SPYCRAFT™

ROLEPLAYING GAME

VERSION 2.0

WORLD ON FIRE

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A WORLD TORN APART BY FEAR, SEWN TOGETHER WITH LIES...

Terror. It is a word we know well. It haunts our daily lives and changes the way we act, the way we think. Though we may not realize it, terror has drawn us into a new kind of global conflict that is fought not only in far off places but also in our hearts and minds. Einstein was only part right: World War III is not being fought with devastating weapons of mass destruction — yet — but rather with the strength of true conviction, the principles required to take a stand for a future worth saving. He was right about the stakes, though. They're nothing short of extinction.

World on Fire presents a savage, uncompromising view of one possible future that is all too dangerously near. It is a dark mirror of the real world, disturbingly familiar yet shockingly different, in which spies and soldiers become revolutionaries poised to shape a future of their own design.

What will your tomorrow be? Are you ready to face your fears, root out the lies, and fight for it? The battle begins here...

2.0 SPYCRAFT 2.0
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computers died making this book

AEG, for allowing us to release
this product on our terms,
and for suggesting we include
the Alliance of Evil Geniuses
(yes, it was their idea)

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>> DATA STREAM 7.00.8.1.1....
....
WELCOME AGENT
THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING TO HELP US. AS AN ADDED INCENTIVE,
THESE PAGES HAVE BEEN COATED WITH ONE-HALF OF A BINARY POISON.
>> PARADOX

>> CHAPTER 0
INTRODUCTION

CRAFTING THE PERFECT SPY SETTING

As you may already know, the *Spycraft* brand has a new home, though its management remains the same. Crafty Games consists of Alex Flagg, Scott Gearin, and Patrick Kapera, the authors of the *Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook*, and while we're expanding the game's offerings to include science fiction, near future, horror, and other genres, we haven't forgotten its roots. As our first major release, *World on Fire* squarely targets the espionage genre, in fact more so than anything we've ever done.

For a start, there's the Tradecraft chapter, which gets down and dirty with all the little ways and means of the cloak and dagger profession. Everything from how to code and secretly transmit messages to building and running spy cells is covered, along with dozens of other topics intentionally geared to inform and improve your espionage experience. Game Controls and players alike should benefit from this in-depth discovery of one of the world's most elusive trades.

We've also slanted the New Rules chapter toward intelligence work, with the Fixer base class and several expert classes offering many new career paths for characters and their opponents. New Origin options and feats round out this healthy mix, which also greatly expands melee combat options and rounds out other parts of the system. A new system, Allegiance, further develops factional play by offering character options and new Reputation uses specifically tailored for certain groups. This system in particular will make appearances in future Crafty Games releases, joining our existing tools in sculpting the flavor of each setting.

This brings us to *Spycraft's* latest campaign offering, the *World on Fire* itself, which features a unique approach that we believe is a perfect fit for today's discerning RPG audience. First and foremost, though the setting material in this book shares many elements with the factional *Spycraft CCG*, and in fact details many aspects of that game's backstory, it is both independent and very different in approach and tone. Where the card game was necessarily broad, including many real and fabricated concepts to support a wide array of visuals, *World on Fire* is largely realistic and tightly focused, a snapshot of global turmoil directly inspired by today's political landscape. Where the card game was flamboyant and bombastic to exhilarate and drive competitive duelists, *World on Fire* is believable enough to satisfy die-hard tabletop espionage enthusiasts.

Another important feature is this book's setting content, which keeps the spotlight on matters of interest to everyone. The setting's history is detailed in broad strokes, never focusing too long on any single faction or NPC, and offers many hooks and details for players to reference when creating their characters. The modern backdrop, rather than focusing long sections about each faction, revolves around current events and villains against which the player characters struggle. There's a little about each of the heroic factions here, but mostly we've left those roles for you, the players and Game Controls using the product, to fill. Above all else this product should be about what you do with it and we don't want any of our ideas to get in the way of that.

This approach has several additional benefits as well. It allows Crafty Games to give each of these heroic factions the deluxe treatment in its own PDF release. Each of these six products will include a comprehensive overview of the faction and additional storyline related to the group and its NPCs of note, as well as options exclusive to characters who join — all without distracting from the primary thrust of the setting, detailed herein. As many of these factions were the source of unconventional flavor in the card game, this also allows GCs and players to adjust the setting to their liking. Perhaps best of all in an espionage world, these releases allow factions to remain mysterious to those whose characters don't or shouldn't know about them.

A brand new approach for a brand new company, and one we at Crafty Games hope you enjoy. Please feel free to drop by **www.crafty-games.com** and let us know one way or the other, browse our other products, ask questions, or just socialize. We look forward to meeting you and until then, enjoy the *World on Fire*.

CHAPTER 1 - CONTENTS

STUMBLING THROUGH TRAGEDY

The world is in pain. Virtue has become a foreign language, fear is the new currency, and apathy is the vice of choice. We are shackled by the senseless circular logic of headless governments fumbling for bloody knives lost in the abattoir, fearing what may happen if someone else finds them first. And in this community of petrified despair, we are each ultimately alone.

This community of one exists in an endless sea of mediocrity, frozen in place by countless choices to settle, to strive less and accept more. It begins with the despondent, spoon-fed drones that make up the populace of every civilized culture in the world, conditioned by generations of shattered dreams and undermined aspiration. Yet these hapless parasites are merely leeching from those truly at fault, the so-called power brokers in charge of the fractured, impotent bureaucracies running the Great Machine of the world. So long have these talking heads spun and re-spun the truth that none of them truly remember what it was anymore.

