

TIMEZERO



THE MIRRORS OF CARTHAGE



CRAMEL



TIMEZERO

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GRAMEL'S LINE OF TIME TRAVEL ADVENTURES TAKES YOU THROUGH
THE MISTS OF TIME TO STOP CHRONOTERRORISTS, PREVENT TIME
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THIS ISSUE CONTAINS A SINGLE, STAND-ALONE ADVENTURE.

THE MIRRORS OF CARTHAGE: A MYSTERIOUS TEMPORAL ANOMALY
IS DETECTED BY TIMEGUARD IN SYRACUSE, ITALY, 212 BC, JUST A
FEW DAYS BEFORE THE FAMOUS BATTLE IN WHICH ARCHIMEDES,
THE MATHEMATICAL GENIUS, WAS KILLED. IS IT JUST A NATURAL
PHENOMENON, OR SOMETHING DARKER HAPPENING IN THE FAR PAST?

SIEGES, BATTLES, FORBIDDEN CULTS, AND THE SUBTLETIES OF ROMAN
POLITICS AWAIT THE OPERATIVES IN THE AGE OF THE PUNIC WARS!

SUNDAY FILES EXPANSION – INVENTORS OF THE TIMELINE: IN THIS
EXPANSION YOU'LL FIND USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PATENT
OFFICE, A SPECIAL BRANCH OF TIMEZERO WHICH MUST WATCH OVER
THE GREATEST MINDS OF THE TIMELINE. IN THIS APPENDIX ARE
DETAILED SEVERAL KNOWN AND UNKNOWN INVENTORS OF HUMAN
HISTORY, MEN AND WOMEN WHO WITH THEIR DISCOVERIES GREATLY
FURTHERED THE ADVANCE OF MANKIND. THESE SAME PEOPLE, IF NOT
MONITORED AND CONTROLLED, COULD WREAK HAVOC THROUGHOUT
THE ENTIRE CONTINUUM! IN ADDITION THERE ARE SPECIAL RULES
TWEAKS TO HELP YOU PLAY AN INVENTOR-TYPE OPERATIVE!

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THE MIRRORS OF CARTHAGE

By Umberto Pignatelli

THIS BOOK CONTAINS AN ADVENTURE FOR A GROUP OF FOUR TIMEGUARD AGENTS. THE SCENARIO IS TAILORED TO NOVICE CHARACTERS BUT IT IS EASILY SCALABLE. WE SUGGEST ADDING AN EXTRA TO ENCOUNTERS FOR EVERY RANK OF THE HEROES ABOVE NOVICE. SO, IF THE TEXT SAYS THAT THE OPERATIVES MEET ONE ROMAN LEGIONARY PER HERO AND YOU HAVE A PARTY OF FIVE VETERAN OPERATIVES, THEY'LL MEET SEVEN ENEMIES.

To play this adventure, you need a copy of the *TimeZero Operative's Manual*, in which you will find all the rules and guidelines to create TimeGuard Operatives, the skilled time agents enlisted to save history. On the same website where you downloaded this scenario you will also find some archetype characters to download for free.

Finally, you will find it handy to have gaming stones of two different colors and several copies of the standard *Savage Worlds* burst templates to represent terrains and props.

But now, stop talking and go to the Hypnotraining room.

A new mission is about to start!

Background

This adventure is about uncovering and stopping a Triad plan to alter the result of the Punic Wars. The Triad, for unknown reasons, wants to save Carthage from destruction and prevent the rise of Rome, which will be replaced by a powerful Carthaginian Empire.

To ensure the success of their plan, the Triumvirate has recruited two very skilled agents: Agamemnon, a former Cretan prince, and Parvati, an Indian priestess of great beauty.

The plan unfolds in three phases.

First, in the Second Punic War, during the siege of Syracuse, Agamemnon will change the course of history by saving the famous mathematician Archimedes from the death, and by taking him away to the future.

Second, in Rome, some months before the Third Punic War begins, Cato the Elder, the main supporter of the war against Carthage, will suddenly stop his political action in this direction. The old Roman politician will be seduced and controlled by Parvati, the second Triad agent. The war will break out all the same, but a few months' delay will be crucial to ensuring the victory of Carthage.

In the third phase, the Third Punic War is about to begin, but Carthage has a card up its sleeve. Archimedes, whom Agamemnon brought to the city, will defend it against the Roman legions using his amazing inventions, in an attempt to avenge the fall of Syracuse.

The Operatives' task is to discover and stop this devious plan. If they fail, the whole course of history will be changed forever...

TimeZero, Prehistory

Mission Briefing

The priority code for this mission is only yellow, so no major temporal cataclysm is happening, and this is always good news. But the face of Tactical Officer Piotr Vasilij is quite tense when he speaks:

"As some of you might know, the Techies – the Technical Office – is developing a tool named Temporal Radar. When completed, this device will radically change our work. It is capable of detecting temporal anomalies and tachyon flows like those created by Time Gates."

"Unluckily the radar is only a prototype at the moment. Six hours ago, TimeZero time, during a test, it detected an anomaly, most likely the opening of a Time Gate. We identified the place and date: Syracuse, a city in Sicily, southern Italy, 212 BC."

Yes, 212 BC was the time of the Second Punic War, the great struggle between Rome and Carthage to control the Mediterranean. Syracuse will fall two weeks after the anomaly we detected. It will be pillaged and, most importantly, Archimedes, the famous mathematician, will be killed.

So, you will travel to the past, to watch over the last few weeks of Syracuse. Ensure that Syracuse falls, and that Archimedes is killed by the Roman legionary Romulus Giulius, as is written in the history books.

And keep your eyes open for the Triad, of course."

It's time to prepare for the mission. Read out to the players, or give them a copy of, the Undercover Identities in the sidebar (see page 7). Then, let them do their Hypnotraining and choose equipment for the mission. Naturally, as they are traveling to ancient times, no firearms or similar devices are allowed.

The standard equipment for legionaries is metal armor (Medium Armor from the *TimeZero Operative's Manual*), a pilum (a one-handed spear, which deals Str+d6 damage), a medium



shield, and a gladius (short sword). The Operatives can choose other equipment that suits their Undercover Identity within reasonable limits, and spend their Budget Points as normal.

UNDERCOVER IDENTITIES

Caius Lucius, Decurion

Caius is a true Roman from Rome. Born in a plebeian family, he achieved the rank of Decurion, commander of ten soldiers, after five years of military service. He is the leader of a small group of soldiers (the other Operatives). He has spent the last two years in Sicily fighting the Carthaginians, so he doesn't have fresh news from Rome.

Maenenius, Legionary

Maenenius is a common soldier of humble origins, from a little village in central Italy. He is a rookie, and has no experience of battle. Maenenius is a friendly young man, eager to learn from other, more experienced legionaries.

Valaxio, Gallic Mercenary

Valaxio is an Auxiliarius, a mercenary from Northern Italy. His tribe was wiped out by Hannibal earlier on in the war, so he joined the Roman army to avenge them. He occasionally behaves very strangely, but what can you expect? He is a barbarian.

Marcus Picenninus, Sapper and Engineer

Roman legions are famous for their incredible feats of engineering. Marcus is one of the men responsible for organizing the troops to perform these feats. Besides being a legionary, he is an expert in engineering, capable of directing the construction of an encampment, building a fortification and even using a siege weapon. He is from Pompeii.

Syracuse, 212 BC

The Castra

The Time Gate opens a few miles from Syracuse, in a small clearing, early in the morning.

Have every Operative check for Time Travel Sickness, as per the *TimeZero Operative's Manual*.

Syracuse is a marvelous city built on an island, Ortygia, and is protected by very sturdy walls. Its strong defenses combined with the determination of its citizens and Archimedes's brilliant

machineries transformed the battle of Syracuse into an 18-month siege. The history books say that the city will not fall until two weeks from today, due to internal traitors, so there is no need to hurry.

The Romans have built a big army camp, a castra, by the shore, and a fleet of quinqueremes ensures a total blockade. When you reach the camp, you find that the situation is calm. After so many months, the camp has transformed into a sort of small city. Almost a month has passed since the last assault, and the legionaries are enjoying the peace.

Your cover story to enter the castra is simple: you were part of a reinforcement column from Gela (a nearby city), but you were attacked by Syracusan guerillas and the four of you are the only survivors. The story is reasonable and quite common, allowing you to enter the camp without problems.

The Operatives are sent to Centurion Marius, who hears their report and sends them to join the Seventh Century. They are given a bed in a tent and can rest for the day.

The camp discipline is quite lax, and, at least for the first day, the Operatives can investigate freely. The day after, they are assigned to various routine chores from being on guard duty to digging latrines; the GM should be free to add interesting tasks for the heroes. As a rule of thumb, half of the group will be on duty at any given time, while the others are free to investigate.

The party has two main tasks: discovering if Triad agents have infiltrated the camp and locating Romulus Giulius.

Triad Agents. The heroes can ask questions among the soldiers. This is a Streetwise roll, which each Operative can make independently. With a success, they learn that nothing unusual has happened for a month but in the last few days quite a number of soldiers have arrived, as if something big has been planned. Identifying all the newcomers is impossible, there are too many of them.

Romulus Giulius. Finding the legionary who will kill Archimedes requires another Streetwise roll. With a success, the heroes learn that Romulus is a common soldier serving in the Third Century. With a raise, they also discover that Romulus is known for his laziness and love of wine and gambling more than his martial skills. When off duty, he usually plays dice near the refectories.

Life at the camp is normal for the first three days. The Operatives must find a way to watch over Romulus Giulius. The best method is to befriend him, becoming one of his gambling mates and especially losing money to him.

Romulus plays with many soldiers, but his best gambling friends are only a dozen or so in number. They are all common legionaries except for three low-ranking officers. One of them is a big, blond fellow named Agamemnon. When describing the group of gamblers, mention him too, but without giving him too much importance.

You can use the Ally Personality table to flesh out the other gamblers.

Only if the Operatives explicitly ask about Agamemnon, and make a successful Streetwise roll, do they discover that he arrived at the camp, with a dozen other soldiers, half a day before the heroes, but the same is true for at least another two more of Romulus' gambling buddies.



Gambling and lax discipline are not allowed in the Roman army and, the day after the heroes arrive, the centurions forbid any form of diversion, promising harsh punishment for transgressors.

But this only makes things more exciting for the gamblers: Romulus organizes a secret game for the following night, with a few selected participants and very high stakes. He also invites the heroes, if they have managed to befriend him.

Unluckily for the Operatives, there is a good chance they might be on guard duty that night. Every hero invited to the game must draw a card from the action deck. If he draws a red card, he is free to go to the gambling night. Otherwise, the Operative arrives *After a While* (see below).

The Gambling Night

The gambling night is held in a tent used as a warehouse, full of crates of military supplies. All of Romulus's usual friends are there, Agamemnon included. Agamemnon has actually managed to get his hands on a big amphora of Greek wine, and everybody is drinking.

The heroes must drink too. Refusing is seen as sign of weakness and rudeness and non-drinking Operatives are sent away.

Drinking, or even just wetting their lips, causes the gamblers to ingest the very strong sleeping draught contained in the wine. The poison takes effect after a couple of hours. Every Operative must make a Vigor (-2) roll. Regardless of the result, the character falls asleep, but with a success he is still awake long enough to notice the following scene. With a raise, he also ignores the Fatigue (see below).

The drug is general issue for the Triad, so it contains nanoids which can affect the systems of a Synth character in the same manner.

Something strange is happening. Almost all the players are either very drunk or snoring under the table. You too feel veery sleepy. Romulus has collapsed to the floor, totally drunk. Just then, Agamemnon, the blond decurion, walks over to Romulus and smothers him. The soldier tries to defend himself but he is too weak. You know you must do something, but you are too tired...

After a While. If the Operatives arrive late at the game, because they were on duty, they find a strange scene: all the gamblers are sleeping, even their comrades! Romulus is dead – he seems to have choked to death on his own vomit, but with a Healing or Notice (-2) roll, the agents discover he was killed. This is a big problem; whatever the heroes do, history has been altered: Archimedes won't be killed by Romulus.

The drugged Operatives can be woken up with a Healing roll, but the effect of the drug is so strong that the hero will be Fatigued for the next eight hours. If no one wakes an Operative, he spontaneously wakes up at the start of the next scene.

Even if no Operative witnesses the murder, it is quite simple to guess the identity of the culprit, because out of all the usual gamblers only Agamemnon is missing.

But, before the heroes can take any action, the trumpets of the camp sound, calling for an immediate general assembly!

The Unrecorded Battle of Syracuse

The buccinae are sounding and the voices of the officers are summoning all the legionaries. Is it a drill? Or is someone attacking the camp? You are worried because the history books don't mention any attack on the Roman army today!

You must leave the tent quickly, because being found here in the company of drunken gamblers and a dead body will surely cause you quite a bit of trouble.

Let the heroes make a Stealth (+2) roll to avoid being spotted by a centurion lurking outside the tent. If caught, they can make up a good excuse and attempt a Persuasion roll. In case of failure, the centurion imposes a punishment, twenty lashes, to be carried out tomorrow, after the battle: but for now they will be sent with the others, as every able-bodied man is needed. Luckily, the Operatives won't be here tomorrow.

Once they join their century, the Operatives discover what is happening: Marcellus, the commander of the army, has ordered a surprise attack on the walls of Syracuse, because he has received word that the city will get massive reinforcements in the next few days.

This is fake information implanted by Agamemnon into the memory of a scout to force Marcellus to attack Syracuse tonight. The reason for this is that Agamemnon must be in Archimedes's house at midday tomorrow, as the heroes will discover later.

The battle plan is as follows: during the night the quinquereme fleet will attack Syracuse's northern walls from the sea.

This is only a diversion because the real attack will be launched from the camp. Aboard smaller boats, the legionaries will cross the mile of sea separating the main land from the island of Ortygia. The boats are armed with small catapults to damage the city walls during their approach, if discovered. Once on Ortygia, they will disembark on a small beach, only fifty yards wide. There, using siege ladders, the soldiers must scale the walls and storm the city.

This plan presents several problems. First, this battle never happened in recorded history, so no one knows how it will end. Second, if the diversion using the fleet doesn't work, the legionaries will be butchered.

Unluckily for the Operatives, their Century is assigned to the boat assault. The soldiers board small barges during the night and get ready for the attack.

The Operatives have no way out of their predicament: anyone caught sneaking away will be considered a deserter and immediately killed. What's more, they haven't managed to locate Agamemnon.

At dawn, the attack begins.

You are on a small boat, a mile away from Syracuse. You were forced to wait until sunrise because the sea is very treacherous here, full of hidden rocks capable of smashing the hull of a barge in no time. You cannot count exactly, but there are at least sixty barges full of legionaries in the water. Silently, the order arrives and you start to row. Maybe the Syracusans, distracted by the attack from the north, won't notice you.

