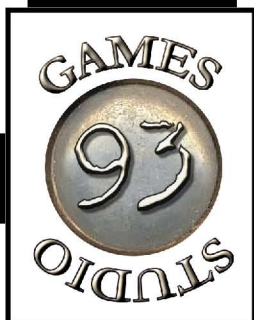
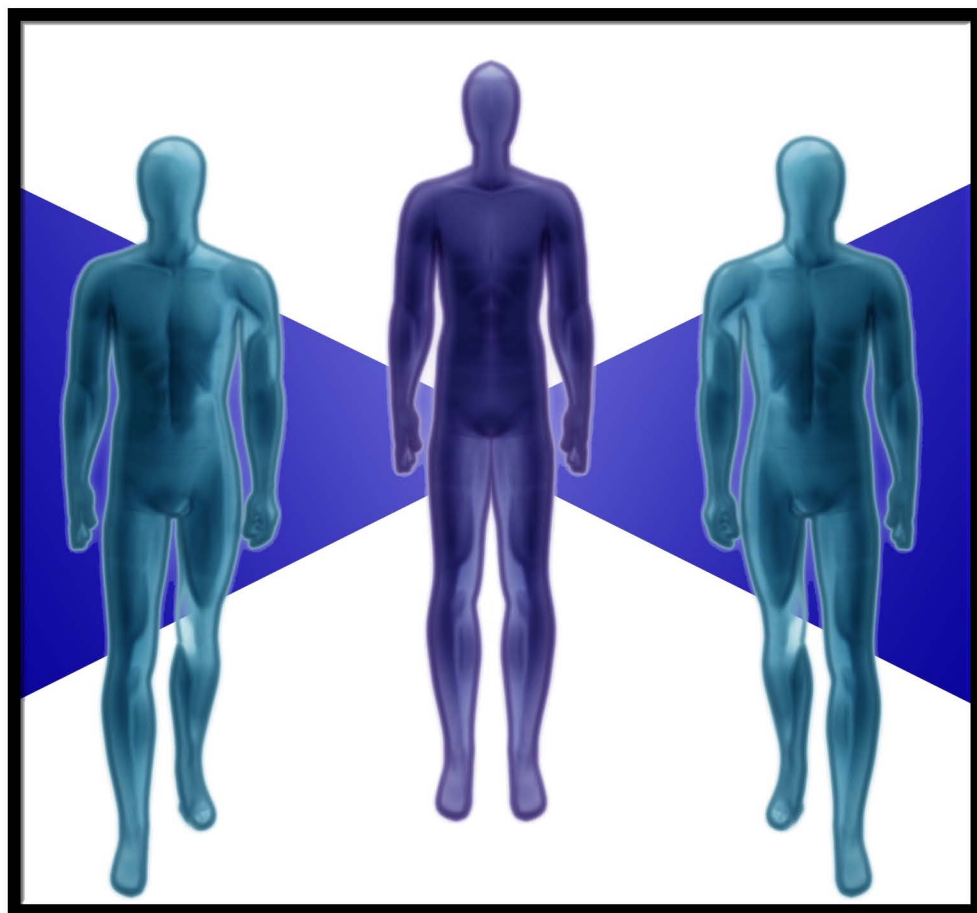


# The SWING

## The Senseless



A GAME OF REALITY  
REALITY IN A GAME

## Copyright & Credits

**The Swing: The Senseless**

**Copyright** © 2005 by 93 Games Studio

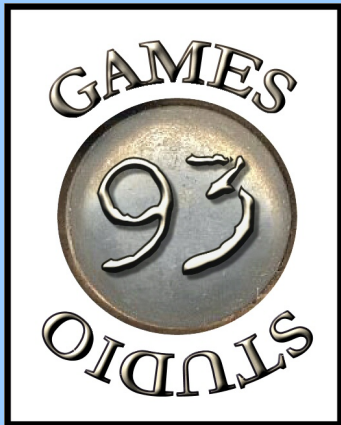
**Author:** Monte Lin

**Illustrations:** 93 Games Studio and its licensors

© 2005 by 93 Games Studio. All rights reserved. No part of this manual may be reproduced without the written permission of 93 Games Studio, except for brief excerpts for the purpose of reviews.

Game aids provided within this manual and online may be photocopied for personal use only.

Any mention of companies, organizations and products in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyrights concerned.



[www.93gamesstudio.com](http://www.93gamesstudio.com)  
smokewolf@93gamesstudio  
715 Williams Ave  
Raceland, Kentucky 41169

## 93 Games Studio

I will be honest with you; 93 Games Studio started out as one man and the guinea pigs that would playtest for him. In 2001 I started with an idea to toy with making a game. I wanted a side project to keep my mind off of work and to help with a friend who was supposed to move in with me and my family. He never moved in, but I kept working on the game, a little here and a little there.

After a year of working on it, I realized that I might have something. I started working overtime to get something into playtest and found a group (Regimental Quarters) willing to try it out. They helped to flesh out the system and boost my confidence. At GenCon and Origins in 2003 I met James (RPGNow.com), and made plans to enter the PDF RPG market. I also discovered print on demand technology which allowed me to enter the print RPG business without mortgaging my home.

In December of 2003 I released *The Swing* in both print and PDF formats. Since then I have released over 25 more products (mostly small PDF supplements) and have reached agreements with RPGNOW, DriveThruRPG, Arima.it, Digital Book Booth, and Lulu to sell my products. I have also hired 4 freelance writers, worked with UKG Publishing to help produce maps for some of our games and have freelanced with White Wolf, Ronin Arts and Expeditious Retreat Press.

93 Games Studio is committed to bringing the real world into the gaming world. We have all played fantasy, been there, done that; now its time to play reality.

If you are interested in joining this endeavor please email me or check our website for our submission guidelines and we can go from there or check out our submissions page for more information.

*The Swing: The Senseless* requires the use of *The Swing: Reality Guide* published by 93 Games Studio

# Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1</b> .....	<b>1</b>	JUDE THADDEUS RETIREMENT HOME.....	<b>10</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	1	<b>CHAPTER 4</b> .....	<b>12</b>
BACKGROUND.....	1	THE SENSITIVES.....	12
OBJECTIVISM.....	2	SENSITIVES POWERS.....	12
TIMELINE OF EVENTS.....	3	CHARLES LUNIS.....	13
<b>CHAPTER 2</b> .....	<b>4</b>	GEORGE HAGARD.....	14
WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S WHAT.....	4	RICHARD VEX.....	15
<i>People</i> .....	4	THE SENSELESS.....	16
<i>Places</i> .....	5	SENSELESS POWERS.....	16
<b>CHAPTER 3</b> .....	<b>8</b>	TACTICS AND ENCOUNTERS.....	18
JUST THE FACTS.....	8	<i>Hunting the Senseless</i> .....	18
THE SAINT JEROME COLLEGE OF		<i>Failings</i> .....	19
INTELLECTUAL SCIENCE.....	8	<i>Vulnerabilities</i> .....	20
THE MERCIFUL LADY CITY HOSPITAL.....	9	<b>CHAPTER 6</b> .....	<b>22</b>
OLD NEWS.....	9	CONCLUSION.....	22