Wars are fought to satisfy the few and televised to placate the many. Elections are held to reverse reversals and laws are ratified to silence or jail those who notice. Debates are scripted serials, impassioned yet meaningless diatribes propped up to appease the few citizens tuning in from the latest episode of canned reality. Only in the dark, remote offices of national dignitaries does anyone mention the grand sham that international politics has become, and then it's to wonder...

How did it come to this? How did the century of greatest cultural and scientific progress in history fall so short of its potential? Why are the insightful punished as the ignorant ascend to power and glory? Who is responsible, and for what purpose?

As is often the case, it began simply, and more will be said of this later. For now, let's focus on the broader picture — the world we've all come to quietly abandon. It is a grim world indeed, in which national militaries sponsor brutal, exhibitionist acts of counter-terrorism rivaling or in some cases surpassing the violence they oppose. In which opportunistic snake oil salesmen take advantage of a system well beyond checks and balances, without hope of unbiased representation. Most importantly, it's a world that may look familiar, but is altogether different...

THROUGH A MIRROR, CRACK'D

The *World on Fire* setting may seem familiar to you, especially if you're a player of the *Spycraft Collectible Card Game (CCG)*, but chances are, you're in for a few surprises. Unlike a lot of CCG support products, this isn't a recap of the serialized storyline to date, and unlike a lot of RPG products, it's not a collection of NPCs to trounce and humiliate. Rather, it's an unrelenting view of the real world, with a few key differences and a frighteningly vast underlying threat to literally everything we know.

It's a place where characters have the chance to drag the world back from the very brink of oblivion, or find the best seats in the house for the final apocalyptic show. The characters are special not for what they can do, but for what they know and how they use that knowledge to change the status quo. In the end, their actions define every campaign brought to life in this *World on Fire*, and set the course toward every campaign's ultimate destination, for good or ill.

As the first rays of morning light bristle upon the highest bastions of repugnant oppression across the nations of the world, we are reminded of how it all began...

THE COLD WAR AND THE SLOW THAW

In practice, the Cold War was a rough and tumble time of scattered loyalties, when the needs of the moment often surpassed the needs of one's agency, or even one's nation. Individual operatives did what was necessary to satisfy their superiors, or themselves, waging a wild, untamed war without accepted rules of engagement. On a national level, allies became enemies overnight and rivals joined forces to thwart greater threats, or just because it was momentarily convenient. The loyalty wheel continued its relentless turn, just as it had so many times before.

In large part, this had to do with the fundamental nature of the clash. Predominantly, the Cold War was a plodding ideological contest, punctuated by blistering flashes of superiority or scandal. Both sides ultimately sought the same goals and neither could entirely achieve them. Even nuclear and technological escalation assumed this measured pace, both sides lauding their accomplishments as the enemy lingered just behind.

In this zero sum era of pointless circuitous posturing, individual operatives rose to the fore as the premiere force for change — much as they have today. Of course, during the Cold War, the world's governments weren't mired in quite as much red tape as they are today and its leaders weren't quite so toothless, but even then, truly exceptional agents ran the show. As today, some of these agents were brilliant champions of integrity, while others were cold abusers of the system. Nearly all had personal agendas beyond their assignments.

WINTER KNIGHTS

As the world settled into an uneasy nuclear standoff following the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, three power players took center stage. In the Soviet Union, the Committee for State Security (*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy*), or KGB, was formed as part of a sweeping reorganization to decentralize the nation's turbulent government. It proved one of the most formidable participants in the Cold War, quickly gaining ground against the West and establishing a strong foothold in Europe and other disputed regions across the globe.

Unknown even to most within the Soviet government, the KGB's true masters were the ruling council of the shadowy Krypt, a private cabal of old world string-pullers who'd long since seized control of the State High Command. The Krypt had secretly and gently guided Eastern European affairs for centuries, and the upheavals following World War II afforded the hidden organization an opportunity to expand its control to foreign territories from behind the convenient guise of spreading Communism.

Meanwhile, across the Pacific, the United States' National Security Act founded the Central Intelligence Agency, whose function was initially to correlate and evaluate information provided by the military and other national operations arms. In practice, however, the CIA became the American front line throughout the Cold War, conducting covert foreign actions with and without sanction until the U.S.S.R.'s dissolution in 1991.

The CIA took its cues from many sources, including its own impressive array of analysts and think tank specialists, but one of its greatest weapons came late in the Cold War with the 1970 introduction of Project BRAINCHILD, a radical experiment conceived by Nobel Prize winner Gregory Goodchilde, a longtime personal friend of the Agency's soon-to-be-deposed DCI Richard McGarrah Helms. Goodchilde had many friends in Congress and throughout the American Armed Forces and used these connections to ensure his handpicked team of revolutionary scientists, theorists, and political forecasters remained well funded and off the books through the Watergate Scandal and the subsequent deluge of anti-espionage sentiment pulsing through the United States.

Finally, an unexpected regime took shape deep in the heart of politically split China, under the commanding banner of egomaniacal demagogue Zhang Khan, self-made Emperor of the Nine Tiger Dynasty. This long-standing millenarian cult had centuries of momentum in its homeland, but in the 1960s, the well-connected Khan brought it respect and authority in all quarters. He transformed the fringe religious sect into a legitimate faith, siphoning followers from the nationalists and Mao Tze-tung's Communist Party alike. During a time of great strife in China, the Nine Tiger Dynasty seemingly offered a return to simpler times, when tradition and propriety were the order of the day.

