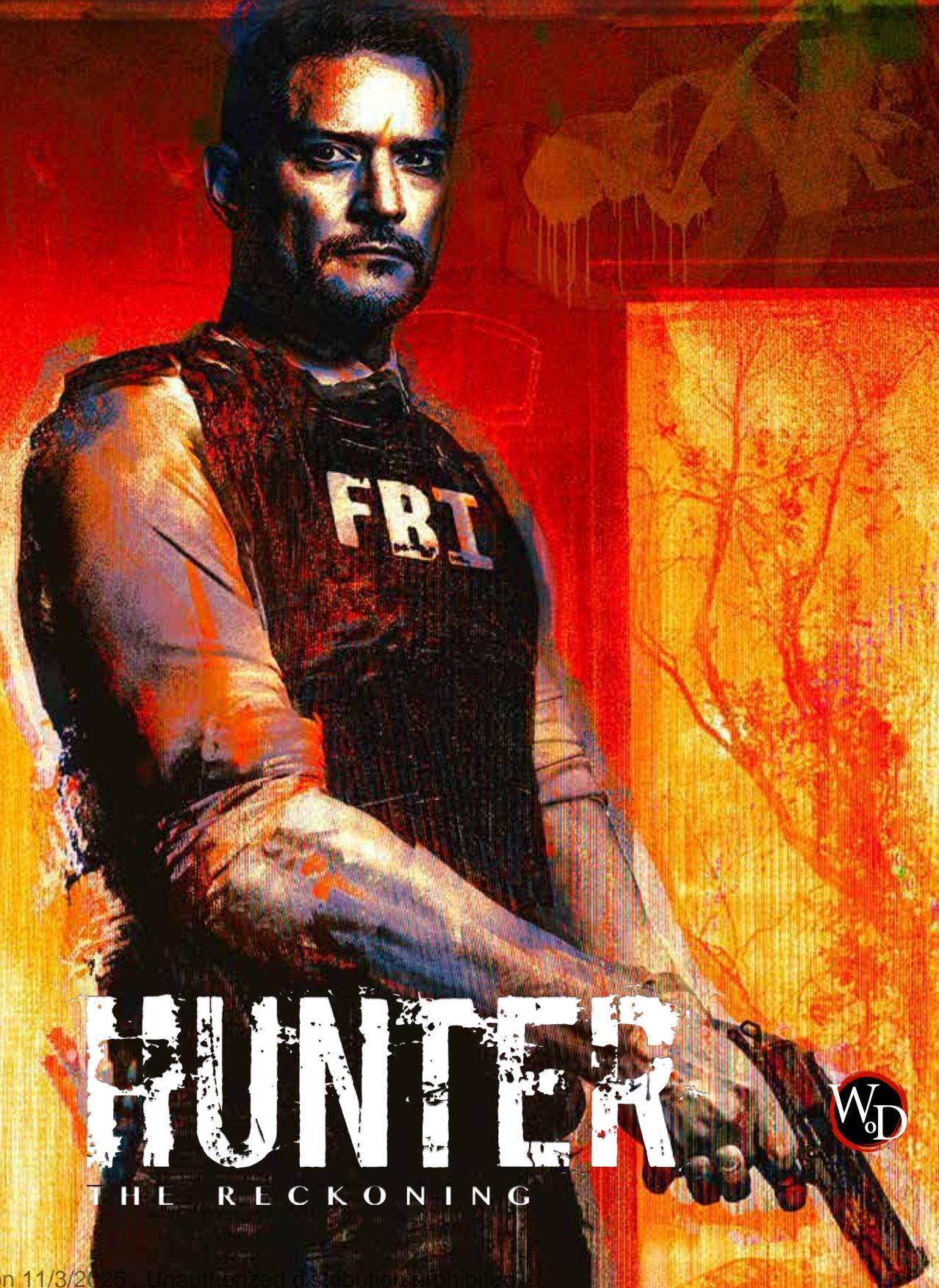


A SOURCEBOOK FOR HUNTER: THE RECKONING

# APOSTATES



**HUNTER**  
THE RECKONING

# HUNTER

THE RECKONING

## FIND YOURSELF A NEW JOB!

Whether you once ran a Monster-X franchise, served in the Special Affairs Division, consulted for the shadowy Arcanum, temped at Re:Venge, or volunteered for the Society of St. Leopold, working with the orgs means you've seen it all — and then some. But when the grind ignites a Drive deep within, it's time to break free and seek a new path. Step into the shoes of the disillusioned and defiant ex-org operatives.

*Apostates* empowers players to repurpose the assets of their former employers — everything from classified intel to cutting-edge gear and clandestine networks. Play as these rogue agents or unleash them as unpredictable rivals in your **Hunter: The Reckoning** chronicle. Whether as allies or adversaries, the Apostates and their former orgs are bound to shake up your story.

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- **New Edges and Perks**, including 4 new Edges for apostate characters, and 4 fresh Perks for existing Edges
- **Extensive detail on 5 major orgs:** the Arcanum, Monster-X, Re:Venge, SAD, and the Society of St. Leopold — with full profiles and lore
- **Features 6 new orgs** ready to be woven into your chronicles
- **20 Storyteller characters** to enrich your chronicle and bring the orgs to life
- **Jumpstart your chronicle** with one story and two chronicle sketches

*Apostates* is a sourcebook for **Hunter: The Reckoning**, a Storytelling Game of Desperate Measures



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## Apostates

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>			
<b>CHAPTER ONE: PLAYING APOSTATES</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SPECIAL AFFAIRS DIVISION</b>	<b>75</b>
Creeds, Drives, and the Orgs	11	Origins	76
Storyteller Guidance	12	Office Politics	77
New Mechanics	13	Roles Within SAD	78
Loresheets	21	The Hunt	78
Discipline		Why Leave?	79
Archetypes		Archetypes	81
Attitudes and Stereotypes		Sample Characters	83
Sample Characters			85
<b>CHAPTER TWO: THE ARCANUM</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>CHAPTER SIX: SOCIETY OF ST. LEOPOLD</b>	<b>91</b>
Origins	32	History	92
The Syllabus	32	Membership	92
Institutional Culture	34	Hierarchy	92
Reputation	34	Leaving the Org	97
Joining the Arcanum	35	Archetypes	98
Leaving the Arcanum	36	Attitudes and Stereotypes	98
Archetypes	38	Sample Characters	102
Inside Looking Out	39		
Personnel Records	40		
<b>CHAPTER THREE: MONSTER-X</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>CHAPTER SEVEN: MISCELLANEOUS ORGS</b>	<b>109</b>
Origins	46	DelphicInvestments	110
Rank and File	46	The Gates of Alexander	112
Management	47	Project Twilight	115
The Grind	48	The Real Cognistas	117
Work Culture	48	Red Eyes Community Watch	120
Leaving the Org	51	Xtend, Ltd	123
Archetypes	51		
Stereotypes	52		
Monster-X Personnel	53		
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RE:VENGE</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>CHAPTER EIGHT: USING THE ORGS IN CHRONICLES</b>	<b>127</b>
Origins	62	The Roles of Orgs	132
Rank and File	63	The Org Chart	136
Management	63	Secrets of the Orgs	137
Corporate Culture	63	Apostate Stories	142
Making Money	66	Sample Chronicle Sketches	143
Leaving Re:Venge	66	Scenario: Shifting Realities	146
Apostate Concepts	69		
Inside Looking Out	70		
Personnel Records	71		
		<b>INDEX</b>	<b>150</b>



INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

Hunters are not the only people who stand against the things that go bump in the night, not by a long shot. They're just simply the best at it. The world is filled with other people who do what they do, though for very different reasons. Faith, curiosity, financial gain, or a mandate from the government can all lead people to investigate and hunt monsters. However, these people aren't Hunters. Most of these people never actually come up against the monsters and live their lives behind a desk. Those who do encounter real evil don't always survive.

Some of these people who suspect, however, become true Hunters who know. They awaken a Drive within themselves to do what no one else around them will do. Something about being in the org sets them off. Maybe they read enough information about how blood-sucking monsters have infiltrated society, and they have the need to do something about it. Perhaps they are the lone survivor of a werewolf attack, driven to hunt down that and every other shapeshifting monster. There are fascinating abilities that unnatural creatures have that can be studied and, if done by the right person, exploited.

So, these Hunters have had their Drives ignited, and perhaps for a time they can be both an operator in an org and a Hunter, but they are pulled in two directions, serving (at least) two masters. On the one hand, they have a job to do, paperwork to file, expenses to report, and on the other hand, they must hunt down monsters, regardless of if they have a shift coming up at the local Monster-X location in the morning or not. Eventually, as the poem goes, “the centre cannot hold.”

An org doesn’t provide the freedom to do whatever you want, and sometimes the goals of the org you’re a member of are, for one reason or another, at odds with yours. Something’s got to give. But that’s the thing about a Drive, you can’t just deny it, can you? So you quit, becoming an apostate.

Quitting isn’t always the easiest thing to do, however, not if an org has fanatics who may view apostates on the same level as monsters. How do you get out without finding yourself on the receiving end of a bullet? Maybe you fake your own death, or else secure enough dirt on someone else that they cover your trail. Maybe you just retire, taking a deal to lie low.

Whatever the details, you’re out now, doing what you love, what you need to do. Apart from the blankbodies, shapeshifters, and whatever else is on your ass, you’ll never fully escape the scrutiny of your former comrades-in-arms, even if you parted ways amicably. They will always be a part of your life, until a werewolf or vampire or ghost gets the better of you.

## Apostates for Players

This book provides players with new information about the various orgs in **Hunter: The Reckoning** so that players can portray apostates, former members of orgs who now Hunt monsters independently. *Apostates* gives players the information they need to craft backstories for Hunters who were once members of an org but left, as well as new mechanics for Hunters with ties to an org.

Just because you left an org, under good or bad circumstances, doesn’t mean you don’t have friends, colleagues, or rivals still there. You might have burned the org, but that doesn’t mean you’ve burned them, and people are, after all, just people. If you come at it the right way, these people can help you do what the orgs they’re still lashed to can’t or won’t: make a difference.

The apostate is unique among Hunters, for they suffer under the threat from two directions: first, the monsters that threaten all Hunters, and second, the org whence they came. While not all Hunters leave their orgs in a manner that leaves them as enemies, no org wants loose ends who have intimate knowledge of their inner workings out in the world.

For players of such chronicles, *Apostates* offers lore to build out backstories, Loresheets to make use of, and characters to have connections with to bring your apostate Hunters to life.

### OTHER KINDS OF APOSTATES

While most apostates are former members of an org, not every person who does work for an org is a full member. Sometimes these people are freelancers or contractors, only brought into the fold for one gig or just to clean the office when the shit hits the fan. Otherwise they can be people who were in the process of becoming full members when they get a taste of the real horrors in the world.

These kinds of apostates are just as valid as ones who are dyed in the wool or card carrying members of an org. A story featuring them can be just as interesting, if not more, as one about full members.

## Apostates for Storytellers

For Storytellers, *Apostates* offers a plethora of options for Storyteller Characters, plot hooks, and guidelines for how to run chronicles centered around apostate Hunters. Chapters Two through Seven, covering specific orgs, tell you why someone might join an org in the first place, what the organization is like, and how to use org agents or apostates in any **Hunter** chronicle.

Chapters Two through Seven flesh out five distinct orgs so that one or more can be the focal point or main antagonist for a Hunter or their cell. Each example of an org includes guidance on how to make an org your own, allowing you to customize your own version of the World of Darkness and fill in the gaps that this book leaves. Furthermore, Chapter Seven contains many shorter entries for other orgs not previously included in **Hunter** to give Storytellers or players more choices.

## CONTENT WARNING

As a supplement for **Hunter: the Reckoning**, Apostates tackles many of the same heavy themes. Storytellers of troupes with an aversion to any of the following topics may want to tread carefully: addiction, conspiracy theories, cruelty to animals, drug use, human trafficking, and religious persecution.

Finally, Chapter Eight advises you on running chronicles both for Hunter cells made up of one or more apostates from the same org, as well as chronicles for cells where each Hunter is from a different org. Regardless of whether they start the chronicle when their apostasy begins, or long after they left, these tools will help you run your games in such a way that everyone gets their moment to shine while also ensuring that the chronicle runs

smoothly. This chapter comes complete with a series of plot hooks, two chronicle sketches, and a story for Storytellers to use: Shifting Realities. This story can be a starting point for a full chronicle, or adapted to fit an ongoing one.

## Orgs and Where to Find Them in Other Books

The following table lists orgs mentioned in other books from all over the World of Darkness. While there is no need to read books from non-**Hunter** games, these other books provide alternative points of view on the orgs, from the perspectives of the monsters they hunt. Table 1 summarizes where information on orgs can be found.

**TABLE 1: ORGS IN HUNTER: THE RECKONING**

Name	Org Type	Source(s)
The Arcanum	Academic	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
BOPE-RJ	Governmental	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
Delphi Investments	Corporate	<i>Apostates</i>
The Gates of Alexander	Academic	<i>Apostates</i>
Information Awareness Office	Governmental	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
Monster-X	Corporate	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
The Nails of Christ	Religious	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
The Order of the Rose	Religious	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
Orpheus Group	Corporate	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
Project Twilight	Governmental	<i>Werewolf: The Apocalypse</i>
The Real Cognistas	Vigilante	<i>Apostates</i>
Red Eyes Community Watch	Vigilante	<i>Apostates</i>
Re:Venge	Corporate	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
SAD (Special Affairs Division)	Governmental	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i> , see also <i>Second Inquisition (Vampire)</i>
Special Rehabilitation Program	Governmental	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i>
Society of St. Leopold	Religious	<i>Hunter: The Reckoning</i> , see also <i>Second Inquisition (Vampire)</i>
Xtend, Ltd	Corporate	<i>Blood Sigils (Vampire)</i>



# Chapter One: PLAYING APOSTATES

As orgs are a career instead of a calling for most of their members, their workforce is constantly in flux as people retire, are made redundant, change careers (to leave the bloodstained, heart-stopping nightmares behind), or die. What sets apostates apart from other ex-members is that, somewhere in the blood and darkness, they found themselves.

Mechanically, of course, this is their Drive, but all they know is that the org helped them find the path to making measurable change in the world by fighting back against the monsters that prey upon it.

Org members hunt monsters because they fall for a PR campaign, want to make a quick buck, or simply like the idea of playing with the latest toys and theoretically making people safer.

Apostates Hunt because the world is a dark place, and someone must hold a flickering candle to the darkness. Many of them know that they wouldn't have seen the truth had they not naively joined up. But sooner or later, something eye-opening happens. They leave to stand against the darkness. Others join the org to fight against a darkness they know exists and leave when the org gets in the way of the Hunt.

Just because an apostate has left an org doesn't mean they forget why they joined it in the first place, and there are as many reasons for leaving an org as there are apostates. There are no hard and fast categories of apostates in the rules of **Hunter: The Reckoning**, but Hunters have accumulated a common jargon for a variety of apostate personality types.

**Desk Jockeys:** Desk jockeys are happiest away from the field. They are experts at manipulating the structures of Governmental or Corporate orgs and find their niche very quickly. These Hunters are often placed into coordination roles. They can claim to be advancing the org's goals while doing as little work as possible. Most often, desk jockeys become apostates when their position allows them to discover hypocrisy or corruption on a grand scale. They are also subject to the whims of others, and many have become Hunters after being forced into the field by a superior trying to remove a rival for their position.

**Noble Outsider:** Noble outsiders are often Vigilantes, although a fair number find their way into Academic, Corporate or Governmental orgs. For these apostates, the Hunt is a means for them to put their specialised skill set to use protecting those unable to defend themselves. Often highly moral and reclusive, they are sometimes confused with true believers (below). The difference is that the latter joins the org because they want to, but a noble outsider joins because they feel they must. Most leave their org when they realize that its values aren't as pure as they initially believed, or when they are forced to choose between their morals and the org's orders too many times.

**Occult Librarians:** Occult librarians live for knowledge. Mostly found in Academic and Religious

orgs, they are the brains of a team. They are involved in most stages of a hunt, apart from the actual hunt itself, and comb through the monster's lair after the fact to add to their library. Such actions are a double-edged sword, and many occult librarians turn apostate when their org asks them to cover up, destroy, or invent knowledge, or they uncover evidence of the org abusing what knowledge it has in order to exploit people, instead of protecting them. Others leave when they feel the org is holding them back from acquiring more knowledge and becoming better Hunters.

**Thrill Seekers:** Thrill seekers are those who join orgs for the chance to experiment with the most dangerous things. Often members of Corporate or Vigilante orgs, they are usually adrenaline junkies or researchers who eventually feel constrained by the bounds of traditional research and development. While researchers content to remain in the lab fall under the desk jockey title, thrill seekers are those apostates who discover a passion for field tests. Many leave their org when they realize how much they could do without the constant oversight or need for profit, while others get lost in the thrill of the hunt and chase that high above all else.

**True Believers:** Most often belonging to Governmental or Religious orgs, true believers are committed to a cause. They are passionate and enthusiastically follow orders they believe to be correct. Most true believers leave their orgs when they are confronted with things they can't reconcile with the company line, or when the org betrays them, whether spiritually or not. They may also find their commitment questioned and realize their hard work and dedication benefits the org instead of the people they want to help. On rare occasions, the horrors they Hunt create such doubts that their beliefs become more extreme.

**The Disillusioned:** Some Hunters turn apostate simply because they never agreed with the org in the first place and signed up just for the money or have no other choice but to fight on their own terms after being fired. Others slowly come to believe that other orgs have a better approach to fighting back against the darkness or lose all confidence in their org's stated goals. Whatever their reasons, the disillusioned come from orgs of all kinds and often find a cause worth fighting for, even if it's only their cell.

# Creeds, Drives, and the Orgs

With the workforce, members, volunteers, or contractors that most orgs can call upon, it's no surprise that apostates of all Creeds and Drives find their way into the wider world. While no two Hunters have identical rationales for joining an org, some things hold true. The following section presents the most likely orgs that Hunters of each Creed and Drive might join, as well as potential reasons for apostacy.

**Entrepreneurial** Hunters most often join Corporate orgs. They find their innovative mindset and eye for gathering and exploiting resources is often rewarded in the pursuit of commercial products created from monster hunting. This mindset can bring them into conflict with their superiors, however, as many of these Hunters see avenues for growth their org refuses to consider. A small number join Vigilante orgs and use the org as their customer base, or as a way to constantly hone their procurement skills.

**Faithful** Hunters are usually members of Religious orgs. If they are, the org supports and reinforces their belief system to the exclusion of all others. Usually categorized as true believers by other Hunters, Faithful find comfort in the teachings of their org and genuinely believe they are making the world a better place. Their zealotry can bring them into conflict with their superiors, as can any evidence of corruption within the org. Some Faithful join Governmental orgs in countries where the church and state work closely together.

**Inquisitive** Hunters often find their way into Academic orgs. Their natural drive to deepen their understanding of the world is supported by the org's interests and resources. Some Inquisitives can't stop once they've started, however, and leave the org when they feel they are being censored or restricted. Corporate orgs focused on R&D attract many Inquisitives as well.

**Martial** Hunters gravitate towards Governmental orgs for the most part. They're often recruited from

law enforcement or the military, and their abilities quickly find them on the front line of monster hunting. Clear boundaries and orders provide guidance and legalize their more overt tendencies, but they may resist orders they view as too confining. Martial Hunters of a more anarchic belief join Vigilante orgs instead.

**Underground** Hunters are a natural fit for Vigilante orgs. Already on the outside and used to avoiding mainstream society's attention, Underground Hunters know how to fit in among the marginalized and outcast, and how to do their job with whatever is available and by any means necessary. Unfortunately, such people often have very rigid lines they won't cross, and the beliefs held by Vigilante orgs can force an Underground Hunter to reconsider their relationship. Some Underground Hunters put their talents to use in Academic orgs instead, acting for the betterment of all instead of a single controlling interest.

Hunters driven by **Curiosity** are most often found within Academic orgs or forward-thinking Corporate orgs. Their Drive to find the truth of everything can lead them to explore beyond the org's stated boundaries, and many become apostates when their org tries to stop them from investigating things outside of its purview.

Hunters seeking **Vengeance** are a natural fit for Vigilante orgs, but some take up the mantle of a crusade and find their way into Religious orgs. Such



a burning passion cuts sharply however. They may cross the line and do things the org itself is forced to condemn or, more often, their actions bring them into conflict with the org itself.

Hunters who swear an **Oath** usually find meaning in Governmental and Religious orgs. Their oaths give them a purpose, and their org gives them a legitimacy they would otherwise lack. Problems arise when their oaths and their employer clash, and all Oath-sworn apostates are those Hunters who chose to prioritize their oaths over their org or were given no other choice.

Hunters driven by **Greed** most often find themselves in Corporate orgs, but some join Academic or Governmental orgs to exploit what resources they can. Their Drive pushes them to find profit in everything and their commitment to this is swiftly revealed to be as dangerous to their org as it is to their prey. Many find themselves fired after taking too many needless risks in pursuit of their money-making goal.

Hunters whose **Pride** drives them gravitate to Vigilante and Governmental orgs. Their peers prove to be the perfect audience and training partners, and their prey is the fire in which they are forged. Many of these Hunters find themselves running afoul of their org when their actions lead to others being hurt or killed, and they are more likely to be fired than leave voluntarily.

**Envy** is a powerful Drive and these Hunters find solace in the exploitation of monsters by Corporate orgs or the understanding found in Academic orgs. Their nigh-obsessive desire is hard to hide, however, and their peers eventually notice when an envious Hunter attempts to steal unnatural power for themselves.

**Atonement** is easiest to find when the orders come from above, so most of these Hunters sign up with Governmental orgs but some use Religious orgs to emulate historical methods of atonement instead. Conflict arises when the Hunter's burning need for atonement overrides their commitment to the org.

## ADVANCED APOSTATES

If your cell contains experienced Hunters who cut their teeth within an org and survived, you may wish to allow character advancement before the chronicle begins. With the Storyteller's permission you may start with an additional 15 experience points to spend on advancement before you begin play.

If you are using the Alternative Progression system (see *Hunter: The Reckoning*, p. 83), choose one of the following packages:

**Connections:** Divide 5 dots among Backgrounds (but not Merits)

**Edge-Focused:** Choose an additional Edge and one additional Perk

**Innate Ability:** Add 1 dot to two different Attributes

**Training:** Choose 3 different skills and add one dot and one specialty to each

# Storyteller Guidance

The information contained within this book is, as ever, a tool to build the stories you and your players wish to tell. As such, you are encouraged to read or skim through the book in advance. This way, you can help provide summaries of each org for your players to aid their choice of orgs or lack thereof.

More importantly, you may find that some of the orgs aren't a good fit for your troupe or aren't otherwise appropriate for your chronicle. If that's the case, feel free to restrict the options presented here to improve your story.

With all the orgs described in this book — whichever ones make it to your table — your troupe may find themselves spoiled for choice when it comes to the Relationship Map. We advise caution when allowing players' characters to have too many connections that are members of orgs or shared connections. Either can lead to an unbalanced, unfocused narrative that spotlights certain characters or orgs more than others.

Should this situation or one like it arise, we encourage you to explore alternative options or work with your players to establish a compelling,

and mutually agreeable, narrative reason for those connections. Excess connections can be culled during the course of play as well.

As apostates are Hunters who had connections with an org, your players' choices allow you to draw upon the themes of their characters' former orgs, as well as provide a large pool of Contacts, Allies, rivals, and favors to draw upon.

At the very least, some of the options—particularly the Loresheets, Advantages, and Edges—presented in this book will likely need narrative work to complete from time to time—such as consulting on a hunt, if not something much larger—in order to retain access to that option. It's worth having a conversation with any player choosing these options to understand the expectations around character's former org and the impact the org may have on the chronicle.

This is a useful conversation to have with the players collectively as well. If every player is on the same page about what to expect in terms of org involvement, you can make informed decisions when designing storylines around orgs calling in favors. You may also want to check with the players what they understand a small, medium, and large favor to be.

As a rule of thumb, a small favor should last a scene, a medium favor should be no more than two sessions, and a large favor should take an entire story.

If a player chooses one of the options from this book after character creation, you should work with them to figure out how their character has gained access to it and design the next story accordingly. If multiple players do this at the same time, you may need to get creative with the favors asked while still honoring the experience investment the players have made.

If a character refuses to repay a favor, limit their access to the resources provided until the favor has been completed. If the character wants to cut ties completely, work with them to choose a suitable replacement of the same dot rating or experience cost.

While most orgs prefer to keep rogue agents out of their business, they know the benefits of keeping a team of skilled, expendable Hunters in their pocket and may sweeten the deal just enough to ensure the cell's continued relationship with them. This can take many forms but access to resources or minor logistical support is always a good start.

# New Mechanics

The following are new weapons, gear, Advantages, Flaws, Perks for existing Edges, new Edges, and Loresheets for apostates. Some options suggest a specific organization (such as Arcanum or Monster-X) or org type (such as Academic or Governmental) as a prerequisite to maintain the themes explored in this book. Storytellers can restrict these as they see fit, or require players to explain why another org or org type would grant access to the option. This is often plausible when tied to characters on the Relationship Map.

## Weapons

### *Velum Sanctuarii: The Red Death*

Similar to a tear gas canister, these metal and plastic canisters contain Velum Sanctuarii. This dense gas obstructs visibility but is otherwise harmless to humans; the undead, however, are left withered and desiccated. Canisters are thrown by hand or fired with spray guns.

Red Death canisters can only be obtained through a Society of St. Leopold contact or the black market, as the Society won't share the weapon even with close allies. When deployed, the canister releases a gas cloud that spreads to 40 meters in diameter and obstructs visibility, reducing dice pools for actions requiring sight by 2 for the first two turns, as this is when the cloud is at its thickest. While the cloud is still dense, vampires inside take 1 point of Aggravated damage per turn. If the vampire doesn't escape the cloud before the end of the third turn, it withers and shrivels, becoming paralyzed as if staked (see *Hunter*, pp. 101, 169).

## Additional Gear

The following options include a prerequisite linking them to one or more org types. They are only available to those types of orgs, but if it makes your story better, the Storyteller may throw the prerequisite out. These are all



items that can be smuggled out when leaving an org or obtained from a contact in exchange for a small favor.

## Debilitating Restraints

**Prerequisite:** Governmental or Vigilante Org  
These restraints aren't for any specific prey, but use a mixture of chemicals, auditory effects, and electrical shocks to distract whoever—or whatever—is held within them. Ranging from manacles covering the forearms to whole body restraints, they're reliable and relatively easy to produce.

Creatures held by these restraints must succeed on a Difficulty 3 Strength + Athletics test. They are subject to a cumulative -1 die penalty to their pools for each escape attempt (to a maximum of -3).

## Forensic Field Kit

**Prerequisite:** Academic, Corporate, or Governmental Org  
These kits usually come in large, reinforced suitcases and contain a wide variety of chemicals, tools, and pieces of miniature equipment. While most people

require additional training to use one properly, a layperson can figure out the basics on their own given enough time. With the right know-how, apostates can usually cobble these kits together from commercially available components.

Using this gear allows you to apply your Science or Technology Specialties to any relevant dice pool, not just ones that use the Science or Technology Skills. It may be impossible to find certain clues—such as blood stains that have been cleaned up—without using it.

## Monster-Bane Restraints

**Prerequisite:** Academic, Corporate, or Religious Org  
These restraints are made from a variety of materials known to be inimical to monstrous life. Often custom-made for a specific hunt, they contain at least one component that inhibits the suspected prey.

When you acquire this gear, decide a monster type you hope to eventually capture: this creature type must win a Strength + Athletics test (Difficulty 5) to free itself from these restraints and takes 1 Aggravated damage to Health with each attempt. Other creatures treat these restraints as normal.

## Occult Field Kit

**Prerequisite:** Academic or Religious Org  
Containing EMF readers, candles, salt, holy water, and EVP recorders, like a forensic field kit, this gear is transported in a reinforced container and is necessary for uncovering certain types of evidence. You can't use it without being trained how to, but you can find evidence of magical and spiritual activity with it.

Using this gear allows you to apply your Academic or Occult Specialties to any relevant dice pool, not just ones that use the Academics or Occult Skills. This kit can identify things such as supernatural residue. In a pinch, you can use this kit as part of an exorcism. However, the gear is destroyed in the attempt.

## Advantages and Flaws

Many of the following new Advantages and Flaws require one or more dots in an existing Backgrounds or Merits before purchase.

## Loresheet

A *Loresheet* is a set of merits that represents ties to the wider world. In *Apostates*, each represents some tie to one of the orgs. To take this Advantage, choose one Loresheet and you can purchase one or all of the Merits from that Loresheet, in any order. Add or modify characters on the Relationship Map (see *Hunter*, p. 84–86) as needed to represent connections to members of the org. Each level of a Loresheet is self-contained and must be bought separately: you can buy the four-dot Merit without buying the one-, two-, or three-dot Merits on the Loresheet. A character can only choose Merits from a single Loresheet. The Storyteller can waive this rule as well as restrict (or open up) specific Loresheets.

For individual Loresheets, see pp. 22–29.

## Mask

If you have the Mask Background at one dot or higher, you can buy the following Merit.

- .. **Faked Death:** While some rival organizations maintain good relations with some Hunters who left, the majority are antagonistic to apostates, in some cases watching them for years or even killing them. When dealing with some of the more fanatical orgs—the ones who hunt down apostates until they’re dead—the easiest way to save your skin may be to fake your death. As long as you keep your head down and maintain a fake identity, stalkers and enemies from your former life won’t look for you, and neither will your former org. On the other hand, you may also have limited access to Contacts from your former life. By default, you have the same penalties as the Flaw Serial Error (see *Hunter*, p. 76) unless you buy a separate Mask Merit.

## Mentor

If you have the Mentor Background at one dot or higher, you can buy the following Merit.

- to ... **Generous:** Your mentor has a soft spot for you—or possibly you know enough of their secrets they don’t risk offending you. Whatever the reason, they’re prepared to go further on your behalf than

the average Mentor. For each dot you have in this Merit, you can call on your Mentor for a valuable favor once per story, without the usual risk of offending them and losing a dot from this background.

- .. **Spirit Guide (Arcanum):** Your mentor is a ghost or other spectral entity you studied and formed a relationship with during your time in the Arcanum, and they remain loyal to you even now. You have the means to summon them, and they provide you with a similar level of advice and assistance as any other Mentor with the same number of dots invested in the background. While they can’t help you with mortal authorities or politics, they can provide reliable—probably life-saving—information on ghosts and hauntings.

**Flaw: Credit Hungry (•, Arcanum):** On any Hunt where you call on your Mentor, they inevitably take credit for your achievements (but not for any negative repercussions). One day you’ll read about your case in an academic journal or an Arcanum library, with their name attached to it instead of yours. If there was any financial reward for your work, they’ll get at least half of that too.

## Resources

If you have the Resources Background at one dot or higher, you can buy the following Merit.

- Flaw: Freelance (•):** Like a lot of ex-Re:Vengers, you still work freelance—maybe monster hunting, maybe in a more legit career where you actually pay taxes. Freelancing lets you set your own hours, choose where you work, and generally control your own destiny. It’s great. Except for the work comes in waves and your cash flow is constantly in a state of feast or famine.

Roll one die at the start of each story. On a failure, reduce your Resources by 1 until the end of the story; on a success, increase Resources by 1 for the same period.

You can’t take this Flaw unless you have 2, 3, or four-dots of Resources. You must buy off the Flaw with experience points if you ever increase Resources to 5 dots.

- Flaw: Gig Economy (• or ••):** Whatever you do for money, you’re at someone’s beck and call. Maybe your job is so precarious you’ll get fired if you miss a shift, or maybe it pays so poorly you can’t afford to turn down work. If you have high Resources, this Flaw could represent you



being an on-call surgeon or even family requirements you must meet if you want to keep your trust fund.

Periodically, work comes calling at an really inconvenient time. You can reduce your Resources by 1 (yes, Resources can be reduced to zero) for the rest of the story, postpone whatever your cell was going to do, or talk your way out of that shift by promising a future favor (which you should expect to have a high cost).

At one dot, this Flaw comes into play once every few stories. At two dots, it's once per story on average — the Storyteller may decide to give you a break, then hit you a couple of times in a future story.

You must have at least one dot of Resources to take this Flaw.

**Flaw: Debts (• or ••):** Whenever you earn money, a hefty chunk of it goes to servicing debts. As well as the obvious problems this creates in a narrative (get paid in cash or stay broke), it costs you twice as much to increase your Resources.

For two dots, your debts are to loan sharks or some other shady enterprise. Trying to hide income from

them doesn't just result in higher future payments, it ends in threats and violence.

## Safe House

If you have the Safe House Merit at one dot or higher, you can buy the following Merit.

**• to •• Rural Hideaway (Arcanum):** Many Arcanum safe houses are old family properties deep in the countryside. Yours might be a former hunting lodge on a sprawling English estate or a former plantation deep in the bayou. It might be tremendously luxurious, riddled with mold, or both. What matters is that it's remarkably hard to find. For each dot in this Merit, add 1 to the Difficulty of efforts to locate, penetrate, or carry out surveillance on the safe house. In addition, when anyone other than you attempts to travel to the safe house, it takes them at least a day longer than it should to arrive there unless you give them explicit directions.

**Flaw: Isolated (••):** The safe house is in the middle

of nowhere, which means it's hard to maintain reliable modern conveniences and unavailable at short notice. Your safe house has intermittent network connectivity and the phone and internet signal always fails at the worst possible moment. Getting to the safe house is a chore, and it can't be reached in a rush — either by you or any help you might call upon.

## Franchise Office

### Monster-X

Most, but not all, Monster-X franchises are given the use of a specific space as their base of operations. Upon leaving the org, a select few operatives are allowed to continue using their former franchise office in exchange for the occasional favor, their experience being deemed too important to throw away.

Franchises can be little more than a single room in a city center rented and furnished for the lowest fee possible or a warehouse outfitted for training and resupply. Each is a reflection of how important Monster-X believes it to be. Most franchises move offices as their success grows.

This Background represents a physical space that you theoretically have exclusive access to as a former member of Monster-X. Should you find yourself traveling as part of your chronicle, the Storyteller should provide you with the opportunity to access other franchise offices of similar standing (within one dot your rating, to a minimum of one dot).

For the most part, this Background functions as the Safe House Background (see *Hunter*, p. 78) with the following exceptions:

- You may not take the Flaw: No Safe House.
- You may not choose the Laboratory or Surgery Safe House Merits.
- You may not choose the Haunted Safe House Flaw.
- This Background provides a new Franchise Office Merits and Flaws you may choose from in addition to those found in the Safe House Background.

### FRANCHISE OFFICE MERITS AND FLAWS

- **Bureaucratic Smokescreen:** Contacts in HR, the press, and local law enforcement have ensured you're kept abreast of any movements and current

events you can safely exploit while on the hunt in the immediate area. This Merit grants you and your cell (assuming they're with you) a one-die bonus to pools when avoiding scrutiny from the local police and journalists.

- **Database Access:** Through a mixture of favors, happenstance, and hard work, you've maintained a secure connection to Monster-X's research logs. With this access, you can search for information most franchisees are happily ignorant of. This Merit adds one die to pools when researching monsters and other supernatural phenomena.
- **New Hire:** Monster-X is always hiring, and some offices find themselves with more operatives than they know what to do with — this results in a steady supply of "cannon fodder", er... recruits. Once per story, you have access to one of these enthusiastic new hires and may bring them along on the Hunt. Within reason, they follow your every order but remain fiercely loyal to Monster-X and stand no chance of becoming a capital-H Hunter.

**Flaw: (•) Location of Interest:** Due to the office's effectiveness, or lack thereof, it has drawn attention to itself. This attention could be internal, as Monster-X evaluates its long-term viability, or external, as local law enforcement keeps a close eye on it. To avoid additional interest, your office must be circumspect. One Franchise Office Merit is randomly selected at the start of each story, and you lose access to that Merit for the duration.

You must possess at least two Franchise Office Merits to take this flaw.

**Flaw: (•) Poorly Maintained Equipment:** Whether through idleness or substandard quality, your equipment is faulty, although stubbornness ensures you use it anyway. If you roll a total failure when using any of your own equipment, it's unusable until fixed.

## New Perks

### Artifact

- **Feature Unlocked (Re:Venge):** Re:Venge clients rarely pay in cash, and you got this artifact as payment for a freelance job. Maybe the last owner gave it to you, maybe you simply swiped it on your way out.

Whoever had it before certainly didn't tell you if they knew what it did. However you got it, this artifact does more than you knew it was capable of. Once per story, when Danger is at 5, you can call upon the deepest reserves of your artifact's power, allowing a spent Willpower point to reroll as many non-Desperation dice as you like. If you succeed, treat the test as a critical win.

## Global Access

- **Digital Cannon Fodder:** You worked for Re:Venge or a similarly grimy employer—someone that harvested a ton of personal data. You use that data to camouflage your own activities, bouncing your online activity around a trail of other identities—and not fake ones, real people. It makes you very hard to pin down. All attempts to track you down or trace digital actions back to you lead to dozens of dead ends. Reduce the successes of any attempt to digitally surveil, trace, or locate you by two.

## Library

- **How to Silence Them:** In addition to the clue gained from this Edge, you learn information that gives you leverage over the target: a secret they want to keep hidden, a name that strikes fear into their heart, or someone they would never risk hurting. You gain a bonus equal to the margin on the win to any attempt to damage the target in social combat. This bonus expires after use and cannot exceed three dice.
- **Pattern Analysis:** You can discern, fairly easily, whether the phenomenon you're studying has occurred before, allowing you to identify a specific monster's behavior (such as a specific vampire's feeding pattern or a certain sorcerer's occult practices), or you can find a close match for it. Perhaps more importantly, you can identify someone still alive who studied the phenomenon. Whether they'll talk to you is another matter.

# New Edges

The following four Edges mechanically support apostate characters. They can alternatively be used to add variety to any **Hunter** chronicle.

## Turncoat

### APTITUDE EDGE

Once a betrayer, always a betrayer, right? Why wouldn't a Quarry believe that you would sell your new allies down the river to switch sides once again? The truth that you're a double agent, working with your cell to get on the inside with your Quarry, may not be something that even your cellmates know. The Quarry, however, believes you're now loyal to them completely.

**Edge Pool:** Manipulation + Subterfuge

**System:** The Hunter makes a show of pledging their new allegiance before making an Edge test (Difficulty equals half the target's Intelligence + Wits or just their standard Difficulty). This requires relative calm, so while they can "switch sides" in the tense moments before a fight breaks out, it's impossible mid-combat. If successful, the target takes the Hunter at their word, accepting their labor, loyalty, or servitude. This Edge doesn't make the target more inclined to treat the Hunter well or even care for their wellbeing, but they do believe the Hunter is 100% loyal to them now. This effect lasts until the target is presented with evidence to the contrary—if the Hunter has plausible deniability, another Edge test can be made to maintain their cover, with each subsequent test made at +1 Difficulty. It should be noted that lackeys might not share their superior's opinion and could be desperate to out this dangerous interloper, confused as to why they believe the treacherous upstart.

### TURNOAT PERKS

- **Deathbed Confession:** The restrictions regarding usage during combat are now lifted, and in fact, your sudden switch even allows combat to be paused. This takes your full action but can be used at any point in the turn. Combat resumes when the cell attacks or if either side fails to back down.

- **Poker Face:** You give nothing away, never breaking character, and always reacting with perfect innocence if questioned on any contradictory evidence about your loyalty. You gain a two-dice bonus to Turncoat Edge tests prompted by the Quarry's cronies. On a successful test, you convince the crony as well as the Quarry of your loyalty.
- **Stick to the Plan:** Regardless of how convincing your declarations are or how little notice you give, your cell remains firmly in sync with your plans. They're always able to understand your intent without any communication needed, no matter how long you remain away from them.
- **We Come as a Team:** Your voice speaks not just for you but your cell too. For each point of margin on a successful test, you can bring a cellmate along with you as long as they play along. If their loyalty is later called into question, you can make Edge tests to vouch for them, with the Difficulty increasing as usual.

## Experimental Medicine

### ASSET EDGE

#### Monster-X

The Hunter has signed an indefinite waiver allowing Monster-X's medical team to perform whatever experiments they want upon them in exchange for swift, free medical care. They may not belong to the org anymore, but their waiver still applies, and a badly injured Hunter may have nowhere else to turn. Whether it's drugs to knit together broken flesh or meds to calm a broken mind, Monster-X has you covered!

**Edge Pool:** Stamina + Medicine for Health, Composure + Insight for Willpower.

**System:** Whenever a Hunter has one or more levels of Aggravated damage, they may undergo this experimental procedure. The test's Difficulty is equal to half the subject's current amount of Aggravated damage (rounded up). Winning the test heals the damage completely, while failure sees all damage remain and inflicts the appropriate Impaired status for the story's duration, regardless of their remaining Health, and raises the Danger by 1. The Storyteller can use their discretion as to when these debilitating side-effects wear off.

This Edge's Perks only apply to winning tests and Health damage unless otherwise stated.

### EXPERIMENTAL MEDICINE PERKS

- **Improved Resilience:** A layer of flexible armor is grafted to the Hunter, matching their flesh tone. Until the end of the next story, the Hunter counts as having an Armor Value of 1 when unarmored. This Armor Value stacks with any worn armor.
- **Monstrous Enhancement:** The procedure uses an esoteric component to boost the Hunter's abilities. One of the Hunter's Attributes is increased by two dots (to a maximum of five), and they develop a weakness to a common, mundane material such as silver or sea water, taking Aggravated damage from it until the story's end. Should they die during the story, their corpse becomes something monstrous under the Storyteller's control.
- **Phoenix Protocol:** A dangerous emergency operation that combines pseudoscience and science. For the duration of the next story, the Hunter's Health heals twice as quickly, and they benefit from supernatural resilience to damage, with most Aggravated damage downgraded to Superficial. They can't call upon their Drive for Desperation dice, and once the effects fade, they gain Aggravated Willpower damage equal to the amount of times they've benefited from this Perk this story. This Willpower damage cannot be healed by this Edge.
- **Unstable Steroids:** The procedure uses a mostly stable compound to augment the Hunter's natural abilities. One of the Hunter's Attributes is increased by one until the end of the next story. Should they achieve a Despair result on any tests before the end of the next story, they suffer one Aggravated damage in addition to any other effects.

## Cleanse the Unnatural

### ENDOWMENT EDGE

#### Society of St. Leopold or SAD

In the Society of St. Leopold, the ability to drive out supernatural influence from a victim is called

exorcism. Others might call it an intervention or psychic surgery, but they all have the same goal: remove the taint of supernatural control from a person and give them back their freedom. Every method practiced by this Edge involves some form of violence, leaving the subject emotionally or physically scarred. As the possessive powers of the unnatural are a violent violation of everything good and pure, the practitioners of this Endowment argue one final act of violence is worth the freedom.

**Edge Pool:** Charisma + Persuasion (Society of St. Leopold), Resolve + Science (SAD and other secular psychic exorcists), or Manipulation + Occult (charismatic street preachers or faith healers).