## About Monte Lin

Monte Lin is a freelance writer with a several publication credits; an adventure in Dungeon magazine issue #105, an article in Dragon magazine issue #323, and another article for Dragon awaiting approval. Monte also has written a d20 Future time travel supplement under consideration for Morrigan Press.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

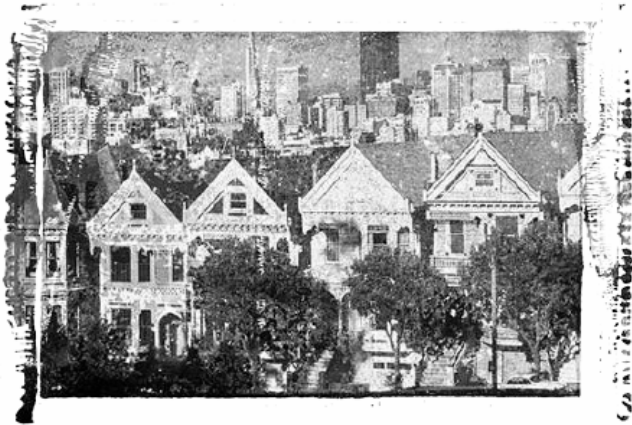
Reason is not automatic. Those who deny it cannot be conquered by it. Do not count on them. Leave them alone.

**Ayn Rand**

### Introduction

"The Senseless" is a short introductory adventure for the Swing role-playing game (conversion notes for the d20 Modern role-playing game will come as a separate Appendix). The characters run across an abandoned lab where psychological experiments went awry half a century ago. While the adventure does have physical dangers, the crux of the story involves gathering information and sleuthing.

The major antagonists are slightly stronger than beginning or novice characters, so direct confrontation is discouraged. However, they do possess some psychological and physical weaknesses for the characters to exploit.



The adventure takes place in a generic city, about the size of San Francisco, which has a population of 750,000 (according to a 2003 estimate).

At any given time, the city has a WILL Rating of 7.

### Background

In the late 1950s, Doctor David Sofim, a behavioral psychologist with Objectivist leanings, conducted experiments to isolate the human being's ability for rational and logic thought from "distracting" sensory input such as sight, taste, sound, touch, and smell. Without these base inputs, Sofim believed, a man could make moral and ethical decisions through pure logic. If he had been born half a century later, Doctor Sofim would have been the kind of man to promote the advancement of artificial intelligence as the ultimate accomplishment of Mankind.

Located in the basement of a large blocky Bauhaus-style building, Doctor Sofim placed three volunteers from his graduate students in separate sensory deprivation tanks to study the importance of sensory input to the behavioral psychology of the human being. After a few months, Sofim added the then-still-legal hallucinogenic drug LSD to take his

behavioral experiments to a more extreme level.

Three of his volunteer test subjects, George Hagard, Charles Lunis, and Richard Vex suffered from prolonged panic attacks and nervous breakdowns. Hospitalized at the college hospital, one managed to recover. The other two remained in their psychotic states.

Sofim continued his experiments, convinced that the three test subjects were on the right track but suffered from “lack of nerve.” He convinced another three students, George Trump, James Capp, and Jack Tower, to stay in the tanks longer and to take a higher dose of the hallucinogen. When he opened the doors, he found that they completely vanished from the sensory deprivation tanks.

After a few days, college authorities still couldn't find Trump, Capp, or Tower, and the College brought in the parents and the police. The resultant scandal led to a short-lived investigation of the college and his unethical experiments. The dean of Saint Jerome Craig Wagner used his expansive influence in the media and city government to bury the investigation and allow the college itself to conduct their own ethics review.

Doctor Sofim was let go with a small pension and subsequently vanished into obscurity. The college set up Lunis, Hagard, and Vex in the Psychiatric Ward of the Merciful Lady City Hospital. After some time, the matter faded into the background.

## **Objectivism**

Ayn Rand, through a series of novels and non-fiction books, outlined her personal life philosophy that became known as Objectivism. The philosophy emphasizes human beings' rationality and the existence

of an objective, knowable reality discovered through the scientific method. In addition, she believed that self-interest (sometimes called “enlightened self-interest”) should rule one's goals in life, and that capitalism is the economic vehicle to pursue those goals.

This philosophy has influenced American culture and life, and Ayn Rand has become an institution in of herself. As an immigrant from Communist Russia, she found in America an ideal place not only to thrive, but also to write and to ponder the questions of life.

Detractors and critics, including former disciples of Ayn Rand, claim that Objectivism promotes a cold, unfeeling and selfish philosophy. Nathaniel Branden, once a close associate of Ayn Rand, fell out of favor when his own philosophy veered toward integrating psychology and addressing the importance of emotions, especially when those emotions conflicted with reason. Lastly, while Rand did expand on the philosophy in her later non-fiction works, the majority of her ideas lay within her fiction portraying an idealized and perhaps unpractical model for an individual's life.

Regardless of one's attitudes to Objectivism, the philosophy has contributed a great deal to American intellectual discourse, and it should be noted that this adventure only superficially addresses the nuances of the philosophy.

Ayn Rand's works include her fiction in *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Fountainhead*, *Anthem*, *We the Living*, *Night of January 16th*, as well as her nonfiction, such as *The Virtue of Selfishness*, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, and *For the New Intellectual*.

## Timeline of Events

The story picks up in present day, half a century later when Trump, Capp, and Tower reappear as the strange trans-dimensional beings called the Senseless. Since they perceive time in such a radically different way than normal humans, the Senseless are unconcerned with modern developments and changes.

Because of the Senseless' nature, they follow a strict schedule. Without the characters' intervention, the Senseless act according to the following timeline:

**Day minus 16** - Senseless return to existence in the old lab in the Public Service Building.

**Day minus 15** - They master their own abilities and explore the Public Services Building, as well as the nuances of the modern world.

**Day minus 13** - They seek out David Sofim but find only the senile old man in the Jude Thaddeus Retirement Home. Sofim's senility is so far advanced; he does not even recognize his former students as his philosophical ideal.

**Day minus 12** - The Senseless begin their own experiments with animals to recreate the original transcendence of their present state.

**Day minus 9** - Having come to a plateau of their understanding, the Senseless weighs the pros and cons of experimenting on human beings. They choose three employees from the Public Service Building, all of whom die from the experience.

**Day minus 3** – Kathryn Blake files a missing person's report on her husband, Jacob, and starts her own investigations.

**Day 0** - The characters or the police come into the picture.

**Day 1** - The Senseless seek out potential "candidates" for conversion into Senseless. They appear to various people throughout the city, and people report visitations from strange men akin to various infamous "alien abduction" accounts of popular culture.

**Day 7** – The Senseless search for the three Sensitives.

**Day 9** – Death/transformation of Charles Lunis.

**Day 10** - Death/transformation of George Hagard.

**Day 11** - Death/transformation of Richard Vex.

**Day 13** - The Senseless launch their plan for world-wide Enlightenment.

## Chapter 2

### Who's who & What's what

He had a big head and a face so ugly it became almost fascinating.