In truth, however, the Khan sought military glory and expansion, and the Dynasty offered him the ideal opportunity to realize an irrational dream of global domination, one flock at a time. A patient man, the Khan was content to let the message spread slowly through the Chinese people, without drawing unwanted attention from potential enemies on either side of the slow-boil Chinese civil war. By the time anyone realized his ultimate aims, he stood at the center of a dire stalemate in China, poised at the head of a fanatic criminal army.

Others maneuvered through this super power minefield, some with noble agendas and others seeking to exploit the chaos. England's response to the two- and eventually three-way Cold War exchange was Majestic Branch, an assortment of the finest operatives from MI6 and other Crown agencies. These operatives — privately referred to simply as "Majestics" — were provided covert license to use any means necessary to undermine Cold War escalation and safeguard Queen and Country.

Europe hosted another growing but largely overlooked force: the Marino crime consortium, a mob family controlling much of the illicit traffic through the western half of the Continent, with fledgling tendrils in many U.S. cities. The Marinos frequently became embroiled in the super power confrontation, especially after a promising young don — the Italian Count Dominic Demise — established a foothold on both sides of the Berlin Wall.

Each of these organizations became well known within its own circle, gaining considerable influence and reputation. The CIA and KGB were widely known, though many civilians inaccurately viewed them as notorious boogeymen with unilateral power, unlimited resources, and lives of constant excitement and danger. In truth, the vast majority of their job was dreary routine, consisting of weeks or months of tedious surveillance, sifting through mountains of data for one lucky break, and endless training for potential situations that might never come to pass.

Still, the reputed thrill of the world's second oldest profession was, and is, very real. Like their modern counterparts, Cold War spies were married to deception, always having to develop new and more impenetrable lies and disguises. They could trust no one — not their friends and lovers, not their colleagues, not even their family — as anyone could turn out to work for the other side at any time. Even the righteous and the virtuous had to be kept at arm's length for fear an enemy had found a weakness, a way to exploit an operatives' greed, ideology, secrets, or ego.

Paranoia and anxiety were rampant, even life threatening, during the dark, lonely years at the peak of the Great Game. Spies regularly fell victim to personal demons, losing themselves to alcohol, drugs, careless sexual partners, and faster, more effective methods of suicide. They squandered money to compensate. They ruined relationships to validate their despair. The best of them clung to their flags and philosophies throughout, but many failed, losing themselves in the international maze of loyalties.

No, the Cold War was not kind to spies, and few felt this more deeply than the field agents of the CIA and the KGB. Yet if these agents' lives were infrequently turbulent, those of Krypt and BRAINCHILD operatives were positively convulsive. Cloistered within remote, unglamorous cells across the globe, these behind-the-scenes figures waged the conflict on an unprecedented plane, constructing thousands of scenarios before the first directives went out to their respective vanguards, and deconstructing just as many before the body bags made it onto the plane ride home.

Within the highest echelons of both organizations, planners manipulated and sacrificed nations as figurative chess pawns, always searching for the perfect move to trap the opposition. They forged the scenery against which their field teams clashed, playing the Great Game on a purely cerebral level, matching wits on a scale not even the most brilliant military minds in history could envision.

The Cold War experiences of Majestic operatives differed, though perhaps they could be viewed as a union of the super powers' public and private espionage assets, with a healthy dose of arrogant pride thrown in for good measure. At their prime, many Majestics became well known within the world's elite communities, regularly consorting with world police and politicians one hour only to meet with top dog terrorists, assassins, and other wanted criminals the next. As highly adaptable troubleshooters, the Majestics were given a wide berth and an incredibly forgiving field license, which allowed them to break a narrow common ground between typically contentious social and power strata.

This freedom was responsible for many of the Majestics' greatest successes, and contributed to the intoxicating sense of romantic adventure that always surrounded them, but it came with its own unique disadvantages. While the Majestics rarely answered to anyone in the field, they often didn't benefit from any home office support, and each of them understood that should they slip — should they become captured or somehow create trouble for the functionaries at home — there was little chance the Crown would acknowledge them, let alone negotiate on their behalf. More likely, they would simply be burned, cut off and forgotten until another Majestic found the opportunity to avenge their loss.

Ultimately, each Majestic was his own home office, a blend of analyst and operative all at once. The Majestics' lives were never dull, but few were equipped to survive such a relentless existence, and the rate of agent loss in their ranks was highest of any bureau in the world, save perhaps the minion divisions of some particularly harsh criminal groups. Even with ample remuneration and liberal recreational options, Majestics tended to define the very limits of self-indulgent, self-destructive behavior. None made it through the Cold War entirely whole.

Members of the Marino crime family and followers of the Nine Tiger Dynasty lingered at the very opposite end of the spectrum, enjoying completely open lives of relative simplicity. Both

a time. The roots of this gradual revelation paralleled the growing conflict in Vietnam, where the Khan saw great opportunity for expansion of his criminal empire. Acting without the knowledge of any outside his small collection of military and political advisors — henchmen deeply committed to his grand vision — the Khan secretly agreed to back opposition of Ngo Dinh Diem, the U.S.-installed and CIA-supported head of South Vietnam.

The Khan hoped to thwart American and French interest in Vietnam and support the new powers in the beleaguered territory just long enough to establish his own controlling interest. This, he expected, would lead to a standoff in Vietnam his growing resources could easily dominate. In fact, the inevitable

operated for the most part in public, the Marinos an accepted criminal menace in the European underworld for decades, the Dynasty at first a welcome middle ground in volatile China and later a world-threatening evil empire. Both embraced violence as a means to their ends, and both rarely kept secrets or played intricate games within their own ranks, saving such tactics for encounters with their enemies.