**System:** The Hunter makes an Edge test, with a Difficulty dependent on how long the supernatural influence has persisted (1 if it began this scene, 2 if within the past 24 hours, 3 for a week, 4 for a year, and 5 for anything beyond). The Storyteller might also adjust the Difficulty up or down if the monster in control was particularly potent or weak. Targets of this Edge receive 3 Aggravated damage (to either Health or Willpower, depending on technique), minus 1 for each point of the margin. On a winning test, the target regains full control for the following twenty-four hours. Particularly insidious forms of control may require multiple uses of this Edge before fully purging the supernatural control from their mind.

## CLEANSE THE UNNATURAL PERKS

- **Bedside Manner:** Your touch is soothing, and your mien, while firm, is as gentle and accommodating as possible. Any damage dealt by this Edge becomes Superficial and, after the usual halving, is rounded down.
- **Inflict Stigmata:** Inflicting stigmata (see *Hunter*, p. 72) on the subject causes one additional point of Aggravated Health damage but reduces the Difficulty of the Edge test by 2. The stigmata are permanent.
- **Trace the Threads:** As the Hunter purges the unnatural forces from their subject, they sense the connection between victim and aggressor. The Storyteller will truthfully answer one question about the controller's current location for each point of the margin on a winning Edge test.

- **Psychic Backlash:** A modicum of the torment experienced by the victim is thrown back at their tormentor as well. If the Edge test is successful, for every 2 points of the margin, the controlling entity receives 1 Aggravated damage (the player chooses either to Health or Willpower).

## Great Destiny

### ENDOWMENT EDGE

Whether a higher power has blessed the Hunter, or they simply believe in their own righteousness, they seem to be chosen by providence. With this Edge, the Hunter is empowered to fulfill a higher purpose.

**Edge Pool:** N/A

**System:** Choose a higher purpose or destiny the Hunter has been chosen for. For example, *Be martyred for the Society of St. Leopold*, *Save the life of an innocent*, or *Physically destroy a great evil*. Some Hunters are “blessed” by something unholy, and their dark destiny involves *Killing an innocent* or *Aiding the return of a great evil*. At the beginning of each session, the Hunter creates a temporary pool of two dice. These may be added to any dice pools that directly further their destiny. The pool resets at the beginning of each session.

## GREAT DESTINY PERKS

- **Divine Protection:** In any scene where the Hunter takes damage to Health in service of their destiny, they can reduce the damage by 2 (to a minimum of 0).
- **Heavenly Resolve:** In a scene where the Hunter has taken damage in Social Combat when defending or proselytizing their destiny, they can restore one Aggravated Willpower damage.
- **Sacred Insight:** Once per story, the player may ask the Storyteller for a clue to help the Hunter fulfill their destiny. The Hunter experiences this as a supernatural voice or vision.
- **Influence Fate:** Once per session, the player may influence a Storyteller character to take one action that would aid them in their destiny. Test Charisma + Occult versus the target's Resolve + Occult. ■



# LORESHEETS

# Agent Cog



Based on Agent Cog's beginnings as a pirate radio host and disseminator of fliers in Austin, Texas, in the 1980s, profilers place him in his early to mid-70s and in the Philippines—if it's even the same person. Over the years, he's appeared on and dropped off the radar, then he returned with some new, more secure means of spreading the message. Podcasts and online videos seem to use a recreation of the original's voice, and he's incredibly careful to use proxies. Best guesses say he was never an agent but may have been related to an accomplice who leaked information and then used that credibility to attract more leakers. Reach out with good intel, and he'll broadcast it—or even do a few favors.



## LORE

**• Secure Line:** To speak to Agent Cog safely, you need a secure line. Fortunately for you, Cog provided a tutorial on how to be temporarily untraceable. Once per session, a phone call of your choice becomes fully untraceable and secure for about 10 minutes. This can be used when speaking to anyone, not just Cog.

**• Inside Man in Black:** As an informant for Agent Cog, you're in an exclusive club. He'll put you in contact with someone inside SAD who also leaks to him. They act as a **• Contact**, but the doubts they carry about the Division ensure much of the information they deliver is unfairly biased.

**•• Two Truths and a Lie:** Agent Cog needs information. Whenever you provide him accurate information about the inner workings of SAD, their current operations, or a defeated Quarry, Agent Cog provides you with two genuine nuggets of info, and one misleading—but plausible—untruth. Cog believes it, but Cog believes everything. The data given is relevant to the story, even if the character doesn't yet know it.

**••• Lookie-Loos:** Give Cog an exciting enough tip about a paranormal event in progress at a specific location (true or not), and he'll share it in real-time. His fans—dozens of them—show up within minutes. This can be used to create traffic jams, summon a crowd too large to identify you as a suspect within it, or for the less scrupulous, handy hostages and meat shields.

**•••• It's Never Aliens:** Of all the possible paranormal things behind an event—ghosts, vampires, the fae, werewolves, mages—the one thing it has never, ever been is aliens. Agent Cog disagrees, and if you tell him aliens were involved in an event, he eagerly broadcasts this “fact” to his hundreds of thousands of fans. This decreases rival orgs' interest in any Quarry or aftermath of a hunt to zero. This can be used once per story.

# Arcanum Tenure



Like any other academic structure, the more time spent navigating its particular peculiarities, the closer you get to a true understanding. Your time spent walking the hallowed halls of the Arcanum was significant, and even though you've moved on, your knowledge remains as keen as ever.

Considering how slowly the org changes, this knowledge keeps you in good standing for years. It eventually, however, becomes out of date unless you make at least a minimal effort to keep it current.



## LORE

**• Humble and Lowly:** You worked ridiculously hard to keep your place in the Arcanum. You learned the fastest and most efficient ways to get things done, and you made strong connections among the other easily overlooked support staff—the archival assistants, database administrators, and personal secretaries. Reduce the Difficulty of attempts to gain information from the Arcanum by 1, to a minimum of 1.

**.. Arcanum Shorthand:** You understand the notoriously cryptic shorthand and references with which Arcanum research notes are rife as fluently as you know your mother tongue. You can get far more from reading Arcanum notes or research reports than most members in good standing. When making a test to understand or analyze Arcanum material, lower the Difficulty by 2 (to a minimum of 1).

**... Red Tape:** You know how to make Arcanum personnel back off or at least get out of your way. You know exactly how to mire them in exhausting, distracting bureaucracy, or what strings to pull to get their supervisor or a senior researcher off their back. Even hinting you can cause trouble is convincing enough to make an Arcanist second-guess themselves.

Once per story when Arcanum personnel oppose you, you can threaten them with red tape. This causes them to leave the immediate area until the end of the current scene or acquiesce to reasonable demands.

**.... Prolific Researcher:** Your research spanned subjects far and wide, and your published papers dipped into almost every field, both mundane and esoteric. Your previous efforts continue to pay dividends, even outside the Arcanum. When you take this Merit, you gain an additional Academic or Science Specialty of your choice (above the usual limit). While you can't

necessarily speak them, you benefit from a two-dice bonus to attempts to read a language you don't otherwise know. Finally, you're considered to have Fame (++) when dealing with other academics.

**..... Tenure:** You may have left the Arcanum, but in the eyes of these academics, your impact was so great that you remain part of the comfortable, leatherbound furniture. Your old fellowship treats you as one of their own, never interfering if you enter Arcanum property, read their books, or walk into an ongoing investigation. Of course, any behavior considered unacceptable to the org (violence against members, theft or destruction of property, etc.) remains so and will be dealt with accordingly—assuming they know it was you.

# Best Served Cold RE:VENGE

You don't work for Re:Venge anymore, but you haven't fully cut ties either. You have connections, loopholes, backdoors, and with enough investment in this Loreshed, a legitimate financial stake in Re:Venge—now RV works for you.




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## LORE

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**Gone But Not Forgotten:** When people refuse to sign their Re:View contract, they lose access to RV's services. You've got an acquaintance, most likely a closure counselor, who gives these rejected customers your contact info. You occasionally get calls from people looking to hire you to solve their monster problem. It might relate to the case you're currently working, or it might just put some money in your account.

**My Login Still Works:** RV never got around to fully revoking your access. You can still see the Re:Verb forums and access some other data sources you shouldn't be able to. You reduce the Difficulty of Investigation or Technology tests to access Re:Venge's confidential, and potentially valuable, data by 2 (to a minimum of 1).

**Client List:** Maybe you kept the personal records of everyone you worked for at Re:Venge, or maybe you stole a slice of data when you left. You've got a significant quantity of Re:Venge client data, giving you a one-die bonus to research, find, or draw connections between potential witnesses, victims, and contacts.

You also, through Re:View, have access to enough of these clients' personal data to borrow their identities. They're quick to pull together, halving the time to source a Mask (see *Hunter*, p. 76), and they're disposable. You can only use them for a very short while before Re:Venge catches on, quickly bringing Penny's wrath down upon you.

**Data Owner:** You've gone from Re:Venge's exploited employee to one of their valued customers. The initial purchase may or may not have been legitimate, but now that you're in, the RV team is eager to keep you happy

and spending. Your investment ensures you have Re:Venge and their analysts at your beck and call. With a call or an email, you can get a skilled Re:Searcher in a convenient time zone working on your data requests, access top-shelf ordnance, or pretty much anything else that doesn't involve them shedding blood for you or getting to your request same-day.

**Shareholder:** You're either a shareholder in Re:Venge or you've got a minor interest in one of the venture capital firms that keep them afloat. You can place a call to a senior Re:Venge employee and get a Re:Venge jobber assigned to you like you're a real client. That jobber is well paid, and it's expected they won't return in one piece, but if you repeatedly use contractors as cannon fodder, you'll get a bad reputation. Until then, you've got yourself a steady supply of helpers—and occasionally human shields.

# Defector from ESOG



The Entity Special Operations Group's history at the Society of St. Leopold stretches back to the wars against the Cathars and later the crusades. It's now a military force so modern and sophisticated that even SAD looks to them to train their teams.

The higher-ups within the Church pick missions on the basis of righteousness, without regard to probable casualties. This means that, despite ESOG's state-of-the-art technology and training, the death rate for soldiers is astronomical. Leaving the org, rather than dying, is seen as a betrayal. As such, most of your ex-comrades-in-arms are hostile to apostates to the point of psychosis.



## LORE

**• Falsified Membership:** An inquisitor who mentored you through boot camp sympathizes with your apostasy. They're willing to vouch for your continued commitment to the cause. This gives a two-dot bonus to tests to persuade Society members to give you access to Society resources or convince a current ESOG soldier not to shoot you. They additionally count as a two-dot mentor.

**.. Unrevoked Access:** When you left, your access cards and ID were left unrevoked. You can access secure ESOG facilities, although you risk being recognized if you run into anyone you used to know or are caught on camera. Critically, ESOG computer systems run on an air-gapped network, inaccessible from external devices—you can walk right up to a terminal should you need to hack it, a feat outsiders can't hope to duplicate without significant effort.

**... Holy Arsenal:** You saved the life of a former comrade-in-arms who feels they owe you despite your apostasy. Once per story, you may choose the benefits of the Arsenal, Fleet, or Ordnance Edges, but replace the Edge pool with Manipulation + Leadership. You may also call on your contact to bring in the ESOG to intervene in a hunt, but how they choose to intervene and the attitude ESOG soldiers hold toward the apostate and their allies is up to the Storyteller's discretion. This does not give you access to any of the Perks of these Edges.

**.... Vampire Killer:** You've gained a reputation as an expert at killing vampires and surviving. You gain 1 bonus die to researching vampires or ghouls and to any opposed test versus either. Your renown means that individual members of ESOG who would prefer to live through a mission may seek you out for your expertise. Once per story, if you cooperate with a member of ESOG, they will delay Censor action against you for the remainder of the story.

**..... Sword of God:** Once per combat, when confronted with vampires or their blood addled slaves, you can pray for salvation and strength. Your prayers are seemingly answered, as your next successful attack against the undead or their servants deals 2 points of Aggravated damage to Health on top of any usual effects or damage. In addition, their wounds catch fire—this, of course, may cause further issues for them. Despite the name, this attack may come from any weapon (even incendiary ones), not just swords.

# Dr. Theresa Flanders



A one-time research assistant and close friend of Alan Kerchlow, Theresa has been slowly taking over the day-to-day operations of SAD's Research and Forensics subdivisions as his health declines. Theresa is a warm, eccentric, bespectacled woman, broadly interested in the science behind the occult. She's devoted to mentoring young researchers and to the mission of eliminating the blankbodies. Dr. Flanders is friendly to departed SAD agents in good standing and happy to help anyone who brings her information for her research and inventions.

Dr. Flanders was part of the team that pioneered psychic surgery, a fact she reveals to few because of the procedure's brutal reputation. She considers it a necessary evil.




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## LORE

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**• One of the Kids:** Dr. Flanders has mentored dozens of the brightest minds through her work, and you're one of them. Theresa acts as a three-dot Mentor for Inquisitive Hunters and a relaxed two-dot mentor for other creeds. Additionally, she is happy to make introductions. Bringing her name up to fellow mentees (usually forensic specialists and researchers) makes them more predisposed to talk to you. In return for this, Dr. Flanders will make demands of a Hunter, such as their aid in dealing with a monster or their backup.

**.. Forensics:** After gathering a piece of forensic evidence from a scene and giving it to Dr. Flanders, her analysis provides the maximum amount of information available about the clue—if you're prepared to wait. At the Storyteller's discretion, her experience and equipment glean information undiscoverable by standard

measures—the blood was from a ghoul, the tooth was from an older werewolf, or the faint occult energies on a fiber sample suggest a haunting.

**... The Big Guns:** Dr. Flanders is fond of you and wouldn't let you go into a situation unprepared. She's also responsible for the R&D of specialized weapons for SAD and has access to any toy your Hunter heart desires. Once per story, she'll provide the benefits of either Arsenal or Ordinance (and any one Perk for the chosen Edge). As they're designed specifically with blankbodies in mind, reduce pools by one die when used against anything but vampires or ghouls.

**.... Psychic Surgeon:** Dr. Flanders is one of the reluctant pioneers of psychic surgery. As one of her trusted students and research partners, she's admitted to knowing this invasive but critical procedure. Once per story, she will agree to use Cleanse the Unnatural

herself on a subdued, restrained, or otherwise unthreatening subject. The process incurs all the normal penalties but is guaranteed to succeed.

**..... Pavlovian Response:** Science never rests, and while Dr Flanders resents the worst excesses of psychic surgery, she can't resist tinkering with its potential. One experimental technique delays the breaking of supernatural influence, happening only upon a chosen trigger. The Hunter may also insert their own command, which the newly freed subject is compelled to immediately follow. Once per story, this effect can be used in conjunction with any use of Cleanse the Unnatural. Dr. Flanders needn't be present.

# The Evangelical Friends of St. Rita

The Evangelical Friends of St. Rita are the least discriminating recruiters of inquisitors, so not every camp counselor, Catholic school teacher, or youth pastor truly understands the severity of the threat they've vowed to oppose. Because of this, the line between a normal person and an inquisitor is incredibly fine at the lowest levels of the hierarchy. This serves the purposes of the Friends of St. Rita, which uses its less-informed members as the backbone of an information-gathering and logistical support network.



## LORE

**• Sign of the Cross:** You know a password, gesture, or possess a trinket that identifies you as having taken the simple vows of an inquisitor within the Friends. By making the sign and identifying yourself as an inquisitor, you can get one other inquisitor in the scene to also identify themselves. Once per session, you may also re-roll one die (even a Desperation die) when attempting to persuade a known inquisitor to share information or do a minor favor. This only works if they're not aware you're an apostate.

**• A Warm Cot:** You always have a cot at the local St. Rita's shelter. It counts as a one dot Safe House (as it's not very private), but it has Watchmen, a Postern, and the friar who runs the place and maintains a Hidden Armory available under dire circumstances.

**•• Clinic Hours:** Your time volunteering at a St. Rita's clinic taught you a few tricks. You are always able to identify injuries caused by vampire bites or powers without needing to test, and add a two-dice bonus to Medicine pools when treating injuries inflicted by vampires. If someone from the Society is badly injured, your contacts at the clinic may hold their nose and ask for your help. If the injury's successfully treated, someone—the clinic or the injured party—owes you a favor.

**••• Recordkeepers:** The Evangelical Friends keep meticulous electronic records of those they've served and any signs of supernatural interference. These reports cover likely vampiric activity down to the neighborhood and other unnatural activity with less specificity. Once per story, your intimate knowledge of the Friends' inner workings allows you to convince members of the Evangelical Friends to grant you unfettered access to this coveted and unique database for a few hours.

**•••• The Miracle of St. Rita:** Before you left, you had deep ties to the Evangelical Friends and have been indoctrinated into their deeper mysteries. You now have the Stigmata Flaw (see *Hunter*, p. 72). However, once per story, when the wounds open, your hands, feet, and forehead emit Velum Sanctuarii—a red gas that desiccates vampires and spares living people (see p. 13).

# Monster-X Franchise

MONSTER



Monster-X is surprisingly easy to join. Its talent scouts are always combing through academic papers and social media for up-and-coming researchers or product engineers, and its various administrative departments suffer the same bloat as any other multinational corporation. Its HR department in particular has experienced a period of growth as Evelina Budrys' online presence continues to expand into something resembling a cult of personality, resulting in an influx of entry-level, unskilled hires.

These newcomers are shunted into a poorly paid, but exciting, opportunity in their local Monster-X franchise. Here, they are given on-the-job training, access to the newest equipment Monster-X's laboratories have produced, and all the career advancement opportunities they could want.

For those employees or contractors who survive, the opportunity to own their franchise—and profit from discoveries made based on any of the



resources they collect—is a heady temptation. Many Monster-X operatives push through the nightmares, grief counseling, and various other red flags that would give most people cause for concern because they believe the company's promises and allow their greed to override their common sense.

You are one of these few—the company will either chew you up and spit you out or set you up for life.

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## LORE

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**• Experimental Gear:** Once a piece of equipment is cleared for field tests, it's assigned to a franchise. The operative issued it must use it as much as possible and send a written report to their superiors. At the start of each story, the Storyteller will give you a piece of potentially useful gear (not a weapon) that you must use. If you don't, you lose access to this benefit until the end of the next story.

Storytellers are advised to use the gear found in any **Hunter** book as inspiration, but can ultimately make whatever they want.

**• Local Contacts:** Your franchise has been established long enough that you know roughly whom to talk to when you need information. You may add a

number of Desperation dice equal to half the Danger level to information gathering tests regarding monsters. If you do, you can't achieve a Despair result, although you can still Overreach.

**... Experimental Weapons:** More trusted operatives are given prototype weapons to test. This functions identically to, and stacks with, Experimental Gear. This offers an opportunity to experiment with different sources of damage or secondary effects. However, total failure results rolled when using this weapon result in severe malfunctions, inflicting damage to the wielder, spreading evidence far-and-wide, and, at the Storyteller's discretion, leading to an increase in Danger.

**.... Discretionary Fund:** As a high-ranking franchisee, you're given access to a large pool of untraceable money usable for bribes, illegal purchases, and similar purposes. At the start of each story, you gain two dots of Resources that can be spent with impunity and with no danger of being traced.

**..... Monster-X Containment Protocols:** Monster-X's proprietary containment protocols ensure that any monster imprisoned within a franchise's holding cell or equivalent can't easily escape. While confined, any monster you manage to capture has a five-dice penalty to all Physical pools and can't heal Aggravated damage.

# Morag Holmscroft



The familial relationship may be distant, but it's undeniable. You benefited from the right connections and upbringing to make the most of your place in the Arcanum, and that privilege didn't drain away when you left.

The more you invest in this Loresheet, the more the Arcanists want to entice you back into the fold. However tempting the offer seems, it would be the end of your time with your cell. The Arcanum has no interest in your hangers-on.




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## LORE

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• **Fondly Remembered:** Your name and reputation still carry some weight. You left the Arcanum, but your fellow Arcanists still respect or possibly fear you. Add two extra dice to all Social test pools for in social conflict with members of the Arcanum.

•• **Friends Left Behind:** You retain some well-placed personal connections within the Arcanum. They're not only willing to talk to you but to use a measure of their influence on your behalf. You have a Mentor (••) in the Arcanum, through which you've also gained Influence (••). The complication in this symbiotic relationship is that you must use that Influence for them whenever asked, no questions asked.

••• **Bequest:** Your family has been part of the Arcanum for a long time. You're fully enmeshed with the organization—technically, you or someone you're related to owns the deed to multiple properties the Arcanum uses. Once per story, you can call on that asset in the form of Resources (••), a Safe House (••), or use of a Library (with one Specialty, selected when you first acquire this Advantage). Access to the asset persists until the end of the story. You can change the form of the asset in each story you call upon it, representing a different part of the family portfolio. However, these assets are directly traceable to you and your family.

•••• **Bequest:** Before leaving the Arcanum, you wielded significant influence. Even though you've left, you can still issue orders to Arcanists working on a field study and expect them to obey (with a successful Charisma + Leadership test at Difficulty 2). Arcanists won't put themselves in harm's way for you, and they won't abandon or endanger a study. But within those parameters, you can count on assistance.

••••• **One of the Family:** You've not only met Morag Holmscroft, but it appears she enjoyed the experience. If you haven't already visited Vannevar House, you have a standing invitation to do so. You may call on Morag directly for support—she won't show up to personally solve your problems, but you can count on resources and assistance coming your way. Morag will inevitably follow up with a quid pro quo request and won't agree to further assistance until her favor is reciprocated.



# Chapter Two: THE ARCANUM

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

-Aristotle

The Arcanum doesn't hunt monsters. It studies them. One of the tenets of its code of operations, the Syllabus, reads:

*The Arcanum does not evaluate the "morality" of the supernatural simply in light of the fact of its existence, nor does it take any action against the supernatural based upon any predetermined system of ethics.*

That value sets the Arcanum apart from other monster hunting orgs. The Arcanum itself insists upon that. They pride themselves on a higher level of detachment and objectivity than most of their peers. Many of those peers would say pride comes before a fall and point out that such overconfidence is emblematic of cautionary tales about sorcerers, alchemists, and other seekers of knowledge who reached too high and fell too far. There's a grain of truth in that assessment. The Arcanum, especially in its higher echelons, is prey to a degree of complacency; a certainty in their own expertise that makes them vulnerable to their own mistakes and supernatural interventions.

That pride and complacency is a significant reason why Arcanists, as individual members of the Arcanum are known, leave the org. Those with dissenting voices struggle to be heard — especially if they don't have the right connections and patronage to make senior members sit up and take notice.

# ARCANUM



## Origins

Benjamen Holmscroft founded the Arcanum in the late 19th century, a time when English society was fascinated by the question of what might exist beyond scientifically observable reality. That curiosity manifested in the spiritualism movement drawn to ghosts and séances, and other forms of occultism that became rich traditions in the past century. This is the milieu in which Holmscroft worked, and his scholarly interest in the arcane was entirely respectable and far from unique.

The Arcanum remains a family concern. Holmscroft's descendant Morag runs the org now, maintaining the same high academic standards as well as the organization's less savory traditions. She does so because it's in her nature. She was raised with a respect for heritage and well-established ways of doing things, and they've served her so well she's never needed to consider alternative approaches.

Morag is a perfectly serviceable leader for the Arcanum. She's an accomplished scholar in numerous parapsychological fields, who understands the work of the Arcanists below her. But she is far from the only person who can lead. She'd face significant competition if not for the Arcanum's respect for tradition, particularly the tradition of being led by a Holmscroft.

Morag is also intelligent enough to see that if she allows the Arcanum to ignore its history, they'll rapidly see that there's no reason a Holmscroft, or their designated protégé, should continue to lead the group. As long as the majority of the Arcanum's finances are entangled with the Holmscroft family fortune, Morag retains control. But the moment the money runs out or progressive voices get too loud she'll be in trouble, and she knows it.

The central place of tradition in the Arcanum's work sets them apart from other monster hunting orgs in another important way: they're not afraid of a touch of mysticism, a dash of the gothic romantic. Many are even drawn to it. While such sympathies are thoroughly expunged from public work, it affects the way Arcanists think about and approach their research. While terms like *supernatural*, *magic*, and *fey folk* might be frowned upon in government or other Academic orgs, they come naturally to the Arcanum, and understanding monsters on their own terms is a definite advantage in studying them.

## The Syllabus

The Arcanum's approach to studying the paranormal and supernatural is codified in the Syllabus, the short and to the point document penned by Benjamen Holmscroft himself.

The five tenets of the syllabus (see *Hunter: The Reckoning*, p. 240) shape every key decision the Arcanum makes. However, like every constitution ever written, it's subject to intense internal debate about exactly how the tenets ought to be applied, and in some cases whether they're still fit for purpose. Boiled down to its essence, the Syllabus directs the Arcanum to gather knowledge for its own sake, amassing it to no practical end, merely the entirely theoretical advancement of human knowledge. It also holds itself as objective and amoral — the observers of supernatural phenomena, not judges.

These are fine ethical principles, but in practice they mean the Arcanum has a very good excuse not to take risks — or responsibility. It hoards information when it could share it and lets threats fester in the name of research. This behavior is tremendously frustrating to outsiders and also to plenty of insiders. It also means that if the Arcanum has dirty work to do, it prefers to do it discreetly, maintaining plausible deniability by tipping off another org or cell to take care of a monster it considers too dangerous.

The fact that Benjamen Holmscroft's direct descendant strongly values the Syllabus, and the

## Possible studies (that might actually get funded)

1. Revisiting stone tape theory, with special focus on chronologically anomalous haunts in modern structures (aka, why everyone sees monks, everywhere, even in 1960s council flats)
2. Identifying possibly ley line networks from a survey of reported hauntings + anomalies - start w/ small, localised area (Glastonbury + surrounds??)
3. Follow up on Geddes + Matsuda's paper on lycanthropic events interaction w/ ley lines (rather than moon phases) - there's something here re: nodes/crossing points/places of power
4. Digitizing/digitally reconstructing the 14 boxes of water damaged files on Golden Dawn splinter groups in the flooded sub-basement (Pros: all on site; cons: def. rats down there. Poss. also roaches.)
5. Urban planning decisions as artificial energy pathways/ley line diversions
6. The Gothic Heuristic. Basically 15 times Arcanists' stupid assumptions about monsters made them look like idiots. (will never get funded. I will absolutely write it anyway. It's embarrassing how caught up in the "Byronic romance" paradigm of vampires people still are.)
7. Haunted data. Changes in meaning/inference vs unrecorded changes in primary documents in the case of Hilltop Road spectres.
8. Whatever Dr. Varma is obsessed with this week.
9. As yet untitled paper that just says "Benjamin Holmcroft was a visionary" in 2 different ways. (will def get funded. Might also kill me to write.)
10. Just a literal Interview with A vampire. I don't even care anymore.

weight of inertia, means the Arcanum is in no danger of changing any time soon. Arcanists can either work with it, ignoring it when they think they can do so with justification and without consequences, or they can leave. Plenty choose to leave.

# Institutional Culture

Arcanum membership is a career for life. Once a new Arcanist is in place, if they keep their head down and don't make any waves, nobody ever asks them to leave. That's a strong incentive for many members to do the bare minimum and settle into a comfortable, complacent, intellectual torpor.

Not every Arcanist is a researcher or a stuffy professor. Its vast annals of research require management, from traditional librarians to database managers and digitization experts. These people are essential parts of the Arcanum, but they're treated, in many chapterhouses, as second-class citizens: support staff, useful assistants to valued members, the ones producing their own research. The Arcanum's deep vein of nepotism means there are members who aren't a natural fit at all; they're just connected to the right people.

The Arcanum's a highly bureaucratic place, with committees governing every decision at chapterhouse level or above. It takes a long time to get any agreement at all, and if senior leadership don't like an idea, they simply bury it in time-consuming processes and red tape until it dies a miserable death. Fortunately, the bureaucracy is not particularly efficient, and it's easy to slip actions under the radar simply by not filling in the required paperwork. Nobody notices, because many members feel everything but their own research is beneath them anyway.

Arcanum work has the potential to be isolating, with every Arcanist pursuing their own interests. Its heavy reliance on physical premises—many of them grand and oppressive, designed to evoke the venerable tradition of

English universities—serves to keep members talking, and one of the major benefits of the Arcanum is that it's surprisingly easy to make connections with people whose interests complement yours.

# Reputation

The Arcanum is a very visible org. It's not the only private research institution with a peculiar set of interests. The obvious influence of its founder—and the remaining power of his descendants—make it easy for other academics to indulge some of the Arcanum's idiosyncrasies, even if they don't share their beliefs.

Arcanum research, at least the studies that don't directly refer to the existence of supernatural beings, is regularly accepted into mainstream academic journals. Its members attend and present papers at international conferences in their chosen fields, and many of them have strong relationships with academic book publishers. Membership doesn't preclude Arcanists from holding research or teaching positions at universities or other research centers.

However, the Arcanum's position among the global academic community is precarious. Their research must be unimpeachable, their argumentation flawless. They have to produce the finest output in order to be taken seriously. Crossing the line into wild conjecture would be easily done and harshly judged. For that reason, mentors and patrons within the Arcanum hold junior members to high standards. One shoddy paper makes the whole org look bad, and there are too many inflated egos and brilliant reputations at play for senior members to allow that. Research moves frustratingly slowly and relies on methodologies that have been tested, approved, and refined. It makes the Arcanum inflexible and reactive, and a narrow majority of the org would say that's a strength: a conclusion founded on false premises is worthless. Better slow and painstaking than rapid and wrong.

The prevailing attitude frustrates young Arcanists—ones tired of biting their tongues—but that's how the org operates.

# Joining the Arcanum

Joining the Arcanum is a privilege, and senior Arcanists make that abundantly clear when they recruit new members. In principle, an offer of membership is extended to academics who show sufficient intellectual prowess in disciplines relevant to the Arcanum's interests. Offers are made discreetly. The process starts with a couple of chance encounters with Arcanum members, a few informal conversations that gauge whether the candidate would fit in with the org's

culture. It culminates in a formal, written offer inviting the candidate to a meeting with the leadership of the local chapterhouse and, where possible, a specialist in the candidate's field. That's where decisions are made.

In practice, the process is a formality. Most new Arcanists are related, either by blood or a sort of academic heritage (shared alma maters and programs, mutual friends in high academic places) to existing members. Recruitment is more of a tap on the shoulder and a knowing wink. Scholarship candidates, young academics who really are the best and brightest rather than part of the family, are the exception. They go through the full process and most of them agree it's deliberately devised to make them feel like paupers begging for charity and grace from their betters.

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A privilege even to be invited</li> <li>2. Would be real nice to not have to dance around believing in magic</li> <li>3. What else can I do with a degree in history and a focus in ancient mysticism?</li> <li>4. Research for its own sake, no agenda</li> <li>5. Good connections via Uncle Jabari; not starting from rock bottom</li> <li>6. Funded PhD a possibility</li> <li>7. This is truly what I want to do</li> <li>8. Actually advancing sum total of human knowledge, pretentious but true</li> <li>9. Work has value</li> <li>10. Amazing resources</li> </ol> <p>??????</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They KNOW it's a privilege to be invited</li> <li>2. They will not let me forget it is a privilege</li> <li>3. The stuff they believe seems to go way beyond magic.</li> </ol> <p><b>VAMPIRES???</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Never gonna buy a house on that stipend. . . do they think I don't NEED money?</li> <li>5. Dangerous?</li> <li>6. Can I ever tell my family what I do? How?</li> <li>7. What happens if you say no to a secret organization? nothing good. . .</li> <li>8. Average age is 60???</li> <li>9. Very traditional</li> </ol>

# Leaving the Arcanum

People leave the Arcanum for numerous reasons. Slow advancement, bureaucracy, becoming victims of favoritism, limited support from their senior advisers, occasional theft of their work, or simple disrespect can push an Arcanist out. Leaving isn't permanent, however.

The Arcanum runs on personal networks, and those don't collapse when someone leaves—not always. A former Arcanist who retains a good relationship with their mentor or adviser has a friend for life. A friend who looks down on them and pities their cowardly choice to leave the foremost center for paranormal research in the Western world, but one who'll still talk to them. The org doesn't blacklist former members or wish harm upon them, in many cases it hopes to woo them back. Leaving the Arcanum isn't dangerous. It's just cold. Members lose access to funding and an unmatched library of research

spanning almost a century and a half of study.

People don't cut ties with the Arcanum because they're forced to, they do so because their experience there was so miserable they no longer want to maintain those connections. Academia burns out young researchers at a frightening pace, leaving them with no interest in the field they were once passionate about. Privilege, good old boys networks, and the expectation of perfection are big parts of that problem, and the Arcanum is a prime example. Many of those who leave the Arcanum get out of academia entirely. Others stay in the sector because they don't think they have the skills for anything else.

There's another type of Arcanum apostate, though, one the org does turn its back on. A small subset of Arcanists find the Arcanum's hands-off approach and its presumption of innocence for all supernatural entities intolerable. They see too much harm come to innocents, and they see their superiors brush it aside since the Arcanum doesn't take any risks. Determined to pursue vengeance or keep the people around them safe, those Arcanists leave and either strike out on their own or offer their services as consultants to other orgs.

## CREATING ACADEMIC ORGS

The Arcanum is one very specific type of Academic org, but there's a world of possibilities beyond their narrow view of how academia and monster hunting should intersect. The Arcanum is rich and European. It's firmly rooted in ideas about prestige and tradition, and research purely for the sake of advancing knowledge. An org rooted in a specific university (or library, museum, or other institution on the fringe of academia) would have very different interests.

An Academic org without the Arcanum's deep pockets would have to worry about making money from its research, perhaps justifying it with commercial partnerships with, for example, corporate interests like Monster-X (Chapter Three). Receiving funding might be a more competitive process, with researchers forced to justify the value—academic or commercial—of their proposed research.

The Arcanum also benefits from a hundred years of heritage, allowing it to maintain a credible public image. It's a viable career path for academics that allows them to still publish in respected journals. Not every Academic org can take that risk. Orgs attached to respectable universities might be more inclined to keep their work private, which means members can't make monster hunting their full-time jobs—they still have to teach and publish.

Remember, too, that academia looks very different outside the romanticized Western version the Arcanum exemplifies. How would an ambitious, rigorous, well-funded Japanese university determined to build a global reputation tackle the monster problem?

# ARCANUM



## OUTCOME: DISCIPLINE & ETHICS COMMITTEE / GRAMMERCY

**Arcanist Statement:** The Pin Factory is a luxury apartment development on the site of a Victorian factory. Like many Victorian factories, it recorded an appalling number of fatal accidents. Those “accidents” were the deliberate work of Edward Rafferty, the factory’s chief engineer, who created machines specifically designed to mutilate and destroy a human body and abducted factory floor workers to feed to his machines.

It took minimal investigation to conclude the poltergeist activity experienced by residents of the recently opened apartment complex was evidence of Rafferty’s spectral presence.

A sixteen year old went missing. I exorcized Rafferty with extreme prejudice. I do not acknowledge the validity of the D&E committee’s complaint against me.

**Committee Conclusion:** Arcanist Avery Grammcery’s action is not in accordance with the Syllabus. A neutral position on the supernatural and a willingness to observe phenomena objectively is the minimum threshold we expect of our Arcanists. It is the opinion of the Discipline and Ethics committee that Mx. Grammcery allowed personal history with the supernatural to override the Arcanum’s interests and best practices.

It is our recommendation that Brockley Lodge and the faculty of Parapsychology suspend consideration of Mx. Grammcery’s recently submitted application for funding pending completion of a period of reflection and re-training under a suitable mentor in their field and lodge.

**Signed for the Committee:** J.D. Brockley-Woods

Arcanist’s Signature:

*Fuck you, I quit. — A.G.*

# Archetypes

The following are some examples of apostates from the Arcanum. Use them to create any apostate character.

## The Scholarship Kid

The Arcanum runs on long-established networks of privilege, chief among them is old money. The Scholarship Kid had the talent to be recruited into the Arcanum despite their lack of fortune and connections, but they didn't get the support they needed to flourish. Instead, they got bitter and resentful, sick of seeing peers get the opportunities they were denied.

So they quit. The Arcanum won't help them pursue their research, so they do it alone. They team up with independent cells or work as lone vigilantes. The Scholarship Kid is a great ally—they were prepared enough to walk out with a thick slice of Arcanum data on a few external hard drives. Beyond that, they're tough, independent, and determined as hell.

**Creed:** Entrepreneurial *or* Inquisitive

**Drive:** Curiosity *or* Pride

## The Hard-Liner

The Arcanum only kills monsters who become a problem. Monsters who deserve it, that kill or harm the living. This former Arcanist saw enough horror to decide there's no such thing as a harmless supernatural entity, just one that hasn't caused carnage yet. Observing and studying started to feel like they put innocent lives at risk. Every supernatural being they allowed to walk free was a future murder waiting to happen.

The Hard-Liner parted ways with the Arcanum over ideological differences—their new ideology being summed up as “do not suffer a witch to live.” They’re looking for companions who won’t try to rein them in but let them study their target long and hard enough to learn all its weaknesses before they strike.

**Creed:** Faithful *or* Martial

**Drive:** Atonement *or* Oath

## The Renfield

The Syllabus exhorts Arcanists to remain detached from the subjects of their research, but the lure of forbidden knowledge, and especially forbidden power, is eternal. There are plenty of would-be occultists or immortals in the Arcanum, and their work brings them into the orbit of beings that can make their dreams come true.

The Renfield is not afraid of these beings. In fact, they envy them. They want that power, or they think there’s something romantic about the idea of monsters. They think they can carefully take power (or whatever they want) from these creatures without falling under their sway.

The Renfield doesn’t feel like this about all supernatural creatures—just one type, or maybe one individual. They’re still too much of a risk for the Arcanum, who kicked them out when they discovered how vulnerable and misguided they are. Now the Renfield is reduced to foraging for scraps of whatever power they’re chasing.

**Creed:** Entrepreneurial *or* Underground

**Drive:** Envy *or* Greed

## The Burnout

The Arcanum inherits many of academia’s worst practices, from undervaluing junior researchers to waging vicious feuds in defense of one’s own ego and reputation. Many internalize their experiences: their perceived failure to advance or network is their own problem, a sign they’re not smart, committed, or industrious enough.

When they crash out of the Arcanum, they’re done with academia in all its forms. Either they work in a field nobody hires for or the Arcanum trashed their reputation after they left, so they sell their services to Corporate, Governmental, or any org that can pay them. The Burnout positions themselves as an expert consultant, making their time in the Arcanum work for them by sharing knowledge acquired there. They have no way to verify that information anymore, so often their insights are little more than educated guesses. Not that they tell clients that.

**Creed:** Martial *or* Underworld

**Drive:** Greed *or* Vengeance

# Inside Looking Out

The Arcanum is notable for its pride — some might say self-satisfaction — and one of its manifestations is in its members' attitude towards other orgs. Of course, there are exceptions to the broad trends described here. Arcanists are critical thinkers by their very natures, and their assessment of an individual or org is, or should be, more nuanced than a lazy stereotype. However, stereotypes do persist, creeping into casual assumptions and the sort of unexamined views that pervade intra-Arcanum communications.

Other Academic orgs attract both curiosity and disdain. The curiosity is born from fellow feeling; Arcanists understand Academic orgs and, right or wrong, tend to trust that they're composed of people with open minds and an understanding of research methodologies. The disdain is that of an old, established institution for newcomers. The Arcanum is the first and most discerning Academic org — at least, that's what its members believe — and every further example is subpar next to them.

Arcanum members with academic backgrounds, which is to say most of them, have often been burned by encounters with corporate interests, skewing research projects or pulling funding after a profit downturn. Corporate research is never for its own sake, always tainted by the financial bottom line or company image. The Arcanum as a whole is therefore skeptical of Corporate orgs. The desire to make profits go up is, members would argue, incompatible with seeking enlightenment. That said, they're quietly curious about Monster-X. Their R&D division turns out useful, functional tech, and most Arcanists are willing to overlook the fact that the corporation is a bloodthirsty bunch of murderers for the sake of a new device they can incorporate into their research tool set.

The goals of Governmental orgs are antithetical to those of the Arcanum. Governmental orgs seek to suppress supernatural activity where the Arcanum desires to study and classify. On the other hand, governments have resources the Arcanum lacks and can supply firepower as well. The Arcanum often works as a consultant to government operations, using funding to put government operatives between its own people and dangerous research subjects.



Historically, the Arcanum has had good relationships with Religious orgs. In many cultures, the roots of academia are in religion after all. Shared beliefs and values kept the Arcanum on a polite footing with Religious orgs for many years, but the relationship has soured in the modern era. Religious groups, most notably Christian ones, are too ready to classify a supernatural entity as a monster and mark it for death, regardless of its behavior or nature. Many modern academics—especially in the West—are suspicious of faith and quick to assume that those who possess religious sentiment are fanatics.

In truth, the Arcanum rarely thinks about independents or Vigilantes at all. They have little to offer the Arcanum. Most don't live long enough to learn anything significant. They sometimes make convenient operational support, because most of them are badly in need of a paycheck. They'll take jobs Arcanists wouldn't dirty their hands with.

# Personnel Records

The following are examples of Arcanum employees to use in your stories.

## Ethan Byers

Ethan is something of a romantic. A young researcher, barely out of his sponsor and patron's shadow, Ethan is fascinated by monsters in an entirely non-academic way. He isn't part of the Arcanum's effortlessly confident, upper-class intake; he was a talented graduate student who caught someone's eye. He's never quite fit in and he finds the Arcanum a very isolating place to be.

That might be why he's so drawn to dangerous company. Plenty of Arcanum apostates left for exactly the same reason Ethan is so uncomfortable—feeling stifled, unsupported, and alone. Ethan sees kindred spirits in them, and he'll always help if he can. His own research into psychogeography and temporal anomalies brings him into contact with apostates and other independent Hunters regularly, and he sees no reason they



shouldn't assist one another.

Ethan would be a supremely useful contact if not for one thing: he's compromised several times over. He's soft hearted and, as previously noted, a romantic. He's fallen for many a seductive monster's charms in his brief stint with the Arcanum, and he's feeding information to vampires, sorcerers, and even a couple of fey beings. He gets information from them too—they've all got enemies. Most of them know they're sharing their little information source, but an eye inside an org is so useful they tolerate it. Ethan likes to think he wouldn't sell out an independent or an apostate, but he absolutely would. The heart wants what the heart wants, and sometimes what it wants is the approval of a monstrous sugar daddy.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics (Victorian Literature) 8, Etiquette 7, Occult 8, Subterfuge 6

**Advantages & Edges:** Library (Who They Are, Permanent Fixture, see *Alma Maters*, p. 33), Linguistics (\*\*\*\*, Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, Latin)

**Notes/Other Traits:**

*Dangerous Friends:* Once per story, a character connected to Ethan (as an Ally, Contact, Mentor, or other Relationship Map connection) can persuade him to let slip one relevant piece of information about a local supernatural being. It's accurate about half the time; on other occasions it's a lie he's been fed by his supernatural masters.



## Natasha Demaret

The Syllabus exists for two reasons: the advancement of human knowledge, and the survival of the Arcanum. Those reasons intertwine, support, and enhance one another. It's a simple, elegant system, and it must be preserved. Every monster slain, every ghost exorcised, and every curse broken is a data point lost to the Arcanum. That is the philosophy by which Natasha Demaret conducts her studies.

Natasha's interpretation of the Syllabus is far from mainstream. The Syllabus only prohibits the killing of supernatural entities based on their nature. It fully acknowledges that monsters that pose a danger to humanity ought to be dealt with. Natasha happens to believe they're at their most informative when they're killing — what better way is there to learn about the risks they pose?