Ayn Rand

#### Who's who & What's what

##### People

##### Jacob & Kathryn Blake

Jacob Blake, a bureaucrat and contact of the characters is missing. Having exhausted avenues with the police, Jacob's wife Kathryn is convinced of something strange in the Public Services Building, and comes to the characters for help. The people in the building already have grown tired of her investigations, so she asks the characters to check it out for her.

She can only really pay the characters a few hundred dollars at best. She holds a part-time job and has a young boy to take care of. If Jacob is truly missing, then she needs to save as much as she can to get by. She appeals to the characters' friendship and morality to get them to check out the building at the very least.

Characters with a law enforcement background will know that two other reported disappearances are associated with the Public Service Building. All three missing persons, including Jacob Blake work in the building.

##### The Police

If the temp finds the ear, the police arrive within the half-hour to take a statement and to investigate the building. They will not find the lab.

The police do note that two other people, a government accountant named John Acedia and a filing clerk named Dave Grimm, also disappeared from the Public Service Building within the past two weeks. A DNA analysis of the ear, which takes a week, manages to identify the owner as the accountant, not Jacob Blake. Basic forensics notes that the ear, while severed for more than a few days, was somehow preserved from bacterial decay suggesting surgical knowledge.

Those with law enforcement backgrounds or police contacts can obtain this information easily. Other characters can make a Charisma + Intelligence + Bureaucracy check against a Difficulty of 28 (Very hard) to convince the police to release the above information. Those with the equipment to do their own forensic analysis can make an Intelligence + Perception + Medical check against a Difficulty of 16 (Normal) to glean the same information.

During their investigations, the characters may decide to investigate past police involvement in regards to the Public Service

Building. Luckily, the police still keep old paper files from the 1950s, and possess the original report on the original missing person's case for the College of Intellectual Science. The report from the 1950s lists the three graduate students as missing. It refers to the experiment as a college prank gone bad and the case is officially unsolved.

The characters must make a separate Charisma + Intelligence + Bureaucracy against a Difficulty of 28 (Very hard) to convince the police to allow them access to the old files.

The old case file was presided over by a Detective Eric Gonn, now retired and living in Arizona. If the characters press the matter with the police, they may be able to dig up a phone number for Gonn, otherwise his address or whereabouts is not listed.

Gonn, having long disassociated from his police roots, will not have much to say about the case, except that he suspects that the College of Intellectual Science managed to cover up their tracks pretty well. His Captain at the time made very sure that he dropped the investigation in favor of other, easier-closed cases.

The case file also has Gonn's initial report. It lists all the principal parties, such as a Professor David Sofim (male, 40s, professor of psychology) who reported three of his students (Jorge Trump, James Capp, Jack Tower) missing 24 hours after a "psychology" experiment. There were no suicide notes and no signs of kidnapping.

He lists the witnesses as Craig Wagner (dean of Saint Jerome), David Sofim (professor, psychology), George Hagard (graduate student), Charles Lunis (graduate student), Rick Vex (graduate student), and Francis Johnson (professor, philosophy).

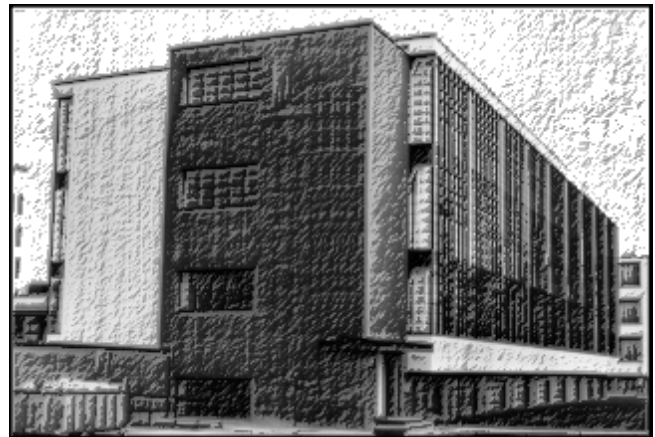
Gonn noted in the file that the case is officially open, but the files itself shows that no one has done anything with it since the 1950s.

## Places

### **The Department of Public Services**

The Public Service Building is a giant Bauhaus-style stone block masquerading as a building, and is a testament to the Golden Age of Science, Progress, Democracy, and the American Way back when it belonged to the Saint Jerome College of Intellectual Science.

Saint Jerome sold off the building to the city government decades ago, who now uses this building as a grand example to the power of red tape. The Department of Public Services is a hodge-podge of cashier's offices, complaint and claims offices, and public records to service the menial tasks of government, payments, filing, and the shuffling of paperwork.



Interviewing the various clerks and lower-end bureaucrats leads nowhere. The Department suffers a rather large rollover rate, partly from the use of temporary employees and partly because more ambitious people quickly transfer out of the Department of Public Services. The few old-timers either do not



remember or care to notice if an employee failed to appear for work.

The ten stories of building are easily accessed via elevator. The only security is an aging guard with a radio who has not seen any trouble in his thirty years watching the lobby. Each floor contains the same blocks of cubicles and the same dull office workers.

The building, however, has a basement, used mainly for storage. The chaotic and disheveled floor contains the boiler room, the phone switchboard, and the power room. Large clunky doors seal off rooms full of boxes and filing cabinets. From the dust and dinginess, the characters quickly get the feeling that no one ever goes down here.

The characters should make a Sensory check against a Difficulty of 12 (Easy) to discover a severed ear. If they manage to miss their check, a woman's scream breaks the gloom of the basement, as a temp discovers the ear while storing a box from one of the upper floors. A character who successfully rolls for Perception + Intelligence + Surgery against Difficulty of 16 (Normal) notices that whomever removed the ear used perfect skill since the cut looks absolutely neat and measured.

If someone comes up with the idea to get a copy of the building's architectural diagrams from the Department of Public Services, the character must make a Charisma + Intelligence + Bureaucracy against a Difficulty of 20 (Extended) to convince the bureaucrats to allow them access to such a public record. A quick walk through the basement with the diagrams in hand quickly reveals the location of the rusty iron door that leads to the basement lab.

Alternatively, the characters may simply poke around the basement, and require a Sensory

check against a Difficulty of 28 (Very hard) to physically find the rusty iron door.

*Now full of disgruntled employees, the desperate atmosphere enforces a WILL Rating of 10 within the building itself.*

### **The Lab**

The lab is divided into two rooms. The main room contains three rusted sensory deprivation tanks, as well as monitoring equipment straight out of the 1950s with magnetic tape and vacuum tubes. A speaker system hangs over a boarded up one-way mirror into the observation room. The lab has no plastic and is made of glass, silicon, and rubber.