But this isn't your lucky day. You are almost halfway across when screams of alarm rise from the walls of Syracuse and a rain of arrows, hurled rocks and Greek fire darken the sky.

"Row, sons of dogs! Row if you want to live!" barks the commander of your barge.



This situation is handled with a variation of the Dramatic Task rules.

The Operatives' barge must reach the shore as quickly as possible to avoid being destroyed in the open sea. This is simulated in an abstract way. Each round, the helmsman must make a Boating roll. For each success and raise, the barge gains one Advancement Token. When the party has ten or more tokens, they land safely on Syracuse's shore.

The barge's helmsman has Boating d8 and is an Extra. Each Operative can use his action to row – making a Strength (–2) roll – to speed up the crossing. For every success and raise the helmsman gains +1 on his Boating roll, as per the cooperative actions rules.

In every round something nasty happens, as explained in the table below.

First Round – Rain of Arrows. A deadly volley of arrows hits the barge! Treat it as suppressive fire: each hero makes a Spirit roll. If he fails, he is Shaken. With a 1 on the Spirit Die, regardless of the Wild Die, he suffers a Wound. The Dodge Edge applies to this roll.

Second Round – Helmsman and Commander dead. A volley of arrows rains onto the stern of the barge, killing the commander and the helmsman! Someone must take control of the helm, but reaching the right position requires an Agility roll. As long as the barge has no helmsman, the barge loses an Advancement Token every round and no Boating roll can be attempted. If no hero has the Boating skill, one of their fellow legionaries has Boating d6.

Third Round – Panic on the Barge. Two legionaries panic and they attack the current helmsman, if present, to make the barge go back. Otherwise, they take the helm and try to make the barge turn, but only cause the boat to sway wildly (Agility and Agility linked skill rolls suffer –2 until order is restored).

(M) Roman legionaries (2): See page 48.

Fourth Round – Burning Mirror. The Operatives' barge is targeted by one of the terrible burning mirrors of Archimedes! The barge suffers 1d10 damage and the fire automatically gains in intensity each round (+2 damage), as per *Savage Worlds* rules, to a maximum of +8 damage. The burning mirror is placed 50" away (minus 5" per Advancement Token the party has) and has Toughness 4 and Heavy Armor, but it is Large (+2 to attack rolls).

Fifth Round – Hull Leak. Something in the water has damaged the hull, causing a leak! The barge takes in water, which causes a cumulative –1 to Boating rolls each round, to a maximum of –4. Fixing the damage, with a Repair roll, eliminates the penalty.

Sixth Round – A Suspicious Explosion. Run the scene as normal and read the following part to the players:

"In the confusion of the battle, the catapult of a single barge of your side shoots a strange projectile. It explodes as no Greek fire could, creating a great breach in the walls of Syracuse!

It cannot be a Roman weapon.

You turn toward the shooting barge and you believe you catch a glimpse of the golden mane of Agamemnon on it, before the turmoil of the battle engulfs him again."

Seventh Round – Out of My Way! Another boat, which is out of control, is moving toward the Operatives' barge at full speed! The helmsman must make an immediate Boating (–2) roll, which does not count as an additional action, to avoid the obstacle. In the case of failure, the heroes' barge suffers 2d6 damage and cannot gain any Advancement Tokens this round. All the



heroes aboard must make a Spirit roll or fall prone. If they roll a 1 on the Spirit die, they are also Shaken.

Ninth, Eleventh and Thirteenth Round – Fiery Ballista Darts. A ballista targets the heroes' ship with burning projectiles. This counts as Suppressive fire. In addition, draw three cards from the action deck. For every red card, a small fire starts, dealing d6 damage to the ship and following the normal fire rules. The fires can be extinguished with bucketfuls of water, by making a Strength (-2) roll.

Assault Barge

A small barge, with seven rowers on each side. Used only for short trips. For tabletop combat purposes, it is 12" long and 6" wide.

Top Speed: 5; **Toughness:** 10 (2); **Handling:** +0;

Crew Traits: Boating d8 (helmsman)

Weapons and Other Useful Objects:

* 1 x light catapult (Range: 25/50/75; Damage: 2d6; ROF 1/2; AP 2, HW). Two men can reload the small catapult in a single round if both of them make an Agility roll.

Take that Breach!

Finally you are on the shore. Only half of the barges have made it across. The centurions shout orders that get lost in the confusion. The crowd of men drives you toward the breach made by the strange catapult shot. Suddenly a huge cone of fire rising from the breach chars the legionaries in front of you! Panic spreads and you find temporary shelter behind some fallen debris. A centurion, his face covered in dust, comes up to you and says: "We must take that damned machine down or, by Mars, we'll die here!"

You know he is right, the Syracusans will send fresh troops in a few minutes and then you'll be wiped out.

You must destroy it!

The Operatives start 15" away from the walls of Syracuse, hidden behind the Big Debris Pile (see below). Syracuse's walls stretch across the entire battlefield and cannot be climbed.

There is only a single breach, 6" wide. A cannon-size flamethrower, another of Archimedes's gizmos, is placed here, directed toward the breach and manned by two soldiers. A group of Syracusan soldiers defends its crew.

Deal a different Action Card to the soldiers and the crew. The soldiers will use bows as long as possible, to keep the enemies at bay, then they'll switch to melee to defend the flamethrower.

When the party manages to destroy the flamethrower and takes the breach, go on with the next section.

This scene requires the heroes to make good use of the cover granted by Debris piles (see below).



(M) Syracusan Soldiers (1 per 2 heroes): Ancient Era Soldiers, half of them are equipped with bows and the other half with melee weapons. See page 48

(M) Syracusan Officer (1): A Henchman Ancient Era Veteran Soldier with the Command Edge. See page 44.

(M) Flamethrower Crewmen (2): Ancient Era Soldiers equipped only with short swords. They have Shooting d6. See page 48.

Terrain and Props

- ☞ **Big Debris Pile:** A huge pile of rocks, fallen from the city walls. It grants Heavy Cover (–4) and has Toughness 12. You can use a Medium Burst Template to represent it. It must be placed at least 12" from the breach.
- ☞ **Small Debris Pile:** Small piles of rocks (Toughness 10), the size of a Small Burst Template, granting Medium Cover (–2). Place eight of them on the battlefield.
- ☞ **The Breach:** A large gap in the wall. All the area around it is considered Difficult ground. People on the other side of the breach (within the walls) are under Light Cover (–1). Use a Large Burst Template to represent the area.
- ☞ **Flamethrower:** This sturdy weapon (Damage: 2d10, RoF: ½, Cone Template) is similar to a modern-day cannon with a big tank of incendiary mixture attached. With a single crewman, the RoF drops to 1/3 and the shooter suffers –2 to Shooting rolls. It has Toughness 6 and a single Wound smashes it. If it is hit by fire, it explodes, causing 3d6 damage in a Large Burst Template. Use the standard *Savage Worlds* flamethrower rules.

The Ransacking of Syracuse

After the Operatives destroy the flamethrower, Syracuse is doomed to fall.

You are in a square inside the city now, and your fellow soldiers swarm inside, overwhelming the resistance. The pillaging of Syracuse is starting – two weeks earlier than it should!

The Sun Tzus back home won't be happy at all. Not only have you lost all trace of the Triad agent, but you have also helped to change history.

Just then you see Agamemnon! He is on the other side of the square, gathering together a small group of soldiers. He makes for a side alley with his men and disappears down a narrow street.

The men haven't spotted you.

The Operatives should follow Agamemnon unnoticed. This is a Shadowing sequence, to be performed as explained in the *TimeZero Operative's Manual*.

The Shadowing is of Standard length (five rounds). Agamemnon and his men use a group Notice roll (d6 plus Wild Die) to spot the heroes.

At the start of each round draw a card from the Action Deck. If it is a club, run the mini-scene from the Complications Table below (ignoring the standard Complications table), and apply the penalty in parenthesis to their Shadowing roll.

If the party is discovered, stop the Shadowing sequence and run the "Ambush!" section.

Complications Table

Deuce (-4) Rapists: A couple of legionaries are raping a woman in a side alley. If the heroes want to stop them, they have to fight, and the noise of the combat causes a penalty to the Shadowing roll. If saved, the woman is very thankful to the heroes, though they look like Romans. If the heroes ask about the area they are in, she says they are near Archimedes's house. This information grants them an extra Bennie, which can be spent only during this Shadowing sequence.

(M) Roman Legionaries (2): See page 48.

Three (-2) Arson: The pillaging is quite advanced here, and several buildings are burning. The air is filled with smoke. The Operatives must make a Vigor roll or become Fatigued.

Four (-2) Wild Crowd: A wild crowd of Syracusan citizens is running away from the plundering and coming right toward the party, which causes the current penalty. All the Operatives must make an Agility roll (this doesn't count as an extra action) to avoid being slowed down. If at least half of the group is slowed down, they will also suffer a -2 to their next Stealth roll.

Five (-2) Wrong Turn!: Trying to go unnoticed, the Operatives take the wrong turn, momentarily losing sight of their quarry. In addition to the penalty, they must make a group Smarts (-4) roll or immediately lose a Shadowing token.

Six (-1) Sharpshooter: Not all the Syracusans are defeated. Someone hiding on a balcony shoots an arrow at an Operative. Hand every player a card: the lowest one indicates the unfortunate target. The archer has Shooting d6 and his weapon deals 2d6 damage. If the target doesn't have the Danger Sense Edge, the sniper has the Drop. The shooter disappears before the Operatives can find him.

Seven (-1) Inquisitive Centurion: Centurion Caius Pomponius hates smartass legionaries. He stops the heroes and questions them about what they are doing here. The heroes must make a Persuasion roll to appease him. In case of failure, the officer starts barking orders, seriously hindering their chance to go unnoticed. In gaming terms, they automatically lose a Shadowing token every round until Caius Pomponius is persuaded or dealt with in some other way, perhaps through combat.

(M) Caius Pomponius (1): Consider him an Ancient Era Veteran Soldier .See page 48.

Eight (-1) Wild Horse: A horse has got free and charges wildly down the road, with the risk of trampling someone. Hand a card to every player: the lowest one indicates the unfortunate target. The hero must make an Agility roll or suffer d6+d8 damage.

Nine (0) Child in Danger: A little boy is screaming from the window of a burning house. Reaching and saving him requires a Climbing (-2) roll. If a hero stops to help the boy, he will skip the Shadowing roll in the next round (he cannot cooperate, either).

Ten (0) Shortcut: The party finds a way to circle around Agamemnon's group! In this round they use Smarts for the Shadowing roll!

Jack (0) Mad Priest: The party meets a priest of Apollo. The old man, covered in blood and wild-eyed, curses the heroes in the name of his god, saying that "even the deep abyss of time will



not save you from Apollo's rage". It is unnerving even for a TimeGuard Operative. The heroes must make a Spirit (+2) roll. With a failure, they lose a Bennie.

Queen (+1) Enemies Stop to Talk: Agamemnon and his men stop, uncertain about which way to go. This is an excellent moment for the Operatives to reposition themselves! Let them make a Streetwise (-2) group roll. With a success and each raise they immediately gain a Shadowing token.

King (+1) Flight of Steps: Agamemnon's group is going down a very long flight of steps, which allows the heroes to follow them at a distance. In this round the party uses Notice as the Shadowing skill.

Ace (+1) Abandoned Market Stall: The merchants of this small market have run away, leaving their stalls full of wares. There are plenty of clothes and accessories here. Using them for an impromptu disguise gives the heroes +1 to the Shadowing roll until the end of the Shadowing.

Ambush!

If the Operatives' Shadowing attempt is discovered, Agamemnon leaves some of his men behind to set a trap.

The ambush is set up under a colonnade flanking the Theatre of Syracuse. The battle area is a rectangle, 15" by 6", with six columns on each side. The ambushers, hidden behind the columns, jump the heroes - trying to surround them.

The party must check for surprise.

(M) Carthaginian Triad Agent (1 per hero): See page 45

If the party captures one of the goons, read them the following:

The soldier looks at you with fanatical eyes: "We beat you! Archimedes will never be yours!"

And then he dies.

The prisoner has used a poison capsule hidden in one of his teeth to avoid capture.

Thanks to their Hypnotraining, the Operatives know that Archimedes's house is not far and can be reached in a few minutes.

Operatives with a Roman Empire Origin are allowed a Common Knowledge roll to identify the goon's accent: he is Carthaginian.

Terrain and Props

- ☑ **Columns:** Each column is made of stone (Toughness 14). It grants Medium Cover (-2). You can use Small Burst Templates to represent them.

Archimedes Kidnapped!

Run this part when the Operatives arrive at Archimedes's villa.

It is a medium sized house, surrounded by a tall wall. Sneaky heroes can peek inside through the gate.

Archimedes's house has a beautiful garden, full of statues and fountains in Greek style. But art appreciation isn't high on your list of priorities right now. You see Agamemnon and one of his men going into the house, while the others remain outside to guard the garden.

The heroes can sneak inside the garden, using Stealth to advance quietly and eventually surprise the guards, but sooner or later fighting will break out.

The battle takes place in a square area, 18" by 18". The heroes walk in through the gate, a 4" wide opening placed at the center of the southern edge of the battle area, while Agamemnon enters the house through a 2" wide door on the northern edge of the battle area.

Agamemnon's goons are placed within 6" of the door. They are guarding the garden and are considered active sentinels.

The garden is full of plants, statues and fountains that give +2 to Stealth rolls if a character starts and ends his movement behind one of them.

The enemies are fanatical, and fight to death. If the party played the "Ambush!" section, reduce the number of enemies accordingly.

(M) Carthaginian Triad Agent (2 per hero): See page 45

Terrain and Props

- ▣ **Big Fountain:** The big fountain is approximately in the center of the garden. It counts as Difficult ground. It can be represented by a Large Burst Template.
- ▣ **Statues:** The various statues in the garden grant Light Cover (-1) and have Toughness 9. With a Strength (-2) roll, a character can topple one over. Anyone in the way suffers 2d6 damage. Place up to six statues in the garden, represented by Small Burst Templates.
- ▣ **Plants:** There are several well-tended flowerbeds in Archimedes's garden. They count as Difficult ground. In particular, one of the flowerbeds is full of prickly plants, which Archimedes is extremely fond of. Any character falling among them suffers 2d4 damage and is immediately Shaken. Place three flowerbeds in the battle area, represented by Medium Burst Templates.

Archimedes's Pool

Once the enemies are dispatched, the heroes enter Archimedes's house and, following the sound of voices, they find the scientist.

