

A quick 2-player adventure with 4 different possible villains.
See if you can survive!



A Big Misunderstanding

An adventure for Tephra: the Steampunk RPG

A BIG Misunderstanding

When mad science goes wrong, two innocent strangers are drawn into a fight for their lives!



Contents

Table of Contents	2
The Briefing	2
The Background	2
Hooks	2
Overview	2
Abandoned Building	5
Subway Station	7
Apothecary	8
Office Building	9
Opera House	10
Figure 1: Franz Herschel	12
Figure 2: Trim Vank	14
Figure 3: Squibbles	16
Figure 4: Lt. Ateran Medres	18
Conclusion	20

A Big Misunderstanding is an adventure for **TEPHRA: THE STEAMPUNK RPG** using the Clockwork System. It contains write-ups, maps, non-player characters, and all the information you need to run this adventure aside from the **PLAYING GUIDE** (of which, one **PLAYING GUIDE** per player is recommended for ease of use at the table).

This Tephra adventure is designed for two level 1 adventurers. It offers a single combat opportunity and should take between 1 to 2 hours to complete.

The Briefing

Two adventurers are walking the streets at night, each going about their own business. As they pass each other, the building on the other side of the street explodes and is rapidly engulfed in flame. A hulking Figure stumbles out of the front door, yells an ominous **Greeting** (see the “Figures” sections), and launches into a furious assault. Further explosions engulf the Figure and adjacent buildings in flames, obscuring the source of the projectiles from view but doing little to stop them. As the inferno quickly intensifies and explosions continue to burst from the building, the Figure yells out a direct **Threat**, and the adventurers flee.

The Background

This adventure can take place in any major city in Rilausia that offers dense urban areas and narrow alleyways. Razule would be a prime candidate, but any industrialized city will suffice. All that matters is that the Narrator has a vision of the area that the adventurers will be moving through. The **Overview** will provide a sample setting in Razule.

In the city where the adventure takes place, an organization has been pouring a lot of resources into a mad scientist’s promise of a new and improved means of creating super soldiers



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This adventure is designed for **TEPHRA: THE STEAMPUNK RPG** using the Clockwork System.

Maps are included for the adventure and may be copied for personal use.

the likes of which Rilausia has never seen. They've been unscrupulous about acquiring test subjects, and one of them has taken advantage of their newfound strength to break out, leaving the building in flaming ruin behind them.

Hooks

This adventure is intended to unite two adventurers who have not previously met against a mysterious assailant. Each adventurer is free to come up with their own reason for wandering through whatever part of the city that the adventure takes place.

This adventure can be used as a one-off or as a means of introducing a new adventurer into a pre-existing group. While one adventurer of the group is off running errands during Downtime, they encounter the new adventurer and fate brings them together.

In place of traditional hooks, here are some reasons why the escaped captive may target the adventurers:

Uncanny Resemblance

One or both of the adventurers may bear an uncanny resemblance to some of the VIPs in the research facility, and in the chaos of the escape have been mistaken for one of the parties responsible for the escapee's imprisonment.

Stranger in a Strange Land

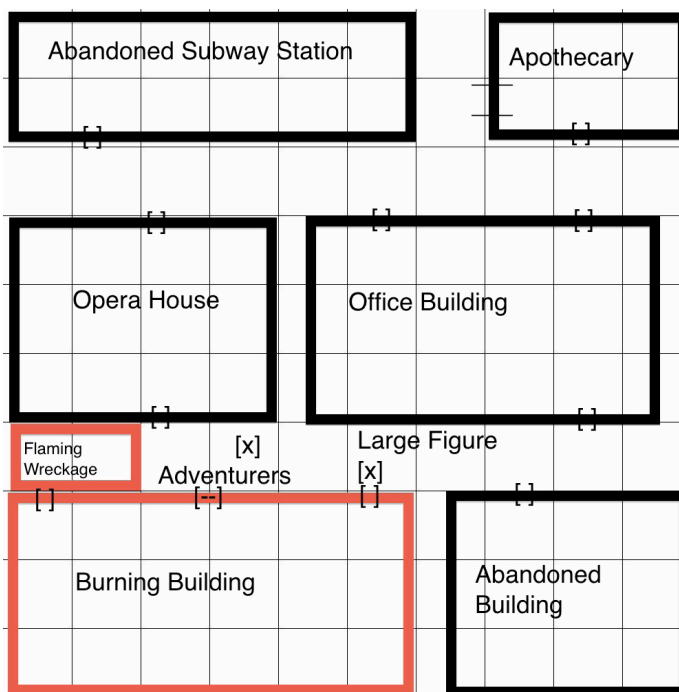
The escapee has been taken far from their homeland. The clothing and architecture is unfamiliar to them, so they have trouble distinguishing the features of their captors and prison from innocent persons and buildings in this strange new land. The adventurers are dressed in the same style of clothes, and they are outside buildings that look the same as the research facility, so they must be in on it.

Blind with Rage

The escapee has killed every living thing in the research facility. Between the blinding rage and the searing flames they may not even realize they've exited the building. The adventurers are just the next two poor souls to kill.

Overview

As mentioned in the Background, this adventure could take place in any city, in any country. For example, the following city layout could work:



Square-wide paths are streets, half-square paths are alleyways, and brackets [] are doorways.

Each square is about 25 feet on each side. The arrangement of streets and alleys in the bottom 7 rows should probably be the same in every instance of this adventure, though the labels on the buildings that aren't on fire can change, as can anything beyond the edges of the provided map.

It's night time, so offices and businesses are closed and empty, and their doors are locked. The abandoned building and subway depot are boarded up and locked too, but they have not been maintained.

The Large Figure

The Figure can be any adversary that comes in a "powered-up" flavor against whom the adventurers have almost no chance, and a "powered-down" flavor against whom the adventurers will be evenly matched. Once the Figure has lost sight of the adventurers and the adventurers have lost sight of it, the Figure will change to its powered-down form. Several Figures are provided, but feel free to create your own.



As the adventurers pass each other on the street at the spot indicated, the **Burning Building** will explode and burst into flames. The **Large Figure** will appear where indicated and welcome the adventurers with their **Greeting**. The Figure will charge at the adventurers with terrifying speed before secondary explosions engulf the building in flames, hiding the Figure from view and singeing the adventurers. From within the flames, the adventurers can hear a clear **Threat** from the Figure, but it is temporarily out of view. Boxed in by the Figure to their left, flaming wreckage to their right, and the exploding inferno in front of them, they have nowhere clear to flee except up the alleyway between the **Opera House** and the **Office Building**.

Part 1 - Flight or Fight or Out of Sight

If the adventurers are not phased by the Figure's appearance and try to fight, they will enter **Part 2a: The Long-Odds Showdown** against the Figure.

If the adventurers take fleeing to the extreme and step outside the provided map, their path will be blocked by the Figure and the adventure will proceed to **Part 2a: The Long-Odds Showdown**.