As they explore, they come across a cage where rats missing their nose, eyes, ears, mouth, and skin stand stock still, their bodies encased in glass tubes, and their legs protruding from holes in the tubing, sealed by rubber and wax. Touching the cage, the rats move, proving that they still live, somehow. The rats die of starvation a few days if the Senseless are forcibly or otherwise removed from reality.

Each of the three sensory deprivation tanks contains a body missing its eyes, ears, mouth, nose, and skin. Of particular interest, the face of the body has no cavities for the eyes or mouth. It is as if the person never had those features. The three bodies are Jacob Blake, the missing accountant John Acedia, and the missing filing clerk Dave Grimm.

A character who successfully rolls a Perception + Intelligence + Surgery check against Difficulty of 16 (Normal) notices no physical trauma occurred with the removal of the various organs.

If the characters perform a detailed examination requiring a full autopsy (or gain the information from the police), they discover that the individuals died not from immediate suffocation or sudden shock, but died over several days.

Characters that see the bodies must make a FEAR check. Any character that fails the FEAR check runs from the room immediately but may return minutes later after calming down.

A door connects the main room to the observation room, where a table, tape recorder, two chairs, and the remains of all of the Senseless' human experiments lay. A cracked and boarded up one-way mirror would normally allow people in the main room to watch the proceedings in the observation room.

Arranged by person, jars of teeth and mouths, eyes, ears, nose, and skin clutter the table and the floor like a macabre museum. Characters that see the body parts must pass a FEAR check or vomit. From the look of it, the body parts correspond to the three individuals in the sensory deprivation tanks.

The tape recorder still contains a large partly-used spool which contains a conversation between Doctor Sofim and a panicked Richard Vex, who refer to each other by name several times on the tape. However, some electrical distortions partly garble their voices. By carefully listening to the tape several times a character can glean out Richard Vex describing the lack of sensation on his body, as well as being unable to see or hear clearly. Sofim continues to ask very measured questions without revealing any emotions on his side. Vex continues to ask for reassurance but Sofim merely asks the next question.

The electrical distortions sound like random harmonics, similar to radio waves produced by cosmic radiation striking the Earth's Van Allen belt. Characters need to either make a Wits + Perception + Cryptography, Intelligence + Wits + Communications Systems, Intelligence + Wits + Technician, or even a Perception + Wits + Expression: Musical against a Difficulty of 24 (Hard) to discover a pattern to the electrical distortions on the tape. An intrepid player may decide to have his character build a device to detect such electrical distortions. With such a device, the character can track down the Senseless in much the same manner as the Sensitives (see the section on the Sensitives see Chapter 4).

*Due to the strange nature of the lab and its users, the lab has a WILL Rating of 5.*

## Chapter 3

### Just the Facts

I need no warrant for being, and no word of sanction upon my being. I am the warrant and the sanction.

Ayn Rand

#### Just the Facts

At this point, the characters have many different paths to explore for more information. The old police files from the 1950s may shed some light on the matter (see the Police section above). Kathryn, once she discovers the identity of her husband, then asks them to find the murderers. She will max out her credit cards to pay them if need be to find the killers and bring them to justice.

If the players get stuck, have them roll an Attitude + Intelligence + Streetwise check against a Difficulty of 24 (Hard) to get one of the following clues. For every Step the roll beats the Difficulty, the character gains one additional piece of information.

If Sages wish to emphasize the importance of the Timeline, have each investigation attempt (successful or not) take a day. Characters can of course make several attempts to discover a piece of information, but again, it uses up a day of game time.

#### The Saint Jerome College of Intellectual Science

If the characters delve into the background of the Public Services Building, they learn that back in the 1920s, Saint Jerome College obtained the building as an administrative

adjunct to their college campus. In the 1970s, the College sold the building to the city government as a means to cover the costs of declining enrollment.

If they pay a visit to the campus, they learn that originally a private Catholic boarding school, World War II saw Saint Jerome College's conversion into the Saint Jerome College of Intellectual Science emphasizing the liberal/soft sciences such as economics, philosophy, psychology, and history.

Eventually specializing in psychology and philosophy, they lost quite a bit of prestige in the late 1960s for some unknown reason. Currently, the staff and administration continually debates opening the school to engineering, computer science, and physics to rebuild their reputation as a serious college.

The characters learn that the Public Services Building once held the Psychology Department, with department head David Sofim presiding over the affairs of the building. They have faculty records for David Sofim, Ph.D. and the accounting department keeps records for his severance pension. The original dean, Craig Wagner, long retired, let Sofim go without an official explanation. The files do show Sofim's

current residence at the Jude Thaddeus Retirement Home Home.

However, as the characters are leaving the campus, Francis Johnson, a tenured philosophy professor stops them to reclaim any copies of the files, declaring that all information is private property of the College and admonishing the administrative workers for their carelessness in releasing such information.

In truth, Professor Johnson, one of the few people left who remember the scandal with Doctor Sofim, wishes to keep the story under wraps in order to protect the College's flagging reputation. While he has no actual authority or power outside of the school, he can use the College's bureaucracy to tie up requests in red tape. If the characters request further information other than revealed above (including medical records at the Merciful Lady City Hospital), they discover Johnson to be behind the administrative problem.

He continues to obstruct the characters from gleaning any information from the College, up to the point that Charles Lunis is killed/transformed by the Senseless (Day 9 on the Timeline). Only then will he reveal the original cover-up to either the police or the characters.



Professor Johnson is not a major adversary, and requires no detail statistics. However, if the need arises, he possesses Mental and Social Attributes of 2D8, and all others at D10. He has Academic skills at 8, Sciences at 4, and little else in other skills.

### **The Merciful Lady City Hospital**

The Psyche Ward is partially funded by Saint Jerome. They have records for the three students who suffered psychotic breaks. George Hagar released himself; he is now a homeless man. Charles Lunis is still in Ward; his hospital bills paid by the college. Rick Vex recovered but is suffering from nervous disorders. The hospital records contain no information on how the three men suddenly suffered a nervous breakdown, citing only stress. Admission records do have Craig Wagner and Francis Johnson's signature.

If the characters have already visited the Saint Jerome College of Intellectual Sciences, they find all files and records pertaining to George Hagar, Charles Lunis, and Rick Vex "lost or missing." The staff is even instructed not to reveal Saint Jerome's financial relationship to the Hospital.

See the Sensitives section for more information on George Hagar, Charles Lunis, and Rick Vex.

### **Old News**

Characters who decide to search old newspaper archives may make a Sensory check against a Difficulty of 24 (Hard) to find a newspaper article from the 1950s in connection with the Public Services Building, Saint Jerome, or David Sofim.

Alternatively, characters that make an Intelligence + Perception + Academics or Intelligence + Perception + Locale Knowledge check against a Difficulty of 32 (Difficult) to know the story offhand.