You are now in a big bathroom in typical Roman style, with a hot water pool surrounded by a colonnade. Archimedes, a man in his sixties, is standing by the pool, speaking vehemently in Greek with Agamemnon, while the last goon is looking around nervously. The Triad Agent points at the pool. Just then you see the air over the water shimmering and hear a familiar low sound: a Time Gate is opening! Archimedes is startled by the strange phenomenon and doesn't move. Losing his patience, Agamemnon knocks him out with one blow and, holding his body gently, prepares to cross the Time Gate.

The Triad wants to kidnap Archimedes!



The heroes must act now if they want to stop Agamemnon but, whatever they do, this scene is scripted to end in a certain way.

Before the players are dealt action cards, Agamemnon jumps into the Time Gate taking Archimedes with him. The Gate closes in a couple of seconds and only the last goon remains to fight the party.

The fight isn't as easy as the heroes think. Despite looking like a plain Roman legionary, the Triad agent draws a deadly energy weapon hidden in one of his bracers and fights with reckless, suicidal abandon.

(M) Carthaginian Triad Agent (1): He is a Wild Card, with the Rock and Roll! Edge, armed with a Triad Energy Gun (Damage: 2d6, RoF: 3, Range: 12/24/48, AP: 2). See page 45

Once they have dispatched him, the Operatives are faced with an even bigger problem: Archimedes has disappeared, he is in the hands of the Triad and there is no hint of where (or when) he might be now!

But not all is lost. By searching the body of the goon, the party finds a clue: a strange Roman coin made of pottery. The heroes recognize it with a Common Knowledge roll: it is an Ostrakon (see the following section). But there is no time to examine it now, the party must clear the scene of all traces (removing the energy weapon, which must be taken to the TimeGuard Technical Office) and report back to TimeZero.

TimeZero, Prehistory

The Ostrakon

Once at TimeZero, the heroes ask a Field Specialist for help. Song Wu, a Roman history expert, gives the party the following information:

"The Ostrakon is a small disk made of pottery, similar to a Roman coin. Ostraka were used for political propaganda: they were engraved with the name and face of politicians standing as election candidates for different offices. To vote for a candidate, Roman citizens, who were mostly illiterate, just had to drop an Ostrakon into the ballot box."

"The Ostrakon you found in 212 BC is clearly an anachronism. It refers to the election of the tribune of Rome, during the year 150 BC, 72 years later. By the way, the politician on it is Caius Marcellus, a man who wasn't elected."

Ostraka were made only a few weeks before elections, so Agamemnon and his hirelings must have come from that age and place. It is a feeble track, but it is enough for the TimeGuard to send the Operatives to Rome, 150 BC, to investigate further.

Important note: during their stay at TimeZero, all the wounds the Operatives suffered are healed.

Rome, 150 BC

A Strange Accident

18

THE MIRROR OF CARTHAGE

The Time Gate takes the Operatives to a small, deserted cottage, the property of TimeGuard, some miles away from the Eternal City. The party can use the same undercover identities they had in 212 BC, with some minor modifications.

Check for Time Travel Sickness as usual.

The date chosen for their arrival is a month before the elections (March, the 13th), a reasonable date for Ostraka to be released (in truth they were released few weeks earlier).

Rome played a key role in history for several centuries, so there is resident Watcher here, who can lend the heroes a hand. The Tactical Office contacted him and arranged for you to meet him at the Six Coins Inn, a tavern in the slums of the Eternal City, near the gates.

Tiberius, the Synth Watcher, has the undercover identity of a Greek freedman (a former slave). He works as a scribe in the Roman Senate, taking minutes of the assemblies. Thus, he can observe Roman politics unnoticed.

You arrive at the Six Coins Inn a quarter of an hour before the meeting. The building stands along the Via Appia, which is so busy it reminds you of a 20th century street. There is an endless coming and going of fast chariots driven by noblemen, litters carrying rich Roman matrons, mounted couriers of the Senate and carriages of all types. You sip a goblet of sweet wine under the porch, waiting for your contact.

After a few minutes you spot Tiberius coming toward you. He starts crossing the road when the unexpected happens: a cart full of enormous amphorae suddenly releases an avalanche of earthenware upon the Watcher!

Similar accidents aren't uncommon in ancient Rome. People rush to help Tiberius but it's too late; the wounds are lethal and the Synth dies almost immediately. If an Operative manages to speak to Tiberius before he passes away, the Synth whispers:

"He hasn't said it today! Nor yesterday!"

The heroes haven't got the faintest idea of what Tiberius was trying to say. If they examine the cart, a Notice roll reveals that the rope tying the amphorae together looks like it's been cut with a knife. When questioning the witnesses of the accident, a Persuasion (-2) roll makes a farmer remember a man passing next to the cart moments before the tragedy. The man is now missing.

The Vigiles (urban police) arrive, question the witnesses, and close the case as an accident. The victim was a freedman and had no relatives, so the guards bring him to the Temple of Pluto (God of the Dead), where he will receive a proper burial at the expense of the City. If the heroes want to claim the body, the guards say that only a close relative, able to demonstrate his kinship, can do so.

In the end, the cart driver is released and the traffic restored – the most important thing for the Vigiles (urban police)

The Operatives are stuck now: the man who was meant to help them is dead, most likely murdered by a mysterious killer.



Now there are three possible courses of action, explained below.

Looking for Agamemnon

Searching for Agamemnon yields no result. The man is in Carthage now. He persuaded Archimedes to aid the Carthaginians against the Romans, to avenge the fall of Syracuse (as the heroes will discover in the last part of the adventure). Let the heroes make a Streetwise (–4) roll to gain some new information: they only manage to find out that a man corresponding to Agamemnon's description and a group of strangers (his Carthaginian goons) were in Rome the week before.

Tiberius's Life

Investigating Tiberius is more fruitful: the Synth, like many Watchers, led a secluded life. Officially he was released from slavery ten years ago and his former owner, a rich merchant from Pompeii, found him a job as a scribe at the Senate's records office.

Tiberius had a room in an insula (an apartment building for the lower classes). His room is very poor and contains nothing of interest. His neighbor Domitia, a retired courtesan, can provide some useful information if the heroes are polite to her (Persuasion roll).

"Oh, I heard of poor Tiberius's end. What a tragedy! May Proserpina comfort him in Hades! Tiberius had only one close friend, another freedman, Graccus. He works at the Senate, sweeping the floor and performing other humble tasks."

Finding Graccus is simple. The poor man is very sad about his friend's death. He says that Tiberius seemed very worried after the last assembly at the Senate.

I have never seen Tiberius so troubled as in the past week. He kept telling me: "It could happen once by chance, twice is a fortuitous coincidence, but three times in a row is definitely strange!"

Graccus believes Tiberius was speaking of Cato the Elder, one of the most influential politicians of the time, but he doesn't know exactly what Tiberius was referring to.

Cato the Elder is a popular politician and keen supporter of the war against Carthage. If the heroes keep investigating, with a Streetwise (–2) roll they discover that for the last three years Cato has always finished his public speeches with the famous sentence: "Carthage must be destroyed".

But in the last week he has stopped repeating his slogan and withdrawn his support for the war party. He is quite old, so it might simply be a sign of senescence, but something rotten is probably brewing. The heroes will investigate the matter further in the next part.

Synth Memory

Some Synths, especially the Watchers, are fitted with a memory chip, in which they file their reports. The chips are also useful in cases like this one, when the Synth is killed and retrieving the information he has gathered is absolutely vital.

The GM should tell the players that all the Operatives know about the memory chips and their importance.

The only problem is that Tiberius's body is now in the Temple of Pluto and, according to Roman burial customs, will be cremated tomorrow!

The heroes can retrieve Tiberius's body either by fast-talking the priests or by sneaking into the temple at night.

Fast-talking the Priest. Only a priest and two acolytes live in the Temple of Pluto. With a good story – something like asking to see the body of an old friend for the last time – and a Persuasion roll, the Operatives can persuade the priest to show them the corpse. But, without a raise, one of the acolytes stays with the characters during their visit to make sure they don't do anything strange.

Sneaking into the Temple. The temple isn't very big: a main hall, a couple of rooms for the priests and an underground mortuary vault. It can be accessed through a front gate or a back door. The back door is locked during the night (Lockpicking roll to break in) and leads to the priests' rooms. But at night they are fast asleep, so a Stealth (+2) roll is enough to reach the mortuary vault without waking them up.

The front gate is always open but it leads to the main hall of the temple, where an acolyte watches all night, praying and burning herbs. A Stealth roll is necessary to sneak past under his nose and get to the vault. The acolyte is considered an inactive sentinel.

If the Operatives are spotted, the priests call the Vigiles who arrive in 3d6 minutes.

(M) Pluto Priest (1). Use the Commoner stats. He has Vigor d4 and the Elderly Hindrance. See page 46

(M) Pluto Acolytes (2). Use the Commoner stats. See page 46

(M) Roman Guards (4). Use the Ancient Era soldier stats. See page 44

The memory chip. The chip is in the Synth's skull. A Healing roll and a cutting tool are necessary to pry the head open and retrieve the chip. The whole process requires five minutes. The data on the chip can be read in two ways: by connecting it to a standard TimeGuard data pad (like those included in any Databank or Communicator) or by plugging it into the head of another Synth. This requires a Healing roll by the character performing the operation and a Vigor roll by the Synth. In case of failure, the Synth suffers a Wound for every failed roll. In case of success, not only does the Synth gain access to the information detailed below, but he also acquires part of Tiberius's memories, gaining a permanent +1 to Common Knowledge rolls in Ancient Rome.

The chip basically contains the same information Graccus is able to provide, plus the following: Tiberius discovered that Cato, who has always lived a secluded life in the country, has recently abandoned his country villa to buy a house in Rome. He is behaving strangely: his political ideas are changing and he is becoming more and more tolerant toward Carthage. Tiberius watched his house and noticed that the old man often leaves his house at night and goes somewhere outside the city. He tried to shadow him, but failed.

What the chip does not reveal is that during his shadowing attempt Tiberius was spotted by Triad agents, who decided to kill him.



Cato the Elder. The players can get the following information with a Common Knowledge roll.

Marcus Porcius Cato is very old and has held the office of Censor for more than 30 years. Besides being a skilled politician, he is also a figurehead for the “mos maiorum”, the ideal of integrity and rectitude of the ancient Romans.

During his political life, before promoting the war against Carthage, he heavily criticized Roman society. He fought against the influence of Greek culture, which he considered corrupt, against medicine, and against the Bacchanalia, the orgiastic cults of Bacchus, which he saw as immoral. He also made the Senate pass a law prohibiting the cult of Bacchus in 186 BC.

Some years ago Cato lost his beloved wife and now he is a harsh, solitary man.

But there is much the heroes don't know about the famous politician, which is summarized below.

Parvati, a Triad agent disguised as a priestess of Bacchus, contacted Cato and, using a mix of futuristic technology and her natural sex appeal, persuaded him of Bacchus's great powers, turning the old, straight-laced statesman into a follower of the cult.

During the rituals, Parvati used drugs and hypnosis to implant pacifist political ideas into Cato's mind. She did this to delay the war against Carthage as long as possible, giving Agamemnon enough time to put his plan into action.

The heroes have no chance to encounter Cato in Rome. He only leaves his house to go to the Senate and is always followed by several slaves and bodyguards. His most faithful servant, an African slave named Ghito, never leaves his side.

In truth Ghito is Parvati's hireling, tasked with watching Cato when he is not with her.

Cato also refuses to receive anyone at his house.

The only chance the heroes have to meet him is on one of his mysterious night excursions.

These trips usually happen once a week, but soon there will be a major festival of Bacchus and Cato now visits the cult on a daily basis.

Following Cato is a Shadowing situation.

Cato's journey is explained below. The GM should use this information to add details and spice up the Shadowing sequence.

Cato leaves home late in the afternoon in a closed litter carried by slaves. This is quite strange: he has always despised this “corrupt” means of transportation.

He is in the company of a tall and muscular black slave, of African origin.

The litter reaches a stable in the suburbs of Rome and from here, disguised as farmers on a cart, Cato and the slave leave the city and make for the farmland.

Given the slow speed of the cart, you cannot get too close while following Cato, otherwise you will be spotted. As the road is deserted, from now on you must stay at a distance and follow the cart's tracks.

Cato and his slave take the road to Ostia but, after a while, they turn right onto a minor path in the woods. Despite its proximity to Rome, the area is wild and solitary. The road is only a muddy trail and after half an hour it ends on the outskirts of a small village.





The Shadowing sequence is of Extended length (10 rounds). The heroes begin with five Shadowing tokens. Cato and his slave collectively have Notice d6 and the Wild Die.

From the sixth round on, the Shadowing occurs outside the city and it must be performed at a distance, using Tracking instead of Stealth as the Shadowing skill.

If all the tokens are lost, the Operatives lose their quarry. They must repeat the Shadowing attempt the next day, but will start with one less Token, because Cato and Ghito have started to be more suspicious.

During the Shadowing, at the start of every round, draw a card from the Action Deck. If the card is a club, something happens, and you should run the relevant Complications mini-scene detailed below, and apply the modifier to the heroes' Shadowing rolls. In case of double entries, the first item refers to events happening in the city, the second item to countryside incidents.

If the Operatives successfully complete the Shadowing, go to the next section.

Complications Table

Deuce (-4) Bandits: A group of bandits, hired by Ghito to watch his back, spots the heroes and attacks them. If the encounter happens in the city, the combat is set in a dark alley, 6" wide, whereas in the countryside the bandits simply burst out from the woods. Two of them stay back and attack the heroes with slings, while the others engage them in melee, trying to gain a Gang Up bonus against a single Operative. They know nothing about where Ghito and his master are heading. The penalty to the Shadowing roll simulates the time lost while fighting.

(M) Bandits (1 per hero). See page 45

(M) Bandit Leader (1). A Wild Card Bandit. See page 45

Three (-2) Rain: A sudden spring rainstorm begins. Visibility is Dark (-2) until the end of the rainstorm. For the remainder of the Shadowing, Tracking rolls have -2 due to the mud. The rain continues for three Shadowing rounds.

Four (-2) Herd of Sheep: A herd of sheep crosses the heroes' path, forcing them to stop.

Five (-2) City Guards/Legionaries Patrol: A patrol of city guards in Rome or legionaries in the countryside stops the heroes and asks routine questions. In this round use Persuasion as the Shadowing skill, as the heroes must get rid of these individuals as quickly as possible. Note: if the heroes have already encountered the Bandits (Deuce entry) and report it to the patrol, they must make a Persuasion (-4) roll. With a success they are immediately released because the soldiers rush to the scene of the ambush, and the heroes cannot lose any Shadowing tokens this round. With a failure they are taken to the crime scene and asked many questions, automatically losing all their tokens.