Otherwise, the adventure proceeds to **Part 2b: Lying in Wait**.

Part 2a - The Long-Odds Showdown

If the adventurers do not stay out of sight of the Figure, it will not have a chance to decrease in power and the adventurers will have to fight the full-power Figure.

Conclusions

Victory: If the adventurers do manage to defeat the Figure, they will each gain 2 experience points and the **Long Odds** story.

Defeat: The adventurers lie beaten and bruised in the streets. Just as the Figure is about to make the killing blow, the local law enforcement shows up and drowns the Figure in a hail of projectiles, driving it away. The adventurers will each earn 1 experience point and the **Forged in Fire** story. They will wake up in a hospital some days later and learn from the news outlets about how the Figure was apprehended shortly after they fell.

As an alternative, the Figure could escape entirely and make a reappearance in an adventure of the Narrator's own devising.

Part 2b - Lying in Wait

The adventurers have ducked out of sight, and must now gather their wits before facing their unknown enemy. Adventurers may craft during this time if they can find the necessary materials.

While the adventurers prepare for battle in various ways - arranging cover, brewing alchemical weapons, assembling automatons, laying traps, or scrounging for supplies - the Figure will continue to search the area for them.

During this time, the Narrator should occasionally interject background noises of the Figure searching; things like smashing, yelling, explosions, and footsteps to maintain the adventurers' sense of urgency.

If adventurers have snuck into a building without leaving external indications that they are inside, the Figure may take up to 20 minutes to locate the adventurers, searching buildings at random. After that time has passed, the Figure will enter the building in which the adventurers have hidden. If their presence is not immediately obvious, they may try to remain hidden and buy themselves additional time - provided they noticed the Figure approaching their hideout.

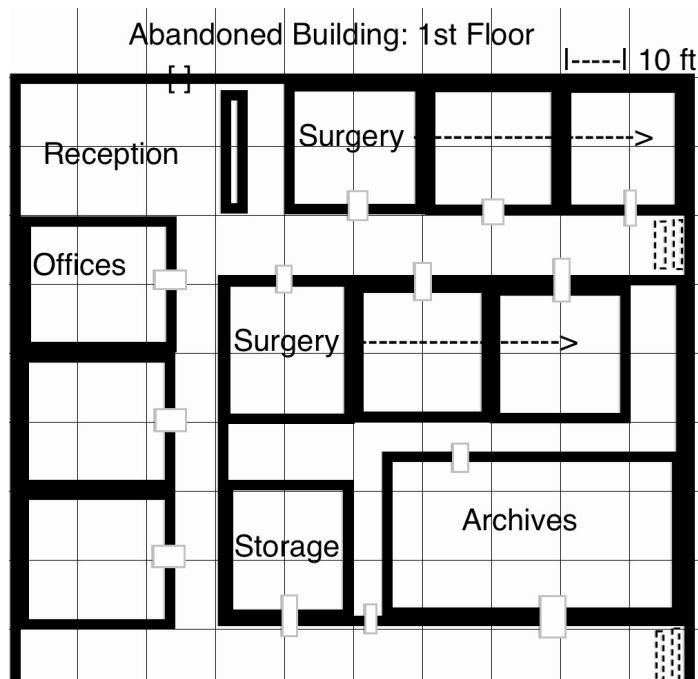
If the adventurers have left a trail behind them (such as by breaking and entering), the Figure will find them quite quickly (as few as 5 minutes), and the adventurers will have to play cat-and-mouse in their chosen building, attempt to remain hidden, or be ready to confront the Figure.

Once the Figure locates the adventurers, **Part 3: The Hastily-Laid Trap** begins.

Abandoned Building

The empty building is recently abandoned, so it is in only slight disrepair. A Tier 2 Lockpicking or Brute result is all that's necessary to gain entry.

The building appears to have been a hospital before it was abandoned. Signs to this effect are visible in the lobby, so so no Cunning check is required.



The Surgeries

The surgeries on the first floor are full of old surgical equipment and some medicines. An alchemist may be able to identify something of use and any blade-throwing characters may be interested in some of the cutting implements.

Storage

The Storage room has the highest concentration of useful materials, including some very poisonous and volatile chemicals. An alchemist could find useful supplies they need in the Storage room.

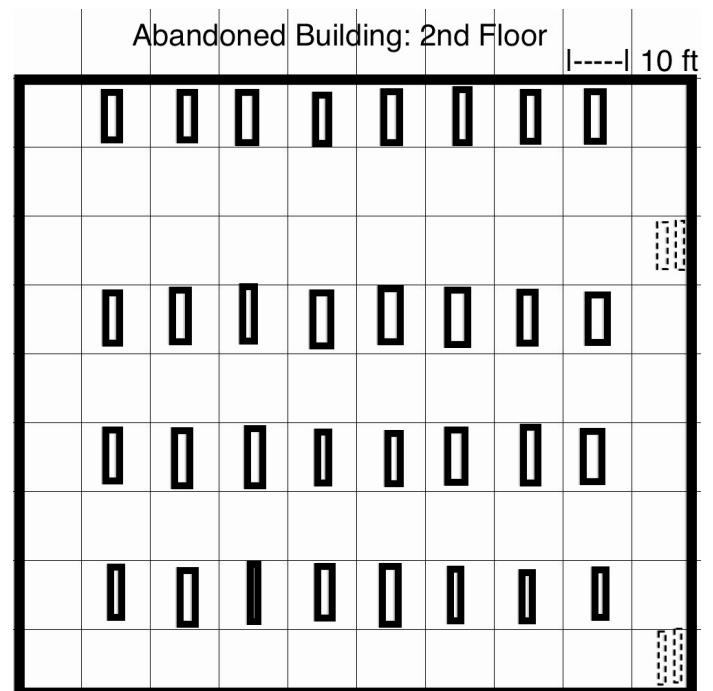
Offices

The Offices are full of what used to be nice furniture, but rats and time have ruined them. Adventurers might find a few valuable personal effects that once belonged to medical professionals in the cabinets or desks if they choose to look.

The offices are on the left side of the building, adjacent to the Burning Building, and will catch fire around the time that the Figure

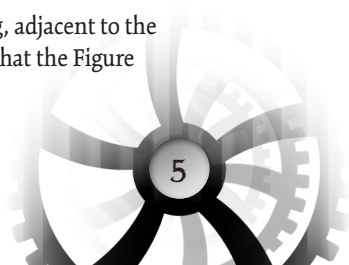
enters the Abandoned Building. If the adventurers have not looted them before their confrontation, they will be unable to do so afterward.

- Being near the west wall will expose combatants to the risk of Tier 1 burns.
- After 3 rounds the burning area (left-most 2 columns) will be covered in smoke and provide light cover to everyone inside.



The second floor of the hospital is open, full of disused hospital beds in varying states of cleanliness from "slightly dusty" to "something bled out here." It is also full of rats who will keep their distance from the adventurers and watch from the shadows. The rats will swarm on any food that lands on a bed or on the floor.