The Dynasty wasn't particularly integral to the Cold War conflict — at least, not at first. As the Khan's ultimate intentions came to light, the Dynasty became one of the most urgent threats in the world, not quite stalling but certainly slowing all other conflicts for

standoff did come, but not as the Khan expected — with the creation of the Soviet-sponsored National Liberation Front (NLF) under Ho Chi Minh's control in North Vietnam, the Khan found himself mired in yet another confrontation with the 800-lb. gorilla of Cold War Eastern Europe (the Dynasty also opposed the Soviet Union in its native China, where the nationalists and communists had been fighting a bitter civil war for decades).

The Dynasty fared poorly in the Vietnam Conflict, having no impact on a national scale and little in the South. As history tells us, Ngo Dinh Diem was eventually deposed not directly by the North Vietnamese, or the Viet Cong, but by his own sponsor, the United

States, in response to his military oppression of Buddhists in an effort to install a strong and supplicant Catholic faith in their place. With their foot in the door, the Americans proceeded to steadily dominate the southern war effort, nudging the Khmer Rouge and others — including the Dynasty — into secondary roles.

Still, for reasons known only to him, the Khan maintained a discreet presence in South Vietnam until the 1968 Tet Offensive, when he pulled all survivors out of the area under cover of chaos. There is evidence that the Khan's continued attention to the war was provincial — that his small but effective strike squads periodically targeted U.S. troops as part of the effort to drive them out of the region. Yet rumblings through the narrow Vietnam intelligence grapevine spoke to another purpose — his squads were searching for something.

In what turned out to be the final field report of 1st Lt. Thad Gant of the U.S. 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, the commander reported the capture of several "unidentified Chinese hostiles" rooting through the remains of a shrine south of Ia Drang Valley. During the subsequent interrogation, the hostiles' assertion that they were religious militants salvaging relics was shredded when one of them broke in isolation, revealing their true target was something called "The Godspike."

No further explanation was forthcoming. 1st Lt. Gant's squad failed to report in again and their ultimate fate was never determined. They were officially declared MIAs and eventually casualties of war, presumed victims of a VC ambush. Given the charnel house of South Vietnam at the time, no further questions were raised until BRAINCHILD came across the report several weeks later. Inquiries were made, but the captured Chinese hostiles had likewise vanished, and submissions to their government yielded nothing but a stock reply about support to North Vietnam's reunification effort. Despite their best efforts, the BRAINCHILD analysts wouldn't hear of the Godspike again until very recently, during the Murder Lottery fiasco.

Following its withdrawal from Vietnam, the Nine Tiger Dynasty focused on shoring up its home front. The Khan had always eyed the turbulent Chinese government as his most critical ambition, but he was enough a student of history to know that any overt military coup would bring him, at best, costly bloodshed and unstable rule. Vietnam had also taught him patience, and rather than use his not insubstantial resources to secure a power base in China's confused halls of power, he waited, watched, and made sure he had friends on all sides.

Beijing had long questioned the Sino-Soviet alliance, citing deep-rooted ideological, economic, and political concerns, and the Khan rightly predicted an imminent break between China and its Soviet partners. The break came in 1966, amidst Red China's accusations of Soviet "social imperialism" stemming from, in part, the Soviet Union's inclusion in the 1963 Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty with the United States. The situation worsened in 1969, as armed battles erupted at picturesque Zhenbao Island along the former allies' mutual border (known to the Soviets as Damanskiy Island).

Zhenbao-Damanskiy was among many territories long disputed between the Chinese and Soviets, and the Khan used many of his highest-placed allies to aggravate these grievances until they flared into open violence. It was at this point that the Khan's meddling came to light as a real threat on the international field, as Majestic operatives were dispatched to assess the crisis and find a way to drag both sides back from the brink of open war.

The Majestics knew they were on a clock, as only weeks later, the Soviets moved on another disputed border region: Tieliekti in Yumin County of Xinjiang. The operatives split their forces, some approaching political figures in both countries believed to be amenable to a peaceful resolution, the rest investigating the sudden swell of pro-violence sentiment in China. The first two teams managed to convince A.N. Kosygin, Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, to suggest a meeting with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, and urged the Premier to agree. Only the Majestics' semi-celebrity — and more importantly, their absolute dedication to continued peace — kept the negotiations alive long enough for the meeting at Beijing Airport on September 11, 1969; that, and the intervention of the third Majestic team, whose investigations had uncovered the Khan's involvement and the Dynasty's plans to assassinate Chairman Kosygin and lay the blame on the Chinese government.

Though their efforts weren't revealed to either dignitary, the Majestics successfully thwarted the assassination, eliminating the Dynasty operatives in a desperate silenced gun battle in the bowels of the airport's luggage conveyor system. The meeting took place as planned and the foundation for new Sino-Soviet talks was established. The Majestics made their discoveries about the new threat in China known to their friends at BRAINCHILD, but as they soon learned, little could be done. Once again sensing the coming wind, Zhang Khan had ingratiated himself with China's newest and most powerful ally — the United States of America.

By the dawn of the 1970s, both China and the United States were carefully probing the possibility of a union against Soviet expansion. Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai made inquiries through American writer Edgar Snow and American table tennis teams they invited to visit, while U.S. President Nixon sent exploratory messages through assets in Pakistan and Romania. This led to a secret conference between China's leadership and Henry Kissinger in July 1971, and the President's public trip the following year. This historic gathering produced the Shanghai Communiqué, which set Taiwan on the path to liberation and established strong diplomatic and intelligence ties between the nations. Leading up to the gathering, however, the White House was extremely apprehensive about any potential upsets, and thus chose to overlook Zhang Khan's activities for the time being.