Six (-1) Transport Changeover: To be on the safe side, Ghito has hidden two donkeys in a house near the gates (if still in Rome) or in a small, abandoned cottage by the road (if in the countryside) so he can leave the cart behind. In this round the heroes use Smarts as their Shadowing skill, trying not to be fooled by this attempt. In the case of failure, they lose an additional token. For simplicity, the rest of adventure assumes Cato and Ghito use their cart; if this card is drawn, the GM should adjust later descriptions accordingly.



Seven (-1) Beggar Boys: A group of beggar boys crowds around the heroes, asking them for money. If they refuse, a beggar tries to pickpocket the hero that looks the wealthiest (Stealth d10 vs. Operative's Notice). With a success, the little thief manages to steal something (of the GM's choice). If the heroes give them money, the beggars don't try to pickpocket them. Clever Operatives can offer some extra money to hire the beggars to lend a hand during the Shadowing. With a Persuasion roll the boys help the heroes. They have Stealth/Tracking d10 and a Wild Die. If the Persuasion roll fails, they grab the money and run away. They also escape if any risky situation arises.

Eight (-1) Drunken Argument: Two drunkards are arguing vehemently in the middle of the road. Instead of calming them, other people are annoying them further, so the predictable thing happens: a fistfight breaks out. The heroes must use Intimidation as their Shadowing skill during this round to avoid becoming involved and then delayed by the situation.

Nine (0) Crossroads: The Operatives have briefly lost sight of their targets (in the city) or the tracks are simply too messy to follow (in the countryside), when they come to a crossroads. There are two possible choices, and the Operatives must choose their way at random. Draw a card from the action deck. If a black card is drawn, the heroes choose the wrong way and they lose a token. If the card is red, they choose the right way and gain a token. Inform any hero with the Luck or Greater Luck Edge that he can spend a Bennie to choose the right path automatically.

Ten (0) Mistaken Identities: Cato and Ghito are traveling on a cart. A cart very similar to Cato is now going down the road. The Operatives run the risk of following the wrong people. In the countryside, the tracks of the cart used by Cato and Ghito get mixed up with other, similar ones. For this round only, use Notice as the Shadowing skill.

Jack (0) Road Works: Roman roads are a marvelous thing, but they need a lot of maintenance, as is happening here. Some workers are replacing the paving, which forces the heroes, as well as Cato, to slow down. This can be good or bad: before rolling for Shadowing as usual, if the heroes have two Shadowing tokens or fewer, they automatically gain another, while if they have four or more, they lose one.

Queen (+1) Famous Gladiator/ Religious Procession: If in the city, a famous gladiator is recognized by the people and a crowd gathers in the street, with women tossing flowers and men cheering, thus hindering the Shadowing roll. If in the country, a religious procession of the cult of Proserpina, the Goddess of Nature, slows down the party. In either case the Operatives must use Persuasion as their Shadowing skill to make their way politely through the crowd.

King (+1) Lonely Pilgrim: A lonely, middle-aged wanderer approaches the heroes. He asks for a sip of water or wine, believing them to be fellow wanderers. If the heroes give him something to drink, let one of them make a Persuasion roll. In case of a success, the pilgrim provides useful information about the road ahead. The hero gains an extra Bennie, which can be spent in this scene only.

Ace (+1) Friendly Cart Driver: On the road, the heroes see a hay cart going in their same direction. If there is a pretty girl in the party (a female character with positive Charisma), the driver of the cart greets her with a wolf-whistle and asks if she and her friends want a ride. If



the Operatives accept, their Shadowing skill Wild Die is raised by one step while they are on the cart. Unluckily, the cart goes along the same road as the heroes for only three rounds.

The Bacchants

Cato's cart approaches a small hamlet in the forest, only a dozen houses along a river bank. The streets seem deserted, all the doors and windows are shut, but strange voices and dissonant music rise from the far end of the village.

If the heroes enter the village, the impression of desolation becomes stronger: not a single soul is around – not even the usual stray dog.

The voices suddenly become louder and you see a strange group of women approaching you. They are a mixed bunch, older ones and very young ones, but all of them are half naked and dancing wildly. They chant shrill songs and play panpipes, frequently drinking red liquid from wineskins. They are all armed with strange, short spears and look at you with wild eyes.

With a Common Knowledge or Knowledge: Religion (+2) roll, the Operatives recognize these women as Bacchants, female followers of the cult of Bacchus, the God of Ecstasy. The Bacchants are known to be quite dangerous while in a state of sacred euphoria, and to practice ritual cannibalism of males and other dark ceremonies. With a raise, the Operatives also remember that the cult of Bacchus was forbidden some years ago by a law that Cato himself strongly supported.

"Here it is!" shouts one of the women, an old crone. "The banquet! The banquet of blood and meat the King of Life has promised us!"

"The banquet, the banquet!" echo the Bacchants. Then they attack you!

Deal action cards as usual.

The combat area is the square of the village, a round area 12" in radius. Place the heroes in the center of the square, near the well (see below), while the Bacchants start 6" away from them, in a loose formation.

The Bacchant Singers stay away from direct combat, using their Taunt and Intimidate skills while the other women attack the heroes at random.

The Bacchants aren't acting of their own free will and the heroes must decide whether to use lethal force on them or not. This decision will affect the development of the following scene.

(M) Bacchants (2 per hero). See page 44

(M) Bacchant Singers (1 every two heroes). Bacchant Singers are Henchmen. See page 45

Terrain and Props

- 📌 **Well:** The only well in the village. It grants Light Cover (–1) and has Toughness 10. A character can throw an enemy into it by winning an opposed unarmed Fighting roll or Agility Trick with a raise. Characters falling into it can climb out with a Climbing (–4) roll. In the well there is a bucket attached to a length of chain, which can be used in combat (Str+d6, Reach: 5, counts as an improvised weapon). You can use a Small Burst Template to represent the well.



- ☞ **Mud Puddles:** There are many slippery areas in the village square. Mud puddles are Difficult Ground, and heroes slipping in the mud must make an Agility roll or fall over. Place up to three puddles in the battle area, represented by Medium Burst Templates.
- ☞ **Cart and Pitchfork:** In a corner the Operatives spot a cart and a pitchfork (Str+d6, Reach 1, Improvised Weapon). A hero can climb onto the cart (Difficult ground) and fight from this higher position, gaining +1 Parry against lower standing enemies. The cart is a 3" by 5" rectangle placed at least 6" from the well.

The Villagers

After dispatching the enemies, the heroes inspect the wineskins. With a Healing roll they notice the peculiar smell of Symelix, a mind-altering drug common in the 27th century. There is definitely something strange going on here.

Just then a door opens, revealing a scared man.

If the heroes did not use lethal force against the Bacchants, the man tells them the following:

"May Minerva protect you, strangers! You saved us! One of the women you stunned is Apulia, my wife. And the others are relatives of other men in the village. Since the Holy Priestess restored the cult of Bacchus and subjugated our women, we men live in a constant state of fear. We must obey them in every way and those of us who tried to go Rome to warn the authorities were taken away by the women and taken deep into the forest. They never returned."

To help you role-play the scared husband, here follow the answers to some of the questions the players are likely to ask.

Q: "Who is the Holy Priestess?"

A: "A woman of uncanny beauty. She arrived six months ago and slowly started to corrupt our women, to make them return to the old, forbidden cult of Bacchus."

Q: "Where does she live?"

A: "Somewhere in the depths of the forest, where the major rites are held. I have never seen it. No men are allowed there, with few exceptions. All I can tell you is that I once eavesdropped on Apulia and heard her talk about the 'river spring'."

Q: "We are following two men, a muscular African slave and an old man. Have you seen them?"

A: "Of course. They are the exceptions I mentioned before. They are among the few male followers of the Cult. We don't know their names, but they left the cart in the village and went into the forest on foot a while ago."

No man in the village can be persuaded to lead the Operatives into the forest.

If the Operatives used lethal force and killed the women, the man's reaction is the following:

"Fools! May Jupiter and Bacchus punish you! You killed them! They were only dangerous because they were in the ecstasy of Bacchus, but among them was my wife! Apulia! Please, speak to me!"

The man runs out the door, kneels down by one of the women and starts weeping. After some moments, other men emerge from the houses. A mix of grief and hate burns in their eyes.

This is the last chance the party has to get a positive reaction from the villagers, making a Persuasion (–4) roll that can be cooperative. Some good roleplaying might give a substantial bonus to the roll. If the Operatives are successful, the scene develops in the same way as above (no lethal force used). Otherwise, the Villagers attack the party.

(M) Villagers (3 per hero). See page 46

The props and setting are the same as in the previous fight. After the combat, by questioning the survivors or with a quick investigation, the party discovers Cato's cart in a barn and some tracks leading into the forest.

The Temple of Bacchus

Following the tracks isn't difficult – it requires a single Tracking (+2) roll due to the fact that Cato's tracks soon get mixed up with other similar ones. The forest seems to have seen a fair bit of traffic recently. The path runs along the stream that flows by the village and after a while the party gets to a big hill, where the source of the stream is. There, in a small clearing, they see the mouth of a cave.

There are several tracks going in and out of the cave, but they are too messy to guess the precise movements of people.

A faint music and a sweetish smell trail out of the cave.

The heroes have found the Temple of Bacchus. Unknown to them, Ghito didn't go into the cave but remained well concealed in the vegetation to deal with snoopers. Judging the party too numerous for his strength, he decides to wait for the right moment to catch them unawares.

Inside the cave, the passage is quite narrow and the party can only proceed in single file. The players must decide their marching order.

The walls are made of tuff, a common rock in central Italy. It is very porous and in some places it almost looks like it's sweating. The passage has a low ceiling and long, twisted roots trail down from it, forging the malleable rock into bizarre shapes. As you go down, the smell and the music become stronger and a flickering light illuminates the passage.

The narrow passage finally opens up into a big hall with a high ceiling. Here, you see a disturbing scene.

Among the fires of three great braziers, a group of Bacchantes is dancing, drinking wine and worshipping the god of ecstasy with complete abandon. The sweet smell coming from the braziers is almost intoxicating. In the shadows, at the far end of the hall, you see a great statue, twice the size of a person, which represents a goat-headed man sitting cross-legged.

A woman of mesmerizing beauty stands in front of it, clad only in a loincloth full of jewels. She is neither Roman nor Greek – she might be Indian.

Among the Bacchantes you see a man, half-naked and red in the face. You recognize him: it's Cato!



After a few minutes the dance ends and the Bacchantes start chanting a strange, discordant song. The Holy Priestess, the beautiful Indian woman, calls for Cato and the old man strips at her feet.

“Bacchus wants peace and friendship among all men!” says the priestess in a chanting voice.

“Bacchus wants peace and friendship among all men!” echo the Bacchantes.

You see Cato rhythmically moving his head.

“Stop the war against Carthage! The Carthaginians aren’t enemies, they are our friends.”

Once more the Bacchantes repeat the priestess’s words and Cato moves his head.

So this is what has caused Cato to change his political ideas. The woman is hypnotizing him!

At this point, a voice behind you shouts: “Beware, Parvati! Intruders!”

And then Cato’s black slave attacks you!

In this fight Parvati, the Bacchantes, and the heroes must check for surprise. Ghito instead starts On Hold.

The fighting area is the roughly circular hall, 12” in radius. There are two entrances, each 1” wide, to the north and south.

Place the heroes within 4” of the southern entrance, according to their marching order. Place the goat-headed statue in front of the northern access. The statue is so big it completely hides the passage, so the players can’t see it until the statue moves (see below).

Place Parvati in the center of the room, surrounded by the Bacchantes. Ghito, instead, stands in the middle of the southern entrance.

Cato is so aghast that he stands petrified next to Parvati for the whole fight, so ignore him.

Ghito attacks the nearest Operative, trying to Grapple him. He fights to the death.

The Bacchantes swarm round the heroes, attacking in melee. In the first round, Parvati turns toward the idol, ordering him to rise. The statue is actually a Synth – he stands up and uses the second round to break off a long stalagmite, which he uses as a weapon.

From the second round on, Parvati tries to use her hypnotic skills and to throw her lethal poisoned pins. She is a very pragmatic person and, after suffering two Wounds, if left with no chance of escaping, she surrenders. Otherwise, she flees down the northern passage. She behaves in the same way if her followers appear to be losing the fight. Luckily, her escape attempt isn’t successful (see below).

(M) Bacchantes (1 per hero+2). See page 44.

(M) Ghito (1). He is a Henchman. See page 46.

(M) Goat-Headed Idol (1). See page 46.

(WC) Parvati (1). See page 47.

Terrain and Props

- ▣ **Braziers:** A mix of herbs and synthetic substances burns in the braziers, causing a state of ecstasy in the Bacchantes. With a Strength roll, a character can knock over a brazier. Any creature hit by the embers must make an Agility (–2) roll or suffer 2d8 damage, with normal chances of catching fire. For every brazier knocked over

the Bacchantes lose one of their Special Abilities (Ecstasy, Unpredictable Moves, and Drunkenness of Divinity). Use Small Burst Templates to represent the braziers.

- 📖 **Brain Chip:** Remember the special ability of the Goat Idol (see page 46). Every Operative can make a Smarts (–2) or Repair roll to identify it. Characters with the Veteran of the Synth Rebellion Edge roll at +2.
- 📖 **Stalagmites and Stalactites:** The hall in the cave is full of dripstones. They offer Light Cover (–1) but they only have Toughness 4 due to the softness of tuff. Dripstone areas are Difficult terrain and the dripstones can be broken with a Strength roll and wielded in the fight (Str+d4, improvised weapon). If someone falls (due to a Trick) onto a stalagmite, he gets impaled on it suffering 2d6 damage AP 2. Place up to six Stalagmites and Stalactites in the cave, using gaming stones of different colors to represent them.

Parvati's Confession

If Parvati manages to run away, she doesn't get far. The passage she took leads to a vertical shaft. She tries to climb up but, luckily for the heroes, she falls, breaking an ankle.

Parvati's main allegiance is to herself, so she is willing to negotiate. Captured Triad Agents are usually questioned, brainwashed and then sent back to their original era. Parvati asks for complete immunity and the protection of TimeGuard in exchange for total collaboration. It is quite a valuable offer!

She tells the heroes the whole story. She is collaborating with Agamemnon on a plan to change the outcome of the Punic Wars. In the Triad's plans, the war should end with the victory of Carthage, which will have great repercussions on the future – the creation of a Carthaginian Empire instead of a Roman Empire.

The plan includes three phases:

First, Agamemnon must kidnap Archimedes before his death and persuade him to help the Carthaginians against Rome, to avenge the destruction of Syracuse.

Second, Parvati must influence Cato, delaying the start of the Third Punic War and giving Carthage enough time to arm itself.