Regardless of the method, Sages should read the following aloud to the players:

*“Prestigious Local School Under Investigation*

*St. Jerome – Located in the heart of the city, the Saint Jerome College of Intellectual Science trains young minds to take on the challenges of a new world. With a bright future of Democracy and Science, America needs its next generation to rationalize, challenge outdated ways of thinking, and open doors to new ideas to bring American forward and fend off the scourge of Communist Russia.*

*Unfortunately today, a tale of pride and the resultant fall is not uncommon to modern Man. Police and concerned parents alike have accused a Professor David Sofim of modern pride, and demand justice for the sake of their children.*

*Three promising young men have been missing for several days now, and the investigation points to highly dangerous experiments all in the name of Science. These experiments conducted on the students of Saint Jerome, involved the exploration of a person’s psychology when removed from outside stimuli, such as light, sounds, tastes, smells, and even human contact.*

*The rumors that several students previously suffered hospitalization have been denied by the dean of the school Craig Wagner. The Professor himself is not available for comment, and officials at Saint Jerome refuse to allow interviews.*

*Police have no conclusions at this point, but have made clear that the lives of these three missing boys are at stake.”*

The story received absolutely no follow up. The reporter has been dead for several years. None of the city newspapers have any additional information regarding the article.

In actuality, Craig Wagner pulled a few governmental strings in order to get the police and the reporter to drop the investigation. Only Francis Johnson and David Sofim know this fact.

### **Jude Thaddeus Retirement Home**

The characters can find Doctor David Sofim via faculty records from Saint Jerome or through their own footwork (though they need to know to look for him in the first place) with above-mentioned Streetwise check.

Doctor David Sofim attempted to restart his academic career after the scandal but the scientific community had already labeled him a dangerous crackpot. Soon, Sofim fell victim to the paranoia suffered by other fringe scientists, that of a faceless unbending scientific community conspiring against “truth-seekers.” Eventually, Sofim settled down with his small checks from the College, giving occasional lectures to occult, conspiracy, and just-plain weird organizations on the nature of reality and the senses.

In a way, the Senseless is the proof of Sofim’s steadfast belief of a “better” human based on thought alone. However, when the Senseless visited him (on Day minus 13 on the Timeline), Doctor David Sofim had not only reached beyond his centennial, he had reached beyond his capacity to reason. The Senseless found Sofim a pathetic senile old coot.

Unfortunately, David Sofim cannot help the characters directly. He may talk about his lab and his “grand” experiments on the human

psyche, but most of it will be ramblings of a bitter, reclusive paranoid.

His bookshelf, however, sheds some light on Doctor Sofim. Various psychology, biochemistry, and psychiatry manuals, books, and magazines crowd his disorganized bookshelf. Several copies of Ayn Rand's books dot the collection.

Hidden amongst the mess is Sofim's own thesis paper "Removal of Sensory Stimuli in the Formation of Logical Thought." The paper is full of academic references as well as archaic psychological terms. Readers need an Intelligence + Perception + Academics check against Difficulty of 20 (Extended) to decipher its message.

In short, the paper posits that Mankind has been ruled by emotion for all his history. Only in this modern era with its emphasis on the scientific method can a person make moral and ethical judgments based on reason and logic. In order to isolate a human's capacity for reason, Sofim suggests that he needs to isolate the senses. Modern life is rife with distractions, and what may be pleasing to eye may in fact be rationally improper. He proposes the use of "thought tanks" (isolation chambers) with controlled doses of an untested drug, lysergic acid diethyl amide. (Characters with a point in Academics or Sciences automatically know this as the chemical name of LSD.)

If the characters manage to get Sofim to discuss logic, Objectivism, or rationalism he opens up and reveals the following:

*"They were three wonderful, beautiful things. I could feel their intellect. They were angels of a new age, perfect, and they only want to share their perfection, to bring Mankind to their level. They may have been an accident, but they belong to a grand purpose.*

*I'm not worthy of perfection. They told me so themselves. I would have been, back in my prime, but I'm nothing more than a shell of what I once was. They have a Plan, you see. They are bringing transcendence to Mankind. One person at a time they will remove the prison of flesh and free the mind. They'll start with the others. I won't be part of it, but if I'm lucky, I'll be witness to it."*

Sofim will not be able to expand upon this statement. The characters have just witnessed his last moment of lucidity.

## Chapter 4

### The Sensitives and The Senseless

The Argument from Intimidation is a confession of intellectual impotence.

Ayn Rand

#### The Sensitives

Whatever their individual experiences in the sensory deprivation chambers, the three graduate students briefly touched the supernatural or extra-dimensional force that transformed the other volunteers into the Senseless. Unable to completely sensitize their encounter, Hagar, Lunis, and Vex internalized the sensations and developed rather debilitating personality disorders. However, they remain in contact with said supernatural force and remain sensitive to disturbances in reality.

#### Sensitives powers

All three can intuitively sense the Senseless and may be able to help the characters track them down with different levels of willingness and effectiveness.

The Sensitives produce the same electronic interference unconsciously, and characters who built the electronic device detailed in the Lab section above detect the interference from the Sensitives in random intervals. With a little time and training, the Sensitives may be able to harness that ability to fend off the Senseless in the same manner as the electronic device. Treat the attempt as an unskilled Visualization Magick check.

They also have the rudimentary ability to discover the whereabouts of the Senseless. Treat this as a normal Scry attempt, except that the Sensitives can only scry the Senseless.

For simplicity, assume that all three Sensitives have the following information, with modifications below.

<b>Strength</b>	2D6
<b>Dexterity</b>	2D6
<b>Wits</b>	D10
<b>Intelligence</b>	D12
<b>Attitude</b>	D12
<b>Charisma</b>	D10
<b>Perception</b>	2D6
<b>Intuition</b>	2D8

#### Skills

Academics: History 2  
Academics: Geography 1  
Academics: Government 1  
Academics: Literature 2  
Academics: Philosophy 2  
Academics: Sociology 2  
Arts: Drawing 1  
Career: Education 2  
Computer Use: Vacuum Tube 3  
Debate: Classical 1  
Drive: Car 1  
Endurance 2  
Engineering: Chemical 2

Escape: Casual 1  
Expression: Literary 1  
First Aid 1  
Instruction 1  
Language: German 1  
Navigation: Landmarks 1  
Science: Physics 2  
Science: Biology 2  
Science: Math 2  
Science: Chemistry 2  
Science: Psychology 2  
Scrounge 2  
Stealth 1  
Streetwise: Slums 1  
Streetwise: Urban 1  
Survival: Urban 1  
Visualization Magick: Scry 1

**Background Effects**

Academic (Primary), Unattractive (Secondary), Common Sense (Secondary), Cautious (Primary), Haunted (by the Senseless), Poverty.

**Combat Stats**

**Combat Points:** 13  
**Wound Ratings:** 10  
**Wounds:** 10



**Severe Wounds:** 5  
**Deadly Wounds:** 2  
**Fatigue Rating:** 7  
**Fatigue Points:** 14  
**Jump:** 2  
**Hand-to-hand Damage:** 7F  
**Lifting:** 140 lbs.  
**Fear:**  
**WILL:** 1 or 5

**Charles Lunis**

Charles Lunis is permanently under observation and is technically a ward of the state through Saint Jerome. Lunis cannot take care of himself and reacts in a very primal level. While he does not suffer the same paranoia and phobias as the other Sensitives, he believes himself to possess the physical characteristics of the Senseless and becomes dismayed if confronted with the contrary. His dementia includes the belief he has no face, and he constantly tries to bite his fingers off. The amount of sedative administered to prevent Lunis from harming others and himself renders him incapacitated and useless in finding the Senseless.