Natasha is the worst type of org member: one who actively impedes independent cells' work. In fact, she's the worst of the worst. Her intervention won't just run them off a case, it's likely to get them killed — deliberately, on her part. Independents are lab rats. Apostates are even more contemptible, having purposefully renounced the opportunity to serve the Arcanum's purpose.

Despite her shockingly controversial views, Natasha is powerful. She's embedded in the Arcanum and has been for 36 years. Other Arcanists of her age wouldn't dream of forcing her out — it sets a precedent that could be used against them. So she continues her

macabre, bloodthirsty observations of monsters, and keeps figuratively feeding independent Hunters to them. Other Arcanists occasionally help her, for fear that if she runs out of sacrifices, she'll turn on the weakest within the org.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 8

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 9

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 6, Firearms 5, Intimidation 6, Leadership (Training) 8, Politics (intra-Arcanum) 9

**Advantages & Edges:** Library (all Perks); Linguistics (\*\*\*\*\* Ancient Egyptian/Coptic, Aramaic, German, Greek, and Latin in addition to French and English), Influence (\*\*\*, Academia and the Arcanum)

## Priyanka Kapoor

Priyanka hails from Delhi, via Harvard, via a fully-funded PhD in Cambridge, UK. She splits her time between the Cambridge and New Delhi chapterhouses, pointedly ignoring the Arcanum's recently ratified policy on limiting usage of private jets. Priyanka is considered rather young to hold the status she's attained — a globally sought-after consultant on psychogenic apparitions, one of the most influential members of both her chapterhouses, and a regularly published mainstream academic. Older members of the Arcanum consider her too glamorous to take seriously, and her regular appearances on TV history programs only compound her sins.

In return, Priya thinks the old guard are dinosaurs and generally doesn't consult them unless she absolutely has to. If there's such a thing as an Arcanum wildcard, Priyanka Kapoor is it.

The Arcanum doesn't move fast enough for her, so Priyanka regularly takes matters into her own hands. She uses her personal fortune and a considerable sum of Arcanum funds paying freelance Hunters to help her where the Arcanum can't or won't. She pays for protection in the field, research conducted to her exacting specifications, and to tie up loose ends, making sure she completes her own studies in no danger of retribution from the monsters she's interacted with.

When she works with independents, Priyanka prefers to seek out Arcanum apostates. She knows they're well-trained in research methods and, even



though they turned their back on the Syllabus, they know what it says. If she can't find an apostate, she'll turn to anyone with respectable academic credentials, even if the job she's hiring for isn't at all academic.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 8, Mental 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Finance (Cover My Tracks) 8, Firearms 6, Melee 6, Occult (Indian traditions) 8, Persuasion (Charm) 9, Survival 7

**Advantages & Edges:** Arsenal (Team Requisition, Exotics), Library (Where They Hide, Who They Are), Fame (••, Historians and fans of TV history shows), Influence (••), Linguistics (••••, Arabic, Latin, Punjabi, Urdu, and Sanskrit in addition to English and Hindi), Stunning Looks (••••), Resources (••••)

**Notes/Other Traits:**

**Pulling Strings:** As an Ally, Mentor, or other Relationship Map connection, Priya can intervene once per story to negate the legal or bureaucratic consequences of a Hunter's actions. There are limits to her power: she can't get a Hunter off scot-free if they were arrested standing over a corpse with blood on their hands. She can get them out on bail, though.

**Public Appearance:** Priya can get a connection some media coverage. It'll take a couple of days—longer if the platform has nothing to do with academia and history. She'll only do this once without asking for a significant favor in return.

## Jabari Robinson

Professor Robinson is as well known for his willingness to mentor promising new Arcanists as for his expertise in cryptozoology. Over the course of his 30 years in the Arcanum, he's shaped and supported the early careers of dozens of young researchers. Some of them don't make the cut, but he doesn't abandon them. As long as he thinks they're still making a serious and committed attempt to observe and catalog supernatural phenomena, his door is always open to them. While he takes some persuading to open up Arcanum resources to his former mentees, he's a valuable asset in his own right, with decades of experience to call on.

That warm and tender relationship isn't the only way independent Hunters might encounter Professor Robinson. Over the last decade, he's become increasingly aware that the independent Hunters who survive their first few clashes with supernatural entities are more than just lucky. He's formulated a theory that something sets them apart from their peers—in short, he's close to identifying the existence of the Drive. The professor erroneously believes it to be a supernatural rather than a psychological phenomenon because that's the lens through which the Arcanum views the world.

He studies Hunters at work, gathering evidence of how their Drive works and what its nature is. To do so, he has to engineer dangerous—often, regrettably, lethal—situations. He hopes, in the longer term, to

learn how to awaken a Drive and apply that knowledge to Arcanists. This is, inevitably, going to result in a lot of traumatized study subjects... and even more dead ones.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 8

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Driving 6, Melee 6, Science (Experimental Method) 9, Subterfuge (On Your Side) 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Library (Perks: Group Study, Where They Hide, How To Harm Them), Linguistics (\*\*\*\*\* French, German, Greek, Latin, Russian)

**Notes/Other Traits:**

*Safe Space:* As an ally or connection, the professor

grants access to an Arcanum safe house. He can do so once per story, but the shelter is temporary: within 72 hours, other members of the local Arcanum chapter politely but firmly ask the visitors to leave.

*Study Buddy:* Once per story, Professor Robinson will, if the subject aligns with his interest, assist allies or connections with their research, adding 1 success to a research test. Professor Robinson expects the Arcanum to receive a copy of the research methodology and findings, and the right to publish it (with the character credited as a co-researcher with him).

The Group Study Perk is described in *Alma Mater* (p. 33). ■

Dear Chapter Head

I hope this letter finds you well.

As you should all be aware, March is the month in which the Disbursement Committee reviews our organization's accounts from the previous financial year. You ought to have already received our annual summary, globally and for your region, via email. More detailed analysis is available, as always, from the Disbursement Committee itself.

To write about finances is never an enjoyable task but one insight from this year's review requires plain communication. In short, the Disbursement Fund is not limitless. As much as we desire to fund every promising research project—and every promising researcher—the Arcanum's funds are finite. It is my regrettable duty to remind chapter heads that we require not only chapterhouses but the majority of Arcanists to be self-sufficient. The purpose of the central fund introduced in 1992 and successfully administered ever since is to ensure that funding is always available for high priority studies with a significant impact on our body of knowledge, or to support Arcanists who find themselves in challenging, potentially personally dangerous situations on our behalf.

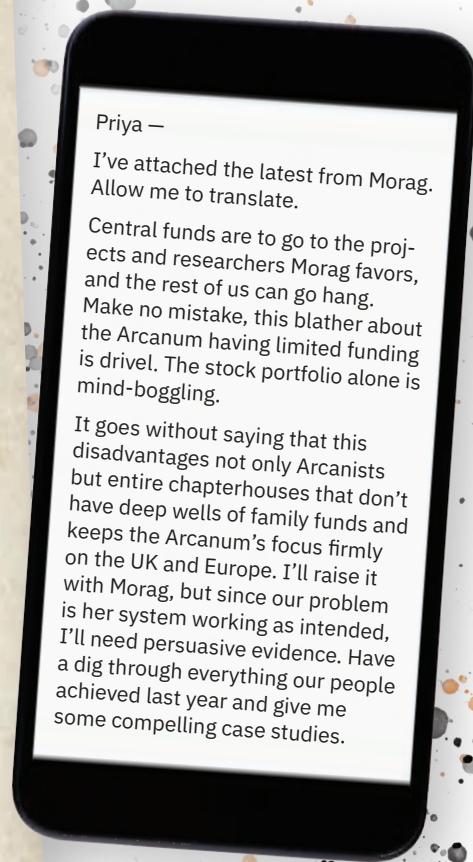
The fund's purpose is not to compensate for shortfalls in chapterhouse funds or to provide stipends for members who cannot cover their personal expenses. To use it in this manner is to shirk a duty to all our members: when our funds are spread thinly, we cannot provide the support that world-leading research or members under threat deserve.

I do not doubt for a moment that now this matter has been brought to your attention, you will assess applications for central funding using the rubric I have described. It would be regrettable, and against the ideals of the Arcanum, to withdraw chapterhouses' freedom to draw on the Disbursement Fund with minimal bureaucratic process.

Faithfully,

p.p. Alistair Grace, for Morag Holmscroft

p.p. Alistair Grace, for Morag Holmscroft





# Chapter Three: **MONSTER-X**

If the unnatural beast tormenting you doesn't rob you and leave you penniless, Monster-X just might.

Monster-X sells a service, namely monster removal, for a price—with all the modern marketing techniques to make anyone wish they were menaced by a supernatural threat. Monster-X also specializes in bleeding-edge anti-unnatural technology to locate and subdue the few legitimate supernatural entities they discover.

It's not just the general public that Monster-X dupes—or at least the small segment of the public that believes they're being threatened by ghosts, vampires, werewolves, or mummies. Monster-X turns its own agents into customers, selling franchise opportunities and lackluster training courses to new recruits. When legitimate encounters with the supernatural occur, they swoop in to claim whatever they can, turning that over to their Research and Development division, then selling whatever placebo cures or new weapons it comes up with.

# Origins

Monster-X is one of the newer kids on the monster hunting block. Technically, it was founded nearly a decade ago in Bergen, Norway, after its now incredibly wealthy founder, Kasper Chin, had a run in with something on their way home.

Formally, however, Monster-X only came into being when the mistress of the speculative and emerging markets, Evelina Budrys, snapped it up in a high profile, swift, and extremely lucrative buyout. None, save Evelina herself, knows what caused her to take an interest in a basement startup touting the newest and most original self-defense solutions. But something caught her attention, now she is the main driving force behind Monster-X's expansion.

With the buyout came the original company's research and inventory. The latter was quickly marked up and sold for greater profit to fund the company's move to the United States and lower its taxes.

With the founder's original research to build upon, Evelina wasted no time in assembling a team of scientists and engineers—offering exorbitant salaries to attract the best from around the world—who had one responsibility: parse the impossible data that Chin had accumulated and make something from it. To help, she established research and development facilities in Togo, Africa—choosing sites well away from large urban centers—and encouraged field tests as soon as possible.

Initially, the data proved too bizarre even for the experts she had accumulated, but, as is often the case, if you throw enough money at a problem, it eventually solves itself.

Something broke into one of Monster-X's African facilities one night and fell afoul of the private military contractors she'd hired to provide security. The contractors had no idea what to make of it but were paid handsomely to keep their mouths shut.

Her researchers examining the hematophage discovered several biological markers that completed some of the occult formulae they had inherited, and production of an experimental medical treatment



began the next day.

Since then, Monster-X has been more proactive in securing the data it needs. Its ranks have swiftly grown with underpaid, but trained, employees whose job it is to hunt, imprison, and kill whatever monstrous creatures they can find, recovering any, and all, materials they can.

# Rank and File

Many of Monster-X's employees are a grab-bag of ex-law enforcement or ex-military survivalists who have had encounters with the things that go bump in the night. Others have an employment history or psychological makeup that made them prime targets for a focused ad campaign.

The company knows that it can't turn a profit without raw materials and gives all its operators a crash course in survival training, weapons, and field medicine, before shipping them off to franchises around the globe with a vague list of things to look out for and materials to recover.

Most are not expert monster hunters—few live long enough to become so. The company finds itself stuck between needing a more experienced workforce and remaining on the right side of various governmental agencies whose purview covers Monster-X's activities.

Monster-X can't provide more specialized training without drawing the attention of said agencies, but it can't reliably harvest materials and data without doing so. For the moment, it's locked in a holding pattern of hunts that provide enough useful information and resources to keep the shareholders and host governments happy, but that doesn't turn a profit.

Much of Evelina's personal finances—most of which are shuffled around between shell companies in tax havens—are used to keep the company afloat, and she knows that the status quo must change.

It's not all bad though. Enough breakthroughs are made that operators are given, and trained in the use of, several experimental weapons or tools a year. And

Monster-X has one of the safest monster containment protocols in the world. Once a monster is captured, Monster-X's proprietary, *franchised* protocols ensure their escape is nigh impossible, and many governmental agencies are lobbying for access to the techniques and equipment required.

It's just a shame that the lack of specialist training and equipment makes it difficult for Monster-X teams to imprison monsters in the first place.

The main reason for this is their scattershot approach to research. In their urgency to turn a profit, the research and development teams manufacture whatever they can for field testing, often resulting in operators being equipped with items that are functionally useless on their current hunt. But they are expected to use this equipment nonetheless.

# Management

Monster-X's management knows that monsters exist but can't publicly acknowledge that fact — and their role within the fight against them — without inviting increased governmental scrutiny or the ire of said monsters. They know they can send agents out into the dark places of the world and reap a profit from doing so. But they also know their hands are tied by the desire to stay out of governmental business. Monster-X exists to make money and it can't do that if it's subjected to too much scrutiny. Instead, it relies on marketing to credible consumers, tax breaks, research findings, and alternative income streams to remain afloat.

**Evelina Budrys** is the org's CEO and uses her vision, vast personal fortune, and the profits from cryptocurrency and her other business interests to keep the company afloat. With her at its head, Monster-X has become a global operation, and she meets with politicians, civil servants, and law enforcement representatives regularly to lobby for access to new facilities, emerging technologies, and tax breaks.

**Yusuf Ghanem** is lord of all he surveys in his laboratory in Togo. As Monster-X's Chief Technical Officer, it's his vision that guides the

company's development efforts. A team of researchers examines his proposals for their financial viability and are consulted before development projects are initiated. Occasionally, however, he won't leave an idea alone and creates a team to research it to the exclusion of all else.

**Patricia Abalo** was one of Evelina's first hires.

Evelina needed someone who would say "no" to her, tell her when she was being foolish, and sift through the enormous amount of investment data that crosses her desk daily. Patricia holds the position of Director of Business Development, has a keen eye for opportunities, and is one of the few members of the board that Evelina trusts.

**Maximillian Weathers** is Monster-X's Chief Operations Officer and is often in the field, leading high risk, high reward operations. Ex-British special forces, he ensures that all Monster-X's hires are trained and provisioned and directs their operations from a mobile command center. He makes the call to buy out franchises that become too successful and risk drawing too much government attention. He is also responsible for maintaining the org's security forces, many of whom are ex-military contractors.



# The Grind

Day to day, Monster-X is like most other large corporations: much of its workforce is engaged with the bureaucratic task of ensuring the wheels keep turning and the lights stay on.

Understaffed teams of accountants, HR specialists, and administrators toil endlessly in office cubicles around the world to ensure compliance with local laws, employee retention, and continued client relationships.

Security and maintenance staff ensure that Monster-X holdings are safe from external threats, espionage, and the inevitable effects of exposure to weather and use. Highly-trained—and phenomenally well-paid—experts are chosen from their ranks to guard the facilities that are used to hold those monsters the org's operatives capture.

Sales teams travel the world, carefully pitching Monster-X's proprietary technology and defense solutions to governments, arms manufacturers, and medical providers. Some form lasting relationships with mid-level managers who carry word of the org's products with them as they hop between employers. Others address independent stores directly, relying on the local community to become a loyal customer base that is fully bought into Monster-X's products.

Research and Development teams work endlessly in air-conditioned laboratories, poring over endless reams of data as they tease out every strand of profit that they can. Most work exclusively on mundane goods that eventually find their way into the hands of the average consumer, tweaking the garlic to salt ratio in their bestselling "Fiend-busting Shotgun Shells" or refining the telescoping mechanism in the latest generation of self-defense stakes. A handful study more occult topics and attempt to combine science with easily—and cheaply—replicable arcane techniques or comb through operations logs to refine containment protocols and capture tools.

Operators, equipped with experimental tech, work mostly out of Monster-X franchises and scour their local communities for signs of the supernatural. Sometimes, a member of the community approaches them with useful information, but most of the time they're forced to rely on their own wits to know when a hunt is needed or when the threat is best dealt with

by the law. Should a franchise be too successful in securing specimens and data, however, it gets bought out, shuttered, and the operators are shipped elsewhere in the world to start again in a new community.

# Work Culture

Internally, Monster-X functions like many companies headed by those whose fortunes are founded on speculation and risky investments. A battalion of middle-managers, not to mention no less than half the board, find themselves doing their best to manage the senior staff and interpreting their directives.

Words like *agile* and *dynamic* are thrown around frequently as teams are grown, disbanded, re-formed, and then ultimately let go. To most of its employees, Monster-X is a capricious, soul-destroying monster.

At the very bottom, its operators are poorly paid and rarely properly equipped. They aren't poorly equipped, though. They usually have the most innovative gear Monster-X produces, but it's rarely what they need. They know that their financial security is directly tied to how successful they are, and many cut corners on the hunt, risking everything to increase the resources they can bring back to the office.

Such actions, when successful, are a double-edged sword. The operator—or team—can be well rewarded for their efforts, but too much success and they find their franchise being bought out from under them and shuttered as management seeks to deflect attention from the host country's government. If they fail, they die alongside the other members of their team.

It's risky, but many find the incredible rewards outweigh the obvious dangers of hunting a werewolf while armed with a stake.

At the other end of the pay scale, the researchers and engineers who rule the roost in the company's laboratories are relatively comfortable, with easy access to any equipment they could possibly want. The company's corporate benefits attract so many of the best and brightest that a lot of the equipment in the main development lab in Togo is entirely unique and remarkably effective.

Most throw themselves into every project they are assigned, knowing that they can be shunted to another division at any moment, and do whatever they can to

# 10

# Things to Know When Working for Monster-X

1

All technology you sign a waiver for is considered highly experimental and should only be used by authorized personnel.

2

Your basic training qualifications will expire, and it is up to you to book requalification courses with our list of pre-approved vendors.

3

Even the smallest detail can be of vital importance as we work to make the world a better place. Record everything, no matter how tiny or unrelated it seems.

4

The research we do is for the betterment of all. If you know someone who would be a valuable addition to our team, speak to HR immediately.

Franchises are authorized representatives of Monster-X but are permitted, within reason, to operate how they see fit. They may do things differently than your orientation package would lead you to believe.

In case of injury, or death, you will be treated, or recovered, by Monster-X specialists and released only when all necessary observations have been made.

You may be required to undertake additional training if your duties change. You will be responsible for arranging that training with our list of pre-approved vendors.

7

You may be approached by members of other organizations. If you are, refer the matter to HR immediately.

9

If you feel that your mental well-being is suffering as a result of your duties, please see your Mental Well-being Officer.

10

Under no circumstances are you allowed to break or reveal our containment protocols.





## **Shooting Script v2\_Final(Final)**

**Ext.:** Beach. A standing figure is silhouetted by the sunset.

**Voice Over:** Do you dream of a better life? Do you yearn for a tomorrow that never comes?

The camera moves to show a man staring wistfully into the sunset.

**VO:** Are you tired of the same old routine? Are you looking for a position in which you can change the world and try out the latest technologies?

The man nods and turns, the camera follows him. A woman in a suit stands nearby with a clipboard and pen.

**VO:** Here at Monster-X we're always looking for the latest talent to bring to our many franchise opportunities. We need people like you to make the world safer.

The man is in high-tech body armor, shrugging off gunfire.

**VO:** Our R&D labs work tirelessly to produce the latest in self-, and home-defense solutions so that when the monsters come, you will have everything you need to defend yourself.

The man is loading a shotgun with Monster-X garlic and salt shells. He opens fire at the camera.

**VO:** Join one of the many franchises we operate globally today, and all of this, including the franchise, can be yours.

We're back on the beach as a sports car pulls up behind the woman with the clipboard.

**VO:** Join Monster-X and change the world today.

The man signs the papers on the clipboard and drives off to a triumphant fanfare.

**VO (quickly):** Franchises subject to directorial oversight and impromptu closure

~~\$20K?~~

**\$2.5K**

secure co-author credits on whatever they are developing.

The only risks they really face are those coming from improperly handled research materials and test subjects, drawing false conclusions, the slow wearing down of their conscience and humanity in the face of endless horrific field test reports, or the rare escape of a test subject.

# Leaving the Org

As Monster-X is a business, leaving it is technically as easy as handing in your notice or getting fired. However, the company is involved in so much proprietary research and development that operators who haven't even handled a piece of experimental tech are required to sign a book's worth of NDAs and assorted forms ensuring their silence. Employment contracts with Monster-X include non-compete clauses that extend for years past an employee's termination, and its business interests are so wide ranging that most avenues of employment are impossible without severe legal ramifications.

Once out of the org, many ex-employees find themselves unofficially blacklisted as Evelina's cronies in the HR department do everything they can to protect Monster-X's secrets and reputation. Even those who do somehow find a job after all of that, often feel they are being covertly watched. Strange cars parked within sight of their windows, opened mail waiting for them when they pick it up, and odd patterns of static in the background of phone calls all haunt them for years.

For those directors, scientists, and engineers who leave on good terms with the company, however, Evelina Budrys's name opens many doors, and their future is golden indeed. Many find themselves working in related fields that don't breach their NDAs, and their fantastic work ethic and forward-thinking strengthens Monster-X's sterling reputation among the STEM community.

It's an open secret, however, that talented operatives are occasionally retained by their superiors in an off-the-books capacity. Their experience makes them a valuable asset, and some are allowed to retain limited employee privileges in exchange for services rendered, as long as they don't rock the boat too much.

## NEW ORG ON THE BLOCK

Monster-X, as a newcomer to the industry, can serve as a great template for your own Corporate orgs.

Its directors are driven by a profit-at-any-cost ideology and pursue any potential money-making venture. Unfortunately, their experimental tech usually costs more to make than it recoups.

Perhaps your org is more established, but under new management, and is redefining itself as a conservative work culture is tested, or it relies on a handful of experienced operators to test new products while leaving the rest to rely on their wits and mundane equipment while on the hunt.

# Archetypes

Use the following examples to create former Monster-X employees who become apostates.

## The Day Job

Some people join Monster-X simply to make money. They have no higher calling than getting their paycheck in exchange for a day of work. Often, these employees are some of the company's most dependable members, if only because they are easily manipulated into taking the most risk for the least reward.

**Creed:** Entrepreneurial *or* Martial

**Drives:** Greed *or* Pride

## The Researcher

Sometimes, members of Monster-X's development teams want to observe the fruits of their labor firsthand and are seconded to a team of operators. Sent into the field as technical support, their eyes are truly opened to the horrors that their colleagues face on a regular basis, and they return as changed people. Less often, researchers become apostates when an imprisoned creature escapes its confinement, but it does happen from time to time.

**Creed:** Entrepreneurial *or* Inquisitive

**Drives:** Atonement *or* Curiosity

# The Corporate Spy

Monster-X's rivals regularly send spies into its ranks in the hopes of uncovering secret projects, revolutionary ideas, or blackmail. Many are caught and bought, or charged with corporate espionage, but a handful manage to make it through the company's extensive vetting process and join its R&D teams. A larger number make it onto a team of operators, due to the org's relative lack of concern surrounding the security risk posed by its lowest paid members, but the job changes them, no matter their position.

**Creed:** Inquisitive or Underground

**Drive:** Envy or Greed

# The Fallen Guardian

Many of Monster-X's employees believe in the supernatural but some had real contact before joining and somehow survived it. Many within its ranks could have joined a governmental agency but, for whatever reason, elected to sign on with Monster-X instead. Often leaders of disenfranchised communities who swiftly rise to positions of authority within their team of operators, their passionate beliefs prove to be a force to be reckoned with.

**Creed:** Faithful or Martial

**Drive:** Oath or Pride

# Stereotypes

**Academic:** *All that knowledge and they keep it locked away from the world; they could make so much money if only they capitalized on their assets. Resource Development should see if they'll sell up for the right price.*

By and large, Monster-X views Academic orgs with a mixture of condescension and pity but is always polite in their dealings. The knowledge such orgs possess can often be bartered for and resources that would be risked or expended acquiring it can be redirected.

**Corporate:** *They aren't as innovative as we are and that's why they'll fail in this industry. That isn't to say they shouldn't be closely monitored, as many of their products can be adapted to our needs.*

Rival Corporate orgs are kept at arm's length. There is too high a risk of espionage, particularly with regards to Monster-X's proprietary containment protocols, to allow them any closer. Smaller Corporate orgs are regularly evaluated for their potential and occasionally bought out to join the Monster-X umbrella.

**Government:** *Give them the small stuff to keep the contracts coming in, but don't show them so much that they tie our hands with red tape.*

Monster-X has a complicated relationship with Governmental orgs. On the one hand, it distrusts any org that could litigate, and therefore limit, Monster-X's activities. On the other hand, those same orgs are often Monster-X's most lucrative clients and require concrete evidence of a product's efficacy. Aside from containment services, it provides many small products as a smokescreen.

**Religious:** *While their passion and commitment are admirable, it is utterly useless to us. Our cutting-edge technology often flies in the face of their traditional methods, and every operation runs the risk of being denounced as heretical and causing problems in the local community.*

Monster-X has almost nothing to do with Religious orgs, being as forward-thinking and profit-driven as it is. Several franchises have had to be shuttered or relocated in the face of fire and brimstone teachings turning their community against them.

**Vigilantes:** *As long as they're buying our product, and not committing too many crimes with it, we don't care what they do. Our responsibility ends at the point of purchase and any public affairs problems can be solved through settlements or the covert reacquisition of our property.*

Vigilantes are often Monster-X's end users. The org does what it can to monitor prominent Vigilante orgs and fosters relationships with them where it can, hoping that their actions don't cast Monster-X in a negative light.

**Independents:** *Wild cards. Some of them are assets to exploit or contract, most are unpredictable and shouldn't be trusted with even the safest of our self-defense products. Their interference in our operations has caused many unnecessary deaths.*

Monster-X knows most of its civilian products end up in the hands of independent cells eventually and has spent billions on PR campaigns to reinforce the

message that its products work when used correctly. Any deaths caused by equipment failure result from user error, not the org.

# Monster-X Personnel

The following are sample characters your players may interact with during stories featuring Monster-X.

## Dr. Dieter Baum

Few know what Dr. Baum works on at any given moment, due in no small part to the almost unprecedented leeway he's given. As one of Yusuf Ghanem's dedicated cronies, he knows how to get what he wants from the Chief Technology Officer and most of the other senior researchers give him a wide berth. He's caused the downfall of many a promising recruit simply because he could.

Dr. Baum was recruited from one of Europe's most prominent universities and is a true believer in the supernatural, due in no small part to a close encounter with a fae spirit as a young man. The creature's casual disregard for reality struck something within him and drove him onto a path he has followed for nearly four decades.

Unlike many of Monster-X's senior researchers, he focuses almost exclusively on one subject: the weaponization of anathema materials. He has headed up the same research team since his recruitment and being assigned to him is seen to be one of the most stable positions you can be given within the org.

A dispassionate, rational man, Dr. Baum personally tests every creature the org manages to capture to identify which materials produce a violent, or fatal, allergic reaction. He then sets to work analyzing the reaction, ascertaining exactly what part of the creature's supernatural makeup produces the effect, and replicates it as efficiently and cheaply as possible.

His work and team move slowly but are yielding viable commercial results at last.



### General Difficulty: 5 / 2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 8

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Politics 9, Science 10, Technology (Medical) 9

**Advantages & Edges:** Library (with all its Perks, and uses his Politics Pool), Improvised Gear (with all its Perks, and uses his Technology Pool); Linguistics (•••, Arabic, Ewé, French, and Kabiyé) in addition to English and German; Influence (••, Monster-X R&D teams)

### Notes/Other Traits:

Dr. Baum brings his Influence to bear in exchange for sufficient payment. Such payment often includes a new subject or access to a rare material for use in his tests.

Should a cell give Dr. Baum credible proof of their ability to deliver something interesting, he works with them outside the org's bounds.

## NEW MESSAGE

**To:** howardsk@monsterx.com

**From:** weathersm@monsterx.org

**Subject:** E. Fellowes

Mr. Fellowes has been a Monster-X franchisee for several years. His belief in the company was called into question during a mandatory psychological evaluation, overseen by Dr. F. Marshall (FM), following his latest operation. The uncensored report [VX-29-88-A] is available in full, but I have included a snippet here for reference.

Excerpt from audio transcript 29-88-A#1 begins:

FM: When did things begin “going south” as you put it?

E. Fellowes (EF): Right from the start. Richards’s body armor [see attached file on Exo-Armor #35] overheated as we arrived on the scene and we had to sedate him to shut him up. His screams unnerved the rookie [J. Herrow] and we had to calm her down before we could even leave the fucking van.

FM: How did that make you feel?

EF: What? The equipment malfunction? Or being saddled with yet another untrained rookie? [a pause] Like we’re expendable. We all signed up to make the world a safer place, and get a good paycheck along with it, and so far, neither of those things have happened. I’ve seen more people hospitalized by the tech we’re testing than saved by it and we all know that the money’s in R and fucking D, not in working the franchises.

Hell. We’ve all heard the stories of franchises that were too successful and got shut down. It’s only a matter of time before we end up going the same way. If we survive.

FM: Those franchises were closed for cost-cutting reasons. Nothing else.

EF: [laughs] Yeah. Sure. Whatever you say, doc. One day, Michaels [poss. T. Michaels, a former operative in Philadelphia and a known associate] is emailing me, telling me about this really cool gun he’s been given to test, the next he’s shipped out to Buttf- Nowhere, Idaho and under a complete communications blackout. Found out later his gun was a new kind of restraint thrower that had been sent up the chain for mass production. You tell me that isn’t a damn coincidence.

FM: So, you think the organization punishes success?

EF: What I think is that Monster-X chews us up and spits us out when it’s done with us. Be in this game as long as I have, and you develop a sense for these things. There’s no way the company needs to shut down so many franchises, or pay for so many private hospital bills, if it’s not in the business of exploiting and testing its own people.

You’ll see, doc. One day you’ll ask the wrong question, or be given a new treatment to trial on your patients, and they’ll come for you. Mark my words.

Excerpt ends.

As you can see, his beliefs aren’t too wide of the mark. I’ve forwarded my concerns to PR should he reach out to the Press, but I recommend reposting him to a remote franchise in need of experienced guidance where he can do little harm to our brand.

Further monitoring is required.

# Marius Bonne

Marius has a reputation among the Regional Operations Officers (ROOs) as a wild card—well-meaning, perhaps, but a wild card nonetheless. He joined Monster-X immediately upon being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army and is a charismatic operator. He gets on well with most of his colleagues, accepts his orders—however strange—without question, and gives 110% to every operation. He just also has a knack for breaking almost everything he touches.

Many of his peers joke that he must have been in demolitions while serving, and word of his many unfortunate accidents spreads quickly on the corporate message boards and email chains Monster-X uses. Almost every ROO in the U.S. knows his name, and several have contingencies prepared should he be assigned to them, up to, and including, expedited transfer requests.

In truth, it's not really his fault. He's great with technology, but his very presence seems to affect its workings. Many team leaders who know of his exploits are curious to see how he will break whatever he's given. Some even place bets about how long any given tech will last once assigned to his team.

Should a piece of equipment survive its time in the field with Marius, it's examined for any potential weaknesses that may have been introduced or any reason for its inexplicable survival; then it's sent back to Togo for refinement and further development.

For his part, Marius takes all this with a smile. He just wants to make people safe.

## **General Difficulty:** 4 / 2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Firearms 8, Technology (Explosives) 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Arsenal (with all its Perks and requisitioned from Monster-X), Ordnance (with all its Perks, except Exotics, and uses his Technology Pool), Safe House (•, Hidden Armory, Panic Room)

## **Notes/Other Traits:** —

Marius joins the cell in the field, but his presence increases the Difficulty of all test involving technology by half the Danger level. If a test affected by his presence is a total failure, the technology malfunctions



spectacularly—likely injuring those closest to it—but the mechanical effects are left to the Storyteller's discretion.

# Rebekah Lobo

Rebekah is a Regional Operations Officer (ROO). While Maximilian, the COO, enjoys taking a personal interest in the affairs of every franchise and team he can, he knows that he can't be everywhere at once and relies on a system of ROOs to monitor after-action and intelligence reports and, if necessary, pass them up the chain to him.

Rebekah was an excellent operative, leading no fewer than 13 successful hunts, until her 14th took her legs. The resource they were hunting managed to slip their net, tracked her down after the operation was aborted, and performed impromptu surgery with their claws.

Her ROO lobbied for Monster-X to provide her with state-of-the-art prosthetics, and she returned to the field but quickly requested a desk job. While her physical wounds healed long ago, the mental scars haunt her dreams, and she puts her highly-organized mind to work cataloging data and coordinating teams along most of Africa's western coastline.



She maintains her firearms proficiency, occasionally venturing into the field to test the company's accessibility focused inventions, but enjoys the lack of personal danger in her current posting. She also acts as a sympathetic ear to any operator who comes to her with mental health problems and directs them towards the best support she can think of.

As a ROO, she is perfectly placed to reach out to cells when the need arises, and she has few compunctions about hiring independent contractors to ensure that what happened to her never happens again.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 9, Politics 8, Leadership 9

**Advantages & Edges:** Arsenal (with all its Perks and uses her Politics Pool), three Safe Houses (• each), Linguistics (•••, Arabic, Hausa, Swahili, and Yoruba, in addition to French and English)

**Notes/Other Traits:** Rebekah has access to three Safe Houses scattered across Africa's western coast. If the cell has gained her trust, she allows them to use these safe houses.

She can also task a team of Monster-X operators (counts as up to a three-dot Ally) to support the cell in the field but expects a large favor in return.

Similarly, she can put the cell in touch with a two-dot Contact specializing in transport in exchange for a favor.

These favors could be a story all of their own.

## Samantha Pastor

Stuck in a cubicle in Monster-X's administrative department, Samantha (she/they) is no stranger to long hours. She graduated top of her class and was recruited by Monster-X before she could enter the world of corporate law. That industry is all well and good, but they know there's more to the world than what we see with our eyes and they wanted to do their best to protect the world from the evils that stalk the night.

She's in a comfortable position within her department: responsible to her team lead, but trusted to do their job without too much oversight. Her monthly reports are touted as an example for others to follow, and it's not an uncommon sight to see her working long

**NEW MESSAGE**

**To:** godfreyf@hiddennewsdaily.com

**From:** \*\*\*\*\*

**Subject:** Scoop of a Lifetime

You don't know me, and you've no reason to believe me, but you're my last hope. I've attached evidence of everything I'm saying, so please, please hear me.

Monster-X isn't who we think they are. They're two-faced, backstabbing corporate stooges looking to make a quick buck at the expense of the everyman.

I work for them. Well... I used to. By the time you're reading this, I'm long gone. I filed my notice last week. Sure, I've got a lot of restrictions on what I can and can't do for the short-term, but I'll figure something out. Don't suppose you're hiring?

Anyway.

I got hurt bad on my last job (we use their new tech while hunting and provide feedback) and needed hospitalization. I woke up days later, hooked up to an IV line full of... something. No idea what. Never found out. Doesn't matter really. It's in me, that's all you need to know.

I should've been in that bed for months. Shattered bones, deep cuts, you name it. I was there for a week. Now, I can cut myself and I don't bleed. I don't feel pain, or hunger, but I'm thirsty all the time.

They did something to me. Something unnatural.

I think that I'm an experiment. I think they had something new to test and took advantage of a clause buried deep in the employment contract. It's there. I checked.

They can do whatever they want with us.



From our humble beginnings in Norway, to our phoenix-like rebirth under the expert guidance of my personal friend Evelina Budrys, we at Monster-X have strived to provide the average person on the street with the means to defend themselves.

Crime is at an all-time, year-on-year high, and our government is stuck looking at the big picture. They're using figures and statistics to understand how to bring those numbers down five, or even ten, years from now. While they crunch numbers, too many are suffering at the capricious whims of fortune.

We live in an age of privilege, but I am as likely to be mugged leaving this conference center as anyone else is. That's why we're developing consumer-grade body armor.

The electronic components of my car could be the target of hackers at any time, which is why we're developing feedback algorithms that we've dubbed techno-shocks. If you get any gremlins or spirits in your code, these weaponized clusters of data will chase them out.

It's even possible, and I know some of you here will laugh and shake your heads, but it's even possible that my home is haunted. Not all of us have the Pope on speed-dial to order an exorcism [pause for laughter], so Monster-X have designed a range of non-lethal, to humans anyway, self-defense solutions targeting ghosts and other common supernatural invaders.

Our R&D laboratories are researching cutting edge technology for use by people of all walks of life, financial statuses, and beliefs.

If I may go back to the non-lethal solution for the skeptics in the room.

You may not immediately see the need for shotgun shells packed with rock salt and garlic. But what if I were to suggest alternative solutions for esoteric products?

Throw out your rubber bullets and bean bags to substitute them for our Spiritwhacker Shells [pause for laughter]. Yes, the name is a little on the nose. But hey, it sells. Who are we to argue with focus groups and market forces?

Where was I? Oh yes. Substitutions. Our Spiritwhacker Shells are a proven non-lethal solution capable of incapacitating a rioting inmate or violent protester at short distances. Any longer than that and they're, if I may, peppered [pause for laughter] with a fragrance detectable by the human nose.

Tag someone with one of our shells, and they won't be able to escape the law.

Besides. In a pinch, you can pop the cap and you've got a ready-made seasoning mix. [pause for laughter]

Monster-X may have a reputation for being in the monster business, but we're really in the business of making everyone safer. We're more agile than traditional R&D companies, can bring products to market faster than any of our competition, and know, without a doubt, that we ride the cutting-edge of science.

For those of you with an interest in non-lethal technology, we also have a variety of patented sedatives and restraint systems I guarantee you will have never seen before.

into the night to execute another franchise buyout or settlement for an injured operator.

The constant churn of horrific after-action reports and gruesome medical absence forms has started wearing on her, and she has begun doing what she can to support operators, both past and current, who reach out.

As part of their job, they conduct follow up visits to monitor the efficiency of the bureaucratic machine and they have formed a wide-ranging network of contacts among the lower-ranking operations officers, franchise owners, and governmental functionaries in most of the major cities throughout the U.S. This network allows her to put Hunters in touch with useful people.

They lack the ambition to lead a team of their own but know how to comfortably stay under the radar.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 8, Academics 8 (Law), Investigation 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Library (with all its Perks and requisitioned from Monster-X), Artifact (with the Shield Perk — it is a pair of inherited reading glasses, and she doesn't know about its supernatural properties).

**Notes/Other Traits:** As part of Monster-X's administrative department, Samantha has fewer restrictions on their personal freedoms than other employees, particularly operatives and members of the R&D department.

As a result, she is far more likely to be able to meet with a cell in person than rely on back-channel communications or dead drops.

They can act as a two-dot Contact for cells tangled up in contract and corporate law. ■





# Chapter Four: RE:VENGE

"If you're not passionate enough from the start,  
you'll never stick it out."

-Steve Jobs

**Re:Venge is not a day job.**

The company's slick, compelling promotional materials sell it as vengeance-as-a-vocation, but that's not reality. Some of Re:Venge's freelance monster hunters are driven by a genuine desire to neutralize threats, take revenge for their own traumatic brushes with the paranormal, or keep innocent people safe. But even for them, it's not a career. It's a side hustle or one of several gigs taken on to cover the eternally rising cost of living. Typical Re:Venge responders are also delivery drivers, customer service or retail staff. Re:Venge's internal stats say the typical contractor has two-to-three forms of paid employment, including their work with Re:Venge.

Strictly speaking, the monster hunters — and most of the other staff — who work for Re:Venge aren't employees at all. They're self-employed contractors, which means Re:Venge has no responsibility for their working hours, how much they earn, or any injuries they suffer while on the job. Re:Venge's careful freelancer recruitment materials make it really clear they provide a platform on which to find work opportunities in return for a cut of earnings. They're even more clear that is where their role and liabilities, both ethical and legal, end.

# Origins

Re:Venge is what happens when monster hunting meets gig working culture. Its official origin story is that the two founders, Danny Brozer and Tim Dalitson, saw a friend murdered by a werewolf and founded a company to make sure it didn't happen to anyone else. Or at least to fractionally fewer people. There's a larger than life

sized picture of that friend, Nick Morello, on display in Re:Venge's huge, mostly empty head office.

The story's not untrue, it's just not the whole truth. Even before Nick died, Danny and Tim had plans to build a startup around some data analysis tools they—mostly Tim—had developed. Nick's death just showed them their niche. They'd use those tools to help identify unusual threat activity, gather a heaping ton of customer data, and turn a profit selling two different datasets.

# RE:VENGE

## Read This First: 10 Tips for Success from RV Pros

10. "You don't define done. The client defines done. If the client wants you to present them with a werewolf's heart, you'd better hand it over on a silver platter." —LB, Nevada
9. "Don't give clients your private number unless you happen to be a licensed therapist on the side." —CJ, Rhode Island
8. "RV doesn't credit check clients. Just because they offer a \$50k donation for services, there's no guarantee they're good for it. Ask me how I know." —AL, Florida
7. "There's nothing stopping you working multiple cases... if you like it when your targets team up to hunt you." —Z., Amsterdam
6. "Other RVers are the only ones who understand you. Make friends fast and treat them right. They'll keep you alive." —AN, Michigan
5. "Every other RV freelancer is out for themselves, and themselves alone. Trust. No. Bitch." —TE, New South Wales
4. "The cops do not believe 'I'm a freelance monster hunter' justifies breaking into their murder scene." —AdM, California
3. "Neither do the FBI." —CJ, Rhode Island
2. "If you work multiple gigs, keep some distance between them. I delivered this guy a pizza on Sunday, and on Thursday I had to convince him I could totally exorcise his haunting." —JJ, New Jersey
1. "Vet your clients, because the closure counselors sure don't. You know who seems to really want vampires dead? Other vampires." —RG, Johannesburg

# Rank and File

The stereotype of a Re:Venge monster hunter is a pitiable, clueless outsider driven to monster hunting by economic necessity or unfounded belief in conspiracy theories. That's partially true: RV's recruitment staff always need more field personnel, and they do very little candidate vetting. The company's sales force, *closure counselors*, promise clients an experienced, effective service—but in reality they're often throwing untrained, unprepared people at a problem and hoping the poor saps get lucky and make a kill. It doesn't matter to management whether cases are successful or not. They're only interested in getting clients to sign up to Re:View, their proprietary data harvesting tool. That happens when a client signs a contract, not when it's complete, so the outcome is irrelevant.

A lot of Re:Venge contractors don't survive their first, real monster hunt and fewer than 10% survive 10 or more jobs. That means a greater than average number of the contractors that independent Hunters meet are naive and inexperienced. However, it also means that Re:Vengers who thrive on the platform—who survive and who keep taking, and completing, commissions—are tough, adaptable, and determined. They're the kind of folk who learn fast, think on their feet, and are masters of rolling with the punches.

Another type of contractor bucks the stereotype of gig economy for monsters. Plenty of military veterans gravitate to the gig economy, and Re:Venge is a perfect place for them. They've got the skills to survive this type of work, and sometimes they've still got connections who can get them the ordnance that makes taking down a frenzied werewolf a realistic prospect.

Re:Venge is more than its fieldworkers. It also has self-employed contractors working on everything from technology development to data analysis. Even the closure counselors are freelancers. They don't face the same lethal working conditions as field staff, but they see a lot of the company's ugly sides: its casual disinterest in employee safety, its focus on growth targets, and how precariously close it is to financial collapse. These behind-the-scenes staff are more likely to turn their backs on Re:Venge than the monster hunters.

# Management

Re:Venge prides itself on being lean and keeping headcount low. In other words, there's very little management.