Despite its government's stance, BRAINCHILD quietly worked with Majestic Branch to remove Zhang Khan from the world stage, sparring with the warlord many times through the rest of the Cold War. The Khan's power and influence grew with that of China, placing him in an enviable position as friend to everyone, ally to none. By virtue of uncanny judgment and incredible fortune, he kept himself at arm's length from every damaging scandal, every shameful upset in China over the years, even several prompted by BRAINCHILD and the Majestics. He also managed to set himself up on the ground floor of several modern agencies, including the Ministry of State Security (MSS), the military intelligence department of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), and the Investigations Department (a Communist Party bureau that carries out political inquiries about party members), the last of which he still uses to eliminate potentially dangerous opponents within the country.

The Marino Family's involvement in the Cold War was far less prestigious but arguably had just as much impact upon today's combative landscape. It began simply, with a poker game. One chilly evening in the winter of 1959, two years before the erection of the Berlin Wall, military, espionage, and underworld figures slipped into the back room of an Italian restaurant in West Germany. By this time most of them had been meeting for years and they easily evaded detection by border police and local authorities, as well as the many uninvited members of West German agencies. All of them brought large sums of high-value currency.

The agreement was simple. After the chaos of the war, a small group of soldiers, spies, and mobsters who'd long traded information and lies decided to continue their fruitful relationship. Some were Nazis or sympathizers able to sidestep the Allies. Others were subversion specialists and guerilla fighters once sent in to undermine the Germans and then left behind to mind the enemy's capital. Still others were neutral during the war, usually in the business for the money, the power, the glory, or all three. All were canny, highly skilled, and elusive double-dealers with at least a little money to burn.

The semi-weekly game had been running throughout the 1950s, with new blood sponsored by the regular players as veterans retired or were retired from the business. It was understood by the regulars, and made clear to the newcomers, that the table was not a place to work out grievances (though many a shady deal was brokered, or even decided, with a convivial hand of cards).

Only one newcomer played at that fateful table in the winter of 1959, a former Nazi deputy commandant whose true name was Vogt. That evening, he went by "Gladisch" and claimed to be an East German tailor seeking a little excitement to break up
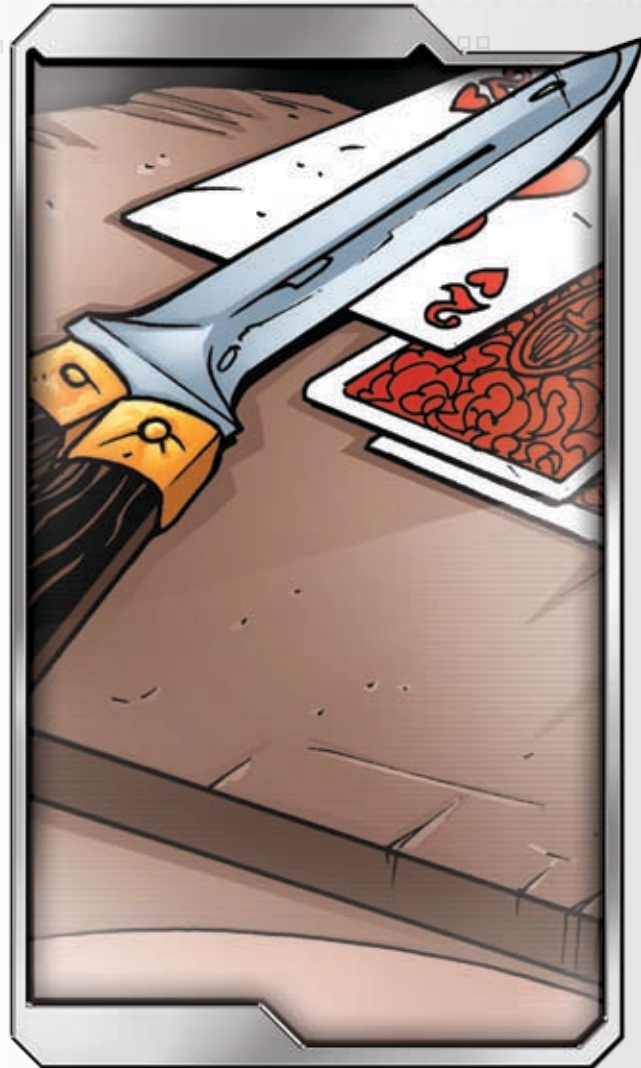
his dreary, mundane life. In truth, he had been part of the military assignment to the wartime Reichsbank, the Nazi monetary stockpile in Berlin — though this wouldn't be discovered for some time, and not without considerable effort.

Another of the players was Count Dominic Demise, a mid-ranking lieutenant in the Marino Crime Family and heir to a bankrupt branch of Italian royalty. His lineage didn't ensure him a comfortable life but it placed him in a position with enough influence that he could have secured a healthy political career. Instead, however, he seduced Dahlia Marino, the mob family's crown jewel and one of the European criminal elite's most coveted prizes. Both families were incensed at their union, but only Dominic's chose to cut him off. Dahlia's father, Don Scali, acquiesced to her foolish choice, grudgingly accepting Dominic into the Marino Family — and its business. He zealously thrust Dominic into the worst of the underworld, hoping to drive him out of the marriage or get him killed, but the outsider thrived, carving out a profitable niche on the wrong side of the law.

Dominic was always intrigued by espionage and one of his most successful ventures involved the blooming Cold War, across Europe and specifically in Berlin, where the Marinos had developed a shaky smuggling route across the increasingly dangerous

border. Dahlia's father recognized that the tenuous route was soon to collapse and inserted Dominic into the hopeless situation without explanation or support. At first the channel appeared to be doomed, targeted by the police and secret forces on both sides of the Iron Curtain, but Dominic soon realized how to save it — he offered the spies targeting it a piece of the action.