Under normal hospital policy, Lunis is restrained to his bed and sedated. Under no circumstances will the hospital release Lunis to the care of the characters. However, they may allow them to see him. Even if not sedated, the hospital keeps him tied to his bed.

If they manage to speak with Lunis, he refuses to explain his situation to the characters, even when threatened. He merely warns them that the next step of human evolution is coming in between fits of hysteria. With a successful Social Attribute Check against Difficulty 24 (Hard), characters manage to convince Lunis to scry for the Senseless'. However, the characters need to convince Lunis to help them each



time to scry. See the Timeline for more information.

According to the Timeline, the Senseless visit Lunis first, since he wants to be found. Even though he may be emotionally willing, he relies too much on his human senses and his own personal perspective on reality. Sages who wish to increase the difficulty of this adventure may have Lunis successfully transform into a Senseless, otherwise, he does not survive and vanishes from reality altogether.

If the characters arrive too late at the hospital, the hospital staff bars them from entering, and police swarm the area. With a successful Charisma + Intelligence + Etiquette check against Difficulty of 20 (Extended), they get a nurse to tell them that some monster removed the poor man's face. She shudders and refuses to talk any more about it.

Archetype: Self Destructive  
Magickal Theory: Insane  
Gender: Male  
Hair Color: Bald  
Eye Color: Brown  
Height: 5'8"  
Weight: 160 lbs.  
Nationality: USA  
Ethnicity: Caucasian  
Religion: Unknown  
Lunis possesses a WILL of 5.

### George Hagar

Though mildly functional and self-aware Hagar is unable to hold a job or maintain any healthy human relationships. He wanders the city as a homeless man. He can intuitively sense anyone with WILL score (or those with magical ability), and is actively afraid of anyone with WILL of 6 or higher.



The Senseless visit Hagar next, though it takes them some effort and time. However, they find him to be too emotional, since he reacts with fear to everything they do. When he undergoes the transformation, it completely destroys his mind and he regresses into himself.

Finding Hagar requires an Attitude + Intelligence + Streetwise check against Difficulty of 28 (Very hard). Due to his extra-sensory exposure, he has become rather good at avoiding people.

Convincing Hagar to help the characters find the Senseless requires a lot of intimidation, since he fears the Senseless so much. He spends as much time as possible escaping the characters' custody.

If the Senseless have already visited Hagar, then the characters find him as a Senseless, huddled in the corner of a dirty alleyway, cradling his removed body parts. If left alone, Hagar gradually vanishes from reality within a few days, unless Sages wish to increase the difficulty of the adventure. If poked and prodded, Hagar becomes violent, lashing out at the characters until destroyed.

Archetype: Apathetic



Magickal Theory: Insane  
Gender: Male  
Hair Color: Brown  
Eye Color: Brown  
Height: 5'6"  
Weight: 120 lbs.  
Nationality: USA  
Ethnicity: Caucasian  
Religion: Agnostic

Hagard is a Level 2 Independent with the accompanying skills of Escape: Casual 3, Scrounge 3, Stealth 3, Streetwise: Slums 3, and Survival: Urban 3 with an additional level of Poverty. He possesses a WILL of 5.

### **Richard Vex**

Vex managed to suppress his experience but remains paranoid and fearful of enclosed spaces, strangers, and sudden surprises. The reappearance of the Senseless assaults

his mind in a subconscious level so he is unaware of their effect on him. Of the three, the characters will have the most difficulty convincing Vex to help them, but he is the most capable.

The Senseless visit Vex last since he had the mental will to overcome his experience. And while his fear distresses the Senseless, it is simply his unwillingness to leave the human plane of existence that causes him to disappear from reality altogether during the transformation.

Finding Vex requires an Attitude + Intelligence + Streetwise check against Difficulty of 24 (Hard). Due to his extra-sensory exposure, he has become rather good at avoiding people.

He lives in a sparse one bedroom apartment in the rundown part of town. He has little to no possessions, just a television, a single chair, and a bed. Talking to Vex is distracting at best. He nervously peers around corners and sees things out of the corner of his eyes. He will not talk about his time as a graduate student at Saint Jerome, stating that he had emotional problems and just wants to live a normal quiet life.

If the characters tell him about the various deaths and the Senseless, he claims to know nothing about it. Characters can make a Social Attribute Check to notice that Vex is lying by his body language; he has become very still and controlled.

If the characters manage to get him to fess up, he tells them that he has dreams, waking visions of three faceless men, hovering over him in the corner of his eye. He has seen them before, when he was in Sofim's sensory deprivation tanks, and they have been haunting him ever since. He knows that they want to take him to their "world" a place of pure thought but of nonstop terror, a place

where you can disappear just by not paying attention. He cannot explain how or why he knows this, only that the thoughts appear in his head from time to time.

Vex knows that the three faceless men will eventually find him; he just does not see a way to stop that. If the characters demonstrate enough knowledge or experience and the willingness to protect him from harm, he may throw in with them; otherwise, he locks himself up in the apartment and awaits the inevitable.

Vex also tells the characters the faceless men want to turn every man on Earth like them and are very close to figuring out how to do just that. He has no other information.

If the characters find Vex too late, they find an empty apartment. His skin, nose, eyes, mouth and ears lie neatly on the bed.

Archetype: Conformist  
Magickal Theory: Apathetic  
Gender: Male  
Hair Color: Light brown  
Eye Color: Green  
Height: 6'0"  
Weight: 150 lbs  
Nationality: USA  
Ethnicity: Caucasian  
Religion: Agnostic

Vex is a Level 1 Clerk with the accompanying skills of Administration 2, Bureaucracy 2, Computer Use: Windows 1, Career: Clerk 2, Stealth 3, and Streetwise: Slums 2.

## **The Senseless**

Stuck in the sensory depravation tanks, their minds mutating at unclockable speeds, the three graduate students, George Trump, James Capp, and Jack Tower turned themselves into logical beings of pure

thought. They did not simply vanish; they wished themselves into non-existence. They rejected their bodies and senses completely, shedding their skin, eyes, ears, tongue and faces like a snake.

The Senseless appears as vaguely nude humanoids with no facial features or solid skin. They possess a faint shimmer as their bodies exist as a field of thought. They float a couple of inches above the ground and never seem to come into contact with physical objects. With no mouth, fingers, or even toes, the Senseless interact with their environment by manipulating their own thought energy.

They intend to recreate the experiments and "advance" Mankind, to propagate their new "species" of Man, and to quash all irrationality and emotion. When they reach a full understanding of their own nature, they seek to find others of like mind and to bring humanity to their form of Enlightenment. When the characters first become involved with the Senseless, the three beings have made some basic experiments with the three office workers, and now wish to find humans of potential.