Field staff's only contacts within Re:Venge are two email addresses: *contractor.support* and *contractor.data*. Support is for general administrative and corporate matters—app malfunctions, queries about account statuses, and so on. Data is for requests for additional information on a case. This absolutely faceless arrangement is easily disrupted. Any paranormal entity with a basic level of tech literacy can impersonate Re:Venge in electronic communication, setting up ambushes, traps, or suicide missions. Re:Venge fervently denies any such possibility.

Other staff report to a thin tier of middle managers: VP of sales, VP of analytics, VP of recruitment and retention, and so on.

Management's singular concern is growing the company and, for individual managers, justifying their own existence. That means they've got to make numbers go up: revenue, number of new clients, number of clients for data sales, and, of course, profit. A bad quarter can mean significantly reduced headcount—not a problem for hunters in the field, who don't cost anything to keep on the books, but a big deal for, say, low-performing sales staff.

# Corporate Culture

Re:Venge's corporate culture revolves around the hustle—not just working hard but being seen working hard and getting results. That said, some divisions of the corporation are more on-brand than others. Most of RV's employees are freelancers, and freelancers aren't getting paid enough to abide by the company's stated ideals and behavior.

Despite the grind, Re:Venge's tech team is a pretty good place to work. Almost all its members work

# RE:VENGE

**REVENGE TO ORDER  
MAKE A *DIFFERENCE*  
MAKE PEOPLE *SAFER*  
– ON DEMAND**

**Put your skills to use – and learn new things about yourself**

**Work as much or as little as you want**

**Make work work for you**

**Be your own boss – freedom in what you do and how you do it**

**Thrive with support from a passionate sales team and expert data analysts**

**Use the QR code to download our contractor app now**

I, these are the guys I told you about. Most of this is nonsense – there's no support and either you take every job they offer or you get bumped down the list (i.e. you get NOTHING), and the pay is trash tier. But money's money, and I know you can shoot straight and you don't wet yourself when you see blood. Give it a go or don't.

– M

remotely, and as long as Tim's latest wild ideas for new features get implemented in a vaguely appropriate time frame, they get a lot of flexibility and freedom. This is one area in which Re:Venge pays well, and it shows. Field staff who know how to get hold of someone in the tech team have useful, capable contacts with access to a wealth of data about Unusual Threats, and the skill to extract both patterns and juicy nuggets of information.

There's no official way for field staff to get hold of technical personnel, but a few contractors get lucky and get a personal response to an email. Some of them are kind enough to share that on the digital spaces where employees congregate to vent their frustrations about Re:Venge. Others just use a professional profile to find a relevant employee and take a guess at their email based on how the company's email addresses are all formatted. Remember, contractors don't have official company email addresses: the tech team are moderately used to people contacting them from personal addresses claiming to be contractors, and since questions from field staff are often matters of life and death, they tend to answer them. The diligent ones check contractor databases for the name of the person making contact, but not all of the staff are diligent.

Data security is abysmal in other ways, too. While the tech team are great at building and maintaining databases and running complex analytical models, everyone is busy, and staff turnover is really high. Admin tasks like locking former employees out of the data archive and analysis tools get overlooked. Sometimes, people retain access for weeks, months, or even years—plenty of time to build a back door in case they're ever officially locked out. It also makes Re:Venge's data far more hackable than anyone on the inside would like to admit.

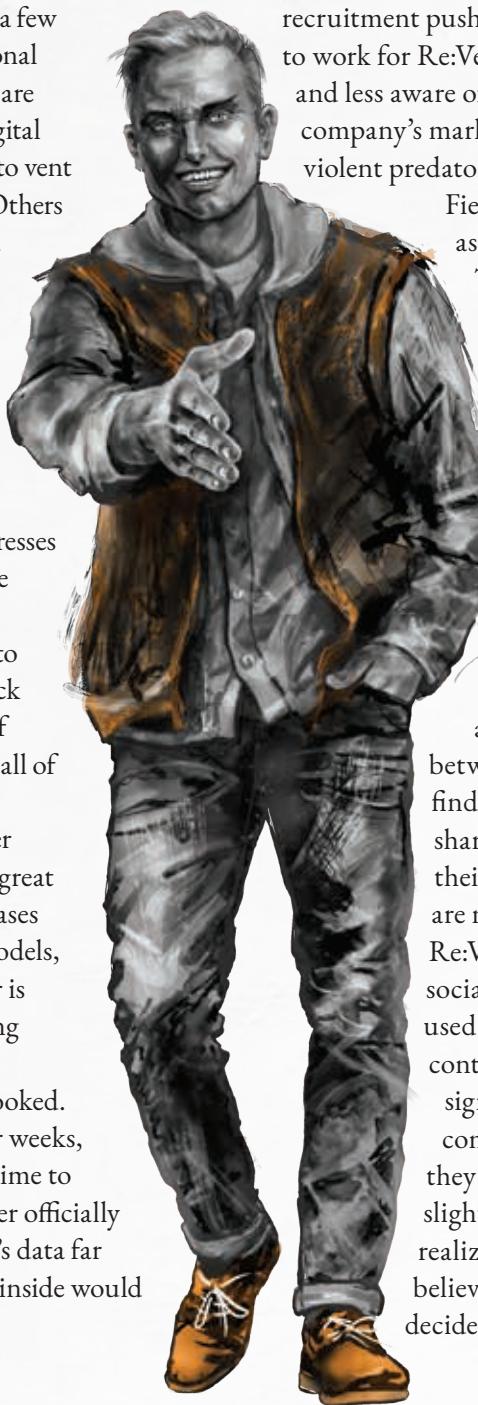
Most support staff, including sales staff, are paid based on performance. That means financial targets are everything. Closure counselors especially work on tough targets, which are all based on how many people they can get to sign data collection contracts. They are not, crucially, based on successful resolution of a client's case. It's not as though clients are likely to provide repeat business. The ever-growing sales targets mean there's also an ever-increasing recruitment push. Over time, the people brought on to work for Re:Venge are less and less experienced, and less aware of what they're signing up for. The company's marketing talks about revenge against violent predators not monsters.

Field hunters are about as independent as an independent contractor gets.

They know Re:Venge doesn't care about them, and they don't feel any loyalty to the corporation.

They hunt monsters for their own reasons, whether those are personal or economic. It's lonely work. Freelancers often take on jobs as teams, often working with the same people whenever possible. As any independent Hunter knows, having people you can trust

at your back can be the difference between life and death. Freelancers also find each other online to talk, either to share information or tips, or just to vent their frustrations about Re:Venge. There are numerous very active and healthy, Re:Venger groups scattered across the social media landscape. The company used to shut these down, reminding contractors of the NDAs they've signed and the company's in house communication platform Re:Verb, but they pop up again within days with a slightly new name. Once management realized people outside the company believe it's all weird fanfiction, they decided to let the current groups carry on.



RE:VENGE

# Making Money

It bears repeating: Re:Venge isn't a monster hunting company. It's a data trading company that uses monster hunting as an opportunity for data collection. Re:Venge doesn't make money from hunts. It makes money by selling clients' data.

## How Re:Venge Makes Money

One of Re:Venge's most marketable datasets covers threat identification and behavior, plus a growing database of paranormal entity classifications. Re:Venge sells that data to Governmental and Corporate buyers who know about monsters. Just about any org in the world could be a buyer. So could independent Hunters, if they have deep enough pockets.

The second dataset is lower value but has a wider customer base. It's data on Re:Venge clients' lives, purchases, and technology use, all carefully demographically, psychographically, and behaviorally segmented. It's the same exploitation of customers that other tech companies employ. As the saying goes: if you're not paying, you are the product.

Don't make the mistake of thinking Re:Venge is profitable. It posts huge losses every year and only some of them are the result of creative accounting. The company survives because a few angel investors keep pouring capital into it. Management, including Danny and Tim, claim not to know who they are. They're wealthy individuals working through shell companies, and they expect RV to maintain their privacy.

They're monsters. Of course the investors are monsters—the human kind, evil people with ugly politics and too much money. While it's possible there's a billionaire out there with a conscience and an interest in monster hunting, the odds of that are long. Re:Venge is a largely ineffective org that collects a ton of useful data on its clients. At least four extremely old, extremely rich donors provide a third of the org's income and use its data to keep tabs on their enemies, occasionally staging elaborate fake hauntings to drive them into Re:Venge's client list.

It's hard to overstate how vile these investors are. They're all haunted by the ghosts of people they've hurt, betrayed, or had killed. They make regular use of Re:Venge's monster hunting services to keep the literal ghosts of their past from catching up with them.

Danny knows this. Tim suspects but pretends he doesn't. He enjoys being able to sleep at night.

## How Contractors Get Paid

Data sales are how the org makes money, and how it pays most contractors'—the ones in tech, finance, admin, and sales—wages. Freelancers in the field supposedly work for the love of the job. That is, of course, nonsense. Monster hunters have food and rent to pay, and weapons maintenance isn't free either.

Clients are permitted to pre-tip or bid higher on jobs, and closure counselors strongly encourage this when setting up contracts. Otherwise, it's hard to find a field operative to take the case. The bigger the tip, the better the caliber of freelancer.

Smart Re:Vengers find other ways to make money from their cases, whether that's selling dead monsters' possessions or blackmailing clients over the secrets they sometimes uncover in the process of working a case. The employees who take those *pro bono* cases are the ones who are best at monetizing their work in other ways. Even other Re:Vengers look down on these bottom feeders.

However hard they work, nobody is getting rich off of Re:Venge. Injuries are common and lead to long downtime between cases worked, and Re:Venge takes a cut of all donations so even an apparently good payout often ends up disappointing.

Re:Venge is currently piloting a tiered system where contractors can pay a small subscription fee to get early access to jobs, effectively allowing them to snipe the best cases and crowd out contractors who aren't willing to pay for the privilege of working for Re:Venge.

## Leaving Re:Venge

Technically, according to the work-for-hire agreements they sign with Re:Venge, contractors can leave any time. In practice, getting out is harder.

# RE:VENGE

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**CASE REFERENCE:** 24/1/A304

**SALES AGENT:** S. Liu

**CASE OVERVIEW:**

Sales Agent to Complete

Client is Mrs. Rebecca Klein, recently widowed mother of three children. Mrs. Klein is insistent that her youngest child (Nico, aged 7) has been abducted and replaced by "something else." She's reluctant to say it's an alien but that's the conclusion she's dancing around.

She asserts Nico is "observing" her and her other children, and that "his face isn't him anymore." Mrs. Klein says her son's reflection "doesn't look the way it used to."

While Mrs. Klein is fully certain of her son's transformation, we shouldn't rule out the likelihood that the entire family is struggling to cope with Mr. Klein's passing. I would be much more comfortable advising Mrs. Klein to try family therapy and come back to us in six months (or more) if her concern persists. Passed concern to senior management and was reminded that assessing the credibility of a client's case isn't part of the sign-on process. Therefore, sign-on process completed and case referred to risk assessment.

**DONATION OFFERED?** Yes (\$15,000)

**RE:VIEW CONTRACT COMPLETE?** Yes

**RISK ASSESSMENT:**

Legal to Complete

Ultra High Risk

The risk of legal action if it transpires—this is a psychological response to grief—is so significant I do not believe Re:Venge's usual contract will be enough to indemnify us. Advised senior VPs of this concern, and after due deliberation, they concluded the client's potential value to the Re:View program outweighs the risk factor.

**CASE HISTORY:**

**Assigned:** 24/1/8 09:34 | Irene Ruiz

**Rejected with note:** 24/1/8 09:37 | I'm not taking a case on a child. Are you kidding me?

**Assigned:** 24/1/9 11:23 | Tyrone Crown

**Rejected with note:** 24/1/9 12:41 | I'm not qualified to make this call and I like being able to sleep at night.

**Assigned:** 24/1/9 19:20 | Zack Mulgrew

**Rejected with note:** 24/1/9 21:11 | NOPE.

**Assigned:** 24/1/10 08:53 | Huỳnh Nguyen

**Rejected with note:** 24/1/10 10:12 | It's a traumatized 7 year old. This is sick. I quit.

**Assigned:** 24/1/16 22:48 | Gael Salcedo

**Case Closed:** 24/1/18 06:32 | Darius Grim

**OUTCOME:**

Not only am I shutting this shit down as of now, we will not be taking cases that target minors as long as I remain on Re:Venge's staff. I have made all freelancers aware, via the Re:Verb forums, that if they accept a case that identifies a literal child as a target it will be the last case they're ever assigned.

The only good that could have come of this case is RV getting sued so hard we took a long, hard look at our policies. I have personally visited Rebecca Klein and advised her to reinvest her \$15k into some damn therapy.

Before anyone asks, this also negates the Re:View related contract clauses. Someone delete that crap off her phone.

All contractors, whether they work in the field or from home in tech or sales roles, sign agreements that include stringent non-compete clauses. That means they're not allowed to work in any "related role" in the "tech sector" either while they work for Re:Venge or for two years after leaving. Both terms are defined extremely broadly, and RV can and will sue anyone who breaches that clause.

Freelancers who leave Re:Venge often aren't allowed

to find work anywhere they have suitable experience. That leaves them looking at their transferable skills—and the one transferable skill they have in common is monster hunting. Some ex-RV employees kill time until their non-compete expires and they can get their careers back on track. Others find a new career path entirely. Sometimes that career path is hunting monsters. Even if they're not getting paid, there's money to be made selling a vampire's lovingly curated



collection of antiques, or a sorcerer's library... or a werewolf's truck or smartphone, if it comes to it.

For field staff, leaving Re:Venge is tough. The compliance department's *satisfiers* exist solely to make sure people aren't exploiting RV data to find non-RV work. Nobody is exactly clear on how the satisfiers operate, but chat on Re:Verb is shut down quickly and they are never, ever discussed on social media. Staff assume the satisfiers threaten, intimidate, and injure until people step back into line, but there's no proof. The point is, if you're leaving RV you'd better cut every single tie.

### CREATING CORPORATE ORGS

You can use Re:Venge as a framework to construct your own Corporate orgs by adjusting the org's outlook on money, personnel, and degree of secrecy around its work.

**Follow the Money:** Re:Venge sells its data, so it needs more clients in order to grow the dataset. An org that took direct payment from customers would strongly prefer high net worth clients and largely ignore potential customers who couldn't pay. An org that makes a lot of money working with the government might be highly bureaucratic, held back by operating standards and Key Performance Indicators, and therefore creaky and slow to react.

**Put People First:** Re:Venge keeps monster hunters at a distance by calling them freelancers and treating them as a renewable, disposable resource. A company that invested in its staff, providing training and healthcare, would be very different. Employees would be loyal, and working here might even be an aspiration for independent Hunters.

**Company Formation:** The Re:Venge founders knew about monsters. A company that, say, discovered the existence of the paranormal while conducting bioscientific research could look very different. Monster hunting or specimen collection might only be one division of a corporation—with interesting ramifications. Such an org would have to keep its operations hidden behind a screen of corporate bluster, not admitting exactly what it was doing (because "we hunt vampires" sounds crazy to the board), leading to a different set of operating procedures and company culture.

# Archetypes

The following are examples of former Re:Venge employees that turn apostate.

## The Veteran

After they left the military and their partner left them—with two kids to care for, no less—this military veteran put their skills to use in the most lucrative way they could find: monster hunting. But their new career had a much worse life expectancy than military service.

It wasn't the danger but the loneliness that drove them out of Re:Venge in the end. They could handle the hustle, and they got pretty good at working a case, but doing it with nobody watching their back was too much. Now they're a security guard, which pays worse but is lower risk. But they can't ignore what they know: there are monsters out there, closer than anyone would like to think. They keep up vigilante patrols, watching for trouble in their own backyard.

**Creed:** Martial *or* Underground

**Drive:** Vengeance *or* Oath

## The Graduate

They worked for Re:Venge while they studied for their MA. They thought they'd be taking petty revenge on people's cheating spouses, or at worst dealing some well-deserved damage to evil, but human, abusers. They turned out to have a flair for the work, and they stuck with it. Then they graduated, and now they're free.

Except someone keeps sending them cases. They've uninstalled the Re:Venge app five times and replaced their phone twice but the app keeps coming back. And whoever is sending cases also sends pictures of their home, their family, and the office they work in at their new day job. The threat's clear: work the case or someone gets hurt. So they do, hoping they'll run into someone, or even something, who can help them out of this predicament.

**Creed:** Faithful *or* Underground

**Drive:** Oath *or* Pride

# The Opportunist

Not many people get kicked off Re:Venge's books, but this person did. Signing up as a freelancer was only a cover. They signed up to hunt predators because they're a predator themselves. They've got a long criminal record, which Re:Venge's vetting procedures would have flagged if they'd been carried out properly.

They're a sadist who loved every second of getting a blade wet in a monster's guts or watching a human-shaped entity's head explode into fragments from the impact of a high caliber bullet. But that wasn't enough. They assaulted a client, and Re:Venge terminated their relationship with this particular contractor. They've figured out that hunting monsters is a great, consequence free outlet for their particular fixation.

**Creed:** Entrepreneurial *or* Martial

**Drive:** Greed *or* Envy

# The Eternal Jobber

They started in sales. But that was barely enough to live on, and then Re:Venge eliminated their position in a round of job cuts to protect the bottom line. They couldn't afford to be unemployed so they signed up as a fieldwork contractor before they even finished their exit interview. They took a few cases, nearly died, and stopped. But it's hard to get steady work, and now they dip back in whenever money gets too tight.

This person wouldn't think of themselves as a Re:Venge employee, but they're still on the books. When they do take an RV job, they tackle it with a grim determination to get it done as fast and efficiently as possible, usually making a mess that independent Hunters have to deal with.

**Creed:** Inquisitive *or* Martial

**Drive:** Curiosity *or* Atonement

# Inside Looking Out

Re:Venge's staff don't have a unanimous view on anything (except that the org should acknowledge

they're employees and offer health insurance). When they brush up against other monster hunting orgs, it's because they're treading on one another's toes. Their encounters with others are colored by those orgs' general disdain for Re:Venge, too.

Their most consistent outlook is on other Corporate orgs. Every Re:Venge jobber has been shit on by their own corporate overlords — and usually other employers before that — and they're skeptical of other corporate endeavors. They don't trust Monster-X, Xtend Ltd, or any other corporation further than they can spit. However, that doesn't stop them buying tech off Monster-X when they can afford it — survival comes first.

Academic orgs like the Arcanum inspire a wider range of reactions among Re:Venge monster hunters. Plenty of RV's staff are underemployed graduates with bachelor's or even postgraduate degrees, and that induces a certain amount of envy. On the other hand, the Arcanum's reputation for elitism works against them. Re:Vengers look at Arcanum employees and see people with privilege and connections — and a lack of those things is a big factor in why people end up working for RV. RV contractors risk their lives while the Arcanum luxuriates in a surfeit of information, money, and protection. It's fair to say RV folks are a little resentful.

RV employees' tolerance for Religious orgs depends largely on their own faith and their relationship with it. A devout Catholic might be warm towards the Society of St. Leopold; someone who broke free of a restrictive, evangelical Christian home bounces hard off the Order of the Rose. For the majority of Re:Vengers with little or no religious sentiment, Religious orgs look like fanatics and they're best kept at arm's length.

Governmental orgs are dangerous. They've got a reputation for treating Re:Vengers as a secondary problem — a bunch of untrained klutzies who do nothing but get underfoot. Government OpSec protocols includes making damn sure freelancers are kept away from their operation, especially freelancers with poor data security, who might share sensitive footage. When RV contractors see government agents, they hide. It's just the smart thing to do if they want to avoid getting bullied off a case or ending up in a

government black site, never to be heard from again. Or shot. Rumors on the RV staffers' social media insist that groups like SAD and FIRSTLIGHT see a couple of handgun rounds as a fast and cost-effective way to solve a problem like freelancers blundering into their operation.

Re:Vengers like to think of Vigilantes and independent Hunters as kindred spirits, a diverse bunch of people who learned everything they know through hard experience. It's frustrating and sometimes confusing when other independents don't think of Re:Vengers the same way.

# Personnel Records

The following are examples of Re:Venge employees to use in your stories.

## Sparrow Liu

Sparrow is a closure counselor. They're paid mostly by commission, and the commission sucks. They're also a pre-law student and they know exactly what the point of the RV client contract is: getting the client to sign away their privacy for life. Sparrow is not a fan.

What Sparrow wants is for clients' problems to be dealt with cleanly, properly, and by the best people for the job. When they can, they pass clients to people they like and trust within RV—people they know from Re:Verb or people they've handed cases to before. If they have to hand the case to someone they don't have faith in, they also pass it to a contact outside of RV. Most of those contacts are RV apostates—either disillusioned or just believing they can do more without relying on Re:Venge's support.

Sparrow absolutely does this out of the goodness of their heart, but they also have tuition and rent to pay. They appreciate a slice of any money their contacts make from a case, or just a token donation to their occasional mutual aid requests.

There's just one problem with a contact like



Sparrow: as soon as they can, they'll leave Re:Venge behind and find a better, more stable job. An apostate making use of their leads would be smart to make sure Sparrow stays at Re:Venge as long as possible.

**General Difficulty:** 2/1

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7 (Law), Etiquette 7, Insight 8 (Emotions), Persuasion 8 (Negotiation), Politics 7

**Advantages & Edges:** —

**Notes/Other Traits:**

*Miner's Canary:* Sparrow excels at reading and intuiting situations, including Re:Venge's internal affairs. Once per story, an allied apostate can ask them for forewarning of some way RV's corporate politics is going to screw up a case. Examples include multiple teams being assigned to a job, rumors of another org getting involved, or a dissatisfied client who's about to withdraw their donation offer or turn to law enforcement. RV won't always get in the way, but it's annoyingly common.

## Mariam Bashir

Mariam has been with Re:Venge practically since it started hiring. When she joined, recruitment still did their job and made sure the contractors they took on could do the job. RV started as a side hustle, a little extra cash to keep her going while she trained as a

firefighter. She was one of the first to make it a full-time occupation. She's also one of the most active posters on Re:Verb, usually falling on the same side of arguments as Darius Grim (see *Hunter*, pp. 265–267), the contractor most determined to make the job suck less.

Mariam makes a point of getting to know new folks who post on Re:Verb. While Darius makes a nuisance of himself with management, Mariam is out there quietly recruiting more people to their cause: organized labor, a union, and a less lethal working environment.

As well as encouraging freelancers to stand up for themselves—to turn down the most obviously awful jobs and make contacts among other freelancers so they're not so isolated and easy to bully—Mariam also teaches newbies how to work the system. She introduces them to useful contacts in sales and data analytics, showing them all the little quirks of the system that boost their ratings (freelancers aren't even told they have ratings) and increase their chances of picking up good jobs.

Mariam is a useful contact, but getting on her good side means automatically making an enemy out of Penny, head of Compliance, who is firmly against the contractors' "agenda of insubordination."

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 6, Mental 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl (Defense) 8, Drive 7, Firearms (Rifle) 7, Investigation 8, Leadership 8, Politics (Re:Venge) 7

**Advantages & Edges:** Ordnance (with Ordnance Perk, but the gear Mariam provides is always jury-rigged or close to the end of its lifespan. It breaks after one use or at the end of the story in which it's loaned out), Influence (4; 3 when working on behalf of others) functions only within Re:Venge.

**Gear:** Medium handgun (damage rating +2), hunting rifle (damage rating +3).

**Notes/Other Traits:** —



## Gael Salcedo

Not everybody who works for Re:Venge hates it there. Gael is one of the company's top performing freelancers—though officially, RV doesn't keep any performance records, because that would imply its contractors were employees. He's worked for RV for just over a year, joining them after he was kicked off the local police force. Honestly, he prefers it. Gael still gets the thrill of having people's

lives in his hands, and now he's not held back by any superiors with ideas about how he ought to do his job.

The thing is, Gael is as sloppy now as he ever was. He operates on gut instinct, convinced he can spot a monster a mile off. He's been wrong twice and had to bury the bodies of perfectly innocent human beings. Gael believes RV would cut him loose if they knew. That makes him vulnerable. An RV apostate might know Gael's secret either from working with him on a case he bungled or hearing it through the grapevine. Gael is very receptive to blackmail... and that gives players a contact in RV who has more clout than most people outside management.

Darius Grim doesn't trust Gael's methods or his record but he can't prove anything. On the other hand, Penny from Compliance is a big fan. Gael gets the job done. He's got 100% client satisfaction; nobody needs to know it's because he intimidates dissatisfied clients with nebulous threats of police attention.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 5, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 6,

Intimidation (Extortion) 8, Larceny (Breaking & Entering) 8, Melee 8, Streetwise 8, Subterfuge (Evading Blame) 7

**Advantages & Edges:** —

**Gear:** 12-gauge shotgun (damage rating +4 at close range, +3 otherwise), handgun with suppressor (damage rating +3), and fire ax (damage rating +3). A range of specialty monster hunting gear in the back of his SUV too—stakes, silver bullets, etc.



#### Notes/Other Traits:

*Friends on the Force:* Gael still has a lot of friends in the local police force, some of them with seniority. He gets three-dice bonus on attempts to cover his tracks. Other people get +1 Difficulty on attempts to pin any of his misdeeds on him. He can also call on his cop buddies (General Difficulty: 3/2) to intimidate anyone who gets on Gael's bad side.

*Oblivious to the Supernatural (Flaw):* Gael suffers a two-dice penalty when determining whether a being is human or something else. Seeing a werewolf transform or similarly clear evidence negates the need for a test.

## Penny

One of the, if not the most, powerful people working for Re:Venge, Penny leads the satisfiers, those staff tasked with making sure that Re:Venge clients keep to their contracts. Which is to say, she makes sure that their entire digital fingerprint is known to the company via the Re:View app and that none of them bad mouth the company. Despite being the leader of intelligence gathering, very little is known about the mononymic Head of Compliance. Some say, offline and in hushed tones among people they trust with their lives, that Penny isn't even her actual name.

There's very little that Penny doesn't know about anyone connected to Re:Venge, between the information web that Re:View provides and employing

countless numbers of sock puppet accounts on Re:Verb. Anyone who steps out of line gets put down. She isn't above using the same supernatural threats that the company says they're committed to taking down to off clients who bad mouth them online or hunters who think they can do whatever they want in RV's employ. It doesn't help that malcontents like Darius Grim almost exist to be an ever-present thorn in her side. He and his little upstart union can't see the forest for the trees. The individual lives of any given Re:Venge hunter can't even come close to the value of the data mined from the lives of their clients. That the company actually kills the monster, if there even is one, doesn't matter, so why would it matter if the hunter survives the encounter. They knew what they were getting into.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics (Research) 8, Intimidation 6, Investigation (Pattern Analysis) 9, Technology (Data Mining) 9

**Advantages & Edges:** Library (Re:Venge databases, all Perks), Global Access (all Perks)

#### Notes/Other Traits:

*Data Slice and Dice:* Penny is a genius with databases. It takes her half the normal time to extract information from them. When she's working with a database she is extremely familiar with (including Re:Call), reduce the Difficulty of her tests by 1. ■



# Chapter Five:

# SPECIAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

## (U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation)

The Special Affairs Division (SAD) has been reborn in the post-9/11 counterterrorism era. No longer relegated to the basements of local branches, the SAD is now a well-funded behemoth with firepower and expertise theoretically capable of ending the blankbody threat entirely. Instead, what they do with that funding is launch careful investigations into occult crimes—so careful, in fact, that many agents grow frustrated and question whether the new glut of antiterrorism funding is the cause of the deliberative pace. The response from the higher-ups is that government work is slow, investigative work is slow, and it's better to put the work into preparation rather than have messy, high-casualty operations the public would notice. Still, many agents eventually grow frustrated with the slow-moving bureaucracy and strike out independently.

## SPECIAL AFFAIRS DIVISION LEXICON

There are many words and phrases unique to operators of the SAD and those who work with and for them.

**Blankbody:** Vampires, coined as a substitute for the straight term for official reports, as vampires do not show up as warm under thermal based night vision.

**ESOG:** Entity Special Operations Group, the special forces arm of the Society of St. Leopold (see Chapter Six).

**FIRSTLIGHT:** The coordinating agency between the SAD, IAO, and other organizations, like The Society of St. Leopold. No one knows who is in control of FIRSTLIGHT, but when an order comes down from them, no one refuses.

**IAO:** Information Awareness Office, a Government org and SAD's counterpart in the National Security Agency (NSA).



# Origins

## Early Years

The SAD is the oldest secular organization dedicated to combating supernatural creatures. Founded in the 1950s by J. Edgar Hoover to combat the mobs and occult influence in left-wing political groups, the SAD investigated ghosts, aliens, werewolves, clairvoyants, and vampires. These were the days of men in black suits, dark sunglasses, and Cadillacs, originating the rumors of the men in black. While Hoover was alive, the SAD was a prestigious assignment. However, not all leads panned out. Their focus on aliens especially turned out to be largely misguided, and many of their experiments into psychic phenomena simply weren't fruitful. Investigations into vampiric, ghostly, and lycanthropic threats yielded some evidence. The SAD forged close ties with members of the Catholic Church, but that wasn't enough to prevent their colleagues from snickering at them in the halls. Once Hoover died, the SAD's funding was slashed. Hoover

ensured its mission was enshrined in the FBI's charter, however. The SAD couldn't be entirely removed, but it could be debased.

By the time the 1970s rolled around, they'd been moved from the top floors of their local divisions to the basement, and their equipment, cars, and desks, once top of the line, were now nicotine-stained and dingy. In some offices, the SAD didn't even have dedicated agents. It became side-projects maintained

by kooks between "real" cases. In rare instances where an investigation's occult dimensions made it fall clearly under SAD purview, agents would downplay those supernatural elements to avoid the classification.

Working a SAD case was a rumored career killer.

In the 1990s, the SAD, in cooperation with the Society of St. Leopold, developed a secular "exorcism" technique for removing vampiric influence from a subject of their mind control. Still, it's an unpleasant enough procedure that not everyone who survives it is glad they did.

## The Counter-Terrorism Era

After 9/11, the U.S. government granted intelligence agencies broad powers to surveil its own citizens. From what the SAD and its partners at the NSA can tell, one faction of blankbodies attempted to turn the intelligence apparatus against another faction or two. It accidentally leaked the bloodsucker parts of the dark web. From there, the NSA reached out to the Society of St. Leopold and the SAD, and they began pooling information. It was quickly determined that Congress couldn't know — it was impossible to tell who was a blankbody or one of their puppets — so the occult crimes committed by the blankbodies in their pursuit of blood were reframed as terrorist activity. With the new, almost exclusive focus on the bloodsuckers, a proven threat, and the glut of funding associated with counterterrorism, the SAD swelled overnight. The SAD went from a handful of aging, discredited



eccentrics, to a large, well-funded, quasi-militarized counter-terrorism unit — albeit still lacking a certain amount of respect within the intelligence community itself.

## Office Politics

SAD is relatively well-respected among other monster-hunting organizations, especially by its FIRSTLIGHT partners in the NSA, IAO, and occasionally, the Society of St. Leopold. Some dissenters within SAD say the Division is too willing to jump into FIRSTLIGHT missions without deliberation because its partners offer it the respect it lacks internally at the FBI.

One of the great ironies of the new reorganization is that the old guard, the agents who maintained the records and kept working the cases, were vindicated. Then all but the highest-ranking members were

crowded out by the influx of young, ambitious agents. Some felt relieved that they could finally retire now that they knew the cases they'd worked on for so long were finally being taken seriously. Others hang on, resentful of the new antiterrorism focus, still pursuing oddball projects. Still playing with their red string and cork boards, they're allowed to remain in the service because of their vast wealth of experience with blankbodies. At least these fanatics are SAD's fanatics.

The SAD isn't antagonistic to all Hunter cells, even going so far as to contract some for jobs too small to merit sending out a pair of agents. These contracts often come with heavy stipulations, like reporting all their hunts for the year after a job or periodically reporting their locations. The money is very good, as is the access to SAD equipment. The leads provided are also invaluable. On the other hand, less careful hunting methods can sometimes get a Hunter cell labeled "terrorists." It's up to the Hunter cell whether the reporting requirements and risk of being on the FBI's radar are worth it.

## THE DEVIL YOU KNOW

Hunter cells can get resources or aid from orgs, especially those the players' characters used to work for. Assuming that the apostate in question didn't completely burn any bridges, there are usually people still in the org who liked them. Many work friends are still contactable because of carpool or daycare arrangements, happy hours, or social media. An apostate can often reach out to those people and connect to the org through them.

Assuming the org doesn't want an apostate dead, most orgs have no reason to avoid using the apostate or their cell should the need arise. Better the devil they know, an apostate, than the devil they don't.

Those orgs with fanatical beliefs are least likely to work with apostates. While the SAD or Arcanum might make an alliance of convenience with their apostates, others won't. The Order of the Rose, the Nails of Christ, and even some parts of the Society of St. Leopold might never welcome their apostates back in any capacity.

# Roles Within SAD

The SAD operates independently from the rest of the FBI, so the higher echelons are the FBI in microcosm. Special agents are organized into squads under a special agent in charge. Team sizes vary, but the largest are roughly 40 members. For the final two weeks or so of an investigation, an entire squad typically works the last of a case, preparing for a final raid.

Research Director Alan Kenchlow oversees various researchers and scientists who innovate tools to fight vampires and occasionally other threats. He also oversees Forensics. Forensic analysis of occult criminals also requires special technology, so it's handy to have them under the same umbrella. As his health declines, many of the day-to-day operations are overseen by Assistant Director Theresa Flanders. Interdepartmental Liaison and Director Gerald Osborne maintains only a small administrative staff. He liaises with other organizations—Corporate, Governmental, or Religious. Some mistake him as a member of FIRSTLIGHT, which isn't quite correct—FIRSTLIGHT is only a coordinating

authority. SAD has yet to decline any FIRSTLIGHT request, leading some lower in the ranks to wonder if Director Osborne could be replaced by a rubber stamp.

Each regional office maintains a large SWAT team. The number of SWAT team members is second only to the number of Special Agents, with each team usually having roughly 30 team members. Maintaining a small army is a requirement of SAD's current mission—the blankbodies have inhuman strength and fangs, and to take them down, they'd better be well-trained and heavily armed. Special Agents also go on raids and are expected to hold their own—but from the back. The SWAT team isn't involved in day-to-day investigation but instead spends time between missions training. They have strong ties with ESOG and often train together at the newly renovated and now state-of-the-art SAD training center near Quantico.

## The Hunt

SAD is primarily a law enforcement agency that investigates occult-related terrorism, with secondary focuses on organized crime and extremist political organizing. Blankbodies are not human; they aren't subject to human rights like the right to a fair trial, so the SAD doesn't ultimately have any compunction about summarily executing one. However, the SAD doesn't currently prioritize individual bloodsuckers who are mugging people for a mouthful of blood. They go after blankbodies who run various forms of organized crime, including human trafficking for illegal work and food.

An investigation begins with a tip, a normal investigation being turned over to the SAD after a supernatural element is uncovered, an informant from a prior case flipping on a new cell of bloodsuckers, or the researchers still combing through the aging dark web archives for leads. In the old days, a pair of agents or a small team would work a case. Now, a team of five or so usually begins the preliminary investigation. Normal stuff: getting wiretaps, monitoring social media, light surveillance, late nights listening to tapped phone conversations while drinking the dregs of the afternoon's coffee. Some of this goes nowhere—they only really chase the big game (vampires) and leave the little stuff (everything else) to Hunters and other orgs.

Once they determine the case is big enough to pursue, the team balloons up to 30 or more agents comprising researchers, field agents, forensic analysts, undercover agents, and support. SAD makes extensive use of profilers since vampires, like serial killers, are creatures of habit. They have preferred feeding habits and hunting grounds and like to rest in the same place.

Once the blankbody presence is confirmed, the majority of the investigation is devoted to determining the correct time to arrange a sting.

The outcome of a normal investigation is arrest and trial. Not so with blankbodies. The preference of leadership is not to leave a single blankbody in a cell “alive,” as blankbodies who survive raids are often vengeful. The SAD gathers extensive intel on when to strike, going so far as to use undercover agents to herd the blankbodies into one location on one night. They go in with SWAT teams and take out every bloodsucker they can while they minimize loss of human life—although some loss is always unavoidable. The blankbodies are never far from their meals and blood thralls.

## GHOULS AND BLOOD THRALLS

The term *ghoul* originates in **Vampire: The Masquerade** and is used for clarity of the rules (see also **Hunter: The Reckoning**, p. 272). Hunters in **Hunter** use a variety of terms and euphemisms for servants of vampires, and different cells often settle on different terms. The vampires of **Hunter** don’t necessarily match up to the Kindred of **Vampire**, so don’t feel too beholden to the terms and lore from that game. Some potential terms Hunters may use for a vampire’s human (or even animal) servants include:

Blood Addict	Familiar
Blood Aficionado	Fan
Blood Servant	Freak
Blood Slave	Fiend
Blood Thrall	Habitué
Blood Junkie	Lackey
Bride	Lemur
Crony	Manes
Enthralled	Renfield
	Stan

The slow approach to investigation frustrates street-level agents. The old guard is frustrated because

it didn’t used to have the manpower to tackle huge blankbody led organized crime. That was awful, but on the occasions they did have the manpower to act, there wasn’t nearly as much red tape. Now, they have to wait for months to finish an investigation while undercover agents, their contacts, and blankbody victims die or worse while they wait for the “perfect” time for a raid. The new, young blood has never been in a situation where they didn’t have the resources to defeat a threat—so what’s the holdup? And why does an organization devoted to eliminating vampires keep such a large archive of vampiric information?

## Discipline

Since the SAD’s classified activities are secret from judicial and legislative authorities, criminal infractions are handled internally. Mild infractions may result in an agent’s firing or transfer. For agents with highly sensitive information, however, summary execution, detainment in off-books secure sites, or assignment to incredibly dangerous operation are common forms of censure. There are rumors that at least one cryptologic center’s evidence vault contains a small prison with two or three people in it. The identities of these rumored prisoners are a matter of urban legend.

## Why Leave?

For agents who separate voluntarily, there are few internal barriers to leaving SAD. Everyone retires eventually, after all. The major controlling factors are that the money is good and that working for the agency tends to make supernatural enemies. SAD maintains cordial relationships with ex-agents who separated on good terms and occasionally hires them as contractors. Regardless, ex-agents, whether they separated on good terms or bad, are surveilled as a matter of policy. If all it took to get ahold of SAD secrets was a blankbody domineering an ex-Regional Director on the first night of retirement, they’d be in real trouble. Despite currently active agents still having access to computer systems and agency

**To:** Alexander Bell IV (AlexB-4@sad.fbi.gov)

**From:** Laura Fowler (LFowler@sad.fbi.gov)

**Re:** Your Offer

My final day will be April 22nd. It's a slog. Same work, over and over, no time for perps we can't shoot. Go to whatever dive bar they're at, stake 'em, burn it down, blah blah. You wipe out the civilized ones, you just give the nastiest leeches free run of the city. The people at the top only care about their budget. If they aren't pocketing half of it (or, hell, diverting it to some blankbody fund), I'd be surprised.

I miss it just being hunting. Uncomplicated. I'm going to see if I can go freelance. Get free of the monotony of months of investigation, Thai takeout with you in the back of that hot box of an undercover van night after night, you loosen your tie, and I take off the stockings they make me wear at the office. You tell me some joke about a moth you stole, and I pretend I don't know it because I like it when you talk. We go quiet to listen to grunting whenever the leeches are drinking or fucking. We stake and burn them after we've spent a year memorizing their hunger.

I thought about spending the rest of my life with you like that.

Read between the lines for me one more time? I don't think our personalities are compatible. I won't be keeping in touch. I know this isn't what you want to hear. Talk to your wife about it when you feel sad, like I do with mine. When I think about you, I'm unhappy, and I'm tired of being unhappy all the time.

Understand?

--Laura

resources, they aren't watched nearly as closely as freshly departed ones.

Guilt over the loss of innocents is a major driver behind agent retirement. SAD raid guidelines prohibit wanton loss of human life, but a vampire's servitors aren't included in this calculation. Worse, it's difficult to tell who is a blood thrall and who isn't. They're hopelessly addicted and loyal to their blankbody masters and pose as much of a threat as a human terrorist even after their master is dust. A masterless thrall may go looking for another blankbody for their fix. For that reason, they are sometimes used as pawns by the SAD to uncover further blankbody activity. However, most of the time, these blood-addled servitors get caught in the crossfire and are still, undeniably, human victims.

Disrespect leads many veterans to quit. Older agents feel as if they're only being kept around because they remember the name of some obscure crime family. They've been shit on for years, and now new, hot agents get all the glory. Newer agents, on the other hand, have never known an agency that didn't have the funding to take out an entire vampire cell. Some of them would prefer to pick off the weaker individuals as they become aware of them rather than spend half a year trying to herd all the vampires in a city into one nightclub.

As a section of the FBI, SAD has physical fitness requirements for all agents and members. Age, injury, illness, and disability may eventually force retirement.

Some wonder why they're so deliberative about investigations if there'll be no trial after—if they're going to just shoot them all, if it's all a secret, why investigate for months? Others let the question sit for a while, and eventually they realize, yeah, there *is* no trial. The reports don't make it to politicians. The full extent of the blankbody threat may even be a secret to the head of the FBI. Even if blankbodies aren't people, blood thralls are—who is the SAD accountable to when anything goes wrong? Nobody. Some agents become disillusioned, even hostile to the organization and its values, and either quit on bad terms or get fired after breaking procedures to follow their conscience.

Agents who don't follow procedure or are too loose with information are fired. Agents who leave on bad terms are never authorized to work on a contractual basis and are deeply scrutinized for blankbody ties and sympathies. Even if they

aren't subject to further discipline beyond firing and blacklisting, they may have to deal with being followed and their calls being monitored for the rest of their lives. If they become Hunters and their methods might expose the existence of the blankbodies to the general public or jeopardize SAD's mission, they risk being labeled terrorists and hunted by their former colleagues.

### CREATING GOVERNMENT ORGS

To create a governmental monster-hunting org, it's easiest to create it as a subdivision of an existing government agency. SAD is a subdivision of the FBI, a law enforcement agency updated for the post-9/11 era, so most of its employees are Special Agents who investigate the supernatural through the lens of terrorism and organized crime. The Information Awareness Office is an independent organization with ties to the Department of Defense, but its surveillance operations are inspired by real-life NSA surveillance of civilians, and it deals with non-vampiric threats that the SAD doesn't touch.

In short, government agencies exist in a time, a place, and a political reality. Common threads are bureaucracy, inter- and intra-agency competition, and the dangers of a government that is secretly dealing with threats not known to the general public and is, therefore, unaccountable to anyone.

## Archetypes

Use the following example character concepts yourself or let them inspire you to make your own.

### Nostalgic Man in Black

Greg wasn't around for SAD's heyday, but he knew the guys who were. He rode with them in their once-fancy cars (rust buckets by the 90s) the size of small boats to crime scenes in back alleys. He remembers the sheen on a pool of blood reflecting the red and white "open" sign from the restaurant across the street; the victim's throat chewed open.

**Artie:** Caller, you're live on Nationwide A.M. Hello.

**Unknown:** Hello? Are you there? I, umm... I don't think I have much time.

**Artie:** What kind of phone are you on? Is it a burner?

**Unknown:** It doesn't matter. Listen, that shooting at the Glenlake Mall? That was us.

**Artie:** Wait. Who is "us"?

**Unknown:** T-the government. One of the letter agencies. They did it. Pinned it on some crazy guy. I can't do this anymore.

