Scene 1: Introduction

# The Players: the Fellows of the West End

Enter our protagonists, a London cell of Asylum operatives from the West End – men, women and magical immigrants of extraordinary and supernatural talent who have dedicated some part of their endeavors to working with the Asylum (1) to foster a respectful relationship between the mortal and supernatural world through a measured, reasonable, gradual diplomacy. In the past, they’ve helped supernatural creatures trapped on earth find their way out or resolve their problems without causing harm to anyone, helped newly awakened mortals come to terms with the new world they’ve been exposed to, and watched out for and avoided some minor threats from The Host (2).

The Cast of Characters :

* Albany Stone, glam rock occultist, awakened human, social skills focus
* Bill Black, thieving magpie, quite literally; stealth skills focus
* Euryale Gorgonpoulos, a gorgon in the shape of a woman, also an antiquarian; balanced skill-set
* Grom Jotunbrud, troll, melee combat focus
* Stanley Custer, awakened human, ranged combat focus
* Simon Suvini, human turned fairest, medical specialist

# Background

Last night, you got a telephone call from Mr. L. Mortimer Darter, your contact in Asylum. As far as Asylum operatives go, you only know of Darter, though you suspect there are a few other cells like yours in London. Here’s what he said:

“Good evening, Fellows of the West End. I have an assignment for you. Tomorrow morning, you are to drive to Heathrow and meet Jason at the arrivals loop. Take public transportation or a taxicab, for Jason will recognize you and remand a vehicle to you for you to complete your mission. Further instructions are in the trunk of the vehicle. Jason will give you the keys.” This was a little more cloak-and-dagger than you’ve been used to. L. Mortimer usually gives you all the details up front.

Standing at Heathrow’s arrivals loop, you were surprised to see a Maybach luxury limousine pull up to the curb. Stanley noticed that the rear was sagging like it had something heavy in it, and dreaded what was to come next. Jason, you suppose, stepped out and handed the keys to Albany, who, judiciously, drove you all to the parking lot before eagerly popping the trunk.

Inside were four large, high-impact plastic carry cases, weighing so much that only Grom could lift two at once. Taped to one was a sheet of further instructions.

Before following the instructions, you opened the cases.

Inside were Krugerrands. A quick visit to Wikipedia and a check on the current price of gold told you that Darter had just given you fifteen million US dollars in gold. In case you’re wondering, that’s 10,000 coins, or 625 pounds of gold. Including the weight of the high-impact locking cases, it comes to 180lbs per case. Even the mighty construction of this massive car (itself worth about US$200K, blue book) has trouble with one third of a ton of cargo. Don’t expect to make a quick car-chase getaway with five people and a third of a ton of gold.

After ogling the gold – and it’s real gold, not some illusion! – you got your gear and drove to Truro, in Cornwall. It was quite a nice rural road-trip, in fact; though apparently the main features of Cornwall in the spring are cliffs, sheep and fog.

In the lobby, you noticed the other guests dining in the bistro and bar. Speaking with the clerk, you discovered that the hotel had been paid for by credit card, by Mr. Darter, for one night; and your expenses would also be covered. By the time you’d checked into the hotel and carried the “luggage” to your rooms on the second floor, it was time for dinner.

That’s where we’ll begin.

DATE: APRIL 30

TO: THE FELLOWS OF THE WEST END

FROM: L.M.D.

RE: ASSIGNMENT

ASSUME THE PERSONA OF WEALTHY ANTIQUARIANS, TAKING GUIDANCE FROM E.G. FOR THIS PURPOSE. TRAVEL TO TRURO, IN CORNWALL AND CHECK IN AT THE WINDSOR HOTEL ADJACENT TO THE HALL FOR TRURO.

TOMORROW MORNING AT 8:00AM, AN AUCTION WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE HALL. USE THE MONEY PROVIDED TO ACQUIRE ITEM SIX. USE ANY MEANS NECESSARY TO ACQUIRE THE ITEM.

