

Mission: Improbable

Operation: Obelisk Park

During the Cold War, the government hid its experimental weapons labs in the heart of residential zones, so they would be more difficult targets for aerial bombing. Underneath Obelisk Park, a small dog park in the wealthiest neighborhood in the city, was a hidden high-security lab working on bio-toxins that would make enemies go crazy. After the Cold War ended, the lab was closed up and abandoned, its experiments put inside locked vaults. Hardly anyone remembered it was there, until the dogs started howling.

About a week ago, visitors to the park started seeing their dogs act funny. They would get angry, bark and growl, and then break their leashes to run wild. “The pack” is now refusing to leave the park and defending their turf with tooth and claw, howling with rage. Scientists have visited the site and believe that the dogs drank contaminated water that had seeped up from one of the experiments in the lab below.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to get into the lab and stop the leak without being noticed by the rich, influential, and naïve residents of the neighborhood.

Character Creation

Standard Risus character creation rules apply. No hooks or tales -- your agents are people of mystery, with nothing to tie them to anyone else and nothing to lose. Pumping clichés is allowed, but no double-pumps.

Characters should be appropriate for the mission team. Some good clichés would be veterinarian, safe cracker, biologist, construction worker, master of disguise, politician, etc.

At least one character, possibly more, should have a cliché like “I planned for that”, to represent just how amazing the planning of such a team can be — they can anticipate even the most bizarre plot twists. This cliché can be used to come up with the proper response to an unexpected situation, such as “remembering” to have the right logo painted on the team’s van. By its nature, this is always an appropriate cliché.

Special Rules

To better emulate a certain 60’s TV show, the adventure is to be run in two separate phases. During the *planning phase*, the characters are given all the known information about the situation and any maps the GM chooses to draw. They may do research or visit the park to make cliché rolls against target numbers to discover the hidden information about the lab. The players should use this phase to plan “the job” in as much detail as they please.

During the *action phase*, the team puts their plan into action. Any remaining hidden information will come out as the characters encounter it during the job. The GM should make sure that not everything goes off without a hitch, of course. If they made contingency plans or allowed for character communication, they may be able to change their plan on the fly... or not. Proper use of “I planned for that” should be able to handle problems caused by misunderstandings between the GM and players, like “I don’t think I said there was a gazebo in the park”, as well as minor failures in planning. You can choose to play this phase for laughs (70’s style), for serious (90’s-00’s style), or both (60’s style), as fits your group best.

Information

Known Information

- The obelisk is an objet d’art, on loan from the Egyptian government. It’s been here in this park for decades and you’d better not break it.
- The park is in a very wealthy neighborhood, surrounded on all sides by the big houses of the rich and famous.
- The park is the only bit of public grass in the neighborhood, so everyone walks their dogs there.
- There is a grounds crew that picks up litter and dog droppings at the park every morning.
- The entrance to the lab is via a metal door set into the ground behind the concrete base of the obelisk. The door is **locked** (safe cracker or similar cliché, TN 10).
- Beneath the door, a flat cargo elevator goes down into the lab proper. It’s a maze of cubicles, lab tables, empty cages, and locked refrigerators. There is still power and water in the lab.
- Everything in the lab was labeled neatly before it was abandoned. Each refrigerator or box lists its contents on the outside.
- Scientists believe the dogs have ingested “Agent RAB-ID-2000”, a pink viscous liquid. How it got through the **locked fridge** (2), the **concrete walls** (3), and up to the park, they don’t know.

Hidden Information

- [TN5] Residents know the schedule of the grounds crew, but not their faces. Any strange workers at the park will be reported to the police within minutes.
- [TN5] There are currently about 20 animals in the **pack of bio-engineered-to-be-angry howling dogs** (4) in the park. Oh yes, they howl. Any overt attacks or attempts to capture the dogs will set up a howling that will alert residents within minutes.
- [TN5] The dogs in the park are people’s pets. If they are killed or injured, there will be **lawsuits** (6), screaming residents, and the like.
- [TN10] The leader of the pack is a **Chihuahua** (3) named Teddy, who belongs to the governor of the state.
- [TN10] The park is riddled with small animal holes, like squirrels or rats or moles would dig. Some are hidden.
- [TN15] The RAB-ID-2000 is in a shared locked fridge with the highly explosive “Agent X-BLAM-O”. Any violent shaking of the fridge will cause it to explode in a 3-dice attack on everyone nearby.

The Real Story

Not all of the cages were emptied out properly. A **colony of rats of NIMH** (6) survived and lives in one corner of the lab, where they’ve dug tunnels out through the walls and up to the park. The rats can walk upright, use tools, speak English, and read, of course. They’ve read most of the books in the lab, so they have learned about bio-warfare. They got tired of the dogs chasing them, so they have poisoned the doggy water fountains in the park. Unfortunately, they didn’t expect this reaction. They’ve been stuck underground since the pack of dogs formed and are now regretting their decision. Clever players may even discover factions within the rats that might be convinced to try a coup.

If your team is discovered or sued, the secretary will disavow all knowledge.

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