Third, Agamemnon must bring Archimedes to Carthage, introduce him to local leaders, and have him create deadly weapons that will make Carthage win the war.

The Operatives have managed to stop phase two but, in the meantime, phase three is still in action. The heroes must rush to Carthage before it is too late!

But first they must deal with another problem: Cato. Parvati will give up her control over Cato's mind at the heroes' command, and the old statesman can be persuaded that the Priestess is actually a Carthaginian witch sent to enthrall him with her corrupt magic.

The revelation causes a mix of anger and shame in Cato, restoring and even strengthening his hate for Carthage. Cato's next speech in the Senate is as vehement as official history records.



Carthage, 150 BC

UNDERCOVER IDENTITIES IN CARTHAGE

From this point on, the Operatives' previous undercover identities are no longer suited to the mission: Roman legionaries aren't welcome in Carthage.

The group must improvise something. A good idea is to take the identities of mercenaries: Carthage is always looking for swords for hire, especially at the moment, and disguised as mercenaries the heroes won't look out of place.

So, the Operatives must remove the roman insignia from their armor and weapons. This can be done with a Repair roll if they have access to a forge. Otherwise, a blacksmith can do the job in a day for \$50 per hero. If the Operatives are short of money, Cato will pay for the service to thank them for their help.

Massinissa's Bane

Carthage cannot be reached directly from Rome, because Romans aren't welcome there and no ship captain is willing to undertake the voyage. However, Utica, a small city near Carthage, is still open to commerce (because it is secretly allied with Rome), so the Operatives make for that destination.

The voyage is uneventful and the heroes arrive in Utica unharmed.

Getting to Carthage from Utica on foot or horseback is quite simple: it is only three days away. The air in the small city is very tense. After losing a battle against the neighboring Numidians, Carthage was forced to pay tribute to them for fifty years. But after a while the city stopped paying, enraging Massinissa, the King of Numidia. So, Numidian raiders are pillaging the region, in order to force Carthage to start paying again.

Tell the Operatives that this is another alteration of official history, according to which Carthage continued to pay its tribute. It was only the constant expansionism of the Numidians that forced the Carthaginians to attack them in the end, starting the Third Punic War.

Few merchants dare to travel from Utica to Carthage now, and only in guarded caravans. Luckily, a convoy, led by Arteus, an Utican merchant, is due to leave tomorrow. The Operatives can join him if they promise to help in protecting the caravan.

The caravan consists of twenty mules loaded with wares, guarded by ten soldiers. Both the soldiers and the Operatives will travel on horseback.

The journey is largely uneventful, but the GM can add encounters of his choice to spice things up.

Once the caravan is approaching its destination, read or rephrase the following text.





It is noon on the third day of travel. The trip from Utica has been creepy. The land is deserted and shows signs of recent pillaging. During the journey you have seen burned villages and abandoned farms. All around the cultivated areas and the beautiful olive groves have been razed.

Carthage is very close now and you can see its walls getting bigger on the horizon. Your worries are finally subsiding when a group of black raiders appears on top of a nearby hill. Shouting war cries and shaking their spears, they charge toward you.

They are Numidian riders, at least a hundred cavalymen!

“Carthage is near!” shouts Arteus. “Spur the beasts!”

The heroes have two choices. They can abandon the caravan and ride like the wind to the city. The caravan will slow down the raiders and the party will arrive in Carthage safe and sound, seeing Massinissa’s Bane in action only from a certain distance (see below).

Otherwise, the party can decide to stay with the caravan and be involved in the following Chase.

Place four counters on the gaming table, each of them representing a fourth of the caravan. Ask each player what part of the caravan they are assigned to. They can choose freely but no more than two Operatives can be assigned to each part of the caravan.

Assign control of each part of the caravan to the players.

Caravan parts have a collective Riding d6 and a Wild Die. At the start of every round, a player can decide that his part will abandon the mules, increasing its Riding to d8.

The horde of raiders is considered as four entities, each of them with Riding d10 and a Wild Die.

There are a lot of raiders, so any time the Range table of the Chase Rules says the heroes are attacked, they are attacked by 1d3 enemies.

The Chase is of Standard duration.

At the start of the sixth round, something terrible happens.

The raiders are all around you, raising their javelins. You are doomed to die. But suddenly they start shrieking in pain! The Numidians are smoking, and their horses too! One of them falls off his horse and catches fire! After a few moments the other raiders and the sparse grass under their horses’ hooves burst into flame! The few survivors try to flee but after a few yards they are burned to death.

You hear cheers and mocking cries rising from the walls of Carthage. You turn toward the city and on the top of a fortress in the highest part of the city you see a shining mirror. It is several times bigger than the mirror you saw in Syracuse.

If these are the weapons Archimedes is building, Rome is definitely in trouble.

(M) Numidian Raider (50). Use Ancient Era Soldier stats raising Fighting, Throwing and Riding to d8. They wear no armor but are equipped with a short sword (Str+d6) and javelins (Str+d6, Range: 6/12/24). See page 44.





Once inside the city, the caravan is surrounded by a crowd of citizens congratulating the survivors and cheering the defeat of the Numidians. The citizens praise the name of “Pallade” as savior of the city and celebrate “Massinissa’s Bane”, as the giant mirror is named.

Shortly afterwards, a group of soldiers, led by two very important looking officers, comes down the street. They try to peacefully disperse the crowd and then approach the survivors. You recognize one of the bosses by his leonine blonde hair: it’s Agamemnon!

The soldiers want to take the newcomers to the palace, where they will be questioned about what is happening in the region and will be “invited not to leave Carthage” (imprisoned). This is because Carthage doesn’t want a security leak about their new weapons.

With a Common Knowledge roll, the party recognizes the other officer. It is Hasdrubal, who will be the Commander of the Carthaginian Army during the Third Punic War.

The heroes must sneak away now, or they will be captured. If the party moves quickly, only a Stealth roll is required.

If in the previous scene the heroes abandoned the caravan, the situation is different: Arteus is furious and accuses the Operatives of having turned their back on him.

“You, scurvy sons of a hundred fathers! There are Phoenician whores with more honor than you! You abandoned us! Let me get my hands round your necks and we’ll see!”

This reaction hinders the Operatives, causing –4 to their Stealth rolls until Arteus is made to keep quiet. Consider him a Commoner armed with a short sword.

The heroes have four rounds to escape. If they fail, they are captured. This isn’t likely to happen but, if it should, consult the Captured! Sidebar to modify the scenario accordingly.

Once they have escaped capture, they must blend in with the other citizens, find a safe place to stay, and start gathering information.

Going unnoticed is quite simple, because the city is swarming with mercenaries right now. Finding a place to stay, like a room in an inn, is also quite easy. The heroes can achieve these goals with a cooperative Streetwise roll and some good roleplaying.

With \$50 they find adequate accommodation.

Then, it is time to start the real work: gathering information about what is happening in Carthage.

First, no historical record speaks of a giant burning mirror in Carthage. Who could be the mastermind behind such a weapon?

Archimedes, of course.

Gathering Information: Gossip in Carthage

To gather information, the heroes must spend a couple of hours walking around Carthage and make a Streetwise roll, which can be cooperative. The Operatives can add their Charisma bonus to the roll and another +1 is granted if they spend at least \$10 on wine and food to elicit information. Another +1 bonus is awarded for particularly good roleplaying.

For each success and raise, they draw a card from the Action Deck and receive the following information.

Deuce-Five. The enormous mirror is called Massinissa's Bane, and was built by Pallade, a great sage.

Six-Eight. Pallade is a very wise philosopher (a general word indicating a sage) who came to the city a couple of months ago with his faithful servant, Agamemnon. Pallade says he was a disciple of Archimedes. When they hear his description, the Operatives understand the man is Archimedes himself.

Nine-Jack. Besides building the giant mirror (heroes with an engineering background can recognize it as a far more advanced version of the ones used in Syracuse), Pallade is creating other devastating weapons to aid Carthage against its enemies. There are even rumors of a flying machine!

Queen-Ace. Pallade and his lab are located in Dido's palace, a fortified building on the top of a hill, in the center of the city. Massinissa's Bane is placed at the top of its tallest tower. The palace is heavily guarded and Pallade leaves it only on rare occasions, and then under the protection of Agamemnon.

Joker. Choose two of the previous entries.

CAPTURED!

Ideally, the party should not be captured but, if this happens, you can handle the situation in two ways:

1) **Only a part of the group is captured.** The other Operatives can free them. Agamemnon questions the prisoners aggressively (they are Fatigued and suffer a Wound), then locks them up in the Dungeon (see Dido's Inner Palace). If willingly searching for the dungeon, the party can reach it with 5 Advancement Tokens.

2) **The whole party is captured.** The situation is similar to (1) above, but the heroes are on their own now and must find a way to escape. If they are still imprisoned after three days, Agamemnon sends them to the Triad base, where they are questioned and then brainwashed or killed. Their adventure ends here.

Dido's Palace

The Operatives' goals are clear: they have to destroy Archimedes's weapons (the mirror, but also any other strange devices he might have built), remove him from the timeline (killing him or using other methods of persuasion, as explained at the end of the scenario), and kill or capture Agamemnon. If they manage to do all this, even though not perfectly restored, history will be sufficiently patched up to return to its original course.

But to achieve their goals, the heroes must sneak into Dido's palace.



Dido was the legendary queen of Carthage, later immortalized by Virgil in the Aeneid, and the palace took her name. Dido's Palace is a sort of fortified mansion on the top of a hill, protected by tall walls with three small towers and a big one. A single road leads to the gate of the palace.

The following scene is divided into two parts: the information gathering process, and the devising of a plan to sneak into the palace.

Gathering Information: Dido's Palace

To gather information, the heroes must spend a couple of hours outside Dido's Palace, casually chatting with off-duty guards and servants and then making Streetwise rolls, which can be cooperative. Their Charisma bonus applies to their rolls and +1 is granted if they spend at least \$10 on wine and food to elicit information. Another +1 bonus is awarded for particularly good roleplaying. The attempt can be made multiple times but, if a hero rolls 1 on the Streetwise die, regardless of the Wild Die, people become suspicious and the Operative must immediately stop asking questions.

For each success and raise, the party draws a card from the Action Deck and receives the following information.

Deuce-Four. A general description of the palace provided by an off-duty guard or a servant. The GM can base it on the description of the palace in the Inner Palace section. In addition, roll a d8. The Operative also learns information about a specific area of the palace. This means that during the mission the hero recognizes the area before entering it, knows what to expect, and can choose to skip the encounter.

Roll	Location
1	Dungeon
2	Kitchen
3	Drunken Soldier
4	Laundry Room
5	Maps Room
6	Armory
7	Secret Passage
8	Gardens

Five-Seven. Information on the guards' shifts. The party discovers that from 10 p.m. to midnight there are only a few guards on duty. If they attack the palace during those hours, reduce the number of guards by 2 in all areas of the palace except the Dungeon and Pallade's Tower.

Eight-Ten. The heroes find out that only Hasdrubal (the famous Carthaginian leader) and his staff can visit Pallade.

Jack-Queen. Pallade's laboratory is in the main tower of the palace, where he also lives. The door to the tower is always watched by two guards.

King-Ace. Dido's palace is heavily guarded, but defenses are weaker in the southern side of the building south. Here the hill is very steep and a high wall stretches along its top. Behind



the wall are Dido's gardens: they aren't guarded, but are closed at night and no-one is allowed to enter.

Joker. Choose two of the previous entries.

Using this information, the Operatives can devise a plan. The scenario proposes two different lines of action, but clever players can work out several other strategies.

The Garden Plan

The heroes decide to sneak into the palace by climbing the southern wall. The wall is steep but luckily has many footholds. Getting to the top requires three Climbing rolls. A success means the Operative has climbed a third of the wall, a failure that he hasn't advanced, and a critical failure that the poor guy has fallen down. The ascent is 60 feet in total, from the bottom of the hill to the top of the wall. If the heroes choose to climb as a roped party, they all roll at +2, except the team leader.

The garden is big and well-tended, with many lush plants, but there are two deadly guardians, a pair of mute lions. They'll arrive in a few moments. The lions' tactic is to use their Stealth to get close enough to the party to use their Pounce Special Ability.

The battle area is a square, 18" by 18". Place the heroes in the center and the lions 12" away from them.

After dispatching the lions, the Operatives find a door leading into the palace (see next section).

(M) Mute Lions (1 every 3 heroes). See page 47

Terrain and Props

- ☞ **Trees:** The garden is full of trees. Small trees grant Light Cover (−1) and have Toughness 7, while big ones provide Medium Cover (−2) and have Toughness 10. A hero in dire straits can even try to climb a tree with a Climbing (+2) roll. Small trees can be represented by Small Burst Templates while big ones can be represented by Medium Burst Templates. Place up to eight small and four big trees on the battlefield.

The Impersonation Plan

If they have an Improved Disguise Kit (see *TimeZero Operative's Manual*) or very good disguise skills, the heroes can try to impersonate Hasdrubal and his guards to gain access to the palace.

But there is a problem: one of the guards at the palace's gate, Cleophanes, is a veteran Carthaginian soldier and knows Hasdrubal very well. Cleophanes is an Extra with Notice d6. Use the Player's Guide disguise rules to check if the Operatives are caught.

A factor that can give a modifier to the roll (from +4 to −4) is how "Hasdrubal" explains the fact that his guards are not the usual ones. If they succeed, the party can enter the Inner



Palace (see next section), otherwise the guards attack. If the players manage to dispatch them quickly and silently in three rounds or less, their fight goes unnoticed and they can enter the palace. Otherwise, at the start of the fourth round and every four rounds thereafter a group of six guards arrives, until the party flees or is captured (see Sidebar on page 36).

(M) Ancient Era Soldiers (4). See page 44

The Inner Palace

The party must now make their way through the palace to reach Archimedes' tower. This situation is handled as follows. Every five minutes the party makes a cooperative Smarts roll (see table below). The roll allows them to earn Advancement Tokens. When they have ten tokens, they reach Archimedes's Lab (see below). Also, each round they draw a card from the Action Deck to check which area of the palace they are in, and the corresponding encounter occurs. Unless otherwise stated, each encounter can only happen once.

Roll results

Critical Failure. The Operatives get lost, they lose a Token. If the room they entered contains people, the heroes must check for surprise.

Failure. The Operatives gain no Tokens.

Success. The Operatives earn one Token.

Raise. The Operatives earn two Tokens.

Encounter/Location Table

Deuce - Dungeon: The dungeon is a subterranean area and it includes ten cells that are locked (Lockpicking (-2)). If the heroes are captured, they are brought here. The cells are watched by two guards and one of them has the keys to the cells.