Dominic began with the Stasi, the East German Secret Police, which had been brutally cracking down on traffic across the super power divide. More importantly, many of the Stasi's senior officers in Berlin were known quantities: corrupt to the core, and easily swayed to look the other way, or even intercede on the smugglers' behalf.

Acquiring allies on the West German side was more difficult. The BND and BfV were not impenetrable, but their agents weren't as susceptible to blunt bribery as their eastern counterparts. With them, Dominic had to apply finesse. He arranged for several key operatives in each agency to become indebted to friends of friends who had no obvious connection to the Marino Family. The debts took many forms, from loans of money to satisfy gambling debts acquired at fixed Family games to favors performed to solve problems the Family had engineered. In all cases, Dominic's friends bailed the operatives out, only to request that they bend the rules, look the other way, or perform some largely benign act to satisfy the debt at a later time. Each time, when they did, Marino Family enforcers produced evidence and threatened the operatives with exposure unless they broke the rules, ignored something major, or assisted a criminal act. The cycle continued until the operatives were in so deep they

couldn't refuse to support the smuggling ring. The shadiest of them even took to the life of crime, willingly falling in with the Family once the lifestyle's perks became evident.

This process took time and it frequently failed. Those who defied the up and coming Dominic Demise were dredged out of local wells or gunned down by Stasi during ops no one should have ever known about. Some simply went missing, never to be seen again. Fortunately for Dominic, his early influence in East Berlin and growing allies in the West bought enough time to secure the smuggling route and ensure steady expansion. By the winter of 1959, Dominic Demise basically controlled the Berlin underground and much of Germany's as well, and he stood poised to reach across Europe in the next few years. All he needed was a little more money to grease the wheels — and that was exactly what he was about to get, though perhaps not in the way he expected.

The poker game went late that evening and the table's limit was lifted. Several times. The newcomer, Gladisch, was flush with cash, bet big, and played poorly. Despite spectacular losses he was never shaken, and sometime after midnight he pushed the last of his impressive contribution into the pot. "All in," he said decisively. Then he lifted a revolver to his temple and drove a .32 bullet through his frontal lobe.

The bloodstained players blinked across the table at the body. None of them moved or said anything for some time. Nearly a full minute later, the crassest of them — a West German banker named Carlberg — reached across and flipped Gladisch's cards over: straight flush to the ace. He'd trounced them all. Indeed, he'd won his money back with interest. Dominic Demise had the next highest hand, and after some debate claimed the winnings. Everyone retired for the evening and fled home to wash.

Much speculation commenced about the mysterious newcomer and his bizarre death over the next several weeks. It wasn't long before the players realized that none of them had invited him, or ever heard of him. Nonetheless, he knew the game's location, how to approach the doorman, and what to say to get through the door. He was either very lucky or very canny, as he'd masterfully manipulated the room, convincing everyone he belonged yet never overstepping with any of them.

When inquiries yielded nothing about a tailor named Gladisch on either side of the Berlin border, the players abandoned the mystery, assuming it would either sort itself out or remain one of those strange events that happened during turbulent times. Six months later, the sorting began. The banker, Carlberg, came to his friend Dominic Demise with a revelation — Gladisch's money was counterfeit. All of it. More importantly, Carlberg knew where it came from.

In World War II, he told Demise, one of the Nazis' plans involved the production of mass quantities of British pounds sterling. The Reich intended to fund its war machine while simultaneously flooding its enemy's banks, crippling its economy. The effect would have been devastating if the plot had gone off. Indeed, the British government had learned of the plot after the end of the war and was in the process of redesigning its currency. As it was, the Allies had overrun the Axis powers months before the counterfeit bills were sent into circulation, though many suspected hidden caches of them were still out there.

Gladisch's bills were German Deutsche Marks, but they bore some of the same hallmarks as the counterfeit sterlings. According to Carlberg, who'd overseen the destruction of many of the original forgeries, the money Gladisch lost was definitely produced using the same process, and likely some of the same machinery. "That makes Gladisch a Nazi," Carlberg told his friend, "and that may make us very rich men indeed."

Carlberg further explained that the Nazi counterfeiting operation had been revealed when the Allies recovered the bulk of the Reichsbank holdings in a Merkers potassium mine *(see The Reichsbank Robbery: A Treasure Hunter's Perspective, page 12)*, though it was kept from the public to avoid a panic. Pretty much everyone knew about the millions of dollars' worth of gold, silver, art, and other valuables found at Merkers — there was no way that such a find could be kept quiet, especially with the chaos and corruption at the end of the war — but only top government officials and those involved in the salvage and follow-up operations, such as Carlberg himself, were aware of the counterfeit findings. "And that places us in a very fortunate position," Carlberg said, "because according to the Reichsbank records, millions of dollars' worth of precious metals and artifacts — perhaps *tens of millions* — are still out there, unfound."

Dominic Demise was a bright man and easily made the next leap, though he agreed that it was a big one. "If Gladisch were a Nazi, and he stole some of the Reich's treasure before the fall..." Carlberg beamed, nodding, gold fever sparkling in his eyes. He finished Demise's thought. "...then we might be able to find it."

It took another year to learn Gladisch's true identity as former deputy commandant Erich Vogt, whose wartime missions frequently involved courier trips through the Bavarian Alps, where much of the Reichsbank monies had been found. Curiously, it appeared that none of the men under his command still lived. Though most of them perished in the final days of the war, seven had committed suicide and four others had died in freak accidents (two when their jeep had mysteriously exploded, one in unexpected shelling, and the last during the collapse of a rarely used tunnel through one of the more rugged stretches of the Alps).