**Artie:** Oh, my God, Glenlake? Caller, are you telling me you did the Glenlake shooting?

**Unknown:** Not by myself, but yeah. It was a bloodbath, absolute. We were supposed to clear it out, we tried, then some fuck at FIRSTLIGHT got antsy and sent an email or something to the IAO, and suddenly they're running in, an hour before dawn, little old ladies doing some power walking up and down the mall... bam, gone. Shoulda waited until 6am, got to the basement, and staked a few vamps. Clean. But no, we didn't even wait until they were out for the day.

**Artie:** What's the goal?

**Unknown:** I mean, we say it's to kill terrorists. And we do; we're good at it. But nobody can know. Not Congress, not the people, not the President of the United States, not even the agency we're employed by. The bloodsuckers are too pervasive, and if Congress could oversee us, just a few mind-controlled Senators could bring the whole thing down.

**Artie:** Mind control?

**Unknown:** Yeah, yeah. Just a few drops, and you're at their command.

**Artie:** Has the government used this? This mind control?

**Unknown:** They would if they could, but no. It's the terrorists.

**Artie:** Which group? From where?

**Unknown:** Here, man. They're monsters. We call them terrorists, so we get money for fighting terrorists. But you know what I think? The bloodsucker threat is real, but it's just an excuse. The secrecy's the point; people'd be much safer knowing the truth. It's about control. You leave the org, they watch you forever. You contract them to do a few odd jobs? They follow you. Even if you strike out on your own, you're a security threat, so someone's gonna be watching you shit through infrared binoculars for the next ten years, and they make a line item in a budget for it... that's how they stick around. Meanwhile, people die because people like me are silent. They can take me out. I'm done playing.

**Artie:** Is your line secure?

**Unknown:** [laughs] The vamps won't even use phones. The "terrorists" look like anybody else, so you, me, the little old lady next door, everyone's a blankbody until proven otherwise, so everyone's tapped. If you've texted your junk to someone, an agent's looking at it. It's a joke.  
[muffled shouting]

**Artie:** Caller, maybe you should get out of there.

**Unknown:** Nah. That's my ride.  
[banging]

**Artie:** Caller?  
[banging and shouting]

**Unknown:** Oh. It's yo—  
[line goes silent]

Those were the days. Only way to do that kind of work again is quit and be a Hunter.

**Creeds:** Inquisitive or Underground

**Drives:** Curiosity or Envy

## The Aspiring Field Agent

Melissa had asthma, and getting through the FBI's physical exams was brutal, but she managed it once. From there, she had to make tough decisions. No fieldwork for her; she'd use her biology degree and process forensics in a lab. She was fine at it but always haunted by the idea she'd settled.

As her health worsened, even a 9–5 lab job started to feel out of reach. She was forced out of her position after too many sick days. Eventually, it occurred to her: Why not strike out on her own? She could set her own hours and do the fieldwork she'd always wanted to do.

**Creeds:** Entrepreneurial or Inquisitive

**Drives:** Oath or Pride

## Frustrated SWAT Team Member

Ashok loved the mission, loved his comrades—and hated raids. Blankbody blood dolls threw themselves in front of their masters while another was discarded like an empty beer can. Lives ruined by waiting. In the time it took to get a raid going, he could have picked each of these leeches off one by one. In fact, why not do that?

**Creeds:** Faithful or Martial

**Drives:** Atonement or Vengeance

## “Terrorist”

Hannah has seen enough. Interdepartmental Liaison and Director Gerald Osborne does whatever that greaseball Dominic says. FIRSTLIGHT wants resources? Money, people, anything? Sure, just hand them over. There are more than enough resources to eliminate the vampiric threat, but for some reason, they simply won't.

Osborne is either a blood thrall or an idiot, and Director Questor sees it, so he's in on it. She still believes in the mission, but the way she sees it, SAD is too compromised to do any good. She sent a “fuck you” letter on the way out and has struck out on her own. If they think her open hunting of the blankbodies and antagonism for the org makes her a terrorist, so be it.

**Creeds:** Entrepreneurial or Underground

**Drives:** Greed or Vengeance

## Attitudes and Stereotypes

**The Arcanum:** A wealthy social club. Director Kenchlow doesn't mind them, but they're here to poke around, perform séances, and do magic tricks. Worth monitoring in case they stumble upon something interesting. Otherwise, they need to stay out from underfoot.

**BOPE-RJ:** We don't work with them often since we're a domestic org, but they're efficient when we do. A few of our SWAT guys have trained with theirs when we're on something joint with the Society of St. Leopold, and they're supposed to be elite. Scary, but elite.

**FIRSTLIGHT:** An incredible cross-functional organization and always worth devoting resources to. They coordinate everything; we just show up and get the benefit of working with other organizations without the trouble of setting things up.

**Information Awareness Office:** Ah, our younger siblings. They wait for us to investigate, then waltz in for the last few gory hours. They're more about surveillance and response instead of true shoe-leather-and-interviews investigation. We've had too many operations end with them coming in, guns blazing, and blowing away our agents before we've had a chance to pull our people out.

**Monster-X:** Can occasionally manufacture specialized weapons for us, and handy because we don't have to hide what the weapons are for. They've even come up with a couple on their own worth using.

**The Order of the Rose:** Obviously a dangerous cult, but not a supernatural one, so they're not really our department. Some other department looks into that.

# SAD's Top 10 Most Wanted



10. **Honore Hope-Stephens** – Hope-Stephens (5'6", blonde, 115 pounds) was an accountant for the SAD. Complained to colleagues about headaches and approached Director Kenchlow about a possible ghost sighting before disappearing. She appears to have downloaded several years of financial statements, but some say they've heard her voice in the walls. Wanted for questioning.
9. **Genevieve Marshall** – Leader of Red Dawn Dallas, a political commune of extremists. The lowest members show up to protests armed and leave pig's heads at police stations. Members live in a commune and ritualistically drink each other's blood.
8. **Name Unknown** – Few lycanthropes make the list these days, but this one keeps hitting our weapons manufacturing partners. Psychological profile suggests a political motive, possibly related to fossil fuel production. Her human form is female, roughly 5'4" and 150 pounds, and 7'0" and 340 when she's ripping apart machinery.
7. **Victor Datlow** – Blankbody, 6'1" and 150 pounds. Breaks into victims' houses and, unlike most blankbodies, sucks his victims dry. He's a recent corpse with a criminal record from his past life. Got caught on a doorbell camera after draining a mom of three in her bed. The openness of his crimes risks exposing the existence of blankbodies to the public.
6. **Agent "Cog"** – Social media personality and podcaster claiming to be an agent of the "deep state." Does not show their face or use their real voice. Most information is just inaccurate enough that it's unlikely to be an agent, but rather someone making sense of secondhand accounts and leaks. Find Cog, find the leaks. Channel will not be taken down, as it would verify the validity of Cog's claim. If we let them know we're coming, we cut off our own access to new information on Cog's identity they may let slip.
5. **Name Unknown** – Blankbody survivor of our joint ESOG raid of a monastery. Goes after members of the raid and butchers them and sometimes their family. Described as having greasy black hair and being able to step in and out of shadows. Wears a priest collar. Coordinate with the Society of St. Leopold if any clues to the identity or whereabouts are found.
4. **Amanda Brown** – Head of a cartel manufacturing and distributing a drug made of blankbody blood, leaving users hopelessly addicted and obedient to another unknown blankbody. Tall, black hair, brown eyes. Able to walk around in the day but is known to drink blood.
3. **Unknown** – Something (possibly a blankbody, likely a lycanthrope) tore apart the Kansas office and everyone working late there. The cameras were disabled, suggesting whatever it was probably either had insider knowledge or was one of us.
2. **Lisa Mamatas** – Lisa was a scientist in the Research Department. She stole blueprints for a secret weapon and headed to Eastern Europe where she's been attempting to sell them for months. Her activities may come to the attention of other parts of government, risking exposing our mission to scrutiny.
1. **Any member of the so-called "Circulatory System"** – This human trafficking ring identifies high-value "blood dolls" for blankbody use and transports them across state lines. Any leads on the higher-ups for this criminal org should be reported to the Director.

**Re:Venge:** We use contractors to pursue cases that aren't worth assigning to agents, and we may eventually look into using an app. We don't know the specifics of the IT security of this app, and RV isn't selective about whom they let advertise themselves as hunters. Better to use ex-agents if we want a consistent outcome.

**The Society of St. Leopold:** Allies who stuck with us even through the lean times and share our understanding that blankbodies are the big threat. Their ESOG is the best training partner, bar none. Still, they get worked up if you don't agree with what the blankbodies are, and they think they're the only people with access to the truth. Share intel, train together, coordinate through FIRSTLIGHT — but keep them at arm's length. They're ultimately just a church.

**Special Rehabilitation Program:** An interesting idea, using institutionalized people. We probably looked into something similar back in the early days, but... no. In practice, a SWAT team works better than using prisoners like slaves.

**Independent cells:** Some are careful enough to make good contractors. If they're playing around when a raid goes down and get caught in the crossfire because they didn't tell us what they were up to, that's on them. The ones who are reckless with civilian lives and who jeopardize our investigations are no better than terrorists and need to be taken out.

# Sample Characters

The following are some example characters that could pop up in stories featuring SAD.

## Brandon Saez

If there was such a thing as a poster boy for the ideal SAD field agent, Brandon would be it. Top of his class at Quantico after being honorably discharged from the Marine Corps, he was immediately recruited into the SAD due to his breaking up a vampire cell taking advantage of the chaos in Fallujah.



While a Marine, Brandon's best friend became a thrall to a vampire smuggling cursed artifacts and humans out of the battlefield to parts unknown. When they discovered the den, this friend shot Brandon in the back to help the vampire escape. While wounded, he chased the thrall, vampire, and the rest of the blankbody's retinue, taking them all out with bloody efficiency. Ever since, if Brandon even suspects someone is a blankbody or a thrall, he takes to the old saying: "kill them all, let God sort them out."

Recently promoted to the leadership of the SAD Unusual Threat Response unit, Brandon still goes out into the field whenever he can, never afraid to lead his people into the hell that is battle.

**General Difficulty:** 5/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 5, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:**

Athletics 6, Brawl 8, Firearms 10, Intimidation 6, Investigation 8, Leadership 7, Technology (explosives) 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Arsenal (Requisition from SAD) with all Perks, Contacts (••, Marines), Influence (••••; SADUTR)

**Gear:** An expert of SWAT and military tactics, Brandon has access to whatever high grade weapons and technology the government has access to. He wears tactical SWAT armor (armor value 6) when in the field and uses a +4 damage fully automatic rifle.

**Notes/Other Traits:** He commonly leads teams of

**SADUTR Specialist Officers** (see *Hunter*, p. 268). The number of team members equals the Danger level.

Brandon doesn't mind Hunters who leave SAD on good terms but sees them as the rest of the UTR does: people to use if push comes to shove. That said, there



is no reason why a Hunter whose main focus is on blankbodies can't be a Contact if they worked in the UTR or with them extensively. However, if Brandon ever has a reason to suspect a Hunter of being a ghoul or working for a vampire, he immediately becomes an Enemy or Adversary.

## Eugenia Kim

SAD is very generous about allowing its employees to leave — to a point. SAD employees have Top Secret clearance, and when one quits, they don't forget everything they saw. SAD secrets are valuable to corporations, rival orgs, and blankbodies.

Newly quit (or fired) agents sometimes get the itch to become whistleblowers. Contractors, like Hunters, also get information on a need-to-know basis that could be dangerous in the wrong hands.

That's where Eugenia comes in. She's a Special Agent in a small task force devoted to monitoring recent contractors and ex-SAD employees who left within the last five years. She's authorized to kill national security threats. She's done so before and would happily do so again.

Eugenia has ties to the Society of St. Leopold and might have joined if she weren't a committed Protestant. She understands blankbodies in terms of her religious background.

Lately, she's been waking up in the middle of the night, frozen in place, and seeing a tall figure with long, ghostly fingers at the foot of her bed. She knows she should report it, but after years of monitoring ex-agents, she's paranoid. It's not quite a dark secret, but it's a worry. Maybe she'll

call a sleep specialist? Or a Hunter?

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical

4, Social 4, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:**

Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:**

Investigation 8, Occult 6,

Stealth 8, Technology 8

**Advantages &**

**Edges:** Artifact,

Arsenal, Thwart the

Unnatural, Stalkers

**Notes/Other Traits:**

Agent Kim is suitable as an Enemy or Adversary if she suspects you've leaked SAD secrets. However, taking care of the figure from her nightmares could make her into an Ally.

Agent Kim does light surveillance of low-level risks as part of her caseload, occasionally checking their social media and phones for suspicious activity. Contact with blankbodies or thralls (even as Quarry on a Hunt) merits increased scrutiny, like monitoring of bank accounts and GPS location. If she determines through her investigation that someone she's monitoring threatens the agency's mission, she files a short form, gets authorization, and kills them. Eugenia has little compunction about taking out a security threat if necessary.

## Dominic Russo

Dominic has worked his way up the SAD hierarchy from field agent to Assistant Director under Interdepartmental Liaison Gerald Osborne. Dominic, through contacts from his childhood, has connections to organized crime, a fact that slipped through the background check on his security clearance. Through this connection, he has ties to Amanda Brown, Number 4 on SAD's Top Ten Most Wanted list. He's on Brown's payroll and undermines planned actions against Brown's drug ring by passing on information about SAD operations.

Amanda, a low-ranking member of the vampiric



criminal underworld in New York City, is uninterested in the politics of SAD—if she says she wants intel, she wants it now, and she doesn't care how. This puts

Dominic in a bind, as he risks undermining Amanda's goals if he's too reckless, but he faces her wrath if he doesn't obey.

Dominic is caught between an angry vampire who might kill him for not being a better mole and SAD, which might kill him for selling secrets to blankbody mobsters.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 6,

Intimidation 4, Leadership 6, Occult 6, Stealth 6, Subterfuge 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Contacts (••, organized crime) Influence (••, Assistant Director), Dark Secret (double agent)

**Notes/Other Traits:** Dominic may serve as a Contact for FIRSTLIGHT-related information if a Hunter contracts with SAD. He may also be an Enemy or Adversary if the Hunter knows about his blankbody ties.

Dominic may call in a Hunter, leak information specifically to undermine FIRSTLIGHT operations against vampiric targets and give misleading half-truths or outright lies to get Hunters to do what he wants.

## Dr. Christopher James

Dr. James's former mentor is Alan Kenchlow, and he's adopted Kenchlow's easy, fatherly demeanor. Dr. James pioneered psychic surgery, a medical approach derived from the Society of St. Leopold's practice of exorcism. While an incredible success, the brutality of the procedure and Dr. James's apparent indifference to the suffering of people who undergo it disturbed Kenchlow enough to limit the procedure to willing

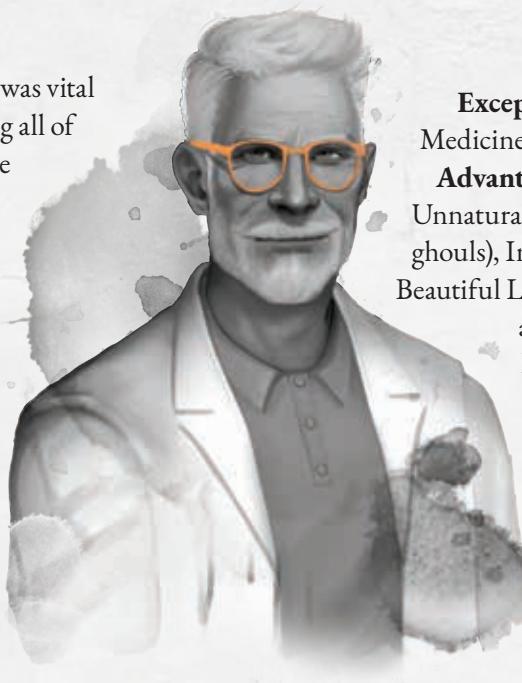
subjects or those whose knowledge was vital to a mission. He also began referring all of Dr. James's research proposals to the Director for ethical review.

Dr. James has met this with his usual good nature and warmth—outwardly. In his personal life, he looks for blood thralls or former thralls to take home, which he achieves through a combination of silver fox good looks and a tire iron. Research is coming along nicely. As an unexpected but welcome bonus, the ghosts it creates also make fascinating subjects.

**General Difficulty:** 5/4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 8



**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 8, Medicine 10, Occult 6, Science 10

**Advantages & Edges:** Cleanse the Unnatural, Dark Secret (experiments on ghouls), Influence (••, respected researcher), Beautiful Looks (••), Retainers (••, research aide), Safe House (••, Haunted, Laboratory)

**Notes/Other Traits:** Dr. James makes a splendid, attentive four-dot Mentor to anyone who doesn't know or care about his extracurricular research. Anyone who'd like to stop him finds him as an Enemy. If he discovers you've ever been a ghoul, he becomes the most charming man you've ever met, immensely interested in your life—and a covert Adversary. ■

You asked for it, true believers, so here it is: the deep state's steps for disposing of paranormal threats and suppressing the truth.

— Agent Cog

1. Reporting: A crime is reported to local authorities and referred to the FBI.
2. Determination of Paranormal Involvement: If there's possible blankbody involvement, the case is referred to SAD.
3. Crime Scene Investigation: Special Agents gather evidence from the scene and interview witnesses. Forensics begins its analysis of evidence.
4. Determination of Scope: The preliminary report is assessed by higher-ups to determine if the threat is within the scope of SAD's mission.
5. Research: Profiling and assessment of evidence identifies persons of interest. Warrantless surveillance of citizens and businesses is performed. Agents go undercover to gather additional evidence and information on the terrorists and their vulnerabilities.
6. Risk Assessment: Every quarter, the Regional Director and Supervisory Special agent rank cases according to the risks the paranormal threat poses and urgency. The outcome determines which cases to pursue and in what order.
7. Referral: Paranormal cases the agency declines to pursue may be passed to unaccountable contractors. Cases beyond the scope or militaristic capabilities of SAD may bring in secret Catholic Church mercenaries and other deep state agencies.
8. Raid Planning: SWAT and Special Agents coordinate to determine the best time and location to raid a blankbody cell.
9. Raid Execution: The raid is carried out. Escaped blankbodies may be assigned to contractors. The outcome of the investigation is hidden from the public and our elected representatives.
10. Suppression: Any surviving witnesses are appropriately pressured or incentivized to keep the paranormal elements they witnessed secret. If not possible, they are discredited. Disinformation about the cause of violence and property damage is disseminated.

# MANY FACES, ONE CAUSE — SAD HEROS DIVERSITY EVENT



Are you a female between the ages of 25 and 35?

OR

Are you African American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino?

OR

A member of the LGBTQIA+ community?

OR

Have you spent at least two years as a Special Agent, Forensic Analyst, Researcher, or an FBI SWAT team member?

## IF SO, WE'D LOVE TO MEET YOU!

Join FBI Knoxville in welcoming Director Marcus Questor of the Special Affairs Division. The department has refocused post-9/11 on protecting our nation from terrorists before they strike. We're looking for heroes with the mental acuity, stamina, discretion, and courage to join our mission. We're looking for forces as diverse as our country, so we're excited to have your strength join ours!

We deal with unusual cases, so an open mind is a huge plus. We're research-oriented, always innovating and discovering new forensic methods, so if you want to work with or design the technology of the future, this is where to go.

Director Marcus Questor will meet us in the auditorium for a 10 a.m. speech followed by a SAD meet and greet. A light lunch and drinks will be provided. Come see why SAD's fast-paced, exciting work defending America from evil is right for you!\*

\* No weapons. A pinprick blood sample and a pat-down will be required at the door. The auditorium doors will be locked at 10:05 a.m. and will not be opened again until 1:00 p.m. Do not adjust the blinds or touch the light switches for any reason.



# Chapter Six: SOCIETY OF ST. LEOPOLD

For many, the only way out of the Society of St. Leopold is death. Some do retire to live out their lives in a monastery or convent safe from reprisal from the vampires they spent a large portion of their lives hunting. The few who successfully turn apostate do so hoping that the large, ungainly hierarchy of the Society will not miss one inquisitor, looking over their shoulders for the Censors—the Inquisition within the Inquisition—for the rest of their lives.

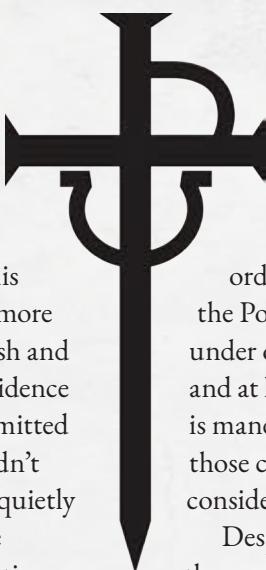
# History

In the 13th century, Dominican priest and inquisitor Leopold of Murnau set out to find heretics. After many years of torture and persecution of Cathars and Jews, he stumbled across monsters. In his mind, these supernatural creatures posed a more urgent threat to Christendom than mere flesh and blood dissenters to the faith. He brought evidence of the danger to Pope Gregory IX, who permitted him to found a secret order. The Church didn't cease its persecution of human heretics but quietly added another target: the supernatural. The Society of St. Leopold dedicated itself to casting Satan's minions back to Hell.

For centuries, the Society of St. Leopold was the only game in town. It had the financial backing of the Catholic Church, impeccable records, numbers, and faith. Faith enables the strict hierarchy, secrecy, obedience, and fanaticism in its members and its leadership's willingness to treat lower-level members as disposable. When heaven is the ultimate reward, it's easy to treat your members as future martyrs.

In 2004, the NSA penetrated the vampire portions of the dark web. In turn, the NSA contacted the Society of St. Leopold, and SAD and asked them what they knew. Thus began the Society's very tenuous and occasional collaboration with FIRSTLIGHT. The little flash-in-the-pan organizations couldn't keep half a dozen members alive without Church assistance. Then, they started pooling information and resources. They started surviving the hunt.

The Church plans in centuries, not days. Which organizations will stand the test of time? Which organizations or small hunter cells are likely to collapse in months or decades and may as well be treated as disposable and used for a short-term purpose? Who among their members, if anyone, is worth rescuing from a lesser cause to join the true Inquisition?



# Membership

The Society of St. Leopold is a large organization overseen by Grand Inquisitor Ingrid Bauer. She reports directly to the Pope. Just as Catholic monastics have several

orders under the leadership of the Church and the Pope, the Society has multiple divisions and sects under one Grand Inquisitor. Professed belief in Christ and at least a willingness to accept Catholic baptism is mandatory for membership. However, within those constraints, diverse viewpoints and tactics are considered an asset.

Despite being a religious society, a slim majority of the members are neither clergy nor monastics. They're faithful laypeople living in the community who have taken a simple vow to denounce Satan and fight his unholy servants. Every member who has taken this vow is considered an inquisitor. Still, it's not unheard of that an inquisitor initially believes the evil they've vowed to fight is purely spiritual rather than embodied threats with fangs and appetites.

Every inquisitor, except the newest recruits in the Friends of St. Rita, begins a period of mentorship called a novitiate under a more senior inquisitor. This is typically a two-year period of philosophical and physical training, but what it entails depends on the tradition or division, its needs, and the abilities of the novice and the mentor.

# Hierarchy

The Society is split up into divisions that are further subdivided into *cenacles*—small, specialized groups with stable membership who habitually work together. There is a waning tradition of itinerant inquisitors who belong to a theological tradition and pass those on from mentor to mentee. In recent years, most itinerant inquisitors eventually join a division, although they may ascribe to one or more theological traditions. Itinerant inquisitors may also form cenacles, although



SOCIETY OF ST. LEOPOLD

# **Heretical tendencies permit agents of the Enemy to infiltrate our organization, gather information, and undermine our mission.**

## **Here are ten ways to root them out:**

- 1. Monitor their online activity:** Often, a heretic feels alone and seeks out community and answers online. Monitoring suspected heretics' search history, email, and social media accounts is often fruitful.
- 2. Administer a test of loyalty:** If it's suspected a member of the Society is wavering in their commitment, send them on a mission where they know they may die. If they refuse their vow to martyr themselves, it's one more piece of evidence.
- 3. Maintain a network of peer informants:** We are all stronger if we hold one another accountable. Encourage cenacles to monitor one another.
- 4. Hierarchical scrutiny:** Adhering to a strict hierarchy of mentorship and cutting off other sources of information prevents heresy and gives heretics nowhere to hide.
- 5. Excommunication:** The threat of denying salvation and the expulsion of heretics keeps heresy at bay.
- 6. Infiltration tactics:** Employing undercover Censors and embedding them within cenacles allows the Censors to gather information.
- 7. Tribunals:** Subjecting suspected heretics to a formal process of examining their beliefs and loyalties can reveal heretical tendencies.
- 8. Inquisitorial audit:** Where a person spends their money is often where their heart and priorities are. Open their books.
- 9. Psychological profiling:** Certain personalities and stressors can predict whether a faithful Christian may become open to satanic influence.
- 10. Interrogation:** Modern interrogation techniques are adequate to uncover a heretic, but some Censors prefer more traditional methods.

they are usually for a specific purpose and dissolve after that purpose is fulfilled.

The sprawling organization of the Society, which spans the length and breadth of the Catholic world, means that even the Grand Inquisitor isn't fully aware of what every part of the Society is up to at one time.

## Theological traditions

The Society of St. Leopold considers nearly all supernatural creatures satanic, but vampirism is regarded as an especially foul mockery of Christ's resurrection, to the extent that even other monsters are evaluated through how they spiritually relate to vampires. Those who believe the eradication of vampirism should be the Society's primary goal are called **Traditionalists**. Some Traditionalists believe vampires are Satan's mockery of holy communion and the resurrection of Christ. Others maintain that vampires are antediluvian spirits possessing and animating corpses, and so the threat of ghosts must also be addressed. Yet others subscribe to the theory that vampires and werewolves are demonically possessed humans and ghosts are demons imitating the dead.

A minority is less interested in vampirism. **The Sisterhood of Saint Claire** are uncloistered women monastics who suspect vampires and werewolves are sick with an unclean, spiritual illness that must nevertheless be snuffed out, but that they are not directly called to violence. Every sister takes oaths of poverty, chastity, and nonviolence and works as hospital staff.

Some say the **Sanbenito Heresy** is merely an accusation and is not truly a theological strain, while others say it's organized and infects the highest echelons of the Church. The heresy says all creatures are God's creation and can be saved, and it hopes to help them retain their humanity. Openly claiming to be a Sanbenito would risk interrogation, excommunication, and possible execution as a threat to the Inquisition.

A few years ago, the *Testament of Leopold* was stolen from the vault at the Vatican. While the frenzy to recover it has waned, it was never found. The disappearance has caused a rift within the Office of the Archive, which still believes in primarily keeping physical records for longevity and security reasons.

Vellum, if well maintained, can last a thousand years. Electronic records are, by contrast, unproven. Other divisions feel the Office of the Archive is compromised and now insist upon keeping their own digital records, which undermines both the Archive's ability to keep consistent records and its power within the Society. This schism has been a driver of apostasy in the Office of the Archive, as paranoia has led to unfounded accusations, increased scrutiny of its members, and loss of status within the organization.

## Divisions

The largest division is the **Entity Special Operations Group** (ESOG), also known as the Gladius Dei. Founded in the 13th century, the ESOG is now a sophisticated special forces group dispatched wherever a militarized presence is required. They have a sophisticated arsenal of weapons specially designed to deal with vampires. As part of the joint operations with FIRSTLIGHT, the ESOG provides occasional training to the U.S. military. Members of the ESOG are the most fanatical of the fanatics. The few survivors of harrowing combat missions move up the ranks into officer positions. The only way out is martyrdom or old age, and young apostates are to be shunned by their former comrades if not shot.

**The Office of the Censor** is the Inquisition within the Inquisition, tasked with rooting out any monstrous infiltrators or their sympathizers. Inquisitors accused of wrongdoing can continue operating independently but must be accompanied by a Censor. The Censor is empowered to learn the truth of the matter by any means and to mete out summary judgment if the accused are found guilty. They may call on ESOG if they suspect they'll meet resistance. The Office of the Censor has historically had the most detailed records of the identities and activities of Society members and was the fastest to adopt modern technology to maintain those records.

Censors are charged with, among other things, hunting down heretics and apostates. They're authorized to execute any apostate they deem truly dangerous.

**The Office of the Archive** is headed by Donatella Ulfila, antiquities curator of the central vault located under the Vatican. Smaller collections are held at

religious museums, historical cathedrals, hospitals, universities, and other locations that can afford both an archivist and security.

Following the theft of the *Testament of St. Leopold*, the Office of the Archive has fallen in rank and importance, and other divisions have both taken up keeping their own records and relied far less on historical documents in their hunts.

Meanwhile, The Office of the Archive has resisted moving to electronic records. While there is a wealth of information about the past filed away in their temperature-controlled archives, they have been slow to adopt computers. Many Society members consider digital records a security risk, leaving data analysis to the Office of the Censor and the Evangelical friends. When they work in the field, many Society members take handwritten notes and even make use of film photography. Apostates who leave the Society are generally frustrated with the Archive's lack of engagement with the hunt and modernity.

**The Evangelical Friends of St. Rita** is the most recent organization and was recognized after Leopold's recent re-canonicalization. Inspired by the success of the Sisterhood of Saint Claire's information-gathering and influenced by a post-Vatican II strain of liberal

theology, the Friends of St. Rita uses charities as a front for their activities. They run homeless shelters, food banks, rehab centers, group homes, mental health clinics, and any other charity that would put them in the middle of a community. They keep meticulous records of everyone who receives a service in a database and pass it on to the data analysts at the Office of the Censor for signs of demonic activity. Their charity vans run guns and ammo; their clinics patch up injured inquisitors; their homeless shelters function as guarded safe houses for itinerant inquisitors; their volunteers are unwittingly being indoctrinated.

The Friends aren't without critics. Their broad outreach and willingness to recruit inquisitors without a novitiate has created an army of what are derisively called "Sunday inquisitors"—inquisitors who can only devote a small amount of their time to the cause. The Censors complain that recruiting inquisitors primarily through charitable work and forestalling a formal novitiate allows Sanbenito sympathies to fester and makes apostasy impossible to track or curb. The Friends dismiss this as politicking on the part of the Censors.

## CREATING RELIGIOUS ORGS

The Society of St. Leopold is Catholic in origin and culture. When creating another religious organization for your table, consider the religion's beliefs, history, and structure. A Protestant organization may date to the horrors of the Reformation, while an evangelical charismatic organization might be very new and distinctly American. These are examples from Christianity, but Christianity doesn't hold a monopoly on faith. Remember that these organizations aren't meant to represent a religion one-to-one, but rather the worst (and a little bit of the best) of a religion's treatment of people.

Religion is personally and politically sensitive and tied to culture, so check the comfort levels of players at the table when introducing it, especially if it's a religion you're not a part of yourself.

Start with the following questions: How and when did the religion become aware of supernatural monsters? What creatures does it consider a threat? Are any holy? How does the organization relate the existence of these creatures to their faith? How does the organization's structure reflect (or depart from) the religion today, and does the religion's hierarchy sanction the organization's existence? Who or what are they willing to sacrifice to protect their adherents from monsters?

# Leaving the Org

Leaving for a low-level inquisitor at the Evangelical Friends of St. Rita may be as simple as quitting their job or volunteer position and falling out of touch with their former co-workers. However, once someone attains the rank of novitiate, an inquisitor is an inquisitor for life. As inquisitors age, they may be called upon less frequently—but they can still be called for any task, including one that would inevitably end in martyrdom.

A major driver of apostasy for low-level members is that the Church rarely shares how individual missions fit into the larger plan. Sharing would be a security risk, and Christ's children are called to obey. Among the things that low-ranking members don't need to know is whether any given mission is certain death for the inquisitor. Independent Hunters, on the other hand, pick their own risks and Quarry for purposes they understand, and that makes the dangers of the Hunt far more bearable.

Breaking St. Leopold's vows by repeatedly failing to complete the required tasks is grounds for examination by a Censor that may end in excommunication from the Church and possible execution. Itinerant inquisitors operate with a fair amount of independence, going after anyone inside or outside the organization they consider heretical or apostate. Once picked for investigation by a Censor, there is almost no way to fully and permanently clear an inquisitor's name. In fact, false accusations by a rogue Censor have driven some devoted inquisitors to leave the Society in disgust.

Leaving the Society is most dangerous for an inquisitor who was especially active in the organization, gaining blood-sucking enemies and the recognition of their peers within the Society. While they're a member, an inquisitor operates under the authority of the Church and with its protection. Outside of it, their life expectancy is short.

The final way an inquisitor ends their earthly service is martyrdom, which is the most common way out for inquisitors who complete their novitiate training. Some information can't be gathered or evil cast back into Hell



without sacrifice. For inquisitors who want out (without a one-way ticket to Heaven), the easiest way to avoid being hounded by a Censor is to find a way to fake their own deaths (see the Faked Death Merit, p. 15).

# Archetypes

Use the following character concepts yourself or let them inspire you to make your own.

## Family Man

Joining the Inquisition was easy when John was young, and the life expectancy for recruits was short. But he wound up in the Office of the Archive and was only called to direct involvement in two Hunts. Then his mother suffered a serious injury. He initially got dispensation to look after her, but when they called him back, he refused. He needs to know the risks of a Hunt going in. He can only do that by going independent.

**Creeds:** Faithful *or* Underground

**Drives:** Oath *or* Vengeance

## Naive Student

Aiden was on track to be the salutatorian of St. Valentine's and needed to round out her extracurriculars. Sister Michael suggested helping clean up the parks with the Society of St. Leopold. She soon found herself documenting enormous paw prints in the park she was cleaning up. The revelation of creatures shook her to the core, she used her departure for college as an excuse to get out of her obligation to the Society. Nevertheless, she wants to do something about the threat, just not with the Church.

**Creeds:** Entrepreneurial *or* Martial

**Drives:** Curiosity *or* Envy

## Combat Veteran

Lisa returned from Afghanistan and, through a fellow Marine, was recruited to ESOG. However, she quickly found ESOG was uninterested in developing its soldiers' careers and far more conservative about women in

combat roles. She was doing paperwork in a back office, so she left before completing her novitiate. Now she fights the monsters on her own time and terms.

**Creeds:** Martial *or* Underground

**Drives:** Curiosity *or* Pride

## Disillusioned Censor

Father Tomas felt called to the emotionally draining, necessary, and nasty work of being a Censor. However, a terrible thought occurred to him: he'd seen plenty of proof of the existence of evil but didn't see any evidence of God. He faked his death and now lives under a fake identity he hopes will hold up long term. He still fights monsters but wonders when the other Censors will find him.

**Creeds:** Faithful *or* Underground

**Drives:** Atonement *or* Vengeance

## Attitudes and Stereotypes

**The Arcanum:** In less enlightened times, we would have burned them as heretics. Dabblers in witchcraft and worse, and open to the influence of Satan. The war against evil isn't a social club's intellectual romp.

**BOPE-RJ:** Our partners in South America.

Excellent to have a joint operation with ESOG, and willing to share equipment and training. Occasionally ruthless beyond what is useful.

**Manila Department of Justice: Special**

**Rehabilitation Program:** Its unsteady funding and leadership make this program cruel to the ill and imprisoned without purpose. If any are faithful, they're better off within the Society of St. Leopold than rotting in a cell between Hunts.

**Monster-X:** A vendor for some of our ESOG equipment, but ultimately, their commitment to the Inquisition is shallow. Their greed gives the Devil a foothold. For-profit ventures rarely last more than a decade or two — how long will one last when it's picked a fight with Satan?



# Society of St. Leopold

Our brothers and sisters in the Evangelical Friends of St. Rita have seen marvelous success in recruiting new inquisitors to the cause. This poses a new, happy problem -- more people are willing to join the Society of St. Leopold than are truly called to join.

Recall the vows you took when you joined the Society -- these are vows to God, not to the Society, and should not be taken in ignorance. If a person is merely interested in fighting evil, we should not endanger their souls by encouraging them to make a promise to God they do not understand. We are biblically required not to lead anyone to sin. The secular organizations are less effective, but it's better to direct someone to them than to permit them to take vows they don't have the faith or ability to keep.

Here are signs that a person is called to take vows:

First, they are aware of the existence of the unholy as both a material and spiritual threat extant in the physical world -- not merely a figurative evil.

Second, they are baptized, confirmed, and regularly participate in the sacraments.

Third, they can commit to a long period of mentorship and study so that they don't fall into the hands of the enemy.

Last, they have the zeal to commit to the cause for life and die for it if necessary.

I trust our esteemed brothers and sisters in the Evangelical Friends will take these signs especially seriously in the future.

Blessings,

Fr. David Peterson, Censor

Beloved,

Of the girls who graduated from the girls' school, only me, Claudia, and Beth stayed behind. We wanted to serve the church that raised us, not be teachers somewhere else or wives or maids. Father Martin hired us to watch the kids at meals, but he also started asking us to do special errands for the church at night. He taught me to drive and had me stay up all night taking the dirt roads from Indianapolis to Muncie, have some men at St. Ed's there unload the trunk, and then drive back and watch two dozen girls all blear-eyed at breakfast the next day. I did that seven more times before I saw in my rear window what those men were carrying from the trunk.

It was bullets. Boxes and boxes. I eventually plucked up the courage to ask Father Martin about it. He said, curtly, "There's a war." Eventually, he invited me to take the vows.

I worked in the charity shop that was eventually brought under the Evangelical Friends' mission. It made running the bullets and other things easier. I can load up a whole truck of used couches, crockery, fuses, and fertilizer in the charity van and drive it past the police without a second glance. Beth and Claudia came with me. We got older; Martin died and was replaced by a young man named Father Cepeda. I'm in my seventies now. Two months back, Claudia did a run to Gary, and then we had to retrieve the truck. I replaced the seats at a church shop because they'd sat soaked and in the sun for days. Nothing could ever get the stains and that smell out.

Then Beth did the run to Gary last month. Neither she nor the truck came back.

Father Cepeda asked me to do the Gary run tonight.

You're either going to think I'm crazy because you believe none of this or because you do believe and wonder why I'd go. Maybe you think I'm stupid. If anything, I'm a little cursed by brains because they make me mouthy. Used to pray to Jesus to take that from me, and the bastard never did.

These weapon runs were never safe, and only the protection of the church and the very small part we played kept me alive to old age. I guess the question now is, could I have done something more than cashier at a charity shop, run guns, and go to mass? God crafted us from clay for his use. Some of us are treasured as fine china, and some of us are used once and smashed for the hell of it. I never knew a mom and dad, and neither did Beth nor Claudia. At least we had a purpose before we were shattered. Father Martin said Christ suffered to be closer to us, and we to be closer to him. Today has been my Gethsemane, and soon, I'll take up my cross. I guess I'm writing this to leave you my courage and ask you to sit with me a while here at dusk. I'll sit with you when it's your turn, and we won't be alone.

Yours in Christ,

Jeanie Shelton



**The Nails of Christ:** To serve God is to be obedient to his Church on Earth, and these brothers and sisters in Christ operate outside of the Church for mostly political ends. Still, their faith seems sincere, and perhaps we can work together for limited ends or, with some time, bring them under our purview.

**The Order of the Rose:** Who knew a creepy little gardening club would grow into a bed of heretics? They're convinced that the world is not yet free of evil because the Church itself is corrupt—and, of course, that a cult that's only a few years old is going to achieve what eight hundred years of Christ-sanctified effort could not.

**Re:Venge:** Dabblers. The Friends and the Censors compete to be the fastest to adopt the newest tech, and even they shudder at putting all of our membership and activity in one computer database. Nevertheless, sometimes the owners of that database have information worth buying, so we hold our noses. Re:Venge agents aren't useful as allies but are useful as

cannon fodder, if their mission of vengeance doesn't make them too erratic.

**Special Affairs Division:** The most serious and competent of our secular allies and perhaps the one most likely to last. Their treatment of vampirism as terrorism rather than a spiritual threat leads them in the wrong direction, but we've been good partners regardless. Our regard for them isn't always returned. They can't deny our methods, but their dismissal of us as zealots has led to an occasional breakdown in mutual respect.

**Independent cells:** It is certainly a choice to enter into the fray with no support, no coherent purpose, no plan, and no hope. It's almost admirable. If they have talent and can be turned to the light of Christ, those who have survived a few hunts might make real inquisitors. If they are apostates, then they've turned their back on God and still seek out contact with monsters. Send a Censor to ask them why.

# Sample Characters

The following are some members of the Society of St. Leopold that may show up in your stories featuring the org.

## Isabella Aguilar

Isabella was born to be an inquisitor. Since the founding of the Society of St. Leopold, every generation of her family has included at least one member who joined. Having shown a childhood aptitude for martial arts and sensitivity to the presence of evil, Isabella's parents pressured her to drop out of school and join ESOG. Now in her late 20s, she's fiercely dedicated to her comrades and their mission. Her relationship to her faith and the Society are more dubious. After a recent injury laid her up in a Society-run hospital, she had a rare moment for herself to think about how little time she's had to be young, live on her own, and explore what she believes.

Isabella has no intention of leaving, but she enjoys small acts of rebellion, such as collecting items from her missions, like an item of clothing owned by a blankbody, or occult texts she hides among her few personal possessions. She's also started trading things among the ESOG black market like her lightly used equipment and surplus ammo for luxuries like cigarettes, manga, or bottles of wine. This black-market trade gives her tenuous access to criminal contacts.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 5, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 8, Brawl 10, Firearms 8, Larceny 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Arsenal (Exotics, Multiple Payloads), Ordinance (Exotics), Sense the Unnatural

**Notes/Other Traits:** Isabella has an intense resentment for ESOG apostates, but she can set aside her dislike for apostates from other divisions if they're willing to trade luxuries or an interesting occult



trinket. She'll capture or even eliminate apostates in her way if she's ever called in on a raid. To her, it's nothing personal. She's suitable as a Contact, Enemy, or Adversary, depending on a character's background with her, and may even be an Ally to a Hunter still technically in good standing with the Society of St. Leopold.

## Colin Davis

Colin joined the Society of St. Leopold while in seminary but dropped out of school as he realized his temperament was better suited to being a Censor than to tending a flock. He has a special distaste for Sanbenito heretics, although he sees apostates and heretics as roughly interchangeable.

Colin is an intelligent hunter of runaway inquisitors. He follows financial records and social media accounts and uses classic detective methods, like digging through trash, breaking into apartments, and approaching family members to track his prey. His goal is to determine what contact the apostate has had with monsters and whether they threaten the Society's mission. Having seen several Society operations and lives quite literally torn apart by vampiric infiltration of a cenacle, he is driven by an anger toward Sanbenito sympathizers that makes him borderline vicious.



Colin is difficult to dissuade once he believes his target is an apostate. If he doesn't have enough evidence to support his convictions, he'll forge that evidence. While the Society has officially moved away from "traditional" interrogation methods, Colin keeps a pair of pliers and a roll of duct tape with him.