(M) Ancient Era Soldiers (2). See page 44

Three - Guards Room: You have walked into the guards' quarters! Some of them are here, relaxing, gambling and sleeping. The heroes must make a Persuasion (-4) roll to convince them they are here for a good reason.

(M) Ancient Era Soldiers (10). Half of them are not wearing any armor. See page 44

Four - Drunken Soldier: Falco isn't the smartest soldier in the Carthaginian army and he really likes his wine. The heroes meet him in a corridor, as he's singing a lewd song. If they manage to get his help (Persuasion roll) and take him with them, they'll gain +1 to Persuasion rolls when interacting with other inhabitants of the palace.

Five - Occupied Bedroom: This bedroom looks empty, but with a Notice (-2) roll the party hears some whispering and moaning. A young couple of slaves have sneaked in to make love. With an Intimidation roll they can be persuaded to keep quiet. They can also be intimidated/persuaded to take the party to their destination. In this case, the heroes gain two tokens.

(M) Commoners (2). See page 46

Six - Empty bedroom: There is nobody here. By keeping quiet, the heroes can easily stay here for an hour. It's an ideal place for Healing checks and similar activities.

Seven – Kitchens: This is the uncontested realm of Paracletus, a great Greek cook! He is a short, fat, ill-tempered man who wants nobody in his kitchen. When he sees the party, Paracletus's first reaction is to shout in anger. The heroes can calm him down or intimidate him. If persuaded, Paracletus can take them to any destination within the castle. In this case, the heroes gain two tokens.

(M) Commoners (1). See page 46

Eight – Laundry Room: A room with a big vat full of hot water and many clothes in big baskets. Most of them are servants' clothes. They give +2 to any Disguise rolls, both for creating and for using a disguise (see *TimeZero Operative's Manual*).

Nine – Sentinels: The Operatives bump into a patrol going along a corridor. Depending on the heroes' appearance and behavior, the sentinels must be deceived or fought. This encounter can happen more than once.

(M) Ancient Era Soldiers (1 per hero). See page 44

Ten – Map Room: The party walks into a room full of maps and other documents. By browsing through them the heroes learn that, differently from what history records, Carthage means to attack Rome in a few weeks! Discovering this information grants them a Bennie.

Jack – Sentinels: See entry Nine.

Queen – Temple of Tanith and Baal: A dark room with tall columns and a great brazier on an altar. Behind it there are two giant statues representing a man and a woman. With a Knowledge: Religion or a Common Knowledge (-4) roll, the heroes recognize Baal and Tanith, the main Carthaginian gods. The brazier is full of very small charred bones, confirming that the Carthaginians did indeed sacrifice children to their gods. Any hero looking into the brazier must make a Spirit roll or suffer from Nausea (see *Savage Worlds* core rules) for the rest of the scene.

King – Armory: This room is full of swords, axes, shields, bows, light and medium armors. All of them have Carthaginian insignia. The Operatives can rearm themselves (they can basically find any weapon or armor appropriate to the era, at the GM's discretion). Wearing light or medium armor also counts as being Disguised as a Carthaginian soldier.

Ace – Secret Passage: The heroes are in a T-shaped corridor with a big statue in a niche, representing Dido. With a Notice (-4) roll, they detect something strange about the statue or a draft of air that should not be there. By moving the statue they discover a secret passage! In the next round, they can skip any encounter and they also gain an additional Token.

Joker: No important location.

RAISING THE ALARM!

There aren't any detailed rules to check if the heroes have raised the alarm in Dido's Palace. As a rule of thumb, whenever they fight or make any action that the GM thinks might be too loud, draw a card from the Action Deck. If a black card is drawn, someone sounds the alarm! There are at least 30 guards in the palace, who reach the heroes in groups of 6 every 2d6 rounds.



You enter the inner garden. Small, beautiful, and full of statues, it resembles the one in Archimedes' house in Syracuse.

The great tower is accessible from here, and hopefully you'll find Archimedes inside. Light comes from the upper floor windows, but this isn't your main problem now: a couple of guards, rigidly strutting back and forth, watch the door.

Luckily for the Operatives, when they enter the garden, the guards don't notice them (unless the palace is on the alert). The guards cannot be persuaded in any way. Only people accompanied by Agamemnon can enter, so the heroes must dispatch them.

(M) Ancient Era Veteran Soldiers (2). See page 48

Archimedes' lab is on the second floor.

You enter a large room full of strange devices: mechanical parts, miniature catapult arms and many amphorae full of liquid. You also notice a strange glider hanging from the ceiling.

In the center of the room, an old man is arguing with two young boys about the devices they are wielding. You recognize them as small versions of the flamethrowers you saw in Syracuse. The two boys, probably Archimedes's assistants, are explaining why it isn't a good idea to test the flamethrowers inside the room.

Now the heroes can either kill Archimedes or talk to him. Agamemnon told the sage the truth: the Romans, the slaughterers of the Syracusans, will soon build a great empire. Syracuse cannot be saved, but it can be avenged by aiding the Carthaginians.

However, the Operatives can win Archimedes's trust by simply telling him the whole story: they are part of the time police and they work to save "official" history. Agamemnon, instead, is a member of a criminal organization that modifies the timeline for its own dark purposes. By aiding Agamemnon, Archimedes is only making the war longer and more bloody, a war that Carthage will lose despite his inventions. No roll is required for this, only some good roleplaying.

After dealing with Archimedes, the heroes have one more problem to deal with: Agamemnon has discovered the missing guards, gathered his men and is about to storm the room.

"Kill them! Kill them all!" the blond Triad Agent shouts. "They are Roman spies, sent here to kill Pallade!"

The final battle with the bad guys has come!

Archimedes's lab is a circle, 18" in radius. There is a circular stairwell in the middle of the room, which the bad guys use to come in. The stairwell goes up to the roof, where Massinissa's Bane stands. A 3" wide door stands at three o'clock.

Place the heroes, Archimedes (if he is still alive and on the heroes' side), and his boys at least 6" away from the stairwell.

Agamemnon and half of his men start within 3" of the stairwell, while the others start the fight while still on the stairs.

The Triad Agent's tactics consist of leading all his men into the room as quickly as possible, to use them more effectively and to fully exploit his Leadership Edge. Agamemnon and his men will take special care not to hit Archimedes.



If Archimedes sides with the heroes, his assistants are Allies of the party, but in the first round they are moved by the GM: one of them shoots the flamethrower, automatically setting the room on fire! From the second round on, they are used by the players as usual.

Archimedes is almost useless in the fight and stays out of danger.

The fight ends after six rounds or when Agamemnon is dispatched.

(M) Ancient Era Soldiers (2 per hero+2). See page 44

(M) Agamemnon (1). See page 44

(M) Archimedes's Assistants (2). Use Commoner stats, adding Shooting d4 and the Loyal Hindrance. They are armed with a prototype flamethrower (see below). See page 46

Terrain and Props

▣ **Tables:** The tables are full of tools, mechanical instruments, and similar gizmos. Tables count as Difficult ground, offer Light Cover (–1) and have Toughness 6. A character within 1" of a table can take a prop of his choice to add +1 to any Trick roll. With a Notice roll, an Improvised Weapon can be found (Str+d4). Each table is a rectangle, 2" by 4". Place up to eight of them in the room.

▣ **Prototype Flamethrowers:** They use the standard flamethrower rules (ROF 1, Damage: 2d8, Shots: 2). Each Assistant has one of them, and a spare one is placed on a random table. Use a counter to represent it.

▣ **Room on Fire!** When one of the Assistants (or an Operative) shoots a flamethrower for the first time, he starts a fire! The fire affects the fight in many ways.

Round	Effect
1	–
2-3	Dim Light (–1).
4-5	Darkness (–2). Smoke Inhalation rules from the Savage Worlds core rules apply.
6+	As above but Smoke Inhalation rolls are at –2

Deus Ex Machina

The following paragraph is written supposing that Agamemnon is dead, while Archimedes is still alive and on the heroes' side.

The smoke is terrible and the room is a burning inferno.

"Come on!" shouts Archimedes. "We can still make it!"

You follow the old sage toward the only door. When you open it, the fresh air gets in, giving new strength to the fire. Now you definitely can't turn back.

You are on a platform, on the side of the tower. Below you, in the palace's garden, you see guards and slaves pointing toward you.

"And now?" you ask.



"We escape!" Archimedes says, indicating a strange device placed on the platform. It looks like a carriage, but fitted with two... well... wings. It stands at the top of a long slide, used to make it gain some momentum. You recognize it as the fabled flying machine!

"Well... does it work?"

"Never tried it in all my life!" answers Archimedes with a broad grin.

The only chance the heroes have to save themselves is to use the Icarus Machine. Three Piloting rolls are required: the first to take off, the second to fly over Carthage and the third, when the Machine's wings start to break, to perform an emergency landing.

This is a cinematic sequence and failing a roll doesn't mean that the vehicle crashes but only that, during the landing, the Operatives suffer 1d6 damage for each failed roll, so failing all three causes 3d6 damage. Let the players roll at the right moments when you read or paraphrase the following part.

You accelerate down the slide and then you are in the sky! You would have never bet a Drachma against a Confederate greenback that this piece of junk could fly but it can! A deafening sound behind you tells you that Archimedes's lab has just exploded. The scientist had probably invented something much more dangerous than Greek fire. You turn your heads and, with relief, you see Massinissa's Bane breaking into a thousand pieces. Oh well, one less problem to worry about.

You enjoy your flight over Carthage but, like all good things, it soon comes to an end! Suddenly the fabric of the wings starts to tear! You are plummeting!

Ending or... Must We Kill Archimedes?

CRASH!

You are somewhere in the desert not far from Carthage. You are bruised and battered, but still alive! Archimedes is standing next to you, complaining that he wants to eat and then take a nap. Well, now you just have to decide what you're going to write in your TimeGuard report!

Agamemnon is dead, Archimedes's weapons are destroyed, and without them Carthage will lose the war – just like the history books say. But now they must solve their moral dilemma concerning Archimedes. The "right" thing to do would be to bring him back to Syracuse (to a time after Agamemnon kidnapped him, to avoid breaking the Laws of Time, see Player Guide) and kill him.

But even the Operatives have a heart, so another solution is possible: Archimedes is officially dead (and TimeGuard can place an artificial body in Syracuse, identical to the scientist, to preserve historical consistency), so he can be recruited into TimeGuard as a Field Specialist, contributing to the goals of the organization with his incomparable genius. If the heroes propose this solution, they gain +1 to their Promotion Roll.

Dramatis Personae



Agamemnon

Agamemnon is a bulky warrior with blond hair and fierce blue eyes. Originally a prince in ancient Crete, he was recruited by the Triad several centuries before the rise of Rome, so his great hate for the Romans isn't entirely understandable. Agamemnon's demeanor is always very cool, even when in dire straits.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d8, Throwing d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Edges: Ambidexterity, Command, Fervor, Improved Nerves of Steel, Two Fisted.

Gear: Triad-made ancient medium armor (+3) and energy bracers (Str+d6, see below).

Special abilities:

- ▣ **Energy bracers:** These bracers, made by the Triad, emanate an invisible energy field around the fists of the user, who is always considered armed. They deal Str+d6 damage.

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THE MIRROR OF CARTHAGE

Ancient Era Soldier

Use this template for the average trained soldier of the Roman Empire. He can be a mercenary, a city guard, or a common grunt. Though not well equipped, he was trained as a Roman legionary and can be dangerous in combat.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6(1)

Gear: Light armor (+1), shield (+1 Parry, +2 toughness vs. missile weapons) and short sword (Str+d6), or bow (Damage: 2d6, range: 12/24/48) and dagger (Str+d4).

Bacchant

Sometimes also called Maenads, the Bacchants are female cultists of the god of ecstasy, Bacchus. These individuals are in a state of dangerous ecstasy induced by Parvati's drugs and personal influence. They are all armed with a thyrsus, a short spear, their traditional weapon.

Note on Special Abilities: The Bacchants have their special abilities only if there are Bacchant Singers within 12" of them or if they are inhaling the Smokes of Bacchus.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Taunt d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

Gear: Short spear (Str+d6), wineskins.



Special abilities:

- ☞ **Crazy:** The Bacchants aren't completely in their right minds so, when they draw a black card from the Action Deck, they do something crazy. It's up to the GM to choose: they can withdraw from combat, fall prone, etc.
- ☞ **Drunkenness of Divinity:** The Bacchants gain +2 to recovering from being Shaken.
- ☞ **Ecstasy:** Ecstasy makes them attack with reckless abandon. They have +1 to Fighting and damage rolls.
- ☞ **Unpredictable Moves:** A Bacchant moves in such an unpredictable way that she obtains +1 Parry and ranged weapons attacks suffer -1 to shooting rolls.

Bacchant Singer

Bacchant Singers are particularly devoted to their God, who has bestowed the gift of melody upon them. With their voices and playing they can induce a state of ecstasy in the other Bacchants.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Taunt d8.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Improved Dodge, Iron Will.

Gear: Panpipe, wineskins.

Special abilities:

- ☞ **Inspired Music:** As a free action, a Bacchant singer can play her panpipes to induce ecstasy in the Bacchants. If at least three Bacchant Singers are playing, all the Bacchants within 12" gain the Ecstasy, Unpredictable Moves and Drunkenness of Divinity special ability. Every time a Singer stops playing, the Bacchants lose one of the abilities at random. To keep things simple, all the Bacchants lose the same ability.

Bandit 45

A slave on the run, an impoverished retired soldier, or a common lowlife. This man has nothing to lose except his worthless life.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Spiked club (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4), sling (St+d4, range: 4/8/16).

Special abilities:

- ☞ **Leader:** The bandit leader is a rough fellow. He is a Wild Card with Strength d8, Fighting d8 and the Brawny Edge.

Carthaginian Triad Agent

A Carthaginian survivor of the Third Punic War, he is full of hatred for Rome, the destroyer of his hometown. Agamemnon recruited him, explaining that they share a common intent: preventing the Romans from defeating Carthage and creating a Carthaginian Empire. From then on, the fighter has been absolutely loyal to the Triad.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6(1)

Gear: Light armor (+1), medium shield (+1 Parry, +2 toughness vs. missile weapons), short sword (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4), short bow (Damage: 2d6, range: 12/24/48).

Special abilities:

- ☞ **Fanatical:** The Carthaginian Triad Agent hates the Romans (and TimeGuard agents disguised as Romans) so much that he has +1 to damage rolls against them.

Commoner

A common man or woman in ancient Rome.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (one craft) d6, Notice d4.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Knife (Str+d4) or farming tool (Str+d6, -1 to Fighting rolls).

Ghito

This junior Triad Agent is originally from 19th-century South Africa, and is absolutely loyal to Parvati. He is a Henchman.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6.

Edges: Brawny, Martial Arts

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Knife (Str+d4).