The Senseless possess no real means of communication, though they have no wish to exchange ideas. They act in concert, as if they share the same mind, though this is not the case. Instead, they function like the same three mathematical "equations" running concurrently.

At any given point in their "equation," each Senseless thinks exactly the same as his two brothers. They always come to the same conclusions in any decision making process and at exactly the same time.

## **Senseless powers**

Though technically the Senseless believe in a pseudo-scientific paradigm involving

thought waves, a little quantum mechanics, and the power of the logical mind, they function very much through True Magick, and thus use their WILL Rating.

Due to their odd nature and their disquieting appearance, characters first encountering the Senseless must pass FEAR checks to perform actions. On subsequent encounters, the characters may ignore the FEAR check.

The Senseless use the following Magickal effects:

**Telekinesis:** See page 175 of the Swing. Since the Senseless have transcended their physical bodies, they manipulate reality via physical dislocation, i.e. telekinesis. They naturally levitate using this means of Magick.

**Telepathy:** See page 175-176 of the Swing. In order to shock their victims into transcendence, they recreate the sensory deprivation experiments by isolating their victim's senses, and then bombard them with a maddening array of logical thoughts.

**Projection:** See page 176 of the Swing. The Senseless travel from location to location in a manner very similar to Projection. In fact, they no longer possess any "real" physical form and manifest as a ghostly thought wave. If they cannot spend the Fatigue points to manifest, then they temporarily vanish from reality until they replenish their Fatigue points.

In combat, the Senseless project a massive telepathic bolt that does Hand-to-hand damage equal to their Intelligence Die Code, 1S and 10F, however, it takes a successful WILL check, and costs the Senseless the same amount of Fatigue Points as a True Magick effect.

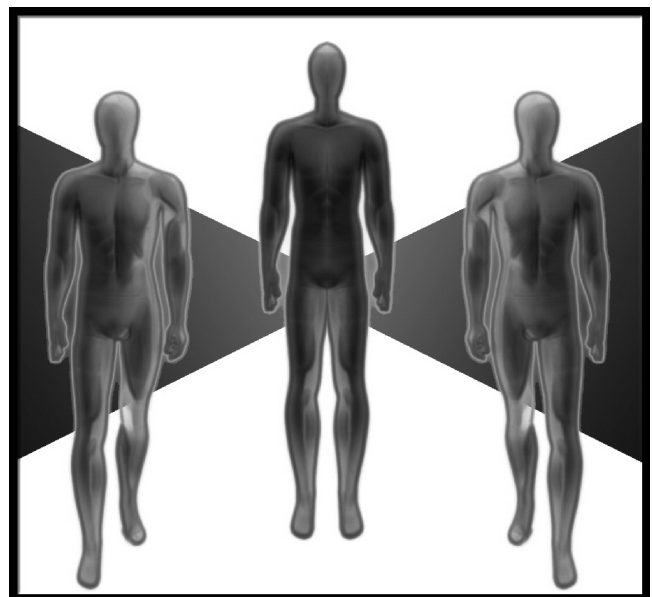
The Senseless only receive grazing hits and do not suffer bleeding effects, since their

bodies exist as a field of fuzzy probability. However, they can only heal under the Natural Healing rules as described in the Damage, Death, and Recovery chapter of the Swing.

<b>Strength</b>	D12
<b>Dexterity</b>	D10
<b>Wits</b>	D20
<b>Intelligence</b>	2D10
<b>Attitude</b>	2D6
<b>Charisma</b>	D12
<b>Perception</b>	2D10
<b>Intuition</b>	D20

### Skills

- Academics: History 2
- Academics: Geography 1
- Academics: Government 2
- Academics: Literature 2
- Academics: Philosophy 4
- Academics: Sociology 2
- Arts: Drawing 1
- Career: Education 2
- Computer Use: Vacuum Tube 3
- Cryptography: Written 1
- Debate: Classical 1
- Drive: Car 1



Endurance 4  
Engineering: Chemical 2  
Engineering: Electrical 1  
Engineering: Mechanical 1  
Expression: Literary 2  
First Aid 1  
Forgery 1  
Instruction 1  
Language: German 1  
Navigation: Landmarks 2  
Science: Physics 2  
Science: Biology 4  
Science: Math 2  
Science: Chemistry 4  
Science: Psychology 5

### Background Effects

Academic (Primary), Don't Touch (Secondary), Don't Speak (Secondary), Increased Will (Primary), Emotion Disability (Secondary), Scientist (Primary).

### Combat Stats

**Combat Points:** 21

**Wound Ratings:** 9

**Wounds:** 9

**Severe Wounds:** 4

**Deadly Wounds:** 2

**Fatigue Rating:** 6

**Fatigue Points:** 24

**Jump:** 2

**Hand-to-hand Damage:** See above

**Lifting:** See above

**Fear:** -

**WILL:** 7

Archetype: Driven  
Magickal Theory: Scientist  
Gender: none  
Hair Color: none  
Eye Color: none  
Height: variable, approx. 5'8"  
Weight: none  
Nationality: none  
Ethnicity: none  
Religion: Unknown

### Tactics and Encounters

Upon first encountering the characters, they establish telepathic contact to read their thoughts and intentions. Characters attempting to read them back only sense wave functions and probability statistics.

If hostile, one Senseless fends off the characters with telekinetic bolts while the other two continue with their assigned tasks, be it probing a sleeping potential or simple observation. If the characters provide strong resistance, a second Senseless joins the conflict. If threatened with possible death, the threatened Senseless removes himself via astral projection.

If the characters manage to fight off the Senseless before they accomplish their particular task, they repeat the same task the next night and push back the Timeline by one day. They continue repeating the same process until they succeed or until all three are too weak to continue. At this point, they wait until they regain all of their Fatigue Points, and then attack the characters in masse.

If one of the characters possesses a high level of Visualization Magick: Science, the Senseless may consider him a potential. Even so, they stick to the Timeline and only approach the character on Day 13.

### Hunting the Senseless

Mostly likely, the characters find themselves uncovering the activities of the Senseless without encountering them. After Day 1 on the Timeline, television news and newspapers report the city-wide spread of random break-ins. Victims report that they find three strange men hovering over them while they slept. Every night sees dozens of reports.

Critics consider these accounts similar to “alien abduction” stories and attribute the occurrences to a form of mass hysteria. Others think that some organization of stalkers is terrorizing the city, since no one reports anything stolen or any physical assaults.

Characters who make a Mental Attribute check against a Difficulty of 32 (Difficult) notice that the sightings occur in ever-widening spiral centered around the Public Services Building. Every day after Day 1 on the Timeline lowers the Difficulty by one Step. The police eventually figure out this pattern on Day 5, but the Senseless stop their searches on Day 7 to concentrate solely on the three Sensitives.