An adventurer that attempts to commune with the rats may achieve the following results:



Tephra

A Big

Misunderstanding

Spirit Tier Results

	The rats give you wide berth, allowing you plenty of room to move about the space. The first time an enemy sets foot on the second floor they will find the rats cause unstable footing and must make a Dexterity resist against this Spirit roll or fall prone.
Tier 1	
	A noise outside causes the rats to emit a frenzy of soft squeaks. They'll be able to give you advance warning if anyone approaches the building.
Tier 2	
	The mass of rats swirls over the floor, revealing a path across the floor to one of the beds. Underneath the bed is a bear trap.
Tier 3	
	The rats squeak attentively and follow your gaze and gestures. You can direct the rats one time to attempt to knock someone prone. To avoid being knocked over, that person must resist this Spirit roll with their Dexterity. The rats will follow you even if you leave the building.
Tier 4	

Bear Trap

When stepped on, the target may resist its damage with their Brute or Dexterity:

Bear Trap Resist Results

Tier 1	9 damage
Tier 2	6 damage
Tier 3	3 damage
Tier 4	0 damage

Moving Beds for Cover

If the adventurers try to rearrange the beds to provide cover, the quality of the cover depends on their Brute success.

Brute Tier Results

Tier 1	Any of the beds can be rolled around the room and tipped over to provide poor cover.
Tier 2	The beds can be stacked two-high to provide light cover.
Tier 3	The beds can be stacked two-high and two-thick to provide medium cover.
Tier 4	The adventurers can construct a makeshift fort of hospital beds to provide heavy cover.

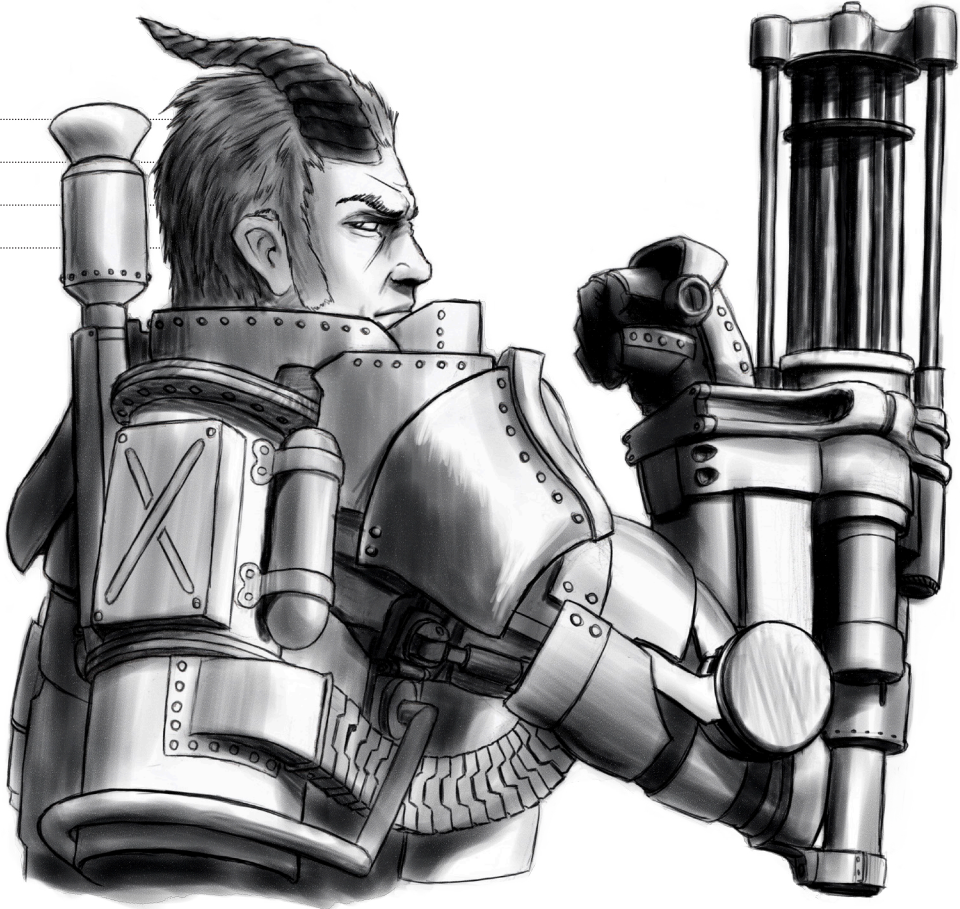
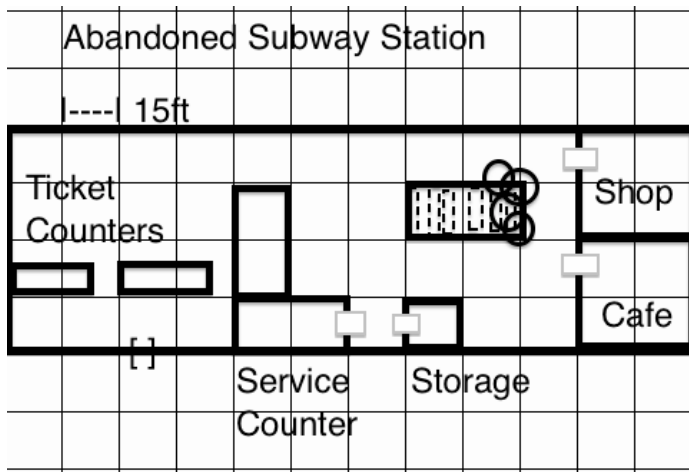


Figure 1: Franz Herschel

Subway Station

The subway station has been empty for much longer than the Abandoned Building, and as such the boards that covered its windows and doors have been pried open many times before and are quite loose. No Brute or Lockpicking is required to peel back a plank or two and slip inside. This method of entry will be largely unnoticeable from the street.



Ticket Counters

The turnstiles are full of quarter-dukes, around 40 each in both turnstiles, should the adventurers pause to get inside. A Tier 2 Sciences roll will grant access to the money and earn the greedy adventurer(s) the **Pilferer** story. Alternatively, the turnstiles each have 80 hit points and a soak class of 3 if the adventurers try to force them open. The brute-force approach will be quite noisy.

Shop

There are some victuals to be found in the Shop. An adventurer that stops to eat may recover a few hit points.

Cafe

There is plenty of inflammable cooking oil in the kitchen area of the Cafe.

Storage Closet

The Storage closet has a stock of cleaning fluids that would facilitate a Gas, Acid, or Poison Brewer.

Service Counter

There is a mannequin wearing a suit of Super-Heavy Plate Mail posed with a Super-Heavy Battle Axe behind the Service Counter where the ticket master would have stood. The armor should comfortably fit most adventurers between 5' 7" and 6' 2" in height. There is a thick layer of dirt and dust which would be easily stirred up into a blinding cloud.