According to Reichsbank records, which Carlberg was still able to access thanks to a few well-paid friends, Vogt never officially came in contact with the stolen loot, but the hunters weren't dissuaded. The bizarre fates of Vogt's men, the events at the poker game... Dominic could smell more. Though he'd never confirm his suspicions, he rightly guessed that Vogt had robbed the robbers, promising to share the spoils with his men if they helped to hide them. Vogt's own death remained a nagging question, though, one that remains unanswered today.

After Demise and Carlberg learned all they thought they might about the elusive Mr. Vogt, they began taking excursions out along the former Nazi's courier routes, beginning with those through the Bavarian Alps. They took no one with them and arranged for false papers identifying them as East German traveling booksellers. They lied to everyone at home about their destination, claiming to be on vacation abroad. With all the death surrounding Vogt, and the thrill of the hunt often overwhelming the two of them, neither was eager to involve others.

Only Dominic returned. He told everyone that Carlberg had died when he fell from their boat off the Corsican coast, and that per his wishes, he'd been cremated and his ashes had been spread over his birthplace in the Lausanne hills of Switzerland. The banker had no family, no friends closer than Dominic, and no one questioned the explanation. The silent acceptance may have had as much or more to do with Dominic's growing power in Berlin, but regardless, Carlberg's death went unchallenged.

Over the next several months, Dominic's power grew exponentially. He shored up impenetrable ranks on both sides of the Berlin border, ensuring that he could get anything through even after the East Germans started building their walls and fences. He expanded into neighboring cities and began dealing in contraband of all kinds, as well as loan sharking and financing high-profile thefts and other criminal activities. He was so successful that he started encroaching upon the Marino territories.

Two years earlier, the other lieutenants could have simply slapped Dominic down and Dahlia's father would have quietly thanked them, but he was only one of many dons at the head of the Marino Crime Family, and Dominic was rapidly engendering himself to all of them. Nearly all of Dominic's substantial income was being filtered into the dons' coffers, and back room deals were being cut every day to strengthen the Family's hold on the European underworld.

Soon, Dominic Demise earned and demanded a place at the head of the Marino Family, alongside the dons and his fuming father-in-law. He first entered Fortune House, the Porto Cristo mansion where all Family decisions are made, in September of 1964, and he spent every day from that moment on scheming to claim it exclusively as his own.

For the next stage of his rise to power, Dominic bided his time. He worked in concert with the other dons, helping to push out all but the most resilient competition, and established some of the Family's most effective and enduring assets, including its stranglehold on local and global law enforcement. Even the globe-spanning INTERPOL eventually lost sight of the criminal picture in Europe (and later, South America, after the Family expanded across the Atlantic).

The Marino Family grew into its own with the Cold War, blossoming as a criminal nation within nations. Dominic's rising star soared with the success of his practical approach, and the growing ranks of those committed to or terrified of him ensured his profitable survival. He outlived Don Scali by sheer force of will alone, and assumed the kingpin's seat at the head of the Family table before the body was cold.

By the latter half of the Cold War, the Marino Family basically owned Europe, and those operating across the Continent, including spies, paid their dues or tangled with underworld enforcers. Unofficially, the Family became a quiet fourth super power intent not upon ideological conflict or expansion, but rather old fashioned greed.

THE REICHSBANK ROBBERY: A TREASURE HUNTER'S PERSPECTIVE

During World War II, the Nazis stole a vast amount of gold, silver, diamonds, precious art, currency, and other valuables, worth in excess of five and a half billion U.S. dollars at today's value. In February 1945, after the successful U.S. bombing of Berlin and the near-demolition of the Reichsbank (the Nazi war machine's monetary stockpile), much of the horde was moved 200 miles south, to the village of Merkers, where it was hidden in the bowels of a potassium mine. Two months later, the U.S. Third Army captured Merkers and French mine workers told the Allies about the underground spoils. The find consisted of over 8,000 bars of gold bullion and enormous piles of loose gold, silver, and currency, but it only accounted for a portion of the reported Reichsbank monies.

As the Allies were sifting through the Merkers cache, the Nazis decided to move the rest of the Reichsbank — including over nine tons of gold — to Oberbayern, their stronghold in southern Bavaria. They hoped to regroup from this location, plotting the rise of the Fourth Reich, but U.S. forces eventually caught up with them and captured their riches. Tallied with the Merkers and other finds, however, this still fell short of the closing balances of the Precious Metals Department of the Berlin Reichsbank.

The vast majority of this missing fortune has never been found — at least, not to the public's knowledge. Despite this being dubbed by Guinness "The Largest Robbery in the History of the World," the widely accepted assumption is that this gold wasn't stolen by any single person or group, but rather by many opportunistic members of the Nazi Party and others with access to the gold in the twilight of the war.

The allure of lost Nazi gold is strong among treasure hunters, who piece together stories and rumors from all over, hoping to confirm and find a missing Nazi fortune. In the *World on Fire*, the horde's final destination — or, at least, the destination of the largest *recorded* horde — is defined, though Game Controls can easily establish other caches of nearly any size to fuel their own storylines. To this end, we provide a sampling of the many theories and threads potentially leading to additional stolen riches. Any new Nazi gold caches are likely subject to the same side effects as Dominic Demise's find *(see page 61)*, though the GC can easily develop a reason this isn't the case.