LEARN ALL YOU CAN ABOUT THE OTHER GUESTS AT THE HOTEL. THEY WILL BE BIDDING AT THE AUCTION AS WELL. SOME OF THEM MAY BE AFTER ITEM SIX AS WELL. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU ACQUIRE ITEM SIX, AND THAT NOBODY ELSE DOES SO. HOWEVER, IF THERE IS TOO MUCH DISRUPTION, THE AUCTION MAY BE CANCELLED. DO NOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN.

THE ITEM MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE DESIGNATED DROP LOCATION IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE AUCTION CONCLUDES.

THE DROP LOCATION IS PICTURED BELOW, IT IS THE LANDWARD GATE OF TINTAGEL CASTLE, NOT FAR FROM TRURO. A STONE IN THE BASE IS LOOSE. PLACE ITEM SIX BENEATH IT AND RETURN TO THE WEST END FOR FURTHER ORDERS.



The Asylum (1)

Asylum is an umbrella conspiracy entwined in a number of other conspiracies. It recruits almost exclusively from other organizations that are aware or affiliated with the supernatural world. Asylum selects people who have a combination of competence, discretion, and a demonstrated sense for the welfare of others. Individual candidates though will have these qualities in different levels. Asylum believes that a careful and respectful relationship between the mortal and supernatural world can be good for both sides. Some of them look forward to a time when such a relationship might even be public, but all understand that to end secrecy now would be disastrous.

Asylum works mostly through local cell structures that it creates through careful recruitment and introduction. Each Asylum cell is only aware of those members within its cell and one or two contacts to the rest of the organization. They are meant to keep the existence of the cell a secret to everyone, including their own personal contacts and allies. New cell members can be recruited with careful investigation and the permission of one of the Asylum contacts. Cells are generally formed either for long-term intelligence and responsibilities over a region, or as short-term task-forces to solve more urgent problems.

When it comes to regional responsibilities, Asylum requires that long-term cell members collect information from each of their respective conspiracies to be on the look-out for any possible threat to both human and supernatural societies. When they identify a possible threat they are given a great deal of discretion in dealing with it. They're already trusted agents so it's assumed that each cell doesn't engage in wanton abuse and violence and that they generally do whatever they can to minimize the harm to human and supernatural society. It's an unfortunate reality that sometimes you have to lie, steal, or kill in order to achieve those noble goals.

One of the less exciting day-to-day things that Asylum does is to shepherd lost supernatural creatures or accidentally awakened humans into contact with a network or conspiracy that will best adopt and support them. Agents usually fulfill this function as "concerned neighbors" and sometimes make use of their inter-factional connections through Asylum to introduce newcomers to the right people. They also work to keep the especially bellicose hawks of various factions from creating or spreading overt conflicts. To efficiently accomplish these objectives frequently requires seeking promotion within factions and ingratiating themselves among local movers and shakers. After all, it's hard to influence communities when nobody respects you.

What Asylum knows that everyone else doesn't is that there is another dangerous faction out there that everyone knows even less about: the Host.

The Host (2)

Whenever egregious supernatural power rises up and creates obvious conflict, the Host comes in and cleans up irrespective of who is to blame and who gets caught in the crossfire. While Asylum doesn't try to keep the Host's existence a secret, no one has seen any sign of them in quite some time. Most of the factions don't believe the Host is still active and a few question if it ever really existed. In recent years there have been a few times where large groups of people in the supernatural communities went missing. Weeks or months later a few would eventually turn up dead or alive but with no memory of who they are. Asylum believes that the Host is responsible for these types of events even though other factions prefer to blame each other.

To avoid these mysterious crackdowns, Asylum tries to find problems and deal with them first. However morally complicated the Asylum solution might seem, the Host's reaction would be that much more extreme. Despite the general benevolence of their mission, Asylum remains largely unknown or misunderstood. Their contacts and handlers claim that their secrecy prevents interference from the countless other factions. Undoubtedly there is a great deal of paranoia within the organization. Different cells rarely get to meet and interact directly, but rumors have somehow circulated about how many Asylum cells tend to mysterious vanish. Agents are asking, is the Host targeting Asylum?

*NOTE: There are other organizations of supernatural awareness out there. They’re not villains, and some PCs in this group are members of them.*