Stairs

The stairs down to the subway tracks have caved in. There are plenty of rocks to be had for a Hurl or Improv Fighter.

If an adventurer tries to move some of the rubble from the cave-in, they may be able to assemble cover depending on their Brute roll:

Brute Tier Results

Tier 1

The adventurer is able to relocate small pieces of the rubble to create uneven footing in a 5x5 area. Anyone moving into, out of, or through the rubble must resist this Brute roll or fall prone.

Tier 2

The adventurer is able to shift larger pieces of rubble to assemble Poor Cover in a 5x5 area.

Tier 3

The adventurer is able to shift large pieces of rubble to assemble Light Cover in a 10x10 area within 40 feet of the stairs.

Tier 4

The adventurer is able to shift huge pieces of the rubble to assemble a 10x10 area of Medium Cover anywhere in the abandoned subway station.



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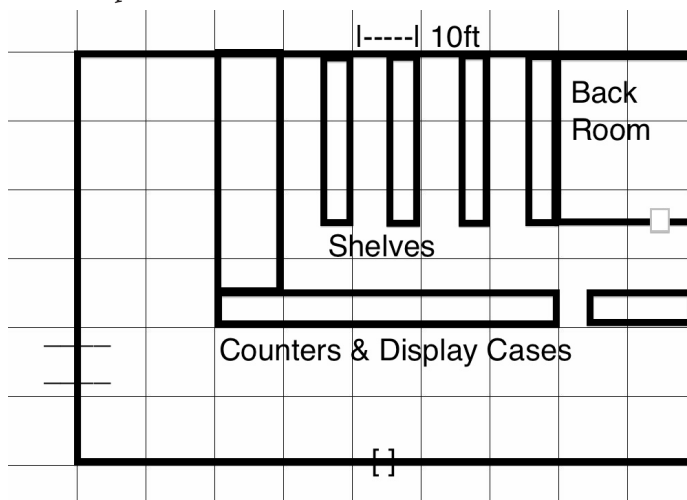
A Big

Misunderstanding

Apothecary

The apothecary's shop is closed for the day, but it has plenty of herbs and medicines which a Medicine Brewer can use. There are also plenty of knives and animal parts. The cash register is intact and contains a princely sum of 7 princes and 5 dukes. If the adventurers opt to burgle the apothecary, each adventurer that pockets some cash will earn the **Pilferer** story.

The apothecary is not a difficult building to break into, but if the adventurers opt for the brute-force approach, the door has 50 hit points and a soak class of 2.



Shelves

The shelves reach almost to the ceiling.

Counters & Display Cases

The counters are four feet tall. There are many premade medicines in the display case, but they aren't labeled.

If an adventurer wishes to discern what a potion does with a Sciences roll or use their intuition with a Spirit roll:



Sciences Tier Results

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Tier 1 | You spot two common poisons (Corrosive, Marque I). You know not to drink them. |
| Tier 2 | You spot an additional, stronger poison (Corrosive, Marque II, Contact). This one might be quite handy in a fight! |
| Tier 3 | You are able to identify the Tier 1 and Tier 2 poisons and are fairly certain that there are a pair of Marque I Push potions on the shelf. |
| Tier 4 | You are able to identify all of the previous poisons, and in addition can determine that one particular vial of liquid will evaporate into a gas when uncorked (Sticky gas, Marque II, Area of Effect). |

Spirit Tier Results

As narrator, you should only tell the adventurer about the gut feeling they get when selecting their liquid; they won't know for sure if their intuition led them true until they try to use the liquid.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Tier 1 | You confidently select one of the liquids from the shelf (fruity-flavored drink). |
| Tier 2 | You have a very good feeling about this liquid (Marque I, Push: Medicine). |
| Tier 3 | You have a nasty feeling about this liquid (Marque I, Contact, Corrosive: Poison). |
| Tier 4 | You have an evil churning feeling about this liquid. It should probably be thrown at an enemy far away from yourself (Marque II, Internal Burning: Gas). |

Back Room

The back room is full of bookshelves, and the cunning adventurer may notice articles of value.

Cunning Tier Results

- Tier 1** Herbalist's Guide to the Empire
- Tier 2** A labeled potion
- Tier 3** HOFAZ Publication - IA
- Tier 4** Shop Catalog

Herbalist's Guide to the Empire

A first edition copy of Nicholai Alighieri's alchemical reference that, due to its edition, may actually be worth a significant amount. An adventurer who can appraise the book will find out that it's worth 10 princes to the proper buyer. Most bookstores would pay 5 for it. Without an appraisal, though, the best offer an adventurer will receive is a single duke - though it will grant +1 to their Alchemy when in a natural setting during their Downtime.

Labeled Potion

Finally, a label in this darn place! It's a large bottle labeled "Blinding Fog ~ Uncork ~ Enjoy."

This bottle, when uncorked, will produce a Marque II, Blinding, Area of Effect gas centered around itself. The perfect ingredient for an ambush!

HOFAZ Publication - IA

This book was clearly hand-written and hand-bound by an unskilled binder. It's written with an alphabet that neither adventurer will recognize unless they have a Story that begins with "HOFAZ." The book has no monetary value to ordinary folk, but is probably one-of-a-kind. Taking it could be very risky or very rewarding - it's impossible to tell at this point.

Shop Catalog

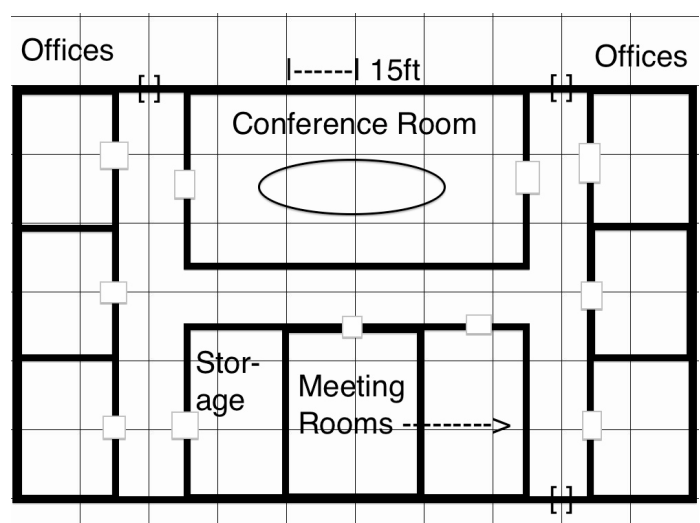
Here it is! Color pictures of all of the shop's potions, labeled with what they do and how to use them.

The adventurers may turn to the "Alchemy" section of their Playing Guides and each choose 2 brews (Acid, Poison, Gas, or Medicine) with up to 2 Marque II augments. While there are many more potions in the apothecary, they don't have time to go through the whole catalog: The Figure will appear once both adventurers have acquired their selected potions and **Part 3: The Hastily-Laid Trap** will begin.