Despite his former aspirations to the priesthood and ruthlessness on the job, Colin is married, with a wife and young son at home. He feels a genuine affection for both but almost nothing for anyone else.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Intimidation 8, Larceny 8, Stealth 10, Persuasion 8, Larceny 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Influence (••), Resources (••), Status (•••, Censor), Dark Secret (underhanded methods)

**Notes/Other Traits:** Colin works best as an Adversary or Enemy. He takes his time to deliberate on how best to deal with an apostate and starts out completely reasonable. As he grows in conviction that the apostate is dangerous or sympathetic to vampires, his behavior escalates. He's more than willing to break into an apartment to hide under the bed with his pliers, call the apostate to a deadly mission as a test of loyalty, or attempt a summary execution. He may temporarily call off his hunt to pursue a common vampiric enemy or, if given another, worse apostate to hunt, but he has

disgust for anyone who'd sell out a comrade. He's never dissuaded for long.

## Nathan Greene

On the weekends, Nathan leads his youth groups in praise songs. Mondays he spends feeding homeless people with the Evangelical Friends. Wednesday is teen Bible study, and Thursdays he spends on campus handing out pamphlets—*Join the Inquisition in the fight against the unholy!* Nathan is clean cut, charismatic, and willing to give the St. Leopold vows to anybody who'll take them.

Nathan is deeply in denial about his own motives. Having many very young recruits at his beck and call flatters his ego, and his young followers obey him with a cultish devotion. He's even willing to give resources to apostates if they flatter his ego enough.

Nathan's lack of screening for new inquisitors isn't out of place for the Friends, but he's such a convincing evangelist that he's gotten the attention of an antagonistic Censor. Still, he's not technically doing anything wrong. Nathan rarely goes on hunts himself, instead preferring to plan the missions and send groups of mentees to go instead. Considering how thin he's spread, he's pleased with the survival rate on these missions—which, even by Church standards, is very, very low.



By joining the Society of St. Leopold, you join an order steeped in tradition and dedicated to the righteous smiting of Satan's forces on Earth. It is paramount to understand the history of our Society to understand your place and direction within it.

## Candidate Orientation

Founded more than eight centuries ago by the visionary Dominican priest and inquisitor St. Leopold of Murnau, our Society rose to confront a threat far more insidious than mere mortal heretics: blood-sucking servants of Satan historically called vampires, and now often referred to by our secular partners as blankbodies. Recognizing the urgent need to combat these malevolent creatures, Leopold sought the blessing of Pope Gregory IX, thus securing the resources and mandate to establish our order in secret.

The Society of St. Leopold has withstood the tides of earthly history, weathering schisms, the growing skepticism of modernity, and the dawn of the digital era. Our steadfast, unwavering faith, obedience to Christ and his Church, and commitment are expressed in our vows to fight evil, even if it kills us.

While we are by far the longest-lasting organization addressing the satanic threat, our organization has partnered with other organizations to begin a new inquisitorial era. Our collaborations, such as the pivotal FIRSTLIGHT initiative, allow us to pool our resources to fight the darkness together. We are the shining city on the hill; the oldest, most steadfast beacon of stability in the fight against supernatural evil. As part of it, you will become a warrior, scholar, servant, or other defender of the faith.

To complete your initiation, a Priest and Candidate, with the Candidate's Mentor as Witness, recite the following vows:

**Priest:** Dost thou renounce Satan and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh so that thou wilt not follow or be led by them?

**Candidate:** I renounce them all.

**Priest:** Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth? And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord?

**Candidate:** I steadfastly believe.

**Priest:** Hath this candidate a lifestyle and zeal suitable for lifelong dedication to our mission? Wilt thou mentor them in the right conduct, physical training, and necessary theological understanding required for their service?

**Mentor:** I certify they do and that I will.

### **The Priest recites, and the Candidate repeats:**

I vow to give my whole life to obedience to Christ and Christ's Church under the authority of the Society of St. Leopold and to the defeat of Satan's minions on Earth, even if called to my death.

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Once you have taken these vows, they are for life. As you begin your work, you may join one of many divisions within the Society, or you may remain itinerant. Often, you will be called to obey a superior without understanding. This is necessary for the security of our mission.

Welcome, Inquisitor.

Nathan has information on what the Church is up to and on local monster activity. However, his loose recruitment practices, associations, and need for attention have put him on the radar of the Censor's Office. Accepting his help isn't without risks.

**General Difficulty:** 5/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Leadership 10, Performance 8, Persuasion 10

**Advantages & Edges:** Allies (•••), Reliability ••, Retainer (•), Status (•), Enemy (•)

**Notes/Other Traits:** Nathan cultivates a fanatical loyalty to himself in his flock of young, vulnerable, and homeless inquisitors. He truly believes his evangelism is crucial to the war against Satan. Anyone who threatens his flock (or their loyalty to him) is a servant of the Enemy. He can also be used as a Contact or Ally, and he can call upon his flock as a mob. He does not make a good Mentor, as he lacks the time to effectively mentor anyone. The Evangelical Friends of St. Rita is a little infamous as a breeding ground for Sanbenito sympathies, but Nathan is an exception—he despises them and sics his followers or the Censors on anyone who shows sympathy to bloodsuckers.

## Sister Astrid Hane

All Astrid remembers from the day her brother was murdered is the sharp stink of blood and a huge, horrible wolf-thing on two hind legs, tearing a hole in the side of the car. Afterward, everyone claimed they were just in a car accident. She spent her younger days trying to sort through it in psychotherapy but found more comfort at Bible study, where she found her fellow churchgoers less skeptical of what she saw. After attending nursing school at a Catholic college, Astrid joined the Sisterhood of St. Claire and found immense relief in the idea that her brother's killer was sick instead of just evil.

Astrid suspects her mentor, Sister Bernadine, harbors Sanbenito tendencies, but is trepidatious about disclosing her own. As a member of the Sisterhood of St. Claire, she's sworn off direct involvement in violence. She believes she has a duty to all of God's creatures and gives medical assistance to anyone who asks for it.



Astrid dutifully records every instance of a potentially supernatural injury for Church databases regardless of her relationship to whom she is treating. Censors can access those records, so use her services at your own risk.

**General Difficulty:** 5/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 7, Mental 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Medicine 10,

Investigation 8, Occult 8, Technology 8

**Advantages & Edges:** Global Access, Mentor, Repel the Unnatural

**Notes/Other Traits:** Astrid believes she has a duty to all of God's creatures and offers medical assistance to anyone who asks for it, including to someone she suspects is under satanic influence.

Astrid is suitable as a Contact, Ally, or Mentor. Astrid is happy to treat any injury. Her position in the community as a nurse and access to databases of unusual injuries compiled by the Church means she can give leads on new Quarries or clues on hunting the current one. She is, however, personally sworn off of violence and won't fight back even if attacked. ■

To whatever censor finds this, go right to Hell.

I joined to be a part of something. I was just a kid fuckin' around, loading freight, wasn't even the kinda guy the National Guard would look at, and a church buddy asked if I was still serious about being a part of the military. Said we'd be fighting for God. I went, "Hell yeah," so we joined together.

He's dead.

I made a lot of friends in basic. I know their wives', and kids', names. They're fuckin' dead. Some of their kids are dead because a monster went after them, too. You ever seen a guy's guts hanging out of him because some blankbody got bored and flicked him across a nightclub? You ever have to shoot into a crowd of people because there are blankbodies mixed in with people, and you have to just "trust God" to take the innocent up to heaven?

You higher-ups are all about doing what "we" have to do. Who is "we"? All you do is choose who dies. That's hard on you? My heart fucking breaks for you.

We make this promise to die for God, and yeah, I signed up for this. Joined the Gladius Dei. And then it turns out we're just poked into any suspected bloodsucker's lair to see if we live.

Fuck you, fuck St. Leopold, fuck his mother, and fuck God and his mother too. I'm out. Don't try to find me. You people don't listen, so pray I don't see you coming.

- Matt Childress



## Chapter Seven:

# MISCELLANEOUS ORGS

Not all organizations have a large, outward presenting front. Some orgs operate under the radar of larger, governmental organizations and focus on niches they carve out for themselves. That is not to say they won't cooperate if the contracted terms are favorable. Sometimes it is more beneficial for other groups to be the focus of public or political attention. Other times, a hunting org operates with a specific mission under a larger umbrella org. There are plenty of ways to stake a vampire or skin a werewolf. Sometimes an org can even use a rival (or even partner) as a shield of plausible deniability should there be any backlash.

The following organizations may support the larger and more mainline organizations showcased in *Hunter: The Reckoning*. They also provide potential backstory ties for apostate characters. A young, idealistic vigilante becomes disillusioned after realizing their mission differs from their organization's. Widespread corruption or complacency when dealing with unnatural phenomena drives employees to take matters into their own hands. Regardless of why or when a Hunter left, these orgs may consider the players' characters apostates or may simply serve as new rivals for any *Hunter* chronicle.

As for Storytellers, these additional organizations can be utilized to bring further tension into the chronicle's stories. Some questions to keep in mind when determining how best to introduce them into play:

- How do these additional orgs interact with other groups? Are they friendly, neutral, or antagonistic?
- Do they have any open bounties on their former members, perhaps members of the Hunters' cell, and what sort of complications can that bring into a story to drive it forward?
- Are there any goals or current missions that other organizations may be able to assist with?

The possibilities are limitless, and Storytellers are encouraged to play upon the fears and paranoia of the cell. The intra-personal and intra-cell potential for conflict is enhanced when Relationship-Map connections and other Storyteller characters from a player's character's pasts come back into play. Take the time to dig deep into the Hunters' backgrounds to build a richer chronicle setting for them to play in. Involving your players in this manner of chronicle-building may enhance their engagement and raise the stakes for their characters.

# Delphic Investments

## Corporate Org

No one wants to admit it, but Delphic Investments will be the first to tell you that money makes the world go round. It's also the root of all perceived evil in the world, but really, who cares about that when you have other pressing matters transpiring in the world? Global warming, violent sectarian uprisings, and a growing apathy within governing bodies that are proving to be increasingly useless by the day. All of it serves the purpose of keeping those same governing bodies from looking too deeply into Delphic Investments' operations—or their highly private clientele.

Founded by college dropouts Chase Nixon and Jacob Anderson just in time to avoid the stock market crash in 1987, the Chicago-based Delphic Investments

managed to navigate the uncertainty of a global recession. By the time the mid-90s hit, they were outperforming legacy firms and raking it in. What they never disclosed to their clients, which included entities like the SAD and the IAO, was that Nixon and Anderson are clairvoyant—able to predict market movement outcomes while playing it off as sheer, uncanny luck. They once joked that they had no clue if there were werewolves on Wall Street, but there certainly were fortune-tellers making a killing.

But things change, and in recent years Delphic Investments has hunkered down on their big money moves, preferring to develop a portfolio that supports their operations, but they are by no means any less aggressive than they had been in their prime. Instead, they have chosen to play a dangerous game: they manage the wealth of long-in-the-tooth vampires seeking to grow their influence in mortal affairs, while at the same time they offer supplemental funding via low-rate loans to organizations seeking to destroy those very same vampires. If their contracts involve a very large fee for handling accounts through probate, well that isn't that odd, right?

Managing Delphi accounts is a balancing act. Only the strongest-willed mediums can stomach it if they can meet the firm's exacting standards. Accounts must be profitable, but not to the extent they arouse suspicion. Delphic agents also maneuver their clients into giving up control of their assets. When a client dies, their estates are left to the company directly, or to shell companies owned by the firm. Delphic Investments fires anyone failing to meet their standards. All Delphic agents have already signed an iron-clad NDA. Those who leave the company often cannot recall details of their time there. Delphic Investments doesn't relish having corporate secrets spread about.

## Key Personnel

- **Chase Nixon**, Founder and President of Delphic Investments, largely retired from public life but still exercises primary control over the org.
- **Jacob Anderson**, Co-Founder and Chief Financial Officer who is rumored to be a clairvoyant and able to predict the ebb and flow of the stock market with eerie precision, leading to rumors of insider trading

- **Caitriona Bellamy**, Public Relations guru and the front-line face of Delphic Investments whenever they appear in the news
- **Virgil Maxwell**, Wharton Business School graduate and rising star within the org, bringing with him an influx of new capital investment funds which helped fuel Delphic Investment's expansion efforts

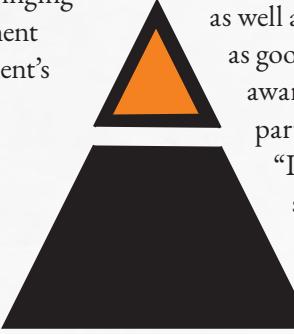
## *Operation*

Legacy investment firms always like to show off their wealth — after all, if they could achieve such opulent surroundings, why can't you? Unlike their Wall Street brethren, Delphic Investments has operated out of the same former tenement building on Chicago's south side, a nod to their humble beginnings and their self-described status as "underdogs" determined to make their beloved hometown a major player in the financial world. That isn't to say that they don't have satellite offices in New York, London, Shanghai, and Tokyo, it's just that they are deep down loyal south-siders.

The recruiting portion of the group uses their precognitive abilities to find others with similar traits who would be able to use their abilities to grow the organization. Those who would join willingly are allowed to do so. Those who would not, however, are targeted by information gathering operations that would result in them being pressed into service for the org — either for one job or turned into all but slaves for the investment group. Those people are paid well for their service, though into accounts managed by Delphic Investments, yet another level of control.

When dealing with the money of literal monsters, Delphic Investments turns to crime. Agents launder such funds gained through human trafficking to vampires or new and terrible narcotics created by sorcerers. While mostly dealing in financial crimes, Delphic Investments occasionally dabbles in information brokering as well. Anything that keeps a target off their backs. These functions also give them leverage over clients whose cost-benefit analysis becomes unbalanced. At that point,

Delphic Investments may use its considerable funds to outsource the client's demise.



By and large, Delphic Investments doesn't discriminate in its client base, especially as it pertains to the supernatural. A leech's money spends just as well as a werewolf's, and a mortal's is equally as good. Not everyone within the company is aware of that fact, but those that do know are part of a special division referred to only as "Investment Specialists" and are bound by strict operational procedures to protect themselves, the client, and the company's reputation. Handpicked by Nixon or Anderson on account of their unique talents, usually of a clairvoyant persuasion, these specialists operate under the strictest of confidence. After all, who is better at dealing with monsters than someone with preternatural abilities of their own?

Only those cleared to deal with unnatural creatures are even aware of that side of the business, and anyone who isn't that learns, but isn't cleared quickly loses their memory and employment. Those who purposefully spill the beans aren't just fired and have their memories wiped, they are utterly burned. False memories are made to replace the real ones, and their lives are ruined by accusations that not even they can wholeheartedly dispute. Worst of all, that still doesn't preclude the investment group from paying to have you killed once they've ruined your reputation.

## *Complications*

It is safe to say that hunting doesn't fall under Delphic Investments' main objective — nor have they ever said it was. Their primary and utmost concern is simply to make as much money as humanly possible for both them and their clients, but mostly themselves. It pays to be part of one of the largest investment firms in the world with actual psychics and clairvoyants on the payroll, and most involved in Delphic are more than happy to turn a blind eye to some of its less than legal dealings. They use these abilities to seek out new investment opportunities, be that killing vampires and taking over their illicit enterprises or finding out

incriminating information to press a sorcerer into working for them.

Most regular employees and even clairvoyant specialists don't realize what goes on beneath the surface. When someone leaves the firm, regardless of the reason, they are largely met with disdain. Not everyone is cut out for the stress of high-powered investment banking. Few give former coworkers a second thought. Memory, however, is such a fickle thing. Human Resources submits quarterly reports to Bellamy and Nixon to keep them abreast of potential employment issues. And the exit interviews often leave employees with a headache that lasts for days.

Of course, should an apostate become a wrench in the works, there is nothing that Delphic Investments does not do to protect themselves and their investments. The thing about being able to both see the future and play around with memory is that evidence of all manners of crimes can come to light, both genuine and manufactured. To that end, what even is fabricated evidence if everyone believes that it is true? Capital and its growth is the only thing that matters to Delphic Investments. It doesn't matter where it comes from or what they have to do to keep it.

## In Stories: Interactions with Hunters

The following are some plot hooks for you to use in your stories involving Delphic Investments.

### INSIDER TRADING

Requested by "concerned investors" to investigate some of Delphic Investments' under-the-table transactions. The Hunters quickly find themselves caught in the crossfire — or perhaps purposefully targeted by those wishing to get rid of pesky Hunters — of opposing factions of vampires who were using Delphic's managed hedge funds to launder their own dirty money, to say nothing of the firm's own hired security firm patrolling the premises. If the cell is interested, they may find a new method of bankrolling their own operations and gain access to Delphic insight on potential Quarries.

### RUG PULL

A new, untraceable, and decentralized currency has begun to shake the foundations of the finance world and has everyone clamoring to get in on the ground floor. Based on an anonymous tip from what is believed to be a current (or soon to be former) Delphic Investment employee, the Hunters are given access to an investor's wallet —as well as their identity — allowing access to all their transaction information, which isn't nearly as anonymous as Delphic Investments has led the public to believe. The Hunters can take the transaction information and do with it as they will, perhaps even causing a data breach, outing the investor's identity, and diminishing Delphic's reputation (again).

### OCCUPY DELPHI

A downturn in the stock market and general financial upheaval has made Delphic Investments a target of idealistic youth who see Delphic as everything wrong with modern day corporate finance, culminating in a protest encamping right outside of their Chicago headquarters. Rather than send in their own security firm or ask for assistance from the Chicago Police Department, Delphic Investments has opted to hire the cell to infiltrate the camp and weed out any dissidents — namely, thralls to any leeches. Any leads the Hunters gain is considered a fair payment, in addition to a handsome lump sum to use towards future operations.

## The Gates of Alexander

### Academic Org

The Gates of Alexander is an old org that operates throughout the Middle East and North Africa, but has agents throughout the world. The precise date of the original founding has been lost, but the Gates claims they originated with Alexander the Great himself, in the Great Library where the org is still headquartered to this day. Alexander's edict was plain — seek out the

supernatural and understand it so that it may be destroyed. To this end, unlike orgs such as the Arcanum, the Gates of Alexander must be forever open to all who wish to pass through them and learn.

To most, the Gates is a fringe group, openly studying pseudoscience and cryptozoology. Very few members believe their

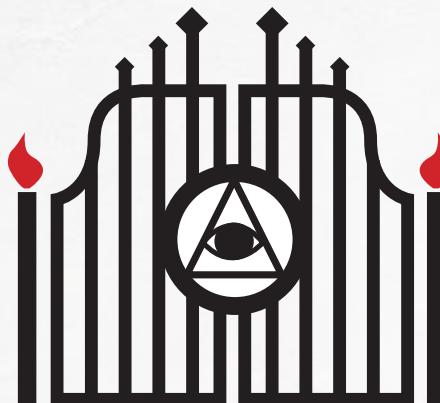
organization has existed as long as it claims. Because it lacks the elitism of other academic brotherhoods and suffers from no small amount of racism due to its headquarters' location outside of the western world, the Gates of Alexander has none of the prestige of other academic groups.

Because of its reputation, or lack thereof, the Gates has operated unnoticed by much of the world for centuries and acts as a resource for hire, loaning out its members to other orgs when that org's knowledge or expertise isn't enough. In return, the Gates is paid handsomely, and its operatives are awarded the first choice of materials recovered from the target.

Agents of the Gates are spread throughout the world. Any place of learning conquered by Alexander had a chapter of the Gates established there. Since then, agents have followed their founder's idea of spreading across the world. Gatehouses, as they are called, can be found from the Ivy League to community colleges. Anywhere that information is gathered and disseminated, the Gates is there.

While its price is high, its usual allies of convenience pay it willingly. The Gates believes itself to possess one of the largest repositories of occult and esoteric lore in the world, and with that burden comes the need to secure and develop it. Most orgs simply aren't equipped to deal with that and prefer to treat the Gates as a library-for-hire rather than a competitor.

The Gates recruits promising scholars from the academic world, sending its members all over the globe under the guise of the Caspian Program — a series of research grants and fellowships for students and faculty. Awarding these funds to rising star researchers encourages them to add to the Gates' knowledge base. Gatehouses are pushed to discover more about



vampires, werewolves, and other monsters. Members hunt unnatural creatures. They capture them, interrogate them, and dissect them to learn their secrets. Once they're in, the Gates keep records of everything everyone has done for or with them. Should anyone get cold feet or want to leave the order, however, the org can review its records for blackmail to keep former members silent or find their new employers.

Many within the academic world are unaware of the Gates' existence, and the vast majority of those who know of it believe it to be a distraction at best. The org's known interest in cryptids, fairy tales, and myths is seen as harmless, and many of its members are open about their membership if asked.

For those in the know, however, the Gates is a force to be reckoned with. It maintains a presence in all the greatest European universities, creates chapterhouses for its members, and maintains vast hidden archives of monster lore.

## Key Personnel

- **Fawzia Badr**, Gatekeeper. Although she prefers the title Director, Fawzia is the head of the Gates and has led it for nearly three decades.
- **Malik Roth**, Keeper of Keys. Malik holds the keys to every chapterhouse and archive and is second only to Fawzia in the Gates' organizational structure.
- **Hélène Allard**, one of the Gates' most seasoned operatives. She lives in Paris but is more likely to be in the field than her office.
- **Demetrios Sarlo**, Keeper of Names. They are responsible for recruiting operatives and managing the Gates' inter-org relationships. They have few rivals within the org.

## Operation

Hidden in many major cities, usually within walking distance of the city's university, is a Gates of Alexander Gatehouse. These buildings are typically old, unassuming, and very well appointed. Each operative is assigned to a Gatehouse on their initiation into the org, and they are given leave to use their resources as they see fit.

Most Gatehouses are provided with limited funds, transportation, a small list of anonymous safe houses, remote access to some of the Gates' archives, and a key to the local archives. All of the org's knowledge is backed up on the servers both of the main Gatehouse in Alexandria as well as the central Gatehouse in each country—the Gates never forgot the way the Great Library burnt, taking centuries of research and information. All members always have access to the full breadth of the Gates' library now, from any Gatehouse around the world.

Members who show promise and initiative are trained as operatives. They are given basic training in hand-to-hand combat, firearms, and field medicine—all in service of tracking down, capturing, and detaining monsters. They are often called in to help other orgs interrogate, experiment on, and dissect monsters. On top of the high fee they charge for this service, they also demand copies of all the data they uncover.

Anyone with an interest in or knowledge of the unnatural and academia knows about the Gates of Alexander. However, most people think they're all cranks, fools, or con artists trying to get one over on someone with more money in an endowment fund than they do sense.

When contacted by another org, provided it agrees to the payment terms, the Gates considers the needs of the request and dispatch either a single operative (for small jobs involving consultations and data processing) or a team (for the acquisition of data and artifacts).

Buried beneath layers of mystery are the org's Torch Bearers. These operatives watch for those whose faith in the mission waivers or who may get wooed by membership in one of the more reputable orgs. These specialists are trained with the fate of the old Library in mind. They burn those they find wanting, ensuring that they are completely discredited, and, if push comes to shove, disposed of like any of their test subjects.

## Complications

The Gates' main problem is its focus. They want to understand the unnatural, not just destroy it wherever they find it. More operatives are lost on a yearly basis trying to take a vampire or werewolf alive for testing than would if they'd just kill the monster outright. Their dyed-in-the-wool operatives never just kill something when they could take it in and figure out what makes the monster tick. There may not be another ghost, sorcerer, or fae creature that the Gates might come across, but there are always new operatives.

Somewhat less detrimental to the org's existence, but still noteworthy, is its recruitment process. Because of its narrow academic focus and its organizational structure, the org largely recruits from less prestigious universities across the globe—which has led to a homogeneity of thought among its members in the past—and each potential member is subjected to an intense background check.

The Gates thinks nothing of learning what it can from other orgs and committing that knowledge to paper, but it requires any potential member to have a completely clean background, unconnected to any org the Gates is aware of. Any member who fails to gather the data they were after—or do so without making a copy for the Gates—is watched closely and, if necessary, targeted by Torch Bearers.

Continuing to college knowledge is what most of the Gates' problems boil down to. It believes that there is always something more to learn, some new secret that might be the Achilles' heel of the monsters that hunt humanity. In its endless search for this information, the Gates has fed some of the world's best and brightest to the meat grinder and have for over 2000 years. The Gates will not stop. Even if it discovers every last secret about every monster that haunts the world, it will nevertheless believe there is still more and spill blood to find it.

When it does work with Hunter cells, the Gates often uses them as bait, or as an asset to assist in a hunt. Of course, Hunters are rarely fools and know this to be the case. But what they risk in being the muscle, they gain in an unrivaled cache of information from the Gates of Alexander.

All that being said, if the Hunters are efficient and happily allow the Gates to dispose of their Quarries, it can be the start of a rather enlightening experience.

## In Stories: Interactions with Hunters

The following are some plot hooks you can use in stories featuring the Gates of Alexander.

### BIG BROTHER

Because of its propensity for gathering intelligence on the resources of its nominal allies, the Gates knows more than it should about every past ally. In most cases, it does nothing with this knowledge, filing it away as incidental, but more than one cell has been approached by an operative referencing a job it undertook months, or years ago.

Sometimes, in exchange for a the right payment, it makes this information available to other orgs.

### YOU SCRATCH MY BACK

While it wants to control the flow of knowledge as much as it can, the Gates knows that no transactional relationship is entirely one-sided and uses any resources it has to uncover new knowledge. Often, this involves contacting a Hunter cell and pointing it in the right direction, but sometimes a Gates agent shares a limited pool of knowledge, promising something greater in the future, if the cell proves its worth.

If the players' characters push the matter or realize the job is more dangerous than advertised, the Gates agent may protest but eventually provides greater, more relevant knowledge.

### DIRECT RIVALS

The players' characters, during their war on the things that go bump in the night, accrue a wealth of knowledge that may eventually catch the Gates' attention. Depending on its reputation, the cell may find itself the target of a team of operatives, may be offered financial compensation for its knowledge, or may even be invited to work alongside the Gates.

Such offers are a smokescreen, and the Gates monitors the cell carefully, infiltrating its sanctuary

as soon as possible to steal, copy, or otherwise claim whatever is stored within.

# Project Twilight

### Governmental Org

Tin-foil hat aficionados love to throw around terms like “deep state” when it comes to conspiracy theories in the United States government, lending credence to the belief that there is a singular thread of power that somehow has woven its way through every part of the government. Regular, every day Americans don’t believe a shred of that quackery, but they should, as there is a secret organization operating within almost every branch of the government at the federal level known as “Project Twilight.” The FBI, the NSA, the CIA, even the CDC—Project Twilight operatives have infiltrated them all.

Yet it doesn’t stop there. While Americans concern themselves only with what is going on locally, Project Twilight has since gone global—showing an international effort to uncover and document the secrets and truths of humanity’s greatest threats: vampires, werewolves, and anything else that isn’t 100%, grade-A, pure human that they haven’t uncovered yet. Britain’s MI-6, France’s Directorate-General for External Security (DGSE), China’s State Security Ministry, even tiny Liechtenstein’s government plays host to an operative or two. They aren’t as numerous as say the IAO or Special Affairs Division,



with which they are sometimes conflated, but they are nonetheless effective at collaborative networking. Sharing new discoveries about how to manage their supernatural enemies, and ensuring that information is in the hands of those who can do the most about it.

Call them bigots all day because they dislike supernatural beings, Project Twilight doesn't care. Their goal isn't to be liked by the general public. Most people don't have the faintest inkling that Project Twilight even exists, though some tin-foil hat aficionados are getting closer to realizing they do. The goal is to ensure that the world's institutions of power remain uncorrupted by these creatures. This is a difficult task, considering that some vampires are older than most world governments and their power bases are entrenched.

## Key Personnel

- **Retired CIA Special Agent Vanessa Pratt,**  
Former field agent for Project Twilight,  
independent contractor
- **Robert Danforth,** FBI Liaison for Project  
Twilight
- **Marsha Crowe,** East Coast Director of Project  
Twilight
- **Anouk Mourne,** Undercover Interpol agent  
stationed in Utrecht, Netherlands

## Operation

An intelligence org at its heart, Project Twilight's primary goal is to ensure that humanity has some manner of leverage over the monsters whose influence has grown exponentially with the advent of instant communication via the Internet. Though it could be surmised that its central organizing body is stationed at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., the decentralized nature of Project Twilight means that there is no one location where they can be struck down in one fell swoop. It has been likened to in the past to the Hydra: you can cut off one head, but more appear to replace it. There are more inactive than active agents in the field at the moment, and it works to their advantage because even the inactive agents

still operate in a lesser capacity, providing intel and regular updates from their sphere of influence.

At any given time, there are roughly 700 active Project Twilight agents, though its total membership is believed to be 10 or even 100 times greater. The large number of members allows agents to avoid attracting too much attention. They can keep their allegiances on the down-low while working an angle where they are dispatched. If an agent's true loyalties become suspected, the agent is recalled from the field with a suitable excuse by their on-paper employer. The agency replaces them with a fresh asset who continues the work on behalf of Project Twilight.

When it comes to recruitment, governmental employees top the list. Former SAD agents frustrated with the SAD's lack of follow-through in exterminating vampires find themselves at home within Project Twilight. Project Twilight moves much quicker than the SAD and targets more than just blankbodies. While eliminating unnatural creatures isn't its primary goal, many agents relish being present in an interrogation chamber with one of these creatures. The opportunity to question unnatural creatures, possibly even torturing them, is a perk rather than a drawback. Former military personnel, disillusioned political analysts, and officers of the Foreign Service all find purpose in Project Twilight. It allows them to continue to serve their country in a way that fulfills a deeply held goal.

## Complications

The nature of Project Twilight means there is often some manner of overlap between operatives and their stated objectives. Whether those objectives align or run contradictory to each other, well, that depends on the individual agent's interpretation and willingness to work as a team — or if they have any history with one another that might affect their judgment. Generally, Project Twilight tries to avoid situations like these, but with active agents shifting regularly and the ever-changing global political landscape they are navigating at any given time, it would take someone with clairvoyant abilities to avoid every messy outcome.

Collaboration is expected from agents, but the ability to do so is increasingly rare. Agents submit

reports via coordinated dead drops at embassies, private residences, and even public establishments. At times, these locations have been compromised. Even technology has become unreliable. Increasing cyber-attacks and security concerns elevate paranoia to new heights. If the run-of-the-mill paranoia commonly found in espionage wasn't enough, Project Twilight deals with threats they barely comprehend as well. The unnatural enemy seeks to undermine everything the U.S. stands for, and they have the same techniques and technology alongside their supernatural abilities.

Then there is, of course, the matter of organizational allegiance and pride. Agents of the CIA and FBI who are active in Project Twilight have a longstanding rivalry and are reluctant to share dossiers even when it would directly benefit Twilight's goals. This has proven to be a pressure point because the whole purpose of the Project is to share and trade information with their parent agencies to further the goal of understanding an ageless enemy that threatens all of them. Yet at the same time, this level of operational security between all the varying divisions and factions within Project Twilight has assisted in keeping the right information in the right hands.

## In Stories: Interactions with Hunters

The following are plot hooks that you can include in stories about Project Twilight.

### TAKEN

The cell received a tip on a high value target that would give them an advantage in negotiations, allowing them to enact an operation to kidnap their Quarry and take them to a secure location for further questioning. Except the tip wasn't forthcoming with the exact relationship between the Quarry and the informant whom they are negotiating with — their 18-year-old child. With the scope of the operation now blown out of proportion and made complicated by a lack of information, the cell must determine the best course of action or risk blowing their cover and the whole mission.

### SECRET AGENT MAN

An agent of Project Twilight in a fit of conscience, or perhaps belief in a higher calling than keeping secrets and running clandestine operations, has gone rogue — and off the grid. A bounty has been placed on them, and the cell has decided to take up the job. The question is ultimately what will the cell do with this former agent who has information that could greatly benefit the cell — return them to their handlers for a financial reward, reap the benefits of the knowledge they have run away with, or both?

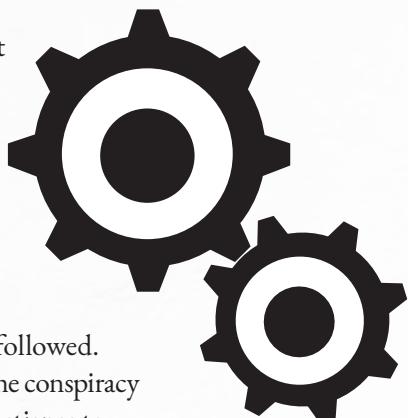
### THE MOURNE IDENTITY

Anouk Mourne is perhaps Project Twilight's greatest asset in the field, able to seamlessly disappear and ingratiate herself with underground entities. However, reports have come through that someone—or *something*—has taken a liking to Anouk's face and has decided to use her likeness to publicly smear this agent's work and expose Project Twilight's movements in Europe. The cell is tasked with hunting down this false Anouk before they reveal any sensitive information that could compromise the real agent.

# The Real Cognistas

### Vigilante Org

When Agent Cog posted the first pages of his manifesto on the internet, few paid attention to his claims of face-stealing vampiric infiltrators and moon aliens, passing him off as another conspiracy theorist yelling into the void. For those who were receptive to his message, however, the truth of his words was undeniable and the breadcrumbs leading to hidden corners of the dark web were ferreted out and followed.



There, the true scale of the conspiracy waited for anyone with the patience to find it. Immortal blood-sucking vampires, blood sorcery, moon aliens, all of it explained—in the minds

of those willing to listen—as to why the government was so apathetic to their needs but extremely invested in authoritarianism and external affairs.

Throw in the occasional hunt that goes public as drones swarm a city block cordoned off by government forces dressed in black or the odd, unexplained, and gruesome death in a public place and you have a recipe for true and unwavering belief.

The secrets revealed by Cog to his Cognistas describe a world on the edge of breakdown, and their very nature leads many to believe that he is highly placed within the American government.

Most of these “secrets” are baseless speculation without a shred of proof, but here and there are concrete facts that those in the know can verify. Broad notions of various vampiric bloodlines, for example, or the real purpose behind the mysterious SAD of the FBI have revealed that Cog knows some truths, however buried in the manifesto they are.

The hunt for these truths has brought the Real Cognistas together. By and large, they pass off Cog’s writings, and the other, more main-stream Cognista’s slavish search for them, as hokum, nonsense to ignore in the never-ending war against vampires. Few believe in the purported moon alien allies the U.S. government can call upon, and fewer still are bothered about uncovering Cog’s identity, because all have had some encounter with vampires that has left them changed.

Cognistas hunt for Cog, his identity, and his remaining manifesto pages. The Real Cognistas simply hunt.

## Key Personnel

- **Howell “Cyph3r” Freemont** was the first of the Real Cognistas to reach out to others he believed saw the material truth within the manifesto.
- **Viky “StakeMaiden” Baumer** maintains the Real Cognistas dark web message board, a duty she inherited when its founder disappeared, and monitors Cognista message boards.
- **Raj “Sunburst” Gupta** often reaches Cog’s geocache drops before other Cognistas. He’s been known to leave things behind to mess with them.

- **Frances “UltraViole\_n\_t” Wicke** coordinates Real Cognista cadres. They know, roughly, how many members the org has, their experience, and where they can be found.

## Operation

The Real Cognistas are an org in the loosest possible definition of the word. They are unified by a common desire to end the vampiric threat that plagues the world. All of them have had some contact with bloodsuckers, and they all have a mild derision for the rest of the Cognistas.

Most of the Real Cognistas know how ludicrous Cog’s claims are and distance themselves from the conspiracy cult that has grown up around him, but a few pay attention to his ramblings on the off-chance that they learn something new to help them fight the dark creatures that haunt the night.

Due to their experiences, knowledge, self-awareness, and beliefs, the Real Cognistas have cast themselves as the noble outsiders struggling to hold back the forces of darkness—which many believe to include the government—and eschew the use of public message boards or forums. Instead, they rely on dark web message boards, dead drops, and burner phones to communicate, and a countrywide organization of Hunter cells has somehow formed amidst this atmosphere of paranoia.

All the Real Cognistas hide behind anonymous screen names, and many prefer to use masks—or other methods of hiding their face—when on the Hunt. They know the people of their community wouldn’t react well if they learned their neighbor hunted monsters in the night and was, to their unenlightened mind, a serial killer. Due to their insularity, cadres become close knit very quickly, and it isn’t uncommon to find cadres sharing fringe beliefs.

The org’s members come from all walks of life, which gives it a much wider range of experience and approaches to draw upon than more official orgs. Sure, a homemaker from Florida may not have special forces training or high-tech detection gear, but they know how to make a crime scene disappear entirely and in half the time a cleanup unit would take.

Their variety gives them strength, and they can

react quickly to the slightest hint of monstrous activity. While they initially focused on vampires, the org's flexibility has seen them hunt other nightmares with, more or less, equal efficiency, and their message boards are full of anecdotal stories demonstrating the finer points of monster killing.

Nothing has yet drawn the org to act *en masse*, but each member stands ready to receive that call and each is fully prepared to die on the hunt.

## Complications

Being on the outskirts of society, the Real Cognistas have no allies to call upon. They view the Cognistas as deluded extremists, the government as almost certainly in league with vampires, and anyone else claiming to be a monster hunter without proof as a liar. Self-reliance is a skill that they place great importance on because they must.

Each cadre is, functionally, cut off from the org and can call upon few resources. Cadres in larger cities may band together from time to time, or share their armories, but rural cadres are often the only hunters they know about, or trust, for miles.

Unwilling to draw attention to themselves, Real Cognistas become experts in improvised explosives and survival techniques, and most put in hours at the local range that would shame a marksman. Unfortunately, all the prep in the world won't save you when a revenant is sprinting towards you faster than your eyes can follow, and those Real Cognistas who survive their first few Hunts are the perfect combination of lucky and skilled.

They share what they know freely. Many run private workshops for their cadre, ensuring that if they fall in battle their skills and knowledge get passed on. On those rare instances that a Real Cognista member has drawn the attention of law enforcement, their knowledge and equipment have labeled them as a domestic terror threat, but none have betrayed their org. Yet.

With no allies or external resources to call upon, all the Real Cognistas have is each other, and their commitment to their cause has created a zealousness that frequently leads to extreme risk taking. More than one cadre has been wiped out pursuing a

monster that clearly outmatched them or interfering with a governmental op. An unaware corporate org does occasionally hire a member for their skills, but said member often burns bridges by stealing whatever they can to better provision their cadre.

All of which is to say that the Real Cognistas are short-term thinkers. They must be by necessity: they lack the resources needed in the long run.

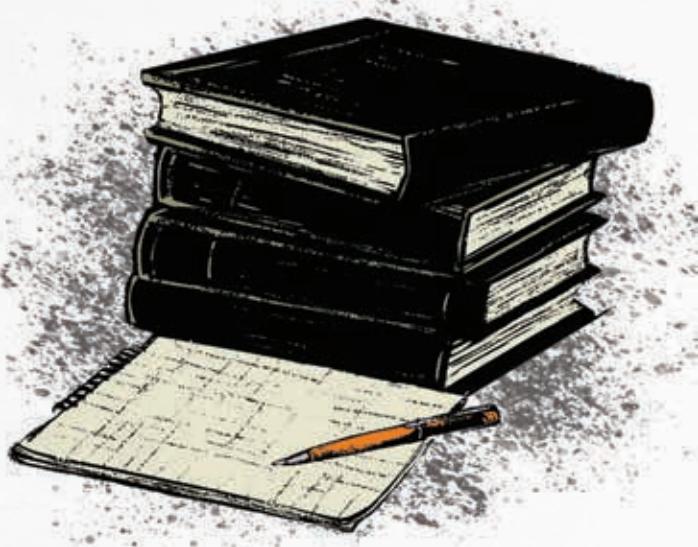
## In Stories: Interactions with Hunters

The following are plot hooks that can be used in stories featuring the Real Cognistas.

### GATEKEEPERS

The cell has been remarkably successful hunting vampires in its local community and has caught the eye of a nearby Real Cognistas cadre. The Real Cognistas believe the cell could be useful allies and begin laying clues and breadcrumbs around for it to find and follow.

The trail points to an abandoned warehouse where a single member of the Real Cognistas meets with the cell and reveals the "truth" of the world, including the members of local government with vampiric ties. Should the cell deride their beliefs, the Real Cognistas sever all contact.



## DANGEROUS ALLIES

A new hunter team has been active within the characters' hunting grounds. It's been striking without hesitation, flushed out several previously unknown creatures and has even begun leaving a calling card: a cog with a broken tooth.

The calling card catches the attention of local law enforcement and the Real Cognistas ask the cell for sanctuary until they can get out of town. They aren't shy about their beliefs but maintain that they're being set up. Should the cell investigate, the Real Cognistas prove to be rash allies who think little of charging headfirst into any situation.

## THE HIDDEN THREAT

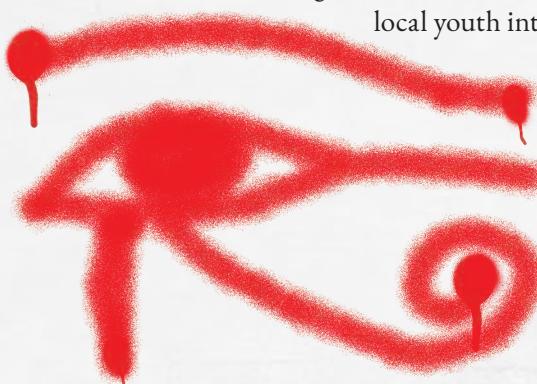
The cell has recently begun finding strange USB geocaches and hidden messages scattered around their hunting grounds. What they've learned so far is nonsense about shadow governments led by vampires, moon aliens, and extraterrestrial communication, but the cell has been asking the wrong people about it.

Unknown to them, a Real Cognistas cadre is in the area and hunting for the thieves who keep intercepting Cog's messages. Sure, it's a ridiculous fantasy for the most part, but there may be useful information buried deep within the USB drives and no one is going to stop them from getting their hands on it.

# Red Eyes Community Watch

### Vigilante Org

No one gave a second thought, especially law enforcement, when the bodies of the downtrodden were found dumped in back alleys. It's just another John or Jane Doe that they didn't want to have to file the paperwork on, getting hauled away to the county morgue on the taxpayer dime. Even when



there was an outcry within the community, the media largely ignored it. After all: the victims were the dregs of society, the unhoused, the mentally ill, or the undocumented. Easy pickings for the vampires and suitable scapegoats for the werewolves thinking they were morally superior by taking out the trash.

After years of being pegged as the source of all the city's ills, while being ignored when their lives were literally being endangered by the actual perpetrators lurking in the shadows, the collective voice of the oppressed said "no more." From that point onward, they decided to stop being victims of a system that was never designed to help them. Thus, the Red Eyes Community Watch was born—entirely grassroots and inspired by the idea of Brazilian favela communities and the autonomous zones that popped up across the world during anti-police protests. The Red Eyes banded together to patrol their encampments and take the fight back to the monsters who thought they could hunt them with impunity because no one cared.

If it isn't law enforcement tearing down their encampments, it's the forces of evil running through their territory. Knowing full well that the likes of the SAD or the Arcanum would never come to their aid, they proclaimed their motto: *no one will help us but us*. Wherever they can, they hunt and take down whatever is threatening people that the powers that be don't seem to give a shit about. Vampire gang turning the local youth into thralls, ghost haunting

the recreation center, a mage selling mind and reality altering drugs? If no one else will come to the aid of these people, Red Eyes will. Of course, without the money and resources of the larger, more official orgs, Red

Eyes turned to more illicit activity. Peddling vampire blood to uptown thralls after kidnapping their masters, moving black market artifacts, or even more mundane crimes such as gun running, whatever it takes to make sure the streets stay safe for the most disenfranchised.