Special abilities:

- ☞ **Greek Wrestling:** Ghito has +1 to Grappling rolls and his grapple damage is Str+d6.

Goat-Headed Idol

This idol is actually a Triad Synth shaped into one of Bacchus's many aspects, a perpetually aroused, goat-headed man. Parvati awakens him on very rare occasions to impress her followers. The priestess doesn't know that this model was withdrawn from service due to a "slight" technical problem.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9

Gear: Stalagmite club (Str+d8, improvised weapon).

Special abilities:

- ☞ **Brain Chip:** This Synth model was withdrawn from service due to a structural fault: a very weak logic chip placed at the base of the neck. The logic chip can be hit with a called shot (–4), causing the Synth to enter a state of confusion, attacking the nearest friend with Wild Attacks. After behaving like this for three rounds, the Synth automatically shuts down. All the Operatives must make a Smarts (–2) or Repair roll the first time they see the Synth, to check if they remember this useful piece of information.
- ☞ **Horns:** Str+d4.
- ☞ **Size +2:** The idol is twice the size of a man.
- ☞ **Sweep:** Can attack all adjacent foes at –2.
- ☞ **Synth:** The idol has +2 to recovering from being Shaken. It doesn't suffer additional damage from called shots. It is immune to disease or poison.

Mute Lion

These specimens had their vocal cords severed, which somehow influenced their growth and made them even more vicious.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit, d10, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities

- ☞ **Bite or Claw:** Str+d6.
- ☞ **Improved Frenzy:** The Lions can make two Fighting attacks each action with no penalty.
- ☞ **Low Light Vision:** The Lions ignore Dim and Dark lighting penalties.
- ☞ **Pounce:** Lions often pounce on their prey to best put to use their weight and claws. They can leap 1d6" to gain +4 to their attack and damage. However, their Parry is reduced by –2 until their next action when performing the maneuver.
- ☞ **Size +2:** Male lions can weigh over 500 pounds.



Parvati

This woman of uncanny beauty is originally from India and was born around 2000 BC. The Triad instructed her in advanced hypnotic techniques that, combined with her strong personality, make her a very deadly opponent. Parvati's main allegiance is to herself. If left with no chance of escaping, she surrenders and negotiates for her life.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidate d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6, Throwing d8.

Edges: Charisma, Very Attractive

Charisma: +6; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Poisoned hairpins x4 (Str+d4, Range: 3/6/12, see below).

Special abilities:

- ☞ **Hypnotic Techniques:** In combat Parvati can use Persuasion for Smarts tricks. She also adds half her Charisma bonus (+3) to Smarts tricks and Tests of Will.
- ☞ **Poisoned Pins:** Parvati's hairpins are covered with a mild poison and she can throw them as if they were knives. Any hero Shaken or wounded by a pin must make Vigor roll or suffer a Fatigue level.

Roman Legionary

This warrior is an average member of the Roman legions, the best war machine of the ancient era.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4, Throwing d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7(2)

Gear: Medium armor (+2), medium shield (+1 Parry, +2 toughness vs. missile weapons), short sword (Str+d6), one-handed spear (Str+d6), medium helm (+2).

Special abilities:

- ☞ **Legion Training:** Roman legionaries are trained to fight in formation. Hence, when they have a Gang Up bonus, they receive an additional +1 to Fighting rolls, up to a maximum +5 Gang Up bonus.

Ancient Era Veteran Soldier

This warrior of ancient times has survived a fair number of skirmishes, battles, and wars. He is strong, well equipped and a deadly customer to deal with, even for a skilled Operative.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6.

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8(2)

Edges: Combat Reflexes.

Gear: Medium armor (+2), shield (+1 Parry, +2 toughness vs. missile weapons), short sword (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4).





THE SUNDAY FILES: INVENTORS OF THE TIMELINE

The Patent Office

There is a sub-branch of TimeZero, almost exclusively composed of Watchers and Field Specialists, which is nicknamed the Patent Office. The task of this branch is very important: monitoring and guarding the most critical inventions of human history and their inventors.

For TimeZero, two classes of inventors exist: recorded ones and unrecorded ones. Recorded inventors are people who are given the credit for an invention: for example, cinema was invented by the Lumiere brothers, X-rays were discovered by Wilhelm Röntgen and so on, but who discovered things like fire, the wheel, the lever and so on? These people are unknown and finding them is one of the Patent Office's tasks.

Naturally some inventions were discovered many times, in different places across the world: for example writing, agriculture, the wheel, fire, pottery and so on, but at the root of each discovery there is always a specific, even if unknown, person. A time-traveling enemy with sufficient resources, by locating and eliminating enough of these people, could erase that invention from human history.

For this reason, inventors must be watched continuously; there is always someone (Triad agents, Alternates or other forces) who wants to dabble with them: sometimes these external forces try to prevent the inventor from making the discoveries written history reports, while in other, rarer cases they are given illicit "aid" to discover much more than they are supposed to find.

Obviously this type of alteration can have serious repercussions on human history: everybody at the Tactical Office remembers the week when Euclid never developed mathematics...

But this isn't the worst danger linked to inventors. The big trouble starts when an egghead discovers, either on his own or with some illicit help, the secret of time travel. In this case (if the scientist hasn't already escaped into the timeline), regular Operatives join the game, find and brainwash the inventor, hide any evidence of the discovery and then calm everything down.

Despite what a recruit might think, the Patent Office is one of the most boring jobs an agent can be assigned to. The surveillance of an inventor must be continuous for all his life, so an entire squad of persons must be deployed throughout his existence to keep him constantly under control. So, an Operative disguised as a first grade teacher can watch a would-be inventor in his childhood, his first girlfriend in his teenage years, and a faithful assistant in his work life.

That is, if TimeZero had infinite resources: as it's on a budget, only inventors on the VIP list are monitored in this manner. The sad truth is that the greater part of them are left uncovered, and Operatives must intervene on the timeline to save them when they are in danger or to patch up the mess they can make.

Here are a number of famous inventors the Operatives could get involved with.

Inventors of the Timeline

Tiala (10,454 BC)

Tiala is one of the unknown inventors of human history. Tiala lived in the part of Syria called the Golan Heights. She was a harvester and priestess who, observing that seeds in the feces of animals after some time produced plants, started taking these seeds and planting them, and so started agriculture in this area, an invention that quickly spread.

Finding Tiala was a big stroke of luck for the TimeGuard. In 1981 an archeologist, Goren Inbar of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem found a sculpted pebble in the area, representing the Great Mother, which was called the Venus of Berekhat Ram. The artifact was temporarily "borrowed" by TimeGuard's Operatives, brought to the time base where using accurate techniques, was dated to 10,454 BC.

A Field Specialist, Jeannette Aule, was sent to the era and she discovered that the model for the statue was the pregnant Tiala, who she revealed to be, among the other things, the local inventor of agriculture!

For that moment on, Aule became the personal Watcher of Tiala and is permanently assigned to her life.

Tiala lived quite a long life for the era: she died aged 39, and during this time her clan migrated south, fought an invasion by a rival tribe, discovered a secluded valley and a network of caves and faced a drought.

The Voice of the Beast. Jeannette Aule recently sent a dispatch to the base according to which a strange event is happening in the Golan Heights in the years after the death of Tiala. A mysterious creature, simply called the Beast, is ravaging the fields and killing the women farmers. In the same period a strange wandering shaman appeared, he calls himself the Voice of the Beast, saying that the gods are angered with the people because they abandoned the proud



customs of hunting to start this evil magic of planting seeds and tending plants. According to this man, the Beast is an envoy of the deities and it will continue bringing death and destruction till the tribes stop their unholy habits. The men of the tribes support his idea and, if nobody intervenes, in a generation Tiala's teachings will be forgotten forever...

Pythagoras (570-495 BC)

Pythagoras was a scientist, mathematician and philosopher of Ionian Greek origin, born in Samos. Later in his life he moved to Croton, a Greek colony in southern Italy, where he set up a sect which followed his teachings. The sect caused internal problems in the city, even causing conflicts with the nearby city of Sybaris, and in the end collapsed. Pythagoras himself was forced to flee his adoptive city and ended his life in Metapontum.

Pythagoras is best known for his Theorem of Pythagoras, one of the foundations of Euclidean mathematics, but he also developed the first mathematical representations of music and the Tetractys, the triangular figure made of four rows, which adds up to the mystic number of ten.

Pythagoras left no written works, and his theories survive only in the words of his successors. Very few written records exist of his life, and he was surrounded by a halo of legend: for Aristotle he was a wonder worker and a sort of supernatural being, while in the Muslim tradition he was inspired by Hermes. Pythagoras believed in metempsychosis, the transmigration of souls between various bodies. On this topic he claimed to have lived four different lives.

There are also rumours that he was the originator of the "harmony of the spheres" theory, the belief that planets and stars move according to mathematical equations and that their movement creates a marvelous music.

But the most important rumour, for the TimeGuard, is reported by Aristotle, according to which Pythagoras was "a being capable of moving in space and time".

Golden Thighs. In the Old Man office there is a piece of paper on the dashboard on which is written Pythagoras, with a big question mark under it. The Ionian inventor is one of the recurrent worries of the Commander of TimeZero. The reason is simple: no agent of the TimeGuard has ever managed to see him in person, because during his years in Croton the town seems to be in the middle of a constant temporal storm. The stories circulating about Pythagoras, apart from the capability of moving in space and time, also tell of a strange physical feature the inventor wasn't able to conceal: his golden thighs. Given that, the probabilities of Pythagoras being an Alternate, an alien being from another continuum, are quite high, but until an Operative manages to establish contact no line of action can be decided.

Ge Hong (283-343)

Ge Hong is a figure wandering on the line between the unknown and known inventors. The reason is simple: officially Ge Hong, who lived during the Chin Dynasty, was simply another alchemist of feeble skills. He made a living selling cheap love potions and remedies for gout. Born in the city of Quin, Ge Hong was the son of a miner and of a washerwoman. In his youth he worked as an indentured stable cleaner, but managed to pay his father's debts off when he

was twenty years old and started studying with the eminent sage Pai So. His main fields of interest, like almost all the alchemists of the era, were the transmutation of base metals into gold, and researching the elixir of immortality.

Ge Hong never distinguished himself in any of these fields. People who knew him also said he was fairly slow and dim-witted, and even his master, on his deathbed, ordered him to quit his studies and make something better of his life.

Nevertheless Ge Hong continued dabbling with alchemy, and around 320 he made an amazing discovery: when he mixed sulfur, carbon and saltpeter, they exploded!

Yes, Ge Hong is the inventor of the gunpowder. The alchemist, enthusiastic about his discovery, continued mixing several other components, obtaining different types of explosions and fumes of various colors. In the end, finding no practical use for this invention, he was going to drop it.

It was Li Li, Ge Hong's wife, who stopped him. Li Li's brother was an officer of the city's King, and he was looking for an impressive gift for the ruler's birthday. Ge Hong's pyrotechnics were so strange and colorful that they could impress the lord.

The King of Quin, Shan Chin, was delighted by the show and from then on, Ge Hong was hosted at court and became one of most sought-after entertainers of the city. In the following years the secret of the gunpowder and pyrotechnics expanded across all China, but it remained simply a curio and an entertainment for another seven centuries before a military use for it was found.

The Great Fire of Quin. Watchers in ancient China report a strange event happened in 321 in Quin. A massive explosion, during the birthday feast of the King, slaughtered half of the royal court. The culprit seems to be a diabolical powder invented by the local alchemist Ge Hong. At first the King sentenced the poor sod to death, but then sly counselors suggested to him that such a wondrous invention could have better uses: for example blowing up enemy castles and being thrown at enemies. Needless to say, this interested the power-hungry ruler a lot. Now it seems that Shan Chin, the King of Quin, using the newly discovered weapon, is conquering all the neighboring cities. If he isn't stopped soon, he could out carve an empire for himself, and, even worse, China will develop gunpowder weapons seven centuries before recorded history says it should!

NEW TIMEZERO GEAR: DOG COLLAR

As mentioned before, the biggest trouble with inventors happens when they casually stumble on the time travel secret. Sometimes this happens by a stroke of pure genius (as for Da Vinci), while at other times they are "helped" by someone with nefarious intentions. Given that TimeGuard cannot guard every egghead in history, the Costume Warehouse devised the so-called "Dog Collar", a microchip powered by the bio-electricity of the human body, which has a single task: when the subject moves in time, it sends a micro-impulse communication to TimeZero, using the same principle as the time radio, with a log of



the event. The device isn't very accurate on the destination date of time travel (its accuracy is left to the GM) but at least it gives an alarm.

The Dog Collar must be implanted in the body of the subject with a routine surgical intervention, requiring a Healing (+2) roll and an hour of time, and the use of a TimeZero Healing Kit. Keep a note of the surgeon's result: it is used in opposed rolls to detect the device (only possible with TimeZero, Triad or comparable technology). Placing a Dog Collar can be the goal of an adventure, because the victim must be studied, captured, operated on, brainwashed and then replaced in his normal life without leaving any traces.

In the same way, when the subject dies, TimeGuard sends a team to retrieve the item, to avoid the chance that an unrecorded autopsy finds it.

Cost: Dog Collars are usually issued only for specific missions (costing no Budget Points to the Operatives). In other cases they are considered to cost 3 BP.



Johannes Gutenberg (1398-1478)

Johannes Gutenberg was a goldsmith, merchant and printer who lived in the Electorate of Mainz (modern day Germany). He is famous for a very important invention: movable type printing, which he developed in 1439. It could appear a minor thing if compared with other discoveries, but in truth it was earth-shaking, changing forever the distribution and accessibility of knowledge. He developed a system based on wooden type (similar to agricultural screw presses) and boiled ink, which progressively developed into cast metal type.

His major work, marking the beginning of the print era and the end of the manuscript tradition, is the Gutenberg Bible, also known as the 42 lines bible, examples of which are among the most precious printed books in human history. Only 180 copies of it exist, mainly printed on paper and vellum.

Operatives who know him personally say that Johannes Gutenberg is a sly merchant. Belonging to a family of goldsmiths, he was a patrician, holding an important position in the local mint. Forced to abandon his home city after a civil rebellion, in his youth he wandered a lot, studying at the University of Erfurt, and eventually settling down in Strassburg.

Around 1439, Gutenberg was involved in a fraud; he was involved in the production of special metal mirrors, which were supposed to capture the light of holy relics, for sale to pilgrims. This seemed like a good investment, because the city was supposed to hold an exposition of relics the following year, but due of a flood in the capital, the exposition was delayed and Gutenberg was forced to face the angry investors in his enterprise. He saved himself only by revealing "a great secret" he had. This secret was the printing process.