Office Building

The office building looks like it houses some service-oriented company, maybe an insurance company, rail, or airship management office. There are lots of nice furniture pieces which may be rearranged to create cover, plenty of meeting rooms, and upscale interior decor. There are not many valuables, though an adventurer that searches diligently may find the odd pistol or shotgun that can be jury-rigged into a trap.

This is a newer building and its lock is complex, which will lower the Lockpicking tier of the adventurers by 1 to a minimum of Tier 1, but its glass doors will give way to a simple thrown brick or stern bludgeoning.



Tephra

A Big

Misunderstanding

Conference Room

The conference room contains a large conference table. It can easily be flipped to provide Medium Cover.

Storage Room

The storage room has plenty of food, paper, and office and cleaning supplies that an Acid, Poison, or Gas brewer will be able to use.

Back Office

In the back office across from the storage room there is a small cannon alongside a stack of cannonballs. If the adventurers choose to inspect the cannon, they may use either their Sciences or Cunning. For each tier of success, the adventurer will learn the information from all previous tiers as well.

Cunning Tier Results

Tier 1	This cannon is a type that was used on seafaring ships about a century before the Hurricane Wars.
Tier 2	This cannon has a ship name - "PRN Dreadfire" - embossed on the side. The Dreadfire was an infamous Paldoran privateer vessel.
Tier 3	This cannon is in fact a real cannon salvaged from an old ship-of-war.
Tier 4	This cannon is in full working order and ready to be fired if only it had some gunpowder.

Sciences Tier Results

Tier 1	This cannon is a type that was used onboard seafaring ships around a century before the Hurricane wars.
Tier 2	This cannon appears to be in remarkably good condition for its age: It looks like the owner has restored it.
Tier 3	This cannon is in full working order and ready to be fired, if only it had some gunpowder.
Tier 4	This cannon is in full working order, ready to be fired (if only it had some gunpowder), and if you fire it yourself you receive a +2 to the first roll required.

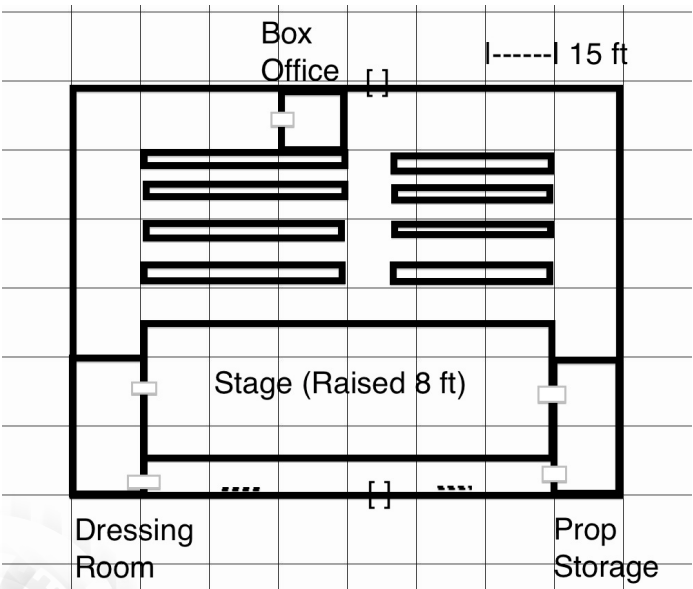
If the adventurers wish, one of them may give up all of the ammunition for one of their firearms to muster enough gunpowder for a single cannon shot. They will then be unable to use that firearm until they can obtain additional rounds.

The cannon has a range of 400 feet and a damage class of 12, requires 3 AP to ready, and may be aimed as an improvised Super-Heavy Firearm. If the target of the cannon manages to evade the ball they will nonetheless be shocked by the blast, suffering a -2 to Accuracy and Evade until the next time their action points refresh.

Opera House

The opera house is a dilapidated affair. It can't seat many people and has a cramped stage. Backstage is even smaller, with just one oversize dressing room and a prop storage room of the same size. There are two ladders backstage that lead up to catwalks above the main thrust.

The stage manager forgot to lock up tonight, so the back door will swing open if the adventurers try it. The front door is locked; to enter from the outside the adventurers may pick the lock or try to break the door down. The door has 100 hit points and a soak class of 2.



As the opera house is across the street from the burning building it will soon catch fire. If the Figure makes its entrance from back-stage, it will do so accompanied by flames and the final combat will occur in a building whose back third is alight:

- The burning area will be covered in smoke and provide light cover to everyone inside.
- After 3 rounds, being near walls will expose combatants to the risk of Tier 1 Burns (which they may tier down with their Brute) at the start of each of their turns.

Box Office

The door to the box office is locked. It has 50 hit points and a soak class of 1. The metal cover over the service counter of the box office is also locked and has 25 hit points with no soak class.

Inside, there are 20 half-dukes which, if stolen, will earn the adventurers the **Pilferer** story.

Dressing Room

The dressing room has cosmetics and cheap, light furniture. Those pieces won't provide much cover but could be broken into improvised weapons.

Prop Storage

This room has a variety of costumes and paraphernalia for making stage effects. The Cunning adventurer may notice the following useful items:

Cunning Tier Results

Tier 1	There are lots of costume pieces here - enough that both adventurers could disguise themselves as any kind of race or person they wanted. As long as they stay in low lighting, they'll probably pull it off.
Tier 2	There are two smoke bombs, likely used for stage effects. They will produce Marque I, Blinding, Area of Effect gas.
Tier 3	The smoke bombs have a warning printed on them: "Fire hazard: this end up!" Inverting the smoke bomb will cause it to burst into flame. An inverted smoke bomb will function as an un-augmented Marque I explosive.
Tier 4	In the back corner behind a densely packed rack of clothes is a control box for the on stage backdrops that can lift, lower, or detach them. The buttons are clearly labeled as to what section of the stage they can lower (or drop) a backdrop.

Stage

There are large sandbags and stacks of pig iron secured with rope as counterweights for several heavy backdrop murals. They are articulated from above, some 25 feet up in the catwalks.

Catwalks

The adventurer that climbs up to the catwalks will find that their Dexterity will let them cause the scenery (or counterweights, as appropriate) to come crashing down to the stage below at an opportune moment. These heavy objects have a damage class of 6.

Dexterity Tier Results

Tier 1	The backdrops and counterweights are located as far upstage as possible; the adventurer will be able to precisely drop one on anyone standing directly underneath.
Tier 2	The adventurer will be able to maneuver the scenery to drop on or up to 5 feet downstage of the back stage line.
Tier 3	The adventurer can coordinate the counterweights and scenery to drop a heavy weight on anyone on or up to 15 feet downstage of the backstage line.
Tier 4	The adventurer will be able to drop piece of scenery or counterweight anywhere on stage.

Part 3: The Hastily-Laid Trap

The Figure has finally arrived at the building in which the adventurers have hidden and resumes its pursuit. Unlike the previous encounter, this time the Figure is a less-powerful version of its former self and the adventurers stand a fighting chance.