# Key Personnel

- **Yuisa Carrillo**, Founder, organizer of the New York Chapter
- **Gonzalo “Gee” Herrera**, Host of the Radio Red Eyes Podcast, community watchdog and herald
- **Matika Smalljon**, Advocate, organizer of the Vancouver-based Salish Freestate Chapter
- **Xochitl “Xo” Perez**, Guardian of the Piedras Negras Crossing Chapter, militant anti-Border Patrol

## Operation

There is no real centralized organization of the Red Eyes Community Watch (RECW). Each chapter is a grassroots organized effort in indigent or underserved communities that are overlooked by their local authorities in the face of threats that no one wants to acknowledge. But despite this, it ends up working in the Red Eyes' favor—the police stay off their backs a little more, and they can take care of their own community. The politicians hate to admit it, but with Red Eyes taking care of these neighborhoods, they can commit even fewer resources to them. Thus, in the vacuum left behind by law enforcement, both monsters and RECW are free to wage their war against each other with no rules of engagement but one: don't bring down the attention of the powers that be. If they do, law enforcement, the military, spooks, or someone else brings down enough heat to wipe both sides off the face of the earth.

There are those who are sympathetic to the plight of the Red Eyes, and they form the primary base of what can be called their fundraising arm. Utilizing civil unrest and social media to boost their profile, the Red Eyes have become something akin to folk heroes to the youth who find themselves incredibly disenchanted with the current direction of society. Those yearning to make a change are quickly recruited into the Red Eye's "street team" as it were and are quickly identifiable by the stylized pin of a blood-shot eye. They work with other community organizations to help feed, clothe,



and otherwise protect those who have fallen through the cracks. And through that they build stronger connections—and plausible alibi's for when the authorities inevitably come to question them about some manner of disturbance.

There aren't really roles in any sort of official capacity with the Red Eyes, but those who have designated themselves as Advocates tend to

be the public-facing, boots-on-the-ground organizers directing mutual aid efforts and handling donations while self-proclaimed

Guardians operate like a modern guerrilla militia. Without the

Guardians, the encampments would be fertile ground for leeches and other ne'er-do-wells willing to prey on those most overlooked by society.

## Complications

When a new community bands together under the banner of the Red Eyes, they agree to its Universal Charter of Mutual Aid and Defense, which outlines the core tenants its membership and charter holders are to uphold, as well as detailing the expectations of the "Red Eyes Look Alive" action call. Each chapter of the Red Eyes Community Watch is an independent entity in a mutually interdependent organization, meaning that harm done to one of its communities is harm done to all of them. When an action call is made, all chartered communities in a reasonable radius are expected to come to the aid of the community which made the call—this includes sending their own militant Guardians, weaponry, and aid supplies to bolster their front lines.

For smaller, less developed chapters within the Red Eyes, this has proven to be a problem that leaves them openly vulnerable and has been responsible for entire encampments being swarmed by cops, vampires, or even vampire-thrall cops, barely leaving enough behind for the chapter to remain. Survivors, if there are any, are usually too traumatized and go straight to ground, taking with them any resources that remain to survive and cursing the Red Eyes all the way down.

Complaints about inequitable distribution of aid and resources from the central operating fund are rampant, and the growing sentiment of certain individuals using



the Red Eyes to elevate their social media profile has begun to sow distrust network-wide. Not everyone who is part of Red Eyes Community Watch comes from a less fortunate background; anyone can be a member if they believe in the tenets of the Charter and support their local communities. This has come to be a sticking point—allowing generous philanthropists into their ranks to help fill the coffers when they are merely engaging in disaster tourism. It's easy when they can go home to their bodyguards and penthouses instead of sleeping with a sharpened stick in hand.

## In Stories: Interactions with Hunters

The following are plot hooks that you can utilize in stories about the Red Eyes Community Watch.

### NOT ON MY BLOCK

Recently a new designer drug has hit the streets and members of the nearby Red Eyes Community Watch

have seen it infiltrate their community. This drug, called *glimmer*, sends its user into an ecstatic high characterized by auditory and visual hallucinations that make them extremely open to suggestions—and a prime target for vampires who can manipulate the victims easily. The cell has been tasked with not just cleaning up the streets and destroying any of the Glimmer they find, but taking out the suppliers before it spreads further than their neighborhood.

### IT FELL OFF THE BACK OF A TRUCK

A sudden influx of defensive gear, weaponry, and medical supplies has flooded the mutual aid network the Red Eyes utilize, giving them an edge against that which goes bump in the night. Yet the question of its origin has raised a concern among certain elements within the local community, as “it fell off the back of a truck” could be more trouble than it’s worth. The cell has been requested to investigate and determine whether these supplies are legitimate or if they have pinged on the radar of another organization or worse.

## EYE FOR AN EYE

During an operation, a Hunter in your cell mistook a mortal for a supernatural entity and gravely (if not mortally) wounded them. Turns out, this mortal was a lookout for the Red Eyes Community Watch, and now they have their eyes on you. No matter where the cell goes, they are being stalked by those wearing a Red Eyes patch or pin, and they do not stop until the cell makes things right with the Watch — this could be securing additional supplies, aiding them in taking down a vampire haven, or something else that benefits them but may cause the cell trouble down the line.

# Xtend, Ltd

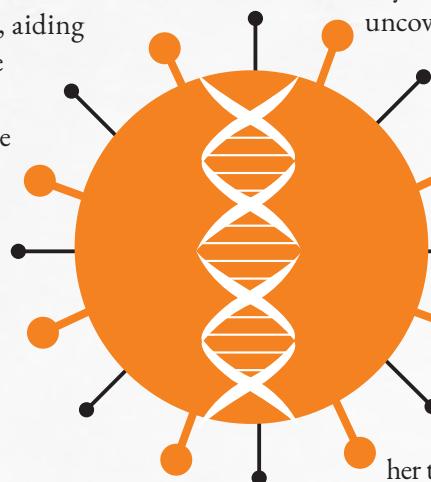
### Corporate Org

Xtend, Ltd is India's eighth-largest telecoms and data firm. It's spread thin throughout South Asia, the Middle East, East Africa, and Oceania, but its vision more than makes up for its diminutive stature on the global tech stage. Outside of India — where it's based in Mumbai — it has three regional headquarters: Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, and Milpitas, California, in the United States.

The brainchild of Satyavan Chopra, Xtend was founded to bring reliable infocom technology, notably the XTD cell network and cloud services, to the world. Satyavan's wife, Saviti, was a key component of his success, with her business acumen and willpower tempering his genius and gentleness.

Having secured a name for itself as a company of good standing, Xtend is — through word-of-mouth promotion among expats and immigrants, and shrewd investments — slowly breaking into more international markets and competing with larger firms in the spheres of cloud data processing and mobile telecoms networks.

Its relatively small size means it is perfectly placed to deploy teams of hunters covertly. Known as the Chopra-wafadar, the existence of these hunters is



unknown to most of Xtend's employees, and they are equipped with the org's best tech.

When Satyavan contracted an unknown illness that left him comatose, Saviti took control of the company, created a medical tech division, and began searching for a cure.

During her search, one of the org's Mumbai executives, Diya Yadav, was discovered to be a vampire. Initially skeptical, Saviti pursued the matter further and uncovered possible links between the executive's actions and her husband's illness.

Taking matters into her own hands, and trusting a handful of employees, she formed an extraction team and captured Diya Yadav. Under intense interrogation and the promise of a conditional release, the vampire revealed the existence of a society of undead predators and a potential cure for Satyavan's illness: blood sorcery.

Saviti immediately began expanding her team — her wafadar — and now actively investigates reports of vampiric behavior and blood craft in her search for a cure. Her influence is, however, restricted by Xtend's reach.

### Key Personnel

- **Saviti Chopra**, director. Driven by a burning passion to restore her husband's health, there are few sacrifices she won't make or risks she won't take.
- **Devesh Sharma**, the head of Xtend's business in California. Devesh coordinates most of the wafadar activity in the U.S. and identifies useful contractors.
- **Namik Sekh**, a weak-blooded vampire. Namik lives in fear of Diya and knows Diya's safety ensures their own. Namik often act as a liaison between Saviti and Diya.
- **Dr. Indrani Vasav**, the head of Xtend's Occult Medical Research team. She leads O.M.R. with the unyielding drive she learned from working alongside Saviti.

## Operation

Xtend, Ltd's ability to function as a hunter org is contingent on its standing in the area of operations. Because of its relatively small size as a corporate entity, it must be strategic with its investment in storefronts and infrastructure, which, in turn, limits how efficiently—and well supported—the wafadar can operate and how quickly they can react.

In India, for example, they can call upon armed backup and expect it to arrive promptly, probably riding in discreet vehicles and equipped with full clean up gear, ready to deal with any problems.

Anywhere in the United States outside of Milpitas, however, the most a team of wafadar can expect is a corporate van big enough to hide a body or two, as well as secure lockboxes for anything retrieved from the target location. Clean up is left entirely to the operatives and, while Xtend might be able to use its expertise to alter video surveillance records, it prefers not to.

In part, the success of the wafadar is down to the fact that very few people know about them. As they are only a fraction of the larger company's workforce, they're able to travel, carry out their jobs, and recover

occult artifacts with none the wiser about their true goals: the recovery of knowledge and items pertaining to vampiric blood.

Thanks to the insider knowledge revealed by Diya Yadav, herself now an unwilling contracted resource, the org has an extensive, and mostly accurate, understanding of vampiric culture. It uses this knowledge, along with insights gained from Saviti Chopra's occult researchers and keywords monitored on Xtend's communication networks, to identify centers of "blood magic" and send covert extraction teams to recover what they can. She prizes anything that promotes healing, of course, but is also interested in blood rituals or artifacts that can be altered to allow a human being to perform or use them.

Should their usual tactic of infiltrating the local occult scene via trust-building, resource sharing, and networking prove successful, the Chopra-wafadar does all they can to pull off a covert abduction or heist once a likely target has been identified. If such a thing proves difficult or impossible—or the local authorities are known to be unreceptive to bribery—no-one is left alive to raise the alarm and nothing is left behind to point towards Xtend as the culprit.



## Complications

While its greatest strength, Xtend's small size is also its greatest weakness. The org cannot call upon the resources of most other established orgs, and the fact that the Chopra-wafadar must keep their activities secret from both the wider world and the board of directors only serves to hinder them more.

Saviti knows that if her vampire hunting activities were brought to the board's attention, she would very likely lose control of the company. She may be a billionaire, but funding every op, research program, or medical development privately would compromise her wafadar or drain her accounts before she could find a cure.

She works tirelessly to keep that side of the company hidden from almost everyone for fear of what might happen if it comes to light.

Additionally, because of the relatively small number of resources available to her, the Chopra-wafadar are a laser-focused force. They are expert vampire hunters—capable of locating, infiltrating, and ransacking vampiric society around the globe—and have created a whole arsenal of discreet surveillance gear and high-tech tools and weapons. But the vast majority isn't formally trained and largely come from Xtend's R&D or HR departments.

When the need calls for it, mainly if Xtend lacks a presence in a particular city, trusted local sales representatives are often pulled into the fold and expected to run the register of their XTD outlet during the day and hunt vampires at night.

This lack of practical experience, when combined with the org's high-level focus on vampiric blood sorcery, means that if the problem isn't vampiric in nature, the wafadar can find themselves easily overwhelmed. Many operations are aborted mid-heist when it becomes apparent that the suspected blood mage isn't susceptible to stake-guns and sunlight. The wafadar are too few to throw their lives away needlessly.

If that weren't enough, many of the lower-level, drafted employees inducted into the wafadar find their conviction tested the first time they are told to stake a vampire onto a rooftop, kill an informant who knows too much, or abduct someone who looks barely old enough to drive.

## In Stories: Interactions with Hunters

The following are story hooks you can use to when focusing on Xtend, Ltd.

### ABORTED OPERATION

The cell comes across a wafadar team in full retreat. They're injured, shocked, and clearly terrified of something. The creature doesn't seem to be following them, but the team leader makes a note of anyone willing to help them retreat to safety. They offer little information about themselves or what they were doing but are grateful for the help.

A few weeks later, a cash payment is left for the cell, along with useful information on the local vampire scene and a contact number that leads to potential work for Xtend in the future.

### HELP WANTED

Following a lead given to her by Diya Yadav, Saviti Chopra herself is in town. Ostensibly visiting for a tech expo, Xtend's director is looking for a Hunter who has information on the local vampires. She pays handsomely for any information given and offers the cell a job while she's in town: if it can recover any vampiric artifacts, she'll pay for them and draft a contract for future employment.

She even equips them with Xtend's latest tech but conveniently forgets to tell the cell that the tech listens in on their private conversations as well.

### A FRANCHISE OPPORTUNITY

If the cell has made a name for itself hunting vampires, there is a good chance that they eventually end up on the Chopra-wafadar's radar. After observing the cell for a while, Xtend offers to employ them in an XTD store in a local shopping district in exchange for occasional night-time favors.

The Xtend representative won't outright mention vampires but implies that these favors are something the cell has already done, promising financial reward for all involved. As part of their cover, the cell is given free communication gear. ■



# Chapter Eight: USING THE ORGs IN CHRONICLES

For most games of *Hunter: The Reckoning*, orgs serve as secondary antagonists for Hunters. Orgs might technically be on the same side as Hunters, but their hunger for control rivals that of their Quarries, leaving little room for the flexibility and freedom that Hunter cells live and die by. On top of that, most orgs have their own goals beyond killing monsters—goals that often put them at odds with Hunters. For example, the SAD is ostensibly law enforcement and has little tolerance for Hunters conducting unsanctioned ops—so little tolerance that it's rare that a week goes by without some Hunter getting arrested, detained, or shot at by the SAD.

The dangers that orgs pose is even worse for apostates. To the orgs, apostates are, at best, quitters who know too much and loose ends in need of being removed by any org member wanting to make a name for themselves. At worst, orgs view apostates as traitors, actively involved in plots against their former employers, making them priority targets, even above the supernatural. Of course, things are rarely that black and white. Even apostates who left their org under contentious circumstances can have friends and allies that they can still count on, although such a friendship puts both apostates and their former compatriots at risk.

## Designing an Apostate

Regardless of whether your chronicle starts before the apostates leave their respective orgs or after they've already adjusted to Hunting on their own, it's important that each character has an origin. How a Hunter "grew up" affects their worldview, as well as what sorts of pitfalls they have to keep an eye out for. Origins are a matter of five important details:

- **Awakening:** How the apostate learned of the parent org, and often, the supernatural
- **Onboarding:** Why the apostate joined the org in the first place
- **Experience:** What they learned as a member of the org
- **Exit Motive:** Why they left the org
- **Departure:** How they left

### EXAMPLE:

Master Sergeant Sam Takamura was a combat medic in the U.S. Army who got recruited into Project Twilight after killing a werewolf with an AT4 rocket launcher. She enthusiastically joined the org because she'd seen the amount of devastation caused by just one werewolf and correctly assumed that she'd be in a position to prevent further loss of life and suffering as a member of Project Twilight. Over the course of the next few years, she served as a medic on countless raids, witnessing firsthand the indomitable power of the human spirit (and overwhelming gunfire). She eventually tired of patching up her fellow commandos and never the wounded civilians they left behind. She filed retirement paperwork and was quickly drummed out of the org, after they violently searched her apartment for any leftover information deemed classified.

Sam's origin details are:

- Awakening:** Recruited  
**Onboarding:** Oath  
**Experience:** Duty  
**Exit Motive:** Disillusioned  
**Departure:** Bargaining

These aspects play into how your character sees the world and provide the Storyteller with hooks to build upon and explore during the course of the chronicle.

## Awakening: How Hunters Find Orgs

The first step in your apostate's origin is how they learned of their org's existence. After all, even Re:Venge and Monster-X keep their existence secret from the general public. Hunters need some combination of luck and inquisitiveness to find out who bumps back against the things that go bump in the night.

Choose one of the sample awakenings or create your own:

- **Chance Encounter:** You stumbled upon the supernatural or your future org while going about your daily life. Maybe you witnessed a belligerent drunk badly injuring someone only for a group of black-clad paramilitaries to abduct the drunk, and curiosity drove you to follow them to learn more.
- **Family Business:** Your family or friends brought you into the fold. Perhaps you were aware of the Hunt and the org long before joining, or maybe your people kept things from you until you reached a specific milestone: a certain birthday, witnessing the supernatural, or otherwise coming of age to the org. This is a particularly common awakening for Hunters affiliated with the Order of the Rose.

## TYPES OF ORIGIN STORYTELLING

There are three basic kinds of Storytelling for apostate origin sessions.

**Solo Break Outs:** One on one games with each of the players and the Storyteller. The other players are, of course, welcome to attend these one player games, but if they'd rather not have information that their characters wouldn't know or wouldn't enjoy sitting and watching other people play while they are not, they aren't required to attend.

**Solo round-robin:** Gameplay rotates through the Hunters, with each player playing a solo scene before focus switches to the next player's Hunter.

**Troupe round-robin:** As with solo round-robin, each player gets a scene to explore an aspect of their Hunter's origin. Players whose Hunters are in the same org as the focus character play as their Hunter, and the other players take control of Storyteller characters. Characters who aren't the scene's focus don't have to be friendly to the focal Hunter, although their players should remember to give space for the focal Hunter to explore their origin instead of stealing the spotlight.

**Troupe spotlight:** Instead of rotating through the Hunters on a scene-by-scene basis, the entire session is dedicated to one player's apostate's origin. The rest of the players roleplay as their own character if appropriate and as a Storyteller character if not. The next session might continue the Hunter's origin or switch to a different one, depending on the group's preferences.

The structure of such a chronicle largely depends on the number of sessions dedicated to telling the characters' origins.

**1 session:** Solo round-robin-style Storytelling is best. Each player collaborates with the Storyteller to pick an aspect of their Hunter's origin to explore during a scene or two. Once a scene reaches a predetermined time limit or the Hunter completes a goal, the Storyteller switches to the next player's Hunter and begins the next solo scene.

**2 sessions:** Solo round-robin-style Storytelling is recommended, although troupe round-robin is also possible. Each player should select three to four origin aspects to focus on, as it's unlikely the group has time for each Hunter's full origin tale.

**3–4 sessions:** Solo round-robin and troupe round-robin are equally good approaches, and there should be enough time for each player to go through each scene of their Hunter's origin.

**5+ sessions:** Troupe spotlight is encouraged, as everyone gets a better understanding of the spotlight character, as well as the Storyteller characters that are part of the apostate's origin. These kinds of sessions allow Allies, Contacts, Mentors, and Retainers to go from mere names and dot ratings to memorable characters whom the group enjoys seeing come back into play from time to time.

- **Forced:** You never had a choice when it came to joining your org—you were forced. Maybe it was a cruel form of blackmail, but more likely it was a government doing the coercion, like with Manila's Special Rehabilitation Program. You and Hunters like you have the most reason to become apostates, although you also face the greatest consequences if you're caught.
- **Recruited:** You didn't even know your org existed until it reached out of the shadows and made an offer. You did something extraordinary that set you apart from the rest of humanity, and they recognized your potential. This is common for secretive orgs like Project Twilight.
- **Rescued:** The org saved you from an attack, supernatural or otherwise, which simultaneously made you aware of the org's existence and sparked your desire to join. Some orgs, such as the SAD, might require you to jump through some hoops before you can join, while others, like Monster-X, might officially induct you without so much as a background check.

## *Onboarding: Why Hunters Sign on the Dotted Line*

Why your Hunter joins an org can be as simple as being born into the group or as complicated as stumbling across the org and the call of the Hunt while checking on a sickly pale neighbor who only goes out at night. However, apostates have a little more to them than the average org member; they have a Drive that compels them to go out into the night and wage war against supernatural forces. While a Hunter's onboarding doesn't have to be the same as their Drive, the two are often similar.

Choose one of the following onboardings or make one for yourself. If your Hunter had their Drive awaken before joining, their onboarding should be similar:

- **Atonement:** Few Hunter onboardings are free of innocent blood, and some of that blood is on your hands. Whether through mistake or inaction, something horrible happened, and only you have the ability to set things right. You might not be

truly to blame for the past, but that does nothing to assuage their guilt. Atonement is often the Drive of Vigilantes.

- **Curiosity:** You've been slowly peeling back hidden layers of the World of Darkness, learning more about the supernatural and what it takes to survive, eventually coming to the inescapable conclusion that you need someone to watch your back or at least to grant you access to a repository of knowledge. This is a common tale for Hunters who join Academic orgs, like the Arcanum.
- **Envy:** You've seen things going bump in the night and thought "Why shouldn't I be able to do that, too?" Corporate orgs, like Monster-X and Xtend, Inc., are particularly attractive to you since they provide opportunities to learn more about the supernatural and potentially take their power for yourself.
- **Greed:** You want to make the supernatural pay, literally. You've witnessed monsters using their powers to get ahead in the world; they've been cheating society, which makes liberating all of the creatures' ill-gotten gains a morally correct act. Naturally, this Drive is common in Corporate orgs.
- **Oath:** Whether you seek to right a wrong or just want to uphold a certain set of principles, you swore a vow that set you on the path to Hunting. Oath Drives are more common among apostates than the general Hunter population, especially when an org fails to live up to a Hunter's ideals. This often leads to the Disillusioned exit motive.
- **Pride:** You believe the powers of the supernatural are an affront to humanity or whichever God or Gods you revere. More importantly, you see the supernatural as lesser than the power of humanity or the Gods and seek to prove it by defeating the creatures. Each Hunt is an opportunity to demonstrate the validity of your beliefs. This Drive is particularly common among Religious orgs but is also prevalent in militaristic Governmental orgs.
- **Vengeance:** One of the most common Drives, Vengeance is the craving to address a past wrong by taking a Quarry's life or liberty. After you suffered the loss of a loved one, the spirit of vengeance filled your heart. Now, you seek to visit pain, suffering, and

death upon those who destroyed your life. Vengeance Drives are present in all org types, although they're less common among Corporate orgs, except when matched by an entrepreneurial creed and the desire to drain supernatural bank accounts.

## ***Experience: The Lessons Learned in an Org***

The time apostates spent in their former orgs amount to more than paychecks and scars. Their experience in the org taught them a lesson that helped shape their Drive. Experience distills months or years of service in an org into a single ideal.

- **Cruelty:** Whether from the supernatural or fellow members of the org, you learned that being scary and violent gets results. You don't necessarily agree that bloodshed is the correct way to achieve goals, but you can't deny its efficacy.
- **Duty:** You understand the importance of standing by principles and taking action, even if it might bring you harm or disgrace.
- **Frustration:** You struggle against the poorly made rules and systems that seem designed to hinder success and safety.
- **Hope:** You see silver linings in the bleakest of circumstances, although this makes you more vulnerable to con artists.
- **Patience:** You try to stay calm and wait for the perfect opening, at the risk that you might miss your chance.
- **Terror:** You learned of the horrors lurking in the darkness. They frighten you, but that same fear spurs you forward.

## ***Exit Motive: Why Hunters Go Independent***

Leaving an org is a difficult choice for many Hunters, but anyone willing to leave their home behind doubtlessly has good reasons for doing so. Storytellers should encourage their players to come up with at least

one specific reason for their character's departure. Some apostates might have a combination of motives. The in-world texts in Chapters Two through Seven can also help with this process, especially the ones that detail problems within orgs. Chapter One provides some general motives for severing bonds with an org (pp. 10–12). The following are six general categories of reasons for an apostate's resignation:

- **Change of Heart:** You had a life-changing experience, such as seeing a particularly tragic death or disobeying protocol to save a life. After such an experience, you realize that your heart isn't in it anymore or that your org's objectives no longer align with their own. The org is fundamentally flawed, and you had to leave.
- **Departed Comrades:** You were part of a tight-knit team, where each member depended on the others. When one or more of your comrades didn't make it back, that was the end for you. You weren't in it for the paycheck; you were in it for the people who had your back. After they died (or worse), it was time to move on.
- **Disgraced:** You left because you weren't wanted anymore. Regardless of whether or not it was your fault, your org stopped trusting you. Perhaps you violated the org's code to save someone or maybe you caught a teammate stealing money from innocents and got set up to take the blame. This exit motive is common in rigid organizations, such as Religious and many Governmental orgs.
- **Disillusioned:** Orgs are made of humans and are therefore fallible. You saw the grimy underbelly of your org and quickly decided it didn't deserve you anymore. This might have taken the form of your org writing off the death of innocents, such as with many Government orgs, or focusing on profit over Hunting, like with Corporate orgs.
- **Greener Pastures:** You leaving your org wasn't a matter of you and the org being bad for each other; you simply found a better fit. If you met Hunters from other walks of life in the field, you could've realized that they weren't so different from you, after all. Alternatively, getting an outside perspective might have opened your eyes about ways your org was less than truthful. You might have even left one org for another before finally

going independent; you might be an apostate to several orgs, leading to more complex drama when your past comes back to haunt you.

- **Outgrown:** Not all motivations for leaving are dramatic. Similar to Hunters who have a Change of Heart, you woke up one day and realized you didn't need your org anymore. Maybe it was your team leader's attitude, or maybe you felt your org wasn't challenging you anymore. Either way, it wasn't a sudden change or the result of an inciting incident, but rather a gradual change that had been coming for a while.

### WHAT IF I HAVEN'T LEFT YET?

You can select your apostate's exit motive and departure even if your apostate hasn't left their org in your chronicle yet. Not only does selecting an exit motive and departure make it easier for the Storyteller to craft an origin story that helps flesh out your character, it makes it easier for you to explore the ideas and events that helped shape your character. That said, don't feel that you're writing in stone. If you and the Storyteller find a better origin for your character than the one you planned, don't be afraid to embrace the change.

## Departure: How Hunters Leave Their Orgs

The final piece of every apostate's origin sets the tone for their Hunting career. While everyone's story is different, there are three basic methods for leaving the org in the rear-view mirror:

- **Bargaining:** You talked your way out of your org. This might have been as simple as turning in your badge and gun or as complicated as filling out NDAs and exit documentation. This doesn't mean that the org's happy with you, but they've decided to accept your parting for now. You're not immune to revenge; circumstances change, and the manager who signed off on the paperwork might get replaced by the guy who hates your guts.
- **Deception:** You lied your way out and left the quiet way. Maybe you made up a story about a family emergency or maybe you went big and faked

your own death to start Hunting under a new identity, in a new location (see the Faked Death Merit, p. 15). This departure might have played to your strengths or you could have gone this route because you feared the consequences of leaving by another method. Regardless, you're safe from retaliation, so long as your story stays intact.

- **Violence:** Your departure was a bloody affair. Maybe your org would rather kill a member than lose one. Or maybe you were just ending a fight that someone else picked. No matter why you turned your weapon on your org, they're going to remember it. This departure is particularly common of Religious orgs and the more hard-line Governmental ones.

## The Roles of Orgs

The intersection of Hunters and orgs creates a number of options for Storytellers and their players. The Hunters and the orgs might take on the roles of somewhat friendly rivals vying over the same contracts or at least competing to see who can rack up the most impressive stories. Alternatively, the two sides might have entirely antagonistic relationships, where each encounter between Hunters and orgs turns into a tense confrontation, at best. The relationships between apostates and the orgs open up two additional chronicle options for Storytellers:

- **Origins:** Sessions that start before apostates leave their respective orgs can be compelling, exploring who the apostates are and what makes them tick before they strike out on their own
- **Tense Alliance:** Sessions where orgs and Hunters need to work together, either because there are so many threats out there that the rivals must pool their resources to get the job done or because the threat to both of them is so great that they must cooperate or die

## Origins

An apostate's origin shapes their present and future, and it differentiates them from other apostates. There's a big difference between a Hunter who's



USING THE ORGS IN CHRONICLES

listed as “Unreliable Asset; Do Not Rehire” in Delphi Investment’s database and another who is labeled “Poisonous Weed; Kill On Sight” by the Order of the Rose. There are two ways to explore these differences in your chronicle: playing through origins or having them come back to haunt the apostates.

## *Storytelling Origins*

The first step in Storytelling origin stories is determining how many sessions to dedicate to the process. Even when all of the apostates are from the same org, you’ll want to make sure each player gets a showcase scene where the story revolves around them. This means roleplaying through each aspect of each Hunter’s origin takes at least one scene. With a cell of five or more Hunters, you should expect to only get through a few origin scenes in a session. Be sure to allow each player adequate time and discuss with them to ensure it feels equal after each session.

## *Haunted by the Past*

Revisiting an aspect of an apostate’s origin is a great way to signal to the player that their character still isn’t safe and that the choices they made during their origins remain unsettled. This kind of Storytelling is best when it feels organic, so consider the people in the apostate’s past and how they might feel about the character now. Additionally, think of the apostate’s departure and how that may cause problems in the future. After each session, think about whether the apostates’ actions may have run afoul of those dangling complications. For example, an apostate who faked their own death needs to keep a low profile. If they’re caught on a surveillance camera that their former org might be monitoring, the breathing room their “death” bought them may evaporate.

If a cell constantly leaves evidence behind, they may have multiple orgs taking notice of them each session. But this doesn’t mean that you need to have every involved org’s kill squads showing up all the time; it’s more unsettling if you wait to have the org show up when the apostates are tired and licking their wounds, especially if you’re trying to create the feeling that the Hunters aren’t safe. Think of when the Hunters might be at their lowest or most vulnerable and use that opportunity to its fullest.

Alternatively, if the players are tired of their

characters needing to walk on eggshells, offer them ways to buy some breathing room. See “Tense Alliance,” below, for more information.

## **Tense Alliance**

Apostates may find themselves on the same side as their former orgs as part of an official partnership, an arrangement of convenience, or a secret friendship.

## *Burying the Hatchet: Making Peace with Orgs*

The first step to any sort of alliance with an org entails ensuring there’s peace between the two parties. If your chronicle uses the optional Heat system (p. 135), this means reducing their Heat with the org to 3 or lower. Otherwise, it’s at the Storyteller’s discretion whether or not the apostates and the org are on good enough terms to negotiate a peace treaty.

How an apostate cell reduces their Heat with an org depends on how much Heat they have. At 2 or 3 Heat, the cell has the option of negotiating more favorable relations or doing some sort of favor for the org. At 4 or 5 Heat, the cell needs to do both. These kinds of negotiations generally involve a combination of roleplaying and a test, using the Heat as the test’s Difficulty. The exact dice pool of the test depends on how the players roleplay the scene, but most tests involve a Social Attribute and a Social Skill. Favors for an org span a wide range but generally boil down to killing a particularly irritating supernatural creature, capturing an annoying Hunter, or obtaining an item that they find valuable.

Reducing the Heat between an org and a cell doesn’t necessarily mean that all is forgiven, but rather that the org as a whole has decided that it’s in their best interest to simply ignore whatever problems occurred in the past. Naturally, this means that there’s always a few people in each org who would like to fight the cell but who don’t have their org’s backing, which generally means that these people won’t raise a ruckus unless they think they can get away with it. These kinds of org members generally make for excellent Adversaries, Stalkers, and other Background Flaws.

## OPTIONAL RULE: HEAT

Storytellers running chronicles featuring apostates with active org connections may wish to use Heat to help explain the ebb and flow of the danger the org presents. Heat is a tracker, rating 1–5, representing the amount of concern the org has for the apostate. This number is not automatically known to the players; one of the Hunters must take action to determine how much trouble they’re in, such as calling an org contact or using an appropriate Wits + Skill action.

Example: Summer wants to figure out how much Heat her cell has with The Real Cognistas, so she makes a Temperature test, rolling Wits + Technology to plumb the depths of the deep web message boards to see what they’re saying about Summer and her Hunter allies and with a win, determines their Heat.

Heat serves as the default Difficulty for Social actions involving an org. For example, if a cell’s Heat with the SAD is 4, the players need to roll at least 4 successes to have a favorable outcome with most tests involving SAD. This includes negotiating jobs, trying to exchange information or favors, and arranging a cease-fire agreement. Heat does not increase org affiliates’ combat Traits, nor does it directly impact using Backgrounds, although if the apostates end up owing an org-affiliated Ally, Contact, or similar character a favor, the Difficulty of that favor would be tied to the apostates’ Heat with that org.

### HEAT

- **No concern:** The org is unaware of the cell’s activities.
- **Minimal concern:** The org either tolerates the cell’s activities.
- .. **Some concern:** The org is investigating the cell and may attempt to question them.
- ... **Serious concern:** Someone at the org has it out for the cell; they don’t have official backing, but that might not matter.
- .... **Target:** The org treats the cell as a target of opportunity; they attack on sight but aren’t hunting the cell.
- ..... **Priority target:** The org is actively searching for the cell to kill or capture them.

Heat trackers serve as companions to Danger; Danger lets the Hunters know that something bad is headed their way, while Heat informs them of which org the threat is most likely to come from. If all the orgs have low Heat with the cell, but Danger is high, the coming fight might not be coming from an org. Alternatively, if several orgs have high Heat, but Danger is low, the apostates might take advantage of the calm to smooth things over with the orgs before it’s too late.

Unlike Danger, Heat increases as a result of player choices. If the apostates attack a SAD branch office, they should expect for their Heat with the SAD to jump up to at least 3—so long as someone at the SAD was able to identify them. If apostates successfully concealed their identities, they might get away without a Heat increase. Similarly, Heat decreases due to player decisions. If the apostates do something that helps an org, even accidentally, their Heat with the org should decrease a step. Other possibilities exist, such as those outlined in “Tense Alliance” (p. 134).

## Working with Orgs under the Table

Informal relationships with orgs come in two distinct flavors: secret and tolerated.

### STAYING FRIENDS WITH ORG MEMBERS

Secret connections are generally between an apostate and their former org members. The Hunter may have turned their back on the org, but they managed to stay on their friends' good sides. These friendships are fraught, as saying the wrong thing to the wrong person can get a kill squad sent to either half of the friendship. On the other hand, these partnerships can be a boon for both sides. A Hunter might borrow equipment from an org friend and use org intel to hunt down a supernatural threat. In exchange, their friend can claim the Hunter's victory as their own, receive fresh intel from the Hunter's raid, or even be first on the scene to further their org's goals. Additionally, the friendship might even become an open secret within the org, with higher ups deliberately feeding intel to the friend in order to tempt the cell into doing their dirty work.

Mechanically, these partnerships are generally Allies, Contacts, or Mentors, depending on how they interact with the Hunter.

### SUBCONTRACTING THE HUNT: BEING TOLERATED BY ORGS

Not all orgs react violently to learning a Hunter cell is active in their area of operations. Some give the Hunters free rein or even try to loosely control a cell they work with. These orgs have their own reasons for using Hunters, but the most common is that eliminating the Hunters would be more trouble than it's worth, so they might as well get something out of the fact that the Hunters are operating in their area. This typically means that the org is using the Hunters as a buffer, ensuring that a bigger threat runs into the Hunters before it does damage to the org.

# The Org Chart

Similar to Relationship Maps, Org Charts show the constellation of problems and solutions that share the apostates' orbit. Cells can use Org Charts to help keep

track of the orgs in play, determine whom they should look out for, and what they can do about a situation.

## Making an Org Chart

Creating an Org Chart helps cells focus on the org-related issues at play. Briefly, the players list the apostates and the cell itself. Then, they write down the orgs that are in play. Finally, they list everyone else they suspect is affiliated with each org, drawing connections between the orgs, the affiliates, and the Hunters. Apostates are special cases in that they also have links to their former org. Properly constructed, Org Charts describe the org landscape and how it pertains to the Hunters' lives. Additionally, it reminds the cell which apostates are known to an org and to which (they hope) are still unknown.

### Starting the Chart

To begin, place each Hunter in the cell at the center of the page. Add an additional label to represent the cell. If some, but not all, members of a cell left the same org, it can be helpful to group the labels together. For example, if half of a cell left Monster-X and the other half left the SAD, it would make sense to split the apostates into two columns, with the ex-Monster-X employees on one side and the former SAD agents on the other. See Figure 1 for an example.

### Orgs

Next, write down the orgs that the apostates left and draw lines connecting the apostates to their former orgs. If there are any other orgs that are known or suspected to be in play within the cell's world, write them down. Be sure to include connections between apostates and orgs if the two have crossed paths in the past. This allows Hunters to know which cellie is most likely to be recognized by the org, for good or bad.

What orgs think of the cell's Hunters is important. Each org's Heat should go onto the Chart next. If the Hunters don't yet know how much trouble they're in, they can do a Temperature test to determine that. Each org's current Heat should go directly below their label to make sure that the Heat ratings are easily legible.

**Figure 1: Preliminary Org Chart Example**



## Org Affiliates

Finally, go around and have each player name an org affiliated person they know is interested in their Hunter and place the affiliate on the Org Chart with a line connecting the two. If they don't know the name of a person, they can provide a placeholder name, either using a detail they know, like "The Drinking Man," or a name with a variable, like "Ms. X." If an org member is interested in multiple people, but not the entire group, be sure to note that by drawing multiple lines. If an org member is definitely interested in the entire group, draw a line to the cell's label instead of individual Hunters. If the org member has yet to identify their person of interest, include a brief label saying so next to the connecting line.

## Plots

To round out the Org Chart, add any ongoing operations or plots the Hunters are aware of next to the org. See Figure 2 (below) for an example of a completed Org Chart.

With all of this in place, the cell has a much clearer picture of what the orgs are doing and whom they're using to do it. They also have a better understanding of which cells are definitely known to the org and who might have a better chance at negotiating with or doing undercover work for.

## Secrets of the Orgs

Each of the orgs has their own dirty secrets. Here are a few of them.

### The Arcanum

As the most prestigious Academic org, it goes without saying that the Arcanum keeps their skeletons buried well. But that doesn't mean they got where they are without breaking a few of their own rules.

- **Green Lake, Seattle, U.S.A.:** Arcanum faculty attempted to make friendly contact with a nest of vampires, who disappeared shortly afterwards. Faculty members then seized control of the vampires' multi-family estate and began a research mission. Over the subsequent weeks, researchers recovered hundreds of blood-themed religious artifacts from the basement. These items appear to be from dozens of cultures from around the world, though most are Christian in nature. Since the artifacts' recovery, all but one of the on-site researchers has developed a thirst for mammalian blood. Seattle's chapterhouse has secured the artifacts, detained the researchers,

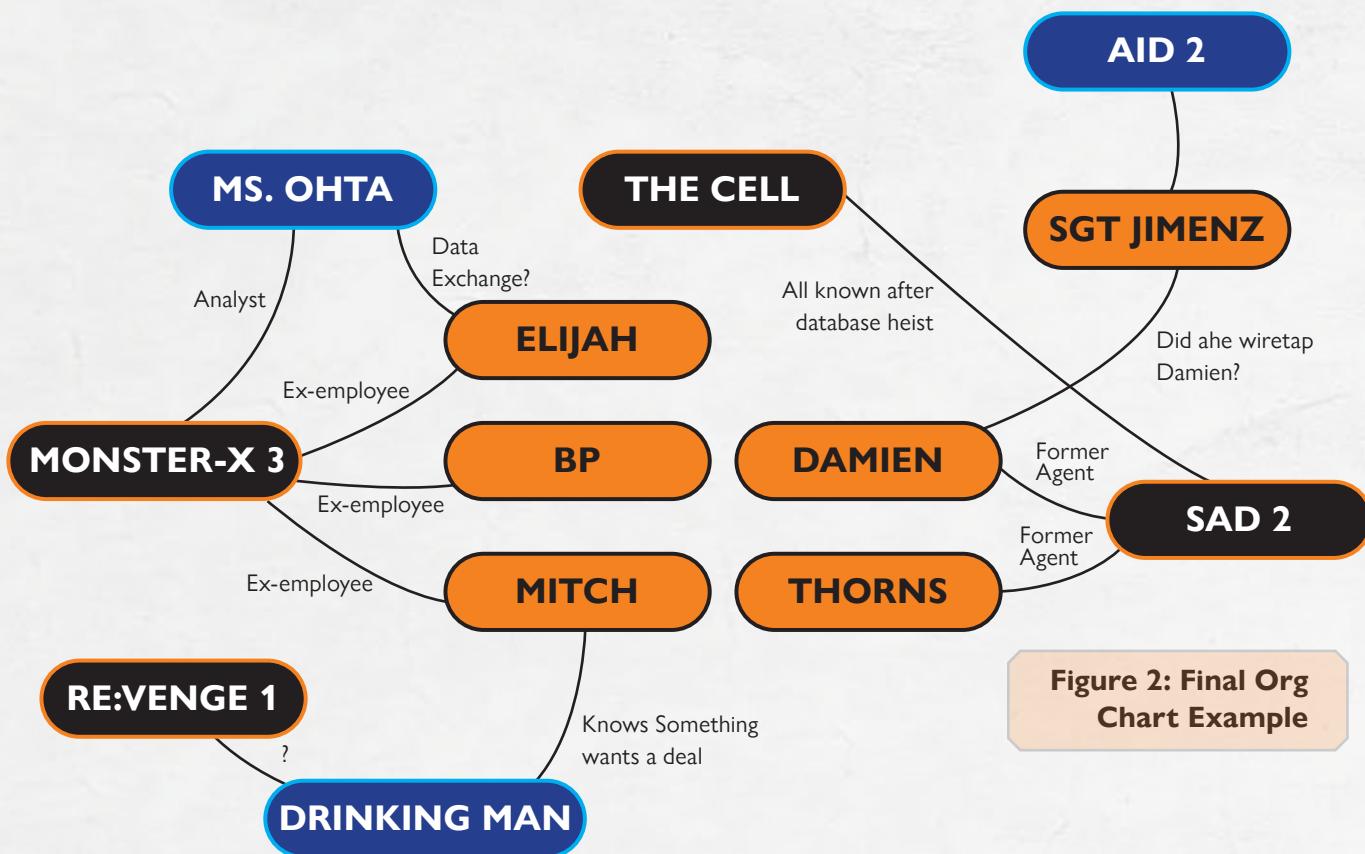


Figure 2: Final Org Chart Example

and sealed the site. Their faculty members now search for the building's former occupants, who may not actually be vampires, but humans afflicted by the same unknown curse that befell the on-site researchers. If the curse is communicable, the "vampires" may spread out of control. Senior faculty have restricted knowledge of the incident to protect the infected researchers from Hunters, as well as to limit the Arcanum's embarrassment at having spooked the "vampires."

## BOPE-RJ

The *caveiras de cristo* (skulls of Christ) is the BOPE's extremist faction, which demonizes all religions other than their brand of Catholicism. Though they decry the secrecy of other factions and orgs, they have just as many secrets as any other Hunter group.

- **Rocinha, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:** *Caveiras de cristo* tracked a nest of vampires to a nightclub and gunned down everyone inside. Three facts haunt them from that operation: only one of the 300 patrons was a vampire, the vampire survived long

enough to document the massacre of civilians on her phone, and the vampire's phone has yet to be located. Whoever recovers the phone has the ability to expose the *caveiras' crimes*, though they may not survive long enough to enjoy the justice they secure for the massacre's victims.

## Delphic Investments

The clairvoyants on staff at Delphic Investments have amassed a pile of secrets, making sorting through the data a full-time job for their analysts.