However, armed with this foreknowledge, the characters may place themselves in the general neighborhood of the next sighting. They have two additional problems if they wish to intercept the Senseless. First, the Senseless always visit a sleeping individual. The characters must break into that person’s house or apartment, and deal with the Senseless without waking the inhabitant. The characters must succeed on an Intelligence + Perception + Security: Personal Protection against a Difficulty of 24 (Hard) in addition to a Dexterity + Perception + Stealth against a Difficulty of 20 (Extended) to do so. Second, on Day 5 and Day 6, the police catch onto the pattern and patrol the suspected neighborhoods. The above rolls then become an opposed check against the police’s Intelligence + Perception + Security against a Difficulty of 20 (Extended) and Sensory Attribute check against a Difficulty of 16 (Normal).

If the police catch the characters, they arrest them on suspicion that they are the nightly stalkers. After a day of questioning and

incarceration, the police let them go for lack of evidence.

Assume the police have Physical Attributes of 2D8, Mental Attributes of 2D6, Social Attributes of D12, and Sensory Attributes of 2D8. They possess the skills of the Local Deputy Sheriff Career and Security: Personal Protection at 2.

Sages should feel free to detail the encounters with varying maps per location if need be, though at this level of ability, characters should do their best to avoid angering local authorities.

### **Failings**

The Senseless believe in a bastardized version of the Objectivist philosophy. They believe that science and reason to be the penultimate form of human enlightenment and expression and emotions a hindrance at best. They are ignorant of one of the basic tenants of Objectivism that each person should be free to live their life, and people cannot obstruct other people from living their life.

The three graduate students come from the traditional mores of the 1950s and consider women to be too emotional for advancement. They underestimate female characters and will ignore them in confrontations. They also reflect the racial mores of the 1950s and do not consider non-European, non-white characters important enough to classify as a threat.

The Senseless spend Fatigue points for multiple magick use. They always maintain a levitation effect and must spend Fatigue points as if always astrally projecting in visible form. For this reason, they only manifest for the brief moments they visit potentials. The characters may be able to force the Senseless to perform more

magickal feats until they deplete their Fatigue points and vanish.

Lastly, the Senseless are very predictable. They stick to the Timeline and never deviate. In light of this, the Senseless avoids confrontation unless prevented from their Timeline goal.

### **Vulnerabilities**

The characters have several options to confront the Senseless other than straight out-and-out violence. These, of course, do not include magically inclined solutions, but take advantage of the unique psychology and physiology of the Senseless themselves.

As detailed in the Lab section above, the Senseless create an interference field with electronic devices. Active electronics with speakers such as televisions and radios howl and whine as if passing through a powerful magnetic field. From the magnetic tape in the Lab, scientifically-minded characters can create an energy emitter with the opposite wavelength. This opposing wavelength does not harm but disorients the Senseless. As living thought waves, the Senseless find themselves vulnerable to disharmonic wave functions.

Characters who notice this can build a detector or emitter as detailed under The Lab. Even if the character builds such a device, he needs a successful opposed Intelligence + Perception + Engineering check (using the same Difficulty used in the construction of the device) versus the Senseless' Wits + Intuition + WILL against a Difficulty of 16 (Normal), to stun the Senseless for that round. Each round the character needs to succeed on the opposed check to keep the Senseless stunned. This represents the modification of the wave function to match the Senseless' and also

causes each of them to lose one Fatigue point.

The characters themselves, with the proper WILL and Visualization Magick can attune their thoughts to produce the same interference pattern, just like the Sensitives. For more mundane characters, they may attempt an Attitude + Strength + Meditation check against a Difficulty of 32 (Difficult) to produce the proper thought patterns disruptive to the Senseless. Again, the characters must make an opposed check against the Senseless each round to succeed.

Socially minded characters may attempt to communicate with the Senseless. While the Senseless cannot, or do not communicate, they understand spoken and written language perfectly.

The Senseless responds well to logical arguments, especially those that espouse the Objectivist philosophy. See the Failings section for some suggestions on the Senseless' psychology. For example, the characters could convince the Senseless that the human race is not ready for this version of Enlightenment. Since the universe is a vast place, perhaps their abilities and knowledge could be better utilized elsewhere?

If attempting to persuade the Senseless to change their current course of action, a successful opposed Intelligence + Perception + Academics check against a Difficulty of 20 (Extended) versus the Senseless' Intelligence + Perception + Academics against a Difficulty of 16 (Normal) gets them to act according to the character's wishes.

The Sensitives hold the most important clue to stopping the Senseless. Since the Senseless exists as a form of thought wave they remain vulnerable to other

manipulations of thought. They obsess over confusion, moral conflict, and disorganized ideas. If the characters manage to insert some logical quandary to their core beliefs, the Senseless spend an exorbitant amount of time sorting out the inconsistencies. They do not like to make decisions based on uncontrolled unknowns.

It is important to note that the Senseless are not evil in the traditional sense. They have tapped into an inexplicable and alien existence and struggle to understand their past, present, and future natures. To better understand who they are, they must discover how they came to be, and strive to recreate the original experiments.



## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

The evil of the world is made possible by nothing but the sanction you give it.

Ayn Rand

---

### Conclusion

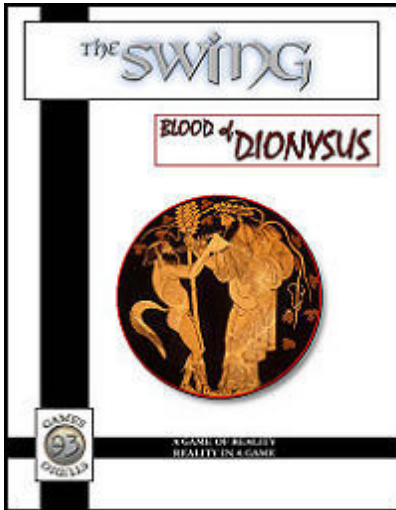
If the Senseless manage to transform the three Sensitives (whether successfully or not), they learn enough to begin their quest to transform Mankind. They leave the confines of the city to seek out the best candidates on the planet, and slowly build their numbers up one by one. If left unchecked, the Senseless slowly replace the population of the planet Earth like a methodical virus.

On the other hand, if the characters manage to save the Sensitives, then the Senseless leave to observe the human race for an undetermined period of time. The characters' resistance proves to them that other factors are at work in the evolution of Mankind.

In either case, the characters will be left to deal with baffled police. Meanwhile, Kathryn Blake takes her child and moves to another city, broken by the unsolved murder of her husband. Saint Jerome and the Public Services Building continue on with business as usual. The only thing for certain is that the characters will encounter the Senseless again.

## Also check out....

Other *Tales of the Weird* from author Monte Lin:



"Blood of Dionysus" is a short adventure for the Swing role-playing game. An ancient jar filled with the divine wine of the Greek god of wine appears throughout the city, causing people to give into their basest impulses. The characters must track down the jar and somehow neutralize it before the city goes completely insane. However, a powerful wine patron believes the wine can cure his physical disabilities and stops at nothing to get that jar for himself.

"Spider Asylum" is a short adventure for experienced characters for the Swing role-playing game. The characters come to the Spider Penitentiary to explore a possible spiritual site and discover the Federal prison overrun not by the inmates, but by crazed guards and possessed staff.