If the adventurers' first act of aggression is an attack (and not a trap), the first attacker may take a +2 to their Accuracy. Once the Figure lays eyes on the adventurers, the final combat begins.



Figure #1

Franz Herschel

Powered-Up

Franz Herschel AP: 4 PAR: 2

Satyr in Clanker Exosuit

HP: 26 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +3 | Spd: 40 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+0	+2	+7	+0	+5

Franz is seated in a clanker exosuit with 12 wounds and 40 HP; this keeps him in constant heavy cover with only his head exposed. Called shots to Franz must target his head, and Franz gets a +8 bonus to his evade against these. All other attacks that hit will hit the clanker.

Guard

Franz's Appropriated Jacket - minimal leather armor

Eva: +0 Def: +0

Soak: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Clanker Exosuit - super-heavy metal armor

Eva: +0 Def: +0

Soak: 5 | 10 | 15 | 20

Actions

Gatling Gun - heavy metal ranged attack

Acc: +1 Range: 200 ft

Damage: 6 | 12 | 18 | 24

1 AP

Notes: Mounted to the right arm of the exosuit. The gatling gun has, as far as the adventurers will be able to tell, an unlimited supply of ammunition and will never need to be reloaded.

Grenade Launcher - light metal ranged attack

Acc: +2 Stk: +0 Range: 50 ft

Damage (Explosion): 10

Damage (Melee): 8 | 16 | 24 | 30

2 AP

Notes: Mounted to the left arm of the exosuit. The launcher delivers Imploding, Extended Range, Marque I explosives. The launcher has six barrels but Franz has no more grenades: After six shots, the launcher will be empty but still useful as a super-heavy melee weapon.

Steam Surge

Franz activates twin Super-Heavy Steam Casters on the back of the suit, propelling the suit forward up to 40 feet. To stop the lunge, the casters swivel forward and deal damage of Class 9 to any enemy unfortunate enough to be in front of the suit.

3 AP

Normal accuracy and evade rolls are performed for the damage. Steam Surge may only be used once every 3 turns as the casters must recharge. Enemies that are between Franz and his destination are pushed the rest of the distance and take 5 damage per 10 feet.



Playing Franz Herschel (powered up)

Franz will advance towards the adventurers 10 feet per turn, if in combat, while terrorizing them with the suit's **Grenade Launcher** followed by two shots from his **Gatling Gun**. If he takes any damage from an adventurer he will retaliate with a full turns' worth of **Gatling Gun** fire split between the adventurers.

While Franz still has grenades, adventurers who charge at Franz with melee weapons will be met with a **Steam Surge**, after which Franz will walk the exosuit backwards until he is 20 feet away, then resume firing his **Gatling Gun**.

Once Franz is out of grenades, he will advance toward adventurers at full speed and wield the **Grenade Launcher** as a melee weapon. If the adventurers move away from him he will fire the **Gatling Gun** at them until they stand still.

Powered-down

Franz Herschel AP: 3 PAR: 1
Satyr Alchemist

HP: 26 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +3 | Spd: 35 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+0	+2	+7	+0	+5

Guard

Franz's Appropriated Jacket - minimal leather armor
Eva: +0 Def: +0
Soak: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Actions

Revolver - medium metal ranged attack
2 AP Acc: +1 Range: 100 ft Ready: 1 AP
Damage: 4 | 8 | 12 | 16

Alchemy Toss
Franz has brewed quite a few nasty Marque II potions, which he will lob at the adventurers or use on himself, as appropriate:
1 AP - 3x Instant, Painful, Contact poison vials
- 4x Area of Effect, Blinding gas vials
- 5x Push, Contact medicine vials
If Franz throws a poison vial at an adventurer and misses, the adventurer must make a Dexterity resist against Franz's or else the poison will splash up high enough to affect the adventurer anyway.

Greeting

"I will not spare anyone! Not the subjects, not the researchers, and not even you!"

Threat

"Run, little kiddies! Franz is coming for you!"

Playing Franz Herschel (powered down)

Once Franz's potions are exhausted he has very little staying power in combat. He knows this and will try his best to remain hidden, in cover, and out of melee range.

Franz will start a fight with a **Blinding Gas** vial, then dodge around the adventurers and take potshots at them with his revolver. He will continue to deploy **Blinding Gas** throughout the fight, striving to keep the adventurers inside its effects. If an adventurer gets too close he will throw one of his **Poison Vials** at them. He will use his **Push Medicine** whenever he has at least 8 HP missing.

Background

Franz Herschel is a lithe, short, and scrawny satyr. He is dressed in a beat-up leather jacket that is too wide for his small frame. The tips of his horns curve backwards, completing a full circle and coming to rest just above their base. He has unkempt, ample facial hair that matches his fur.

Franz was a content moonshiner and tinkerer from Arakrith before he was captured and forced to put his alchemical and mechanical talents to use for the group that was conducting experiments inside the now-burning building. He did a bit of extracurricular alchemy in his time there, and eventually had the right complement of potions to torch the whole building, get into a prototype exosuit, and make his way out of the inferno and past the guards. He doesn't recognize anyone or anything in this strange new city, and there are more than a few alchemical concoctions swimming through his bloodstream, so he's not in the most stable of mind sets at the moment.

Shortly after his initial encounter with the adventurers, the exosuit will reach the limit of its endurance, and the flames, bullets, and wreckage will disable it, forcing Franz to pursue the adventurers on foot.



Figure #2

Trim Vank

Powered-Up

Trim Vank

AP: 4 PAR: 2

Oversized Gnome

HP: 52 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +7 | Spd: 45 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+12	+0	+13	-3	+0

Trim Vank is stuck in her large-sized form, standing a hulking 9' 11" tall. She is able to make one free move per turn.

Guard

Eva: +1 Def: +0

Soak: 0 | 0 | 0 | 0

Note: If Trim is being grabbed, the person grabbing Trim takes 4 heat damage per turn.

Actions

Fist - unarmed attack

1 AP

Acc: +7 Stk: +4

Damage: 3 | 6 | 9 | 12

Earthen Crossbow - medium wooden crossbow

2 AP

Acc: +7 Range: 50 ft Ready: 0 AP

Damage: 5 | 10 | 15 | 20

Flaming Breath

Acc: +7 Stk: +4 Range: 20 ft

2 AP

Damage: 4 | 8 | 12 | 16

Note: For 1 additional AP, Trim can double the range of this attack.

Pictured on the Cover

Playing Trim Vank (powered up)

The hulking Trim will favor her fists and essence augmentations in combat, rushing up to the nearest adventurer and pummeling them. The other adventurers will be targeted by Trim's ranged essence augments. She will take every opportunity to meet an opponent's attack with an attack from her crossbow, though she won't use the crossbow on her own turn so long as she has more than 20 HP remaining. She will use her **Free Movement** to avoid being in melee range of more than one adventurer at a time.