The Sun Tsus of TimeZero have always been a little skeptical on the "sudden" discovery of movable type printing by Gutenberg. It happened too fast, and Gutenberg said "he got the idea

from a ray of light” an affirmation very strange given that abnormal levels of tachyon flux were recorded in 1439 in Strassburg.

The Missing Years. There is something strange and unclear about the life of Gutenberg: in some parts of his existence, he could not be found anywhere: this happened from 1418 to 1433, and later in his life, from 1444 to 1448 when he reappeared mysteriously in Maintz to ask for a loan from his brother-in-law, Arnold Gelthus. On this occasion he also showed a greatly increased knowledge of the typographic process. He said that he passed these years experimenting, but in truth nobody could be found to confirm this. Where Gutenberg was in these years is one of the many disturbing secrets of history.

The Montgolfier Brothers (1740-1810/1745-1799)

Joseph-Michel and Jacques-Étienne Montgolfier were the inventors of the hot air balloon, which they called a *globe aérostatique*. The sons of a very numerous family, their parents were paper manufacturers in Annonay, France. Apart from a brief interlude, they continued to run the family business for all their lives.

Joseph was the typical inventor: a dreamer with little practical sense, while his brother Jacques was more business-oriented, in fact he took over the family affairs after the death of their father.

Joseph was the actual inventor of the hot air balloon. He had the idea after seeing laundry flying away from the effect of a fire burning below it. Almost as a hobby he built a small model balloon, covered in a thin cloth called taffeta, lit a fire under it and saw it fly up to the ceiling of the room!

Soon he involved his brother and together built a much bigger device, which flew for more than a mile before crashing. Then started the first public demonstrations, which became so popular that in 1783 the three first living beings were launched into the air in front of the King of France, Louis XIV: the lucky ones were a sheep, a rooster and a duck.

In 1783, manned flights with human crews started, with much bigger balloons: the first balloon, lavishly decorated and painted with the face of the King, carried the Marquis d'Arlande for almost six miles. The biggest problem continued to be the fire, fuelled by coal, whose embers could set fire to the balloon's fabric.

Despite the popularity of the Montgolfier balloons, others using lighter-than-air gas were built, achieving better results than the Montgolfier Brothers.

The Missing Balloon. Newspapers of the era report a blatant failure of the Montgolfier show in front of King Louis. The two inventors made their deepest excuses to the monarch, but the balloon destined for the King's show, built with the monarch's money, was stolen the week before the show! There are rumours that the balloon was never built, and the Montgolfier brothers used the money to pay off their family debts. On hearing this, the King flew into a rage, and banished the Montgolfier brothers from court.

The inventors have tried everything to prove their innocence, but without success. If the balloon isn't found soon, and their reputation restored, the King's interest in flight could disappear, blocking several centuries of scientific research!



Samuel Colt (1814-1862)

Colonel Samuel Colt was an American inventor and businessman, mostly famous for the invention of the revolver, the first pistol capable of shooting more than two shots before being reloaded. He was the founder of the Colt's Patent Fire-Arms Manufacturing Company and was the first to apply the principles of mass production to his products. More importantly, Colt was the first to create the concept of interchangeable parts: any model of his weapons was made with pieces absolutely identical to other examples of the same model, so making assembly and repair easier, quicker and cheaper, and allowing cannibalization of pieces for other purposes. For example, the Whitneyville-Hartford Dragoon Revolver model was famously assembled using spare parts from the Parker revolver.

Samuel, like many inventors, was an imaginative child, preferring reading the Compendium of Knowledge, a scientific encyclopedia of the era, to the Holy Bible, and was attracted by fire and explosions from childhood: sent to boarding school, he amused his schoolmates with pyrotechnics, but a bad accident causing a fire in the school one 4th July got him expelled.

During a river journey on the brig *Corvo* young Samuel noticed that, regardless of which way the ship's wheel was spun, each spoke always came in direct line with a clutch that could be set to hold it. He later said that this gave him the idea for the revolver. On the *Corvo*, Colt made a wooden model of a pepperbox revolver out of scrap wood. It differed from other pepperbox revolvers at the time in that it would allow the shooter to rotate the cylinder by the action of cocking the hammer and a pawl locking the cylinder in place, rather than rotating the barrels by hand and hoping for proper indexing and alignment.

Colt's early projects weren't blessed by luck, so he used his great speaking skills and his chemical knowledge in another field, becoming a sort of snake-oil salesman, amazing people with his pyrotechnics and the recently discovered nitrous oxide, also known as laughing gas.

This job allowed him to gather enough money to start producing his own models of revolvers. The first attempts weren't successful, but in 1847 he managed to start his own company, the Colt's Patent Fire-Arms Manufacturing Company, achieving his first successes thanks to a collaboration with Captain Samuel Walker, and managed to get a big order placed by the military for the Mexican-American War. So began Colt's fortune.

In 1857 Colt bought a large piece of land near the Connecticut River, where he built his first factory, Colt Armory. Nearby he built a manor, Armsmear, and an employee tenement house. Colt Armory was run with a harsh, almost military discipline, but the workers were treated generally well. In 1856 Colt married Elizabeth Jarvis, daughter of Reverend Jarvis.

Colt was known for his not-so-ethical ways of handling business: he offered bribes and lavish gifts to get contracts with the army and often lived beyond his means. He also had very few moral scruples about the nature of his job as an arms dealer: during the American Civil War he sold weapons both to the Union and the Confederates, as he did in European conflicts.

He died in 1862, of gout, as a rich man: his estate was estimated at around 15 million dollars.

Colt's Optical 1832. Newspapers of the era report that during his years as a snake-oil salesman Colt's studies diverged a lot from what history says. He is now selling a totally new

weapon called Colt's Optical 1832, which is a crude version of a combat laser developed during the 24th century. Colt should not have the skill, the knowledge, or even the faintest idea of what a laser is! He should be also quite poor at this point in his life, instead he has the money to build a small factory in Connecticut, which is simply called Colt's Optical. To make things worse, it seems that a cargo of the newly produced weapons, destined for the American troops of Fort Bragg, recently fell into the hands of the Apaches.

Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931)

Thomas Alva Edison was an American inventor and businessman. Born in Milan, Ohio, he started his career very poor but became a real tycoon by the end of his life.

Called "the Wizard of Menlo Park", his most famous discoveries were the phonograph, the motion camera and his most famous one, the light bulb. To be accurate, he didn't invent this from scratch (other inventors, like Alessandro Volta, had managed to make filaments glow), but he produced the first durable ones, suitable for mass production.

This is another important feature of Edison's work: being mainly a businessman, he applied the principles of mass production to the scientific research process and always kept the focus of his research on business. He built the first modern research laboratory, Menlo Park, an enormous warehouse occupying two city blocks, containing all the components, ores, tools and other assorted gizmos any scientist, sane or not, could desire.

In his career he registered the incredible number of 1,093 patents for his inventions, making him the fourth most prolific inventor in US history.

In the last years of his life he also took a position on economic matters; in particular he proposed a commodity-based currency as an alternative to gold and debt-based currency. He said: "Gold is a relic of Julius Caesar, and interest is an invention of Satan."

The Mystery of Mina Edison. Edison married twice. In 1886, when thirty-nine, he married the twenty-year old Mina Miller, daughter of the inventor Lewis Miller. The woman survived Edison, and always kept a low profile. In the last years of her life she kept a *very* low profile. She officially died in 1847, but after her "death", several strange things happened: first, many items (including some secret ones) were found to be missing from her husband's collection of blueprints, and second, her tomb, opened in error during a police investigation a couple of years later, was found empty. Edison's heirs, wanting to know more about the fate of their mother (or stepmother in case of the sons of the first wife, Mary Stillwell), looked for Doctor Faustus Black, the physician who declared her dead, but he could not be found anywhere.

Nikola Tesla (1856-1943)

Nikola Tesla was a Serbian inventor, engineer, physicist and futurist, who worked in a variety of fields. His most famous patent was the alternating current electrical supply system.

Tesla was a flawed genius: gifted with eidetic memory and incredible technical and problem-solving skills, he never finished school, was addicted to gambling and in the later part of his life was probably affected by personality disorders.



Born in Serbia, Nikola moved to Paris to work in telephony and, after an adventurous journey to America, worked with Edison in person.

The relationship between the two scientists wasn't good, and in the end Tesla moved away to continue his career alone, founding Tesla Electric Light & Manufacturing in 1886.

Although his name is linked to the alternate current system, Tesla was an all-round inventor: he studied x-rays, energy transmission, the mechanics of developing a VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) biplane and even a machine to cure pigeons' wounds (he loved these little creatures all his life). His most famous invention was linked to the concept of "teleforce", the possibility of transmitting energy. Using a modified version of the Vaan Deer Graaf Generator, in fact, in 1937 he claimed to have devised, built and tested a death ray weapon, a sort of particle beam.

In truth, this weapon never appeared in public: Tesla tried to interest the US government, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union in this discovery, but in the end nothing happened. Tesla claimed that several attempts were made to steal his projects, but it wasn't possible, because they were all in his mind.

Six years later, he died in a cheap hotel room, on the verge of poverty and with great mental problems.

Teleforce! Although the scientific community never recognized Tesla's ray gun weapon (because nobody had ever seen it working) Tesla always swore his prototype worked. He also said that the night before the demonstration to the US military, someone sneaked into his laboratory and substituted a fake for his working prototype! He was also convinced that it was the same person who, years before in 1895, entered another of Tesla's laboratories, in Fifth Avenue, NY, setting a fire which destroyed all his precious notes on his X-ray experiments. He is certain he was the same person for a specific reason: in both cases, all the accumulators present in the laboratories were broken the day after.

For TimeZero this means two things: first that someone used a very strong energy source in proximity to Tesla's labs, a type still unavailable in that era, and second that somewhere there could be a working prototype of Tesla's death ray!

NEW VILLAIN: TESLA II

Senior Agent Lucille Preston, in New York, 1939, reports the presence of a strange figure lingering in the darker suburbs of the city. A new formidable force of the criminal world, this scientist is simply called Herr Doktor, and is surrounded by hypertrophic Nazi hirelings. Both a man of science and crime, he furthers the goals of the Axis in America through covert operations, using his cunning and strange inventions. But this isn't the weirdest thing: Agent Preston met him and survived to report that this man looks like Nikola Tesla in his forties. This is very strange because in 1939 Nikola Tesla was an old man at the end of his life, so this leads to a series of disturbing hypotheses: Tesla II, as he is called, could be an Alternate, coming from another universe, a

Synth or even worse, an Evil Double of the famous scientist, created somewhere in the timeline.

The mystery of Tesla II must be resolved as soon as possible, because his presence could deeply alter the American history.



Playing an Inventor Operative

Inventors could be interesting player characters if carefully managed. If a player asks to play an inventor Operative he should be allowed to, taking note of the following restrictions:

1) The inventor cannot be a VIP. As per standard TimeGuard policy, very important people like Leonardo da Vinci, Albert Einstein, Kepler and the like cannot be removed from the timeline without altering history. In the event they are offered a Deal with the Devil and join TimeGuard just after their recorded death, they are assigned to a non-Operative task at the time base, where they can be tightly controlled.

2) Being an inventor doesn't allow you to pollute the timeline. Inventors are resourceful fellows, but sometimes *too* resourceful for the Torquemadas' tastes. An inventor Operative is allowed to go into the timeline with his inventions, but they must be inconspicuous, like the standard gear created by the Costume Warehouse, and they are absolutely forbidden to leave anything in the mists of time!

With the limitations above a player can be an inventor Operative. Given the peculiarity and rarity of this role, it is strongly recommended that only a single inventor character is present in each party.

In game terms, depending on the power level and the mood of the campaign, two types of inventors are possible: Realistic Inventors and Unrecognized Inventors.

Realistic Inventor

A "realistic" inventor can be created using the standard rules of TimeZero, by taking the Field Technician, McGyver and Mr. Fix It Edges. As a minor advantage, if a character has all these three Edges and a background as an inventor he can add +2 to any roll to invent things (*TimeZero: Operative's Manual*, page 119).

Unrecognized Inventor

This type of inventor is an unrecognized genius. Probably he discovered something really ground-breaking in his time, but due to his being totally anachronistic or considered a charlatan by his peers, his fame never spread. TimeGuard recruits this type of person, mainly to remove them from the timeline so they cannot do any damage. This character is allowed the Arcane Background (Weird Science) Edge, as per the standard *Savage Worlds* rules, with the following tweaks:

1) The character begins with only 5 Power Points and can take only *one* of the New Power Edge or Power Points Edge per Rank.



2) His trappings must be “tight”, meaning all of them are linked to a particular field of expertise, scientific theory or similar. For example, if Tesla were a Weird Inventor character all his trappings should be linked to the Teleforce.

3) Each of his devices is considered to have a Budget Points value of 1 per 5 Power Points of the Inventor plus one per Rank of the Power stored in it. So, a device with 10 Power Points and a Seasoned Power is worth 4 BP. These points are only used for reference in case the item is lost in the timeline, they don't count towards the basic gear of the hero.

An Unrecognized Inventor can also take the Fast Recharge and Improved Fast Recharge Edges, and have access to the Spare Parts new gear (see sidebar).

NEW TIMEZERO GEAR: SPARE PARTS

The TimeZero facilities are like toyland for every Weird Scientist worthy of his name. The Torquemadas and the Logistics Office naturally don't allow a scientist to take “big stuff” into the timeline, but if he needs quantum stabilizers to prevent his contraption exploding or extra energy microcells, he can take them, in small quantities.

In game terms, these items are considered “spare parts” and are used by an inventor to temporarily enhance his invention. Each Spare Part is assigned to a particular Power (so a particular device in the scientist's arsenal), must be given an appropriate trapping (i.e. singularity converter, fuel pump etc...) and have one of the following effects. Unless otherwise stated each effect lasts till the end of the scenario.

More Power. This part grants +1 Power Point/Rank of the scientist.

Stabilizer. This part makes the device more reliable. The first time a Malfunction is rolled using a power, the Weird Science roll can be rerolled for free, as if the player had used a Bennie.

Fine Tuning. This part tweaks and enhances some minor, but delicate part of the device. The Arcane skill raised by one die step. The effect lasts till a Malfunction happens.

Amplifier. The device capacities are amplified by the spare part. Power deals +1 damage, or grants +1 Armor or has +2 to opposed rolls.

Extra Range. This spare part grants the device extra reach. The Power's range is increased by 50%. Powers with area effects instead have the size of their Burst Template enlarged by one step: from Small to Medium, from Medium to Large and so on. A Large template is enlarged by 2" of radius.

Cost: Spare Parts cost 1 BP, double the cost for each additional one (so two spare parts cost 2 BP in total, three Spare Parts 4 BP in total and so on). No duplicate spare parts can be taken.

