ties the Chained to the Earthly World: a person, a passion, a vengeance, a task to accomplish before moving on. You can consider it as a special kind of Relic, or the most important Relic of a precise Entity.
26. **Husk:** A kind of Entity. It is usually weak, but often gathers with others.
27. **Infiltrations (or Internal Infiltrations):** The legalese term for Entities in declassified files.
28. **Jackal:** Any kind of cruel and ruthless criminal tormenting good people and ravaging the city. His bad thoughts or actions are probably an effect of *what's going on*.
29. **Legion:** An Entity or an army of Entities of dark and evil nature, serving the Unhuman for its terrible purposes.
30. **Limbo:** See Antechamber.
31. **Lombrosians:** Physicians and followers of the criminologist and spiritualist Lombroso. They are few and keep a low profile, but gather in circles called Athaeneum, in the cities where they are present.
32. **Lunatic:** Any kind of mad criminal or serial killer plaguing the city with his deranged schemes and modus operandi. His bad thoughts or actions are probably an effect of *what's going on*.
33. **MeetUp:** Forums and circles of Believers, often operating as a sect or a cult.
34. **Megapolisomancy:** A secret and occult science concerning rituals performed by architecture. It assumes that planning a metropolis or even just buildings in a certain way is the key to summoning Entities or just creating Slits in the Curtains.
35. **Midnight of the Century:** A mysterious apocalyptic event involving ghosts, the Unhuman and its Legion. We don't know what it is, but we know it's coming.
36. **Milieu:** A colloquial term to define the community of people who know *what's going on*, pretty much know each other and sometimes even cooperate in facing Entities. Bureau Agents are usually part of the Milieu, unless they decide to stand aside, and Vallum head-hunters often recruit people from the Milieu for their local Offices.
37. **Netherkin:** Netherkin are people crazier than Lunatics and crueller than Jackals. They are the seed of the Unhuman in mankind.
38. **Netherworld:** Also called the Afterlife or the Beyond, it's the realm of death, a place (or a condition) beyond life. It's composed, as far as we can understand, of the Antechambers, the Graveyard, the Valley of the Shadow of Death and the Acheron River. Its supreme rulers are the Three Mothers.
39. **Onyx Dusk:** European secret society, a divergent branch of Freemasonry that has secretly pursued its goals since the Nineteenth Century through Megapolisomancy.
40. **Phantom Energy:** According to modern physics, it is a hypothetical form of dark energy. It's the force that makes possible the Internal Infiltrations and many paranormal phenomena.
41. **Psychic:** Anyone who can perform any paranormal phenomenon (and possesses the Psychic Edge). Cineromancers and Lombrosians are usually considered separate from Psychics.
42. **Reaper:** Colloquial term for Charonian.
43. **Relic:** Any kind of special object or Remains that could be useful to summon a specific Entity: a part of its mortal body (bones, ashes, skin, hair), a special item belonging and closely linked to the person in life, something that the Spirit could wish for, want or strongly hate from beyond the grave. It might or might not also be the Hook of the Entity, but is always closely related to it.
44. **Remains:** The corpse or other physical remains of a human body, after death. Some kinds of Entities, such as Faders, are strongly related to them and can be banished by destroying them. You can think of them as a special kind of Relic.
45. **Residue:** Shrouds and other phenomena can leave some ectoplasmic matter behind on the ground. If this *pseudomatter* is left there, it decays and disappears in about a minute. If it is collected in special boxes, it can be preserved and retains medianic properties: it's called "the Residue".

46. **Séance:** A ritual performed to summon and speak to any sort of Entity, usually to ask it for information on its death, on its murderer or on the Hooks and Chains that bind it to our Earthly World.
47. **Shade:** A kind of Entity, the most common shadow of dead people you can summon for information from the Netherworld.
48. **Shroud:** When an Entity manifests in the Earthly World, it creates a “Shroud” around its dreary will. Shrouds are made by ectoplasm attracting and agglomerating any kind of dust, ash, soot and rust around, held together by Phantom Energy.
49. **Slit:** A rip in the fabric of reality, a temporary or permanent passage between the Netherworld and the Earthly World. For some reason, Slits are opening more frequently in recent years and large European cities are the main setting for this phenomenon.
50. **Spooky/Spookies:** People in the Milieu use this term to refer to every Entity and some paranormal phenomena. It’s a colloquial term for the Infiltrations.
51. **Stramadhezo (The Delight):** King Stramadhezo is the ruler of the Tormenthada, the Dark District of Milan. It’s said it is a renegade and eccentric Charonian.
52. **Tormenthada (The Tormented):** Also called “the Dark District,” this is an Antechamber to the Netherworld, somewhere in Milan city center. It looks like a sort of twisted Renaissance Milan and it is ruled by the Stramadhezo. In its central square is the Doomsday Clock, which marks the minutes left until the Midnight of the Century.
53. **Unhuman:** A dark and evil Entity, the most frightening and dark of them all. Nobody knows where it came from but it is not a dead soul. It’s planning something really bad for the human race.
54. **Valley of the Shadow of Death (or simply the Valley):** The central part of the Netherworld, an empty and grey land, between the Graveyard Wall and the Acheron River.
55. **Vallum Program:** A covert EU program of monitoring, understanding and facing the paranormal menace. Its operation and files are highly classified. Its main structure is the Bureau, a network of local Offices with its HQ in Amsterdam.
56. **What’s going on:** An idiomatic way to allude to ghosts, the Midnight of the Century, phenomena and all the other Things Man Was Not Meant To Know.
57. **Wind of the Dead:** Not really a wind, it’s an expression for the Phantom Energy flowing through a Slit, which can cause phenomena nearby.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

PROFESSION: \_\_\_\_\_ MONEY: \_\_\_\_\_

XP: \_\_\_\_\_ RANK: \_\_\_\_\_

— AGILITY — CHARISMA — ○

— SMARTS — PACE — ○

— SPIRIT — PARRY — ○

— STRENGTH — TOUGHNESS — ○

— VIGOR —

WOUNDS

1 2 3 4

FATIGUE 1 2 INC 3 4

## SKILLS DICE GEAR



## EQUIPMENT

## ARMOR

HEAD: \_\_\_\_\_

TORSO: \_\_\_\_\_

ARMS: \_\_\_\_\_

LEGS: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL WT CARRIED: \_\_\_\_\_

WEIGHT LIMIT: \_\_\_\_\_

ENCUMBRANCE PENALTY: \_\_\_\_\_

## WEAPON

NAME

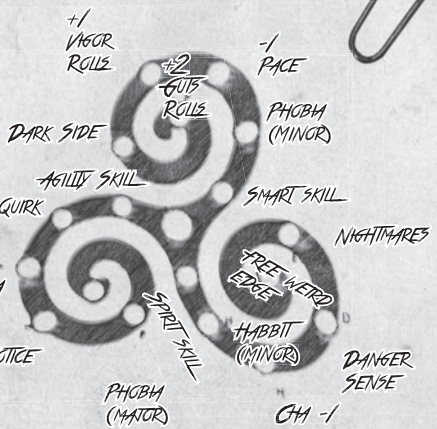
RANGE

RGF

DAMAGE

NOTES

## PERMANENT INJURES:



## HINDRANCES:

## EDGES:

- 5 (NOVICE)
- 10
- 15
- 20 (SEASONED)
- 25
- 30
- 35
- 40 (VETERAN)
- 45
- 50
- 55
- 60 (HEROIC)
- 65
- 70
- 75
- 80 (LEGENDARY)
- 90
- 95
- 100
- 105
- 110
- 115
- 120