Greeting

"Time for hurting is over! Time for payback is now!"

Threat

"There is no escape! Not for them, and not for you!"

Powered-down

Trim Vank

AP: 3 PAR: 1

Gnome

HP: 28 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +7 | Spd: 20 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+4	+0	+7	+3	+0

Trim Vank is able to make one free move per turn.

Guard

Franz's Appropriated Jacket - minimal leather armor

Eva: +0 Def: +0

Soak: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Actions

Fist - unarmed attack

Acc: +7 Stk: +4

1 AP Damage: 3 | 6 | 9 | 12

Note: Trim will only use melee attacks when she has shifted to her Enlarged form.

Earthen Crossbow - medium wooden crossbow

Acc: +7 Range: 50 ft Ready: 0 AP

2 AP Damage: 5 | 10 | 15 | 20

Note: Trim will only use her crossbow when she is in her original Gnomish form.

Minimize (*reflexively*)

1 AP When in her Enlarged form, Trim can reflexively shrink to her Gnomish size as a deflection against ranged or melee attacks. She must return to her Enlarged form before she can use this tactic a second time.

Powered-down

Trim Vank

AP: 3 PAR: 1

Gnome - *Enlarged Form Statistics*

HP: 28 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +7 | Spd: 40 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+8	+0	+7	-3	+0

Background

Trim is short even for a gnome, standing just 1' 3" tall. She wears a black, tattered one-piece garment that clings to her skin. It stretches easily and will adapt to her larger form. Trim has thick black hair that now reaches down to her shoulders - in her enlarged form it will only come to her ears. She has no shoes, but doesn't mind.

Trim was more in touch with her ability to shift and control her size than most gnomes, and lived contentedly in a Zelhost forest, until one day she was bushwhacked by a group of paramilitaries, confined in the now-burning building, and subjected to a great many essence-manipulation experiments and alchemical serums.

Eventually, the scientists pushed Trim's body to such extremes that they could no longer contain her. Trim, now a hulking super-soldier standing over nine feet tall, is unable to shrink her body, and possesses moderate pyrokinesis. She laid waste to the facility and blazed a trail to the exit. Her creators probably would have felt pride in their last moments, had there been room for it next to the pain and terror. No laboratory between Trim's cell and the exit was spared, and all who stood in her way are now dead.

The months of experimentation, essence manipulation, and psychological conditioning have warped Trim's mind, and she now suffers from moderate paranoia. She perceives all beings as threats that wish to return her to his cell and continue the experiments.

Shortly after Trim loses sight of the adventurers a significant portion of her soldier boosts will wear off, reducing her from an unstoppable fiery juggernaut to simply an enraged, bloodthirsty gnome.

Playing Trim Vank (powered down)

Once Trim's essence augments fade away, she will rely much more on her Gnomish form to stay out of sight and stalk the adventurers, taking potshots with her **Crossbow** from afar and using her **Free Movement** to stay out of melee range. If an adventurer lands a melee attack, Trim will grow to her Enlarged form and dish out melee attacks in retaliation. When a ranged attack forces her to use **Minimize**, she will scamper away and resume the use of her **Crossbow**.

If subdued or restrained, Trim may be convinced to perceive her situation accurately and surrender.

Figure #3

Squibbles

Powered-Up

Squibbles

AP: 4 PAR: 2

Bio-Corrupted Ayodin Assassin

HP: 36 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +1 | Spd: 40 ft (land, climb)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+2	+7	+11	+0	+4

Notes: +5 to staying disguised (due to Jellyskin trait), +8 Brute to resist inhalation. Requires a Tier 2 Cunning roll to notice where she goes any time she moves.

Guard

Eva: +3 Def: +0

Soak: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Deflection (1 AP reflexively): +6 to evade

Actions

Throwing Dagger - light metal melee weapon

1 AP Acc: +7 Stk: +1 Range: 60 ft

Damage: 5 | 10 | 15 | 20

40 Squibs

Acc: +5 Stk: +1 Range: 50 ft

Damage (impact): 4 | 8 | 12 | 16

1 AP Damage (explosion): 6 | 12 | 18 | 24

Notes: The squibs' explosions make no noise.

It costs 0 AP for her to drop a squib into an adjacent space, but she can only do this once per round.

Playing Squibbles (powered up)

Squibbles' primary method of attack will consist of phase-stepping to an opponent, dropping a great number of squibs, then phase-stepping into cover or a hiding place. When possible, she will attack from and retreat to locations over the adventurers' heads.

When she runs out of squibs, she'll turn to her trusty throwing dagger. She'll do everything she can to stay concealed, phase-stepping multiple times if necessary.

Greeting

"Wonderful! Fresh meat!"

Threat

"You can run and you can hide, but the shadows belong to me!"

Powered-Down

Squibbles

AP: 3 PAR: 1

Bio-Corrupted Ayodin Assassin

HP: 25 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +0 | Spd: 40 ft (land, climb)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+2	+5	+7	+0	+2

Notes: +5 to staying disguised (due to Jellyskin trait), +8 Brute to resist inhalation. Requires a Tier 2 Cunning roll to notice where she goes any time she moves.

Guard

Eva: +3 Def: +0

Soak: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Deflection (1 AP reflexively): +6 to evade

Actions

Throwing Dagger - light metal melee weapon

1 AP Acc: +3 Stk: +1 Range: 60 ft
Damage: 5 | 10 | 15 | 20

20 Squibs

Acc: +1 Stk: +1 Range: 50 ft

Damage (impact): 4 | 8 | 12 | 16

1 AP Damage (explosion): 6 | 12 | 18 | 24

Notes: The squibs' explosions make no noise.

It costs 0 AP for her to drop a squib into an adjacent space, but she can only do this once per round.

intimidated she will lie and deceive her opponents until an opportunity to turn the tables presents itself.

Background

Female ayodin, 5' 10", at least 25 years old. Dressed in a tight black suit with a myriad of holsters for squibs. She wears form-fitting leather toed boots that allow her to fully utilize her digits while climbing.

Squibbles was abducted at a very young age and has been a subject of alchemical, bio-flux, prosthetic, and psychological experiments for most of her life. She was recently transferred to the now-burning building for a new program. Through years of being addressed by her subject number, ceaseless new concoctions being introduced into her bloodstream, and a rigorous conditioning program both physical and mental, she has long since forgotten her real name. "Squibbles" was a nickname that one of the other subjects gave her after witnessing one of her test performances, and she latched onto the name.

Squibbles was a docile, obedient subject for years, co-operating with all tests and never offering any resistance. A few months back, one of the essence augmentations changed that and replaced her calm, stoic demeanor with a sadistic rage. Her performance at her evaluations improved markedly afterwards, and the augmentation was hailed as a success.

The researchers were playing with fire, however, and the new Squibbles, who had long ago been skilled enough to make an escape attempt, was now eager to taste her captors' blood.