- In 1945, in a remote part of the Austrian Alps, a Nazi caravan awakened farm girl Ida Weisenbacher and ordered her to hitch up a wagon to transport several heavy crates to Lake Toplitz (the Nazi vehicles couldn't complete the journey due to the rugged terrain). The crates were marked in code and Weisenbacher never saw their contents, but conjecture initially centered on stolen gold. Efforts to confirm this met with failure time and again, however. Lake Toplitz is over 300 ft. deep and its floor is littered with ancient trees uprooted or collapsed from the steep limestone cliffs surrounding it. Its water is devoid of oxygen and nothing lives there except bacteria and a rare species of worm. Together, these conditions thwarted attempts to search for the gold, and when divers eventually recovered rockets, torpedoes, and coded crates containing a printing press and counterfeit British pounds, many concluded that no other loot would be found. This may, of course, not be the case.

- In 2003, an amateur diver discovered a solid gold cauldron at the bottom of Lake Chimsee in Bavaria. The item was decorated with Celtic and Indo-Germanic figures and speculation pointed to its commission by a Nazi official fascinated with mythology. The cauldron was appraised at over a hundred thousand U.S. dollars, prompting another sweep through the Nazi's former "alpine fortress" in the Bavarian Alps. *Officially*, nothing was ever found.

- Wehrmacht officer Dr. Max Merten was one of many Nazi overseers at slave labor camps across Europe. In Greece, he was the administrator of the camp at Thessaloniki and stole 50 cases of valuables from its captives allegedly totaling two billion modern U.S. dollars. Merten moved these objects to the Peloponnesus peninsula aboard a Nazi submarine and from there the stolen goods were transferred to the *Sofia*, a fishing boat that was intentionally sunk near Kalamata. Merten planned to retrieve the gold after the war but wound up in a Greek prison in 1958. He later received a presidential pardon but wasn't allowed to leave Germany without incurring further jail time. He died in 1976 and the valuables were presumably never recovered.

COLD WAR RECRUITMENT

Most of the modern groups presented in *World on Fire* are highly cosmopolitan, recruiting from every corner of the globe and every layer of society and walk of life. This is common practice in some parts of today's real world espionage community, but wasn't always. Especially during the Cold War, when borders and beliefs were clearly defined, many organizations enforced strict recruitment and promotion criteria.

Majestic Branch, for instance, was intensely national until stress and attrition reduced its membership to only a handful of operatives in the 60s and 70s. This forced the Branch to rethink its narrow approach and begin actively seeking foreign agents, beginning with proven doubles ready to defect.

The Nine Tiger Dynasty has always been fiercely defensive of its traditions, slow to modernize culturally, technologically, and otherwise. In the latter quarter of the 20th century, it started to induct foreigners, though only in a limited capacity and rarely without proof of the outsiders' devotion or aptitude with The Edge *(see page 61)*.

As a legitimate family, and a proud line of old world Italians to boot, the Marinos were by default largely unsullied. When society grew to accept culture cross-pollination, however, the Marinos grudgingly followed suit. The family also accepted new blood as its empire expanded outside the homeland, but its transformation was completed with the Orphan's rise to power and his reinvention of the family's leadership *(see pages 16–17)*.

The Krypt — guided by forces far outweighing mere nationality — wasn't without its own initial restrictions. Operating inside one of the most shielded regimes the world had ever known, the shadow cell couldn't easily bring outsiders into the fold, nor did it want to. Much of the Krypt's strength was derived from the Soviet Union's unshaken faith in its "national treasure," its blind acceptance that the cell was not only sanctioned but the brainchild of its greatest military and political minds (rather than the other way around, as is the actual case).

Only BRAINCHILD began largely exempt from national staffing, benefiting from Gregory Goodchilde's open-minded, futurist scheme. The think tank and its anarchist successors have always welcomed anyone with the talent needed to get the job done.

COLLAPSE AND COALITION

The Cold War ended not with a bang, nor even a whimper, but with the slow exhale of a world strained to the point of break-down by decades of rampant paranoia. People had lived in fear too long, nations had lied too often, and the grinding wheels of conflict were old and feeble, threatening to crack apart with every turn. It was time for change.

As before, it began in Russia. In 1989, in a speech to the Supreme Soviet, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze proclaimed that the nations of the Soviet bloc had "absolute freedom" to choose their own governments. He and staunch political ally Mikhail Gorbachev deftly guided the crumbling empire to a new day, greatly reducing military and espionage assets and withdrawing troops from Eastern Europe. Communist governments vanished, previously autocratic border controls were eased, and the Berlin Wall came tumbling down in a torrent of foolishly optimistic cheer. NATO officially pronounced the long-anticipated end of the nuclear stalemate and powers across the globe considered their options in what initially appeared to be a grand new era of untapped possibility.

Some were less happy with these developments. They watched the delusional spiral of the world in horror, certain the worst was yet to come. One in particular, a Krypt commander publicly known as GRU Colonel General Yerik Kolesnikov, took action. Kolesnikov arranged a private meeting with one of Majestic Branch's foremost operatives, Sir Richard Poole, and proposed an unconventional alliance between their agencies. The alliance, he said, would necessarily exist outside the authority of their respective governments, providing them a unique opportunity to safeguard the world from what he called "irrationally idealistic self-destruction."

Poole had already seen the cracks forming in the carefully applied layers of the world's defense. Agencies were closing their doors or being incorporated into powerless or pacifistic arms of their governments. Compromises were being made with security programs and deals were being brokered with known villains like Zhang Khan and Dominic Demise. National heroes were being silenced with cash, threats, and in some cases violence. The invisible armies of the Cold War were hemorrhaging soldiers, and like Kolesnikov, Poole was sure that those who weren't given a purpose would find one, often without regard for honor, freedom, or justice.

The agreement was struck in the fall of 1992, as the war in Bosnia was spiking to an all