- **Central District, Hong Kong:** Delphic Investments sent a team, including Shawna Roberts, a clairvoyant, to parley with a local sorcerer circle, assuming that they'd be able to glean more from the meeting than the sorcerers would, tipping the balance in their favor. They were correct: Roberts got far more information than they could have hoped to bargain for. She has been scribbling notes for the past several days, to the point that Delphi medics had to use an IV to ensure she was getting enough nutrients because

she wasn't taking breaks for food or water. The local staff aren't sure how useful the information they've been getting from Roberts is, but several of her notes appear to correspond to events in the city that have come to pass. Whether she's irreparably damaged and whether the information is valuable is something they may need an outside contractor for.

## Gates of Alexander

The Gates of Alexander is focused on protection of their archives, leaving large budgetary gaps in their training and recruitment, leaving such things to fall through the cracks.

- **14th Arrondissement, Paris, France:** Henri Valiant checked out a list of the people currently in thrall to a local vampire pack to update it. Unfortunately, Henri was turned into a ghoul by the vampires before he was able to return the updated list to the archives. Thankfully, the Gates' safeguards prevent him from returning to his chapterhouse and filing whatever list his master wants. Of course, this means that the Gates now lacks any information on the local vampires' servitors, making vetting sources much more difficult.

## Information Awareness Office

The U.S. military's IAO has broad authority, including seconding special operations troops from their parent units and paying off Hunter cells to get the job done. Of course, this mélange of operational assets makes keeping things neat and tidy impossible.

- **Palatinate Forest, Germany:** Weeks ago, an IAO team assaulted a werewolf encampment in the Palatinate Forest. They encountered lighter than expected resistance and chalked it up to bad intel. They were dead wrong. The IAO's raid coincided with the wolves' elders leading a survival exercise for the village's younger werewolves. Now, the majority of werewolves in the region are impetuous and traumatized youths, prowling the countryside

in search of revenge. IAO has largely ignored reports of these werewolves, assuming that the number of werewolves was a mere handful, not the dozens that actually survived.

## Monster-X

Given the corporation's habit of doing anything it can to cut costs and extract profits from the supernatural, it's no surprise that they have a few secrets they'd rather not get out.

- **Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria:** Monster-X agents condemned the 16th floor of a tech high-rise after repeated attempts to quell the ghost haunting it failed miserably, resulting in additional ghosts, several wearing Monster-X uniforms.
- **Western Montana, U.S.A.:** A group of unscrupulous Monster-X agents operating out of Billings have been buying supernatural materials from a rural fixer named Conner in order to satisfy their superiors. What they don't know is that Conner is a werewolf, using corporate stooges to dispose of his rivals' bodies. Worse, his rivals' loved ones have been sniffing around, tracking the rivals. One of these days, they'll locate the agents' warehouse and massacre the wholly unseasoned agents.

## The Nails of Christ

The members of the Philippines' most xenophobic org take a hard line when it comes to foreigners and the supernatural, but their zeal also forces them to hide secrets from each other lest they become the Nails' next victims.

- **Mandaragat, Puerto Princesa, Philippines:** Atanasia Mabini, the *Supremo* of the Nails, has long sought to prove she's the reincarnation of Apolinario Mabini. Her obsession has led to three Nails cells meeting their ends to a group of witches and their ghostly accomplices while trying to recover the body of Apolinario, which lies in the heart of the witches' territory.

## The Order of the Rose

One part homeowners association and one part Christian cult, the Order focuses on preventing supernatural incursions or at least diverting monsters from Order households. Their willingness to sacrifice their unconverted neighbors is hardly a secret, but the extent of it is.

- **Frisco, Dallas, U.S.A.:** Five survivors of six separate monster attacks have banded together, pooling their limited resources to buy a safe house. Unfortunately for them, it's in a housing development that the Order has had its eyes on. The Order's Blossoms have already visited the home and declared the survivors "weeds." Shortly afterwards, a Thorn planted hunks of raw meat around the house to encourage a werewolf displaced by the development's construction to attack the "weeds." Unfortunately for the Order, the "weeds" are heavily armed and easily repel the werewolf, leaving the Order to suffer the consequences.

## Orpheus Group

The Orpheus Group is ambitious; not only do they seek to map out the precise boundary between the physical and spiritual worlds, but they also want to master crossing that boundary by projecting their agents' consciousness far beyond their bodies. This ambition drops off sharply when it comes to supernatural entities besides ghosts, creating huge gaps in their expertise.

- **Maspeth, New York, U.S.A.:** Last week, an Orpheus field team deployed to Calvary Cemetery to observe ghostly activity, only for Agent Eliot Baughman's consciousness to be stranded in the cemetery when the ghost of Jack Walker, a serial killer executed in 1917, took control of his body. Members of Baughman's team are aware that he's been possessed but dare not mention it aloud for fear of tipping their hand, creating a situation where the team is in danger but won't receive any help from the rest of the Orpheus Group.

## Project Twilight

Project Twilight is shrouded in mystery, with its continued existence a secret. Of course, because they play their cards so close to their vest, Twilight teams have secrets even from each other.

- **Cedar City, Utah, U.S.A.:** Captain Nick Ohta's team recently returned from a search and destroy operation, having killed half of a werewolf pack in Southern Utah, near Zion National Park. Unfortunately for them, a Bitter Rage Bane infected Sergeant First Class Hector Garcia during exfiltration. Although the Bane doesn't possess SFC Garcia, it's spurred his aggression to such heights that he nearly killed a civilian during a road rage incident. Capt. Ohta seeks a deniable consultant team to investigate his comrade's condition.

## Re:Venge

Re:Venge is a data-hungry org, regularly gorging itself on everything open and closed sources can provide. While this fuels the efficiency of RV's algorithm-generated Hunts, it also means they collect, process, and disseminate gobs of personally identifiable information of victims—information that they barely even try to protect.

- **Mission District, San Francisco, U.S.A.:** Brad Price, a disgraced RV closure counselor has been contacting current and former clients, posing as an active counselor and claiming that a new supernatural attack is imminent. If the traumatized targets paying Price tens of thousands of dollars for non-existent protection services wasn't bad enough, he attracted the attention of sorcerer and fellow con artist Leon Cooper. Cooper wants in on the scam, won't take no for an answer, and has the power to make good on his threats.

## The Real Cognistas

The Real Cognistas are the fringe of the dark web, knowing far more than they'll ever admit to and almost as much as they claim to.

- **Santa Fe, Mexico City, Mexico:** "Jargon," a Cognista embedded in a data center for a telecommunications company, has been broadcasting an encoded SOS for the past day. They've ignored all messages inquiring about their current status, leading other Cognistas to assume that Jargon is in trouble so serious that they can't reply, compromised by outside agents who can't decrypt Cognista communiqües, or expecting a specific message that has yet to arrive. The Real Cognistas need a deniable asset to physically look for Jargon in the hopes that the outsiders get caught if Jargon really has been captured or turned. If Jargon could talk, they'd warn would-be rescuers about the werewolf who's hunting them.

## Red Eyes Community Watch

A street-level self-defense movement, the Red Eyes have few secrets from each other, owing to their custom of mutual defense. However, even this has limits.

- **East Austin, Austin, U.S.A.:** The adjacent neighborhoods of East César Chávez and Central East Austin are home to a diverse cross-section of vampire hunters, drawing from both the Black Central East Austin and the Latine East César Chávez. Unfortunately, the communities the Red Eyes belong to are less integrated and used to defending themselves against interlopers, making gathering intelligence to confirm suspicions of thralls challenging to say the least. Three suspected thralls live on East Sixth and East Seventh Streets, the border between the neighborhoods. Only one is actually a thrall, though confirming that could destroy the goodwill the Red Eyes have built up.

## Society of St. Leopold

The Leopoldian witch hunters made their mark on history and continue to do so, focusing on vampires and sorcerers. While their ESOG is truly skilled at hunting, the org has a rigid doctrine that complicates operations on the ground.

- **Castelletto, Genoa, Italy:** Last week, a Gladius Dei strike team went rogue, after the Vatican accused their captain of conspiring with a witch. The charge is true, but the captain cut the deal to save the rest of the team from a vampiric death trap. Severed from the Vatican's good graces, the strike team is on the run, hunted by their peers, as well as a group of vampires.

## Special Affairs Division

Despite the SAD's secretive nature, they can't help but cling to their law enforcement background, preferring to cut deals with vampires rather than giving them a permanent death. Naturally, this has led to more than a few loose threads.

- **Bellevue, Washington D.C., U.S.A. & Caimito, San Juan, Puerto Rico:** For years, a pack of vampires preyed on the residential area, an embarrassingly short stone's throw from the FBI Headquarters. Instead of eradicating the pack, the SAD offered a relocation package to Puerto Rico, making them the U.S. territory's problem. Unfortunately for everyone involved, the leeches only sent their undesirable members, treating the offer as a franchise opportunity. Now, a wave of vampiric violence is rising in mountainous barrio of Caimito, and the attacks in D.C.'s Ward 8 continue.



# Special Rehabilitation Program

The Special Rehabilitation Program is little more than a government-sponsored hunter org using prison inmates. Those conscripted into the program have little chance of surviving their sentences, given the hazards of their “work release program”—except for the few who are legitimate Hunters.

- **Tondo, Manila, Philippines:** A recent SRP operation to destroy a Hari outpost was a complete fiasco, with none of the agents returning to base. A subsequent SRP team burned the building to the ground, killing anything that escaped the initial operation. Unbeknownst to the second team, the first team survived both the op and the blaze. Unfortunately, so did the vampires and most of their cultists. Now, the heavily-populated port district has blankbodies, cultists, and escaped convicts trying to find safety.

## Xtend, Ltd.

Xtend plays things close to their vest, as every scrap of information they have is an advantage they can parley into additional funds.

- **Nariman Point, Mumbai, India:** Chanda Singh, an Xtend courier, has a vampire artifact locked in a suitcase and handcuffed to his wrist. Unfortunately for him, the artifact seems to be leaking a blood-like substance. Or so it seems to Singh; no one else can see the leak. What's actually happening is a sanctioned Xtend field experiment, testing the artifact's ability to affect human minds to assess its power and profitability.

## Apostate Stories

The following are a few examples of fellow apostates that can bring into your stories.

### **Francis Petrovic, former Arcanum faculty:**

Of course I miss it. I had tenure, a furnished office, and a pair of interns to help me with the grunt work. There wasn't a ghost in Upstate New York I didn't have a dossier on. That's all gone now, thanks to the Department Chair's greed. The bastard tried to sell my life's work to Monster-X. Sure is a shame that my office's electrical wiring was faulty. So, what can I help you with?

### **Luiz Tan Estrada, Special Rehabilitation Program survivor:**

I'm the only one left. There were 20 of us. We were just kids, man. Kids! Not one of us was over 16 years old. Eman kept us alive—taught us what he knew about the spirits. He was the only one of us who knew anything, but that didn't save him. When I saw a chance to run, I took it. The government came for my family the next day.

**“Wire”, former Re:Venge programmer:** You wouldn't believe how much money's out there for the taking. No, not the clients. The cash the clients put up is chump change. No, I'm talkin' ‘bout the freaks on the dark web who want werewolf parts and the juicy B2B deals. Business 2 business, baby. Health insurance companies love denying coverage for injuries related to supernatural causes, and they can do it with RV's data. What are the client's gonna do? Sue? Ha!

**Joyce Smith, former Blossom of the Order of the Rose:** I still put my faith in the Lord, you know? He's still God. I just—I just... I just can't believe there are people out there taking advantage of good Christians like that. They made us spy on each other and put the Order first. I couldn't even visit my ma in the hospital because she wasn't in the Order. “Honor thy father and thy mother.” It's the Fourth Commandment, but the Bloom didn't care.

**Mike Maxim, former Real Cognista:** What you gotta understand is the government's not gonna help you. What, you think the SAD boys is gonna save you? Pfft. You think Project Twilight's real? They ain't gonna do shit. You put your trust in your mind and your tool. They are the only things that are real—only things on your side. And that's the problem with the Cognistas. Ain't no one got anyone's back. Fucking street gangs are better at protecting each other.

**NAME WITHHELD, former Gates of Alexander:** Director Carson is a scary bitch. Trust

me, she's been the Gatekeeper for 30 years for a reason. And it's not her sparkling personality or her ability to recite Virgil's entire body of work. No, it's because she can turn the largest occult library in Europe into a weapon. And when she does, there's nowhere on Earth that's safe. There's a spell out there with my name on it, and that's why I'm not fucking telling you my name.

**Sam Takamura, former Project Twilight commando:** No, don't "sergeant" me. I'm just a civilian now. Well, retiree, so I guess I'm still a Master Sergeant to the VA, but — nevermind. Look, you know too much now. And that's the same problem I have. But I can't sit by and do nothing. There are people out there dying, and Twilight's not going to help them. Sure, they'll put bullets in whatever threats are out there, but that's not gonna help the victims. They need help, real help. Medical aid, food, shelter, jobs, real things.

**Bethany Moreno, former projecting agent, Orpheus Group:** It's like an NDE, Near Death Experience. Or some potent psilocybin mushrooms. I can't really compare consciousness projecting to anything more mundane because it's so much more than just a dream state. Ha! Oh, I don't need the pod to project. I could do it right now. The pod's just to keep me safe. Well, it keeps my body safe... Did you know that you had a stillborn twin when you were a fetus?

**Su-min Hong, former operator, Society of St. Leopold:** I don't regret my time there. I left because I had to, because they'd declared me an apostate and would have killed me. But I disobeyed orders when I gassed that blankbody. That *does* make me an apostate. It also makes me a good Hunter. If I hadn't ignored the inquisitor's orders, he'd have a pierced neck. I hear he's dead now anyways... *Requiescat in pace*, dipshit.

**Jack Beatty, former Red Eyes Community Watch member:** It hurts, you know? Yeah, I fucked up. I popped off one too many shots. And that's on me. I'll live the rest of my life knowing that I took little Dmitri from them. But they turned they backs on me, man. They told me to get gone, knowing—*knowing* that those bloodsuckers wanted payback. I could've died. Hell, I wanted to die then. I didn't have nothing left. Where the fuck was *my* mutual aid?



## Sample Chronicle Sketches

Here are two sketches that can be used as the starting point of a chronicle or as inspiration for a chronicle using parallel themes and plot points.

- **Leaving the Org:** Hunters from Monster-X and Project Orpheus run into each other in the field and later get accused of malfeasance, giving both groups of Hunters a reason to quit their orgs and form a team.
- **Coexistence:** A group of recent apostates joins forces with a group of org Hunters to take down a vampire nest without making waves in a wealthy neighborhood.

### Leaving the Org

In this chronicle, some of the players' Hunters work for Monster-X, and the others work for the Orpheus Group. The two groups are forced to join forces and become apostates after their respective orgs accuse them of betrayal. The story's setup can also work with other orgs, although it's best if the two orgs share a common theme or type. It's also possible for all of the players' Hunters to be from a single org, leaving the other org's apostates to be Contacts or other backstory elements for the players' Hunters.

## Setting the Stage

Coincidentally, Monster-X and the Orpheus Group dispatch Hunters to investigate a ghost haunting at Skylark Penitentiary, a disused prison.

### MONSTER-X

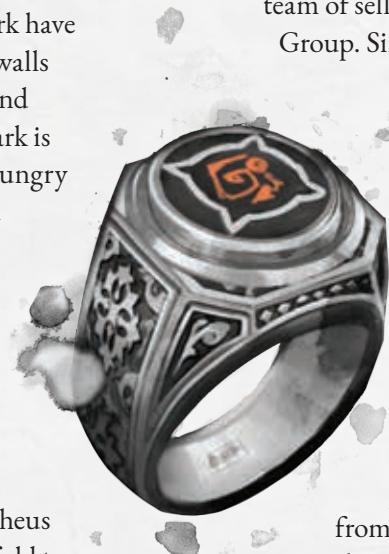
Donald “Cutter” Jones briefs Monster-X’s team that security guards patrolling Skylark have reported intruders moving through walls and floors, as well as bleeding walls and fog. Operations concluded that Skylark is haunted by ghosts, and with R&D hungry for ectoplasm, Cutter sends the team to retrieve as much of the substance as they can. He says that the risk of physical harm is low, but the Hunters should use caution when harvesting ectoplasm from the site.

### ORPHEUS GROUP

Dr. Hatsuko Higa assembles the Orpheus team and says they’re going into the field to Skylark Penitentiary. Intelligence-gathering software intercepted radio chatter from security guards indicating ghostly activity there. Dr. Higa tells the Hunters to collect data on the ghosts. She explains that the Skylark is an ideal place to conduct observational research, as the Hunters can use the closed-circuit camera network to monitor the prison.

## Meeting in the Field

Both groups of Hunters arrive at Skylark Penitentiary within hours of each other and become aware of each other as soon as the players succeed at the relevant tests or one group makes their presence obvious. The groups should be encouraged to talk to one another, partially because they’ll eventually come to depend on each other, but mostly because they can help each other succeed at their respective missions. While the members of Monster-X are convinced that residual ectoplasm is the cause for the camera issues, the Orpheus Group Hunters report there was no residue at all on the cameras and that they have no information that ectoplasm even exists. They do, however, find the shattered pieces of an occult item of



some sort. Players can use appropriate tests to determine that the item is related to ghosts.

## No Good Deed

When the Hunters return from the field, it takes little time for their respective leaders to learn the Hunters weren’t alone at Skylark. Cutter openly accuses his team of selling access to the haunt to the Orpheus

Group. Similarly, Dr. Higa suspects that her team accidentally provided information about the ghosts to their Monster-X “friends.”

While she doesn’t outright accuse the team of being sloppy, she insinuates it and refers the team to an information security assurance training seminar.

Cutter says that he’s not mad that the Monster-X Hunters made a deal with the Orpheus Group; he’s just mad that they didn’t cut him in and wants to be part of the scheme. Moreover, he demands a payoff for not being part of the operation from the start. If the Hunters balk or try to explain that they don’t even know the Orpheus team, Cutter threatens to blackmail them, saying that it’d take one phone call for him to blacklist them.

Dr. Higa doesn’t outright tell the Orpheus Hunters that their days are numbered, but their company credit cards, phones, and security badges stop working. She tells them that they need to complete the information security training to regain access and continue working there, but with their accounts locked, they can’t access their company email to find out the necessary information to attend the training. If the Hunters complain or attempt to explain the situation, she grows visibly angry, fires one Hunter at random, and tells the rest to get out of sight.

At this point, the obvious path for the Hunters is to quit, but they can attempt to fight their bosses to keep their jobs, pleading their case to HR or going over their bosses’ heads to their superiors. However, pulling that off requires some excellent dice rolls or cunning plans.

## EXIT STRATEGY: WHAT IF THE HUNTERS DON’T QUIT?

If somehow one or more teams manage to convince their superiors that they should be given a second

chance, the worst thing possible happens: they coincidentally end up at the same site as the other org *again*—Keystone Mall, an abandoned shopping mall and amusement park. Once might be coincidence, but twice is conspiracy. There is no roll of the dice that makes their superiors trust them again.

## **Out in the Cold**

After either of the teams leaves their org, their former boss targets each of the team's members for surveillance, tapping their personal phones, hacking their personal emails, and having private investigators follow them around town. As former operatives, the Hunters can easily detect this, though they have few options to make the problem go away. Chief among them is to make invading their privacy cost more than it's worth and thereby win their freedom.

At this point, teams should reach out to each other to pool resources, examine their options, or at least have a drink and commiserate. They might not want to form a cell just yet, but the option's looking better with each passing second.

## **Teamwork Makes the Nightmare Break**

Whether the apostates have formed a cell or simply have each other's phone numbers, they face a great challenge when Cutter calls the SAD. He tells the Feds that the apostates have power over ghosts and are attempting to weaponize it, turning ghosts into ticking time bombs. While the SAD's Agent Hernandez is skeptical of the claim, he must investigate the apostates. How they deal with him defines the beginning of their career as apostates, as well as how the new team works together.

## **Coexistence**

In this sandbox-style story, the exact path that the apostates take isn't important, as the direction the story takes depends entirely on the actions (and inactions) of the players. The gist of the Hunt is that the players' apostates have recently left their former org and have been around the block enough to make

friends with the local Hunter community. The apostates hear about a bounty on a vampire and set out to collect on it, only to find out that some of their buddies jobbing for Re:Venge are also hunting the bloodsucker. Ordinarily, this would be a simple matter of friendly competition as both teams race to get to the blankbody first. However, this particular vampire has made her nest in a wealthy gated community. Both teams not only have to be on their best behavior, but they also have to cover for their opponents, or else they'll both have to deal with the police.

## **Setup**

The apostates' favorite Japanese-Korean fixer Hiroshi Hong approaches them with an outstanding bounty on a vampire thought to be living in Evergreen Estates, a wealthy housing subdivision. He stresses that the people in Evergreen Estates have no qualms about calling the cops and are rich enough that the police prioritize their calls, so the apostates need to be smart. Hiroshi also points out that Re:Venge is trying to get the bounty first and has contracted the job out to local Hunters.

## **Hunting in Suburbia**

There are three basic phases to taking out the vampire: determining who she is, picking a time and place to attack her, and carrying out the attack. The first phase is outlined below, but the planning and execution of the attack are up to the Storyteller and players.

### **PHASE ONE: VAMPIRE ID**

Identifying the vampire is a challenge, as Hiroshi only knows that she's a posh-sounding Caucasian woman, which doesn't narrow the suspect list much in the affluent, largely-white neighborhood. He suggests pretending to be HVAC installers, plumbers, cleaners, or other manual laborers who might be allowed into homes with boxes of tools (and surveillance equipment), as that allows the apostates to search the neighborhood covertly. If the Hunters do so, they have their work cut out for them, as they must gain information through invading people's privacy and without getting caught by the wealthy residents or the vampire's

thralls. Fortunately, the on-site security guards are relatively minimal and stretched thin. Additionally, clever apostates might take advantage of the security systems; the guards' security camera network is extensive enough to figure out who's home and who's not. During this phase, the apostates need to make occasional Charisma or Manipulation + Etiquette tests to ensure they blend in and don't upset the more paranoid residents who are already worried that outsiders might come and rob them.

## THE QUARRY

The vampire is Carol Peterson, the president of the homeowners' association and local busybody. Because of her position, she's well known in the community and not particularly well-liked, although her most outspoken critic and real estate entrepreneur, Robert Welker, is actually one of her thralls.

## PROBLEMS

- Robert is Carol's early warning system; if the apostates try to recruit him or ask him too many questions, he warns her.
- Warren Smythe is a thrall who lives next door to Carol and is a weekend hunter with a trove of firearms that he's more than happy to turn on the Hunters.
- Failing an Etiquette test during Phase One may result in a resident using their significant clout with local police. Just one irate person could cost the team valuable time as they try to talk the police out of searching their van. The apostates might not have any stolen goods in the vehicle, but they might have illegal or suspicious equipment that they don't want the police (or anyone else) seeing.
- Similarly, even a single visit by the police might be enough to draw the attention of one of the vampire's thralls.
- The apostates' rivals can cause any of these problems accidentally; just because the apostates are doing a good job of avoiding attention doesn't mean that Re:Venge's Hunters are.

# Scenario: Shifting Realities

*Shifting Realities* is a sample story using the concepts and mechanics explored in *Apostates*. In particular, Org Charts receive detailed treatment, as they serve as an invaluable tool for unraveling the mystery that confronts the apostates.

## Shifting Realities

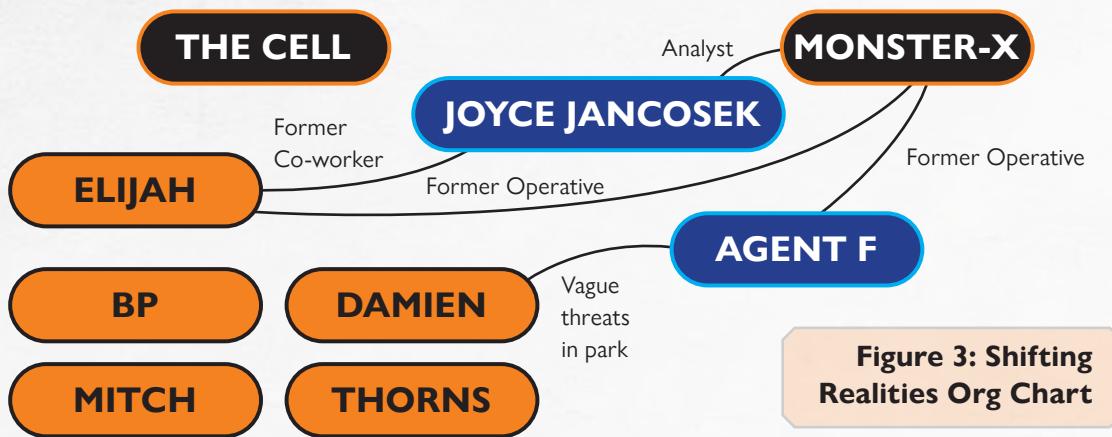
An apostate cell still has a friend in their former org: Joyce. After she sends them on a successful, run-of-the-mill Hunt, she texts the apostates that she's in trouble. Afterwards, the org's generative AI pretends to be Joyce, making it difficult for the apostates to get to the bottom of things. Some investigation leads them to an operative within the org who knows more. Once the Hunters get some of the truth out of him, they track Joyce down and free her from the org's clutches.

## Setup

The apostates live in or near a city and have a strong connection to Joyce Jancosek, who works for a high-tech org, such as Monster-X. This org might be one the apostates left, or it might be an unrelated org that the apostates ran across sometime during their independent Hunting career. Regardless of how the apostates know Joyce, she's long served as their inside woman, covertly passing tips and other intel to the Hunters for their mutual benefit. She gets insight into what's happening on the streets, and the apostates know when the org is sending operatives into their backyard.

Because of this heads up, the apostates start off with an Org Chart (See Figure 3) that has three nodes besides the cell's members: Joyce, Agent F, and the org. Both Joyce and Agent F are connected to the org, although whom they're connected to within the cell is up to the players. The cell doesn't know Agent F's identity—only that he's an operative for the org and likely armed at all times.

While the apostates have a close working



relationship with Joyce, contact between her and the cell is kept to a minimum to prevent the org from figuring out that she's a mole. She regularly uses dead drops and burner phones, switching phones after just a few dozen text messages have been exchanged in order to prevent the org, or even traditional law enforcement, from figuring out that something is up. It may have been months or even years since Joyce and her contact in the cell have had a normal conversation.

## Prologue

The apostates receive a text from Joyce detailing signs of a werewolf near an encampment of unhoused people. The ensuing Hunt reveals a single werewolf who's been sleeping rough on the streets and bullying unhoused civilians. When it comes time to bring the fight to the wolf, he goes down hard, but it's nothing the apostates can't handle. After the cell deals with the werewolf and begins to settle down for the night, they receive a new text from Joyce: "SOS 9" — the code for imminent danger to Joyce's life on the city streets.

## Act 1: Mixed Signals

The coded message means she's not home when whatever's going down happens to her, which means she's especially vulnerable, as the defenses her apartment's outfitted with can't help her. From here, the apostates have a few obvious options: trying to contact her, going to her apartment, trying to identify her location, or going after Agent F.

### CONTACTING JOYCE

Calling or texting Joyce yields an out of service message. It also results in a text from a different phone number a

half hour later: "All OK. Need to meet." A Difficulty 2 Wits + Technology test reveals the number is one from her apartment's stash, which means she's either home or something strange is going on. The cell and Joyce have avoided calling each other, but this is an emergency. If the apostates call the number from the new text, Joyce picks up immediately and sounds oddly calm. She answers questions tersely. Here are a few of her answers:

- **What happened?** I got mugged. It wasn't anyone special — just a guy with a gun.
- **Why SOS 9?** I thought I was in more danger than I really was.
- **Why do you want to meet?** I have special info, and I also need a drink.

Additionally, she tries to get off the phone as soon as possible (which is normal) so that she can meet them in person at a bar (which is strange). A Difficulty 2 Wits + Insight test determines that she sounds odd; she has a flat affect, sounding unnaturally placid for someone who recently thought her life was in danger and who still needs a drink. Success with a margin of 3 or higher identifies inhuman characteristics in her speech; not only is this not Joyce, it's not even a human. A Difficulty 2 Wits + Technology test reveals that the background noise on the call sounds strange. Succeeding with a margin of 3 or higher determines the background noise is fake; she's either in a specialized recording studio or the entire call is fake.

If the apostates ask Joyce for a selfie to prove that she's OK, they get one almost immediately. If the apostates think to ask for a specific pose to prove it's a new photo, it takes a minute for them to receive

it. A Difficulty 5 Wits + Performance, Awareness, or Technology test spots flaws in the selfie that are unnatural — no human took this photo.

If they ask for her to turn on video calling, she replies that her burner phone doesn't have that, which is true, but also very convenient for holding back information.

## JOYCE'S APARTMENT

The cell knows where Joyce's apartment is, although they've likely never been inside it. If they go there now, they find that it's neat but looks lived in. A Difficulty 3 Wits + Investigation test reveals that the apartment was recently cleaned but cleaned poorly. This information, when combined with a Difficulty 3 Intelligence + Larceny test, determines that the apartment was likely photographed, torn apart by someone searching it, then cleaned to match the photos.

A thorough search of Joyce's home uncovers her backup burner phones, except for the one the cell's talking to her on.

## JOYCE'S LOCATION

A Difficulty 3 Wits + Technology test allows the cell to hack a telecommunications company's records, establishing that Joyce's first phone is off now. Additionally, the SOS message was sent halfway between Joyce's org's HQ and her apartment, which the apostates can infer means that whoever took her knew exactly who she was, making it likely that her own org captured her. A Difficulty 3 Manipulation + Etiquette test reveals the same information by conning the phone company to do the research. A law enforcement background reduces this Difficulty to 2.

## AGENT F

Agent F appears on the apostates' Org Chart because he had a run in with one of them and made vaguely threatening remarks that seemed to tie him to the same org Joyce works for. As far as they know, Agent F only knows of that Hunter and has no idea of the connection between the cell and Joyce. However, given that the operative and Joyce work in the same general area, it's not much of a leap to assume that he might know what happened to her.

As luck would have it, Agent F is celebrating a successful mission (searching Joyce's apartment) and is a

little off his game, making this the perfect time to track him down and take him in for questioning. A Difficulty 1 Charisma + Streetwise or Charisma + Investigation test allows the apostates to ask some smart questions in the operative's neighborhood to figure out his name. Success with a margin of 2 means the apostates get his current location or home address. A margin of 3 or higher nets both pieces of information. Having his name and succeeding on a Difficulty 1 Wits + Technology test determines his home address thanks to internet sources.

## Act 2: On the Trail

The cell only has one good lead, Agent F.

### INTERROGATING AGENT F

Although the apostates might want to plan out how they're going to approach Agent F, simply catching him off-guard is enough to make him surrender, no test needed. He's had a few drinks and knows he's not going to win a fight against multiple Hunters. Interrogating him with appropriate Social tests yields the following information:

- He was on the team that searched Joyce's apartment.
- Joyce is in the org's custody and still alive, as far as he knows.
- He doesn't know where Joyce was; he wasn't part of the snatch team.
- He offers a safe house as the most likely place she was taken.

The safe house is well-defended, which is why he's volunteering the information; he thinks the apostates will get captured or killed if they go there. A Wits + Insight test opposed by his Social pool (6) reveals this motive. The cell can also search his phone with a Difficulty 1 Intelligence + Technology test, which turns up a few addresses in his map app: the org's public-facing HQ, Joyce's apartment, his apartment, the safe house, and a dentist's office. This dentist office shows up multiple times within the last month and shows he asked for the directions multiple times. This is suspicious as he doesn't seem to have had any dental work done recently.

## SAFE HOUSE

The operatives at the org's safe house aren't expecting trouble, but they're alert and paying attention to their surroundings via cameras and motion sensors. If the apostates go to the safe house, they have a chance to spot the potential ambush with a Difficulty 3 Wits + Awareness test. If they do, they can simply leave or begin a fight with the org's operatives (use the **IAO Commando's** Traits from *Hunter*, p. 268). There is one fewer operative than there are apostates. Whether or not they leave any of the operatives alive, they find enough information to point the cell to the correct location: the dentist's office. They also obtain keycards that make getting through the office's security a little easier.

## THE DENTIST'S OFFICE

If the team does any research on the dentist's office before they visit in person, they rapidly determine that all of the reviews for the office are fake, likely generated by AI. Likewise, all of the photos on the office's website are AI fakes. The cell has all the information they need to understand that this is some kind of black site, a location where the org performs secret operations and/or research. They understand that the dentist's office is secure but not impenetrable.

Check the Org Chart to determine which apostate Agent F threatened in the park earlier. The office's receptionist knows that apostate's face and goes for her gun if she spots them. Otherwise, the receptionist can't tell the apostates from random people looking to get their teeth checked. If they have keycards from the safe house, they can try bluffing their way inside with a Manipulation + Subterfuge test opposed by the receptionist's Social pool (6). Use the **Monster-X Asset Acquisition Executive's** Traits for the receptionist (see *Hunter: The Reckoning*, p. 269).

Once the apostates are past the receptionist, they can descend into the black site's basement.

## Act 3: Rescuing a Friend

The cell accesses the basement through a small stairwell that takes them no test to find, as the rest of the above ground level is empty, aside from some examination chairs and old dental equipment. The basement is an interrogation suite, with six holding cells and two

interrogation rooms. There are two guards on site (use the Police Detective's Traits from *Hunter*, p. 271), who can be tricked, browbeaten, or simply shot.

Once the cell is past the guards, they have to contend with the high security locks keeping Joyce imprisoned. If the guards are still conscious, the apostates can convince the guards to give up the code with a Manipulation + Intimidation test opposed by their Social pool (3). Otherwise, the apostates need to hack or break the electronic lock with a Difficulty 3 Wits + Technology or Larceny test. Unfortunately, freeing Joyce is not the final hurdle for the cell.

Unless the team deliberately avoided the black site's cameras with a Difficulty 3 Dexterity + Stealth test for each member entering the basement, they've been spotted by off-site security. This also happens if the receptionist recognized an apostate or if the apostates destroyed the cameras. Two more guards show up before the apostates can leave, and if the cell dawdles, five operatives arrive.

## ALTERNATE RESCUE

Alternatively, instead of visiting the dentist's office with the intent to force their way into the basement, the apostates might ransom Agent F for Joyce. The org is willing to make this trade, although the apostates need to be clever to avoid getting all of their faces recorded by the org, which would place the entire cell on the org's radar.

## Epilogue

Ideally, the apostates make it out of the dentist's office with Joyce intact. While this episode spelled the end of their woman on the inside advantage over the org, they know more about the org's operations in the city. If the apostates left many bodies in their wake, the org might want revenge. Alternatively, if they kept the body count to a minimum, the org might be willing to chalk the whole affair up to a misunderstanding. Either way, every scrap of information the Hunters left behind gets examined, potentially spelling trouble from the org in the future. On the plus side, they have Joyce, who serves as a three-dot Retainer. Even without direct access to the org, she still has a knack for spotting patterns and plenty of information sources. ■

# INDEX

Entries in *italics* refer to character options or rules and advice for Storytellers.

## A

Abalo, Patricia, 47  
*Advantages*, 14–17  
*Agent Cog*, 22  
 Aguilar, Isabella, 102  
 Allard, Hélène, 113  
 Anderson, Jacob, 110  
 Anouk Mourne, 116  
*Arcanum Tenure*, 23  
*Artifact*, 17  
 Astrid Hane, Sister, 106

## B

*Backgrounds*  
*Franchise Office*, 17  
*Mask*, 15  
*Mentor*, 15  
*Resources*, 15  
*Safe House*, 16  
 Badr, Fawzia, 113  
 Bashir, Mariam, 71  
 Bauer, Ingrid, 92  
 Baum, Dr. Dieter, 53  
 Baumer, Vicky, 118  
*Bedside Manner*, 20  
 Bellamy, Caitriona, 111  
 Benjamen Holmscroft, 32  
*Best Served Cold*, 24  
 Bonne, Marius, 55  
 Brandon Saez, 85  
 Brozer, Danny, 62  
 Budrys, Evelina, 46, 47  
*Bureaucratic Smokescreen*, 17  
 Byers, Ethan, 40

## C

Caitriona Bellamy, 111  
 Carrillo, Yuisa, 121  
 Chase Nixon, 110  
 Chin, Kasper, 46  
 Chopra, Satyavan, 123  
 Chopra, Saviti, 123  
 Christopher James, Dr. 87  
*Cleanse the Unnatural*, 19  
*Cog*, 84, 88, 117–118  
*Agent Cog*, 22  
 Colin Davis, 102  
*Creating Experienced Apostates*, 12  
*Creating New Orgs*  
*Academic*, 36  
*Corporate*, 69  
*Governmental*, 81  
*Religious*, 96  
*Credit Hungry*, 15  
 Crowe, Marsha, 116  
 Cyph3r, 118

## D

Dalitson, Tim, 62  
 Danforth, Robert, 116  
 Danny Brozer, 62  
*Database Access*, 17  
 Davis, Colin, 102  
*Deathbed Confession*, 18  
*Debilitating Restraints*, 14  
*Debts*, 15  
*Defector from ESOG*, 25  
*Delphic Investments*, 110

Demaret, Natasha, 41  
 Demetrios Sarlo, 113  
 Devesh Sharma, 123  
 Dieter Baum, Dr., 53  
*DigitalCannon Fodder*, 18  
*Divine Protection*, 20  
 Diya Yadav, 123–125  
 Dominic Russo, 87  
 Donatella Ulfila, 95  
*Dr. Theresa Flanders*, 26

## E

*Edges*, 18–20  
 Ethan Byers, 40  
 Eugenia Kim, 86  
*Evangelical Friends of St. Rita, The*, 27  
 Evelina Budrys, 46, 47  
*Experimental Medicine*, 19

## F

*Faked Death*, 15  
 Fawzia Badr, 113  
*Feature Unlocked*, 17  
*Flaws*, 14–17  
*Credit Hungry*, 15  
*Debts*, 15  
*Freelance*, 15  
*Gig Economy*, 15  
*Isoleted*, 16  
*Location of Interest*, 17  
*Poorly Maintained*, 17  
*Spirit Guide*, 15  
*Forensic Field Kit*, 14  
 Frances "UltraViole\_n\_t"  
 Wicke, 118  
*Franchise Office*, 17  
*Freelance*, 15  
 Freemont, Howel, 118

## G

Gael Salcedo, 72  
*Gates of Alexander, The*, 112  
 Gear, 13  
*Generous*, 15  
 Ghanem, Yusuf, 47  
 Ghoul, 79  
*Gig Economy*, 15  
*Global Access*, 18  
 Gonzalo "Gee" Herrera, 121  
*Grand Inquisitor*, 92  
*Great Destiny*, 20  
 Greene, Nathan, 103  
 Gupta, Raj, 118

## H

Hane, Sister Astrid, 106  
*Heat*, 135  
*Heavenly Resolve*, 20  
 Hélène Allard, 113  
 Herrera, Gonzalo "Gee", 121  
 Holmscroft, Benjamen, 32  
 Holmscroft, Morag, 29, 32, 43  
 Hoover, J. Edgar, 76  
*How to Silence Them*, 18  
 Howell "Cyph3r" Freemont, 118

## I

*Improved Resilience*, 19  
 Indrani Vasav, Dr., 123  
*Inflict Stigmata*, 20  
*Influence Fate*, 20  
 Ingrid Bauer, Grand

Inquisitor, 92  
 Isabella Aguilar, 102/*Isoleted*, 16

## J

J. Edgar Hoover, 76  
 Jabari Robinson, 42  
 Jacob Anderson, 110  
 James, Dr. Christopher, 87

## K

Kapoor, Priyanka, 41  
 Kasper Chin, 46  
 Kim, Eugenia, 86

## L

Leopold of Murnau, 92  
*Library*, 18  
 Liu, Sparrow, 71  
 Lobo, Rebekah, 55  
*Location of Interest*, 17  
*Loresheets*, 15, 21–29

## M

Malik Roth, 113  
 Mariam Bashir, 71  
 Marius Bonne, 55  
 Marsha Crowe, 116  
*Mask*, 15  
 Matika Smalljon, 121  
 Maximilian Weathers, 47  
 Maxwell, Virgil, 111  
*Mentor*, 15  
*Merits*  
*Bureaucratic Smokescreen*, 17  
*Database Access*, 17  
*Generous*, 15  
*New Hire*, 17  
*Rural Hideaway*, 16  
*Monster-Bane Restraints*, 14  
*Monster-X Franchise*, 28  
*Monstrous Enhancement*, 19  
 Morag Holmscroft, 32, 43  
*Morag Holmscroft*, 29  
 Mourne, Anouk, 116  
 Murnau, Leopold of, 92

## N

Namik Sekh, 123  
 Natasha Demaret, 41  
 Nathan Greene, 103  
*New Hire*, 17  
 Nick Morello, 62  
 Nixon, Chase, 110

## O

*Occult Field Kit*, 14  
*Orgs, New*  
*Delphic Investments*, 110  
*Gates of Alexander, The*, 112  
*Project Twilight*, 115  
*Real Cognistas, The*, 117  
*Red Eyes Community*  
 Watch, 120  
*Xtend, Ltd*, 123

## P

Pastor, Samantha, 56  
 Patricia Abalo, 47  
*Pattern Analysis*, 18  
 Penny, 73  
 Perez, Xochitl "Xo", 121  
*Perks*, 17–20  
*Phoenix Protocol*, 19

*Poker Face*, 18  
*Poorly Maintained*, 17  
 Pratt, Special Agent  
 Vanessa, 116  
 Priyanka Kapoor, 41  
*Project Twilight*, 115  
*Psychic Backlash*, 20

## R

Raj "Sunburst" Gupta, 118  
*Real Cognistas, The*, 117  
 Rebekah Lobo, 55  
*Red Death, The*, 13  
*Red Eyes Community*  
 Watch, 120  
*Resources*, 15  
 Robert Danforth, 116  
 Robinson, Jabari, 42  
 Roth, Malik, 113  
*Rural Hideaway*, 16  
 Russo, Dominic, 87

## S

*Sacred Insight*, 20  
 Saez, Brandon, 85  
*Safe House*, 16  
 Salcedo, Gael, 72  
 Samantha Pastor, 56  
 Sarlo, Demetrios, 113  
 Satyavan Chopra, 123  
 Saviti Chopra, 123  
 Sekh, Namik, 123  
 Sharma, Devesh, 123  
 Smalljon, Matika, 121  
 Sparrow Liu, 71  
*Spirit Guide*, 15  
*StakeMaiden*, 118  
*Stick to the Plan*, 19  
 Sunburst, 118

## T

*The Evangelical Friends of St. Rita*, 27  
 Tim Dalitson, 62  
*Trace the Threads*, 20  
*Turncoat*, 18

## U

Ulfila, Donatella, 95  
*UltraViole\_n\_t*, 118  
*Unstable Steroids*, 19

## V

Vanessa Pratt, 116  
 Vasav, Dr. Indrani, 123  
*Velum Sanctuarii*, 13  
 Viky "StakeMaiden" Baumer, 118  
 Virgil Maxwell, 111

## W

*We Come as a Team*, 19  
*Weapons*, 13  
 Weathers, Maximillian, 47  
 Wicke, Frances, 118

## X

Xochitl "Xo" Perez, 121  
*Xtend, Ltd*, 123

## Y

Yadav, Diya, 123–125  
 Yuisa Carrillo, 121  
 Yusuf Ghanem, 47



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