Freed at last from shackles both physical and mental, Squibbles is out to wage her very own Hurricane War on the rest of the continent.

Playing Squibbles (powered down)

Shortly after she loses sight of the adventurers, the fatigue of her escape will start to set in. Her missing action point and decreased stats will lead her to prefer climbing over the adventurers' heads, tossing squibs willy-nilly in an attempt to flush the adventurers out.

If she spots the adventurers she'll use her Jellyskin essence augment to disguise herself as a third innocent adventurer and approach them, then attack and Phase Step away.

Squibbles will prefer to avoid open combat, climbing and Phase Stepping into cover whenever the adventurers catch sight of her. Since she only needs 2 AP to attack (1 to phase step in, 0 to drop squibs, and 1 more to escape), she will almost always use her reflexive deflection.

Squibbles will fight to the death. If she is successfully



Tephra

A Big

Misunderstanding

Figure #4

Lieutenant Ateran Medres

Powered-Up

Ateran Medres

AP: 4 PAR: 2

Haudi Stormtrooper Lieutenant

HP: 56 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +5 | Spd: 40 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+9	+4	+3	+0	+3

Notes: She is able to make one free move per turn.

Guard

Royal Combat Armor - medium metal armor

Eva: -2 Def: +0

Soak: 3 | 6 | 9 | 12

Actions

Prosthetic Armblade - left arm

Acc: +4 Stk: +6

Damage: 6 | 12 | 18 | 24

2 AP

Notes: The armblade only costs 1 AP to use the first time of every round. Reinforced provides +8 to resists involving this arm. The armblade stays hidden in the left arm until released.

Prosthetic Hand - right arm

Acc: +4 Stk: +6

Damage: 2 | 4 | 6 | 8

1 AP

Note: Reinforced provides +8 to resists involving this hand. Neuromuscular Incapacitator stuns for 1AP on hit.

Merciless (stance)

Ateran chooses a target. While in this stance, she can only attack her target and people who are directly preventing her from getting to her target. If she is not engaged with her target, sh must spend at least 1 AP every turn moving toward her target. Once per turn she can add a +9 onto any one of her combat rolls.

1 AP

Playing Lt. Ateran Medres (powered up)

Ateran will first enter her Merciless stance, then rush to an adventurer and attack. If she doesn't have enough AP to attack with her blade, she'll stow it (for 0 AP) and punch. The important thing is to land a hit, activating her Neuromuscular Incapacitator, so she can use her Merciless stance to boost her accuracy.

Once she's near an opponent she will make repeated called shots to disarm and disable them.

If the adventurers flee, Lt. Medres will abandon the chase to attend to her burning building and send two **Haudi Stormtroopers** into the night to search for them.

Greeting

"I require more subjects! You two there, you'll do nicely! Hold still while I make the first incision!"

Threat

"Men, find them!"

Powered-Down

Stormtrooper

AP: 3 PAR: 1

Haudi Stormtrooper

HP: 25 | Wnds: 12 | Pri: +1 | Spd: 20 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+2	+5	+7	+0	+2

Notes: +5 to staying disguised (due to Jellyskin trait), +8 Brute to resist inhalation. Requires a Tier 2 Cunning roll to notice where she goes any time she moves.

Guard

Royal Combat Armor - medium metal armor

Eva: +1 Def: +0

Soak: 2 | 4 | 6 | 8

Actions

Long Revolver - heavy metal firearm

3 AP

Acc: +4 Range: 200 ft

Damage: 5 | 12 | 18 | 24

Combat Dagger - light metal melee weapon

Acc: +4 Stk: +1

Damage: 6 | 12 | 18 | 24

2 AP

Notes: The squibs' explosions make no noise.

It costs 0 AP for her to drop a squib into an adjacent space, but she can only do this once per round.

Turret (stance)

While in this stance, she cannot move. For 2 AP reflexively, she can make a ranged attack at anything that moves so much as five feet toward you. If anybody comes into a space adjacent to her, she can make ranged attacks against them for 1 AP during her turn and with a +1 bonus to her damage class.

1 AP

Playing Haudi Stormtrooper (powered down)

6' 5" females, clad in a lighter, more muted version of Lt. Medres' armor, minus the gold trim.

At first only one of the soldiers will encounter the adventurers. She will signal her comrade, then take up her Turret stance. Once they're together, one of them will remain in the Turret stance while the other moves to optimize their attacks. They will swap roles if necessary.

Each soldier will fight until they are no longer able to wield a weapon (or have been disarmed of all their weapons), at which point they will surrender.

Background

Human female, 32 years old, 7' 1", 230 lbs. Haudi, follower of Jinzium. Thick leather strips merge with light metal plates to form a full suit of armor that is lightweight but sturdy, affording full range of movement while still offering much protection. Gold and red trim highlight the intersection of the materials. Both of her legs and her left arm are prosthetics, painted an off-white color that complements the few pieces of visible clothing. Her prosthetics are obvious - shaped like human limbs but omitting skin and with large joints to tolerate adverse conditions.

Lieutenant Medres was raised in a Jinzist sect whose focus was both on the way of Jinzium and on returning the Haudi Empire and the Empress to their former glory and rightful place as rulers of Rilausia. While she had the potential to rise to great heights in the Siyeshi army, her ulterior motives steered her to a slower ascension that put her in contact with certain strategic individuals. For just over a year she has been under the wing of an admiral who shares the vision she was raised with: A Rilausia united under a new Haudi empire.

She was in charge of managing, advancing, protecting, and hiding the research that was occurring in the now-burning building. Research which included covert, illegal, treaty-violating, unethical, and otherwise abhorrent experimentation on live subjects in the name of developing new soldier augments.

She has been granted a good degree of autonomy, and hopes she can replace the subjects that were lost in the fire and resume operation before the next time a superior officer checks in on her, so that she might avoid disciplinary action that would jeopardize her life's work.

Conclusion

Defeating the Figure in combat will earn the adventures 2 experience points. Any items they acquired along the way are theirs to keep so long as they flee quickly. It won't be long before the authorities arrive in force, and they don't take kindly to looters.

Story Rewards

If the adventurers confront the powered-up Figure and are defeated, they will earn this story.

FORGED IN FIRE

You stood fast in battle with a stranger and you both nearly died. Whenever you are in combat with that person as your ally, your first wound effect is reduced to a called shot instead.

If the adventurers defeat the powered-up Figure, they will earn this story.

LONG ODDS

You entered a fight that you had no hope of winning, but somehow came out on top anyway. You've got guts and some serious brass. Once per combat, you may use Heroics on a non-resist roll (such as accuracy, strike, evade, et cetera).

If an adventurer steals for the sole purpose of enriching themselves (rather than to defend against the Figure), they will earn this story.

PILFERER

Once upon a time, the conditions were just right for you to snatch someone else's valuables and get away with it. It only gets easier: the next time you try to commit an incidental theft (that is, a theft that is not a key part of an adventure), you gain +2 to avoiding detection both during and after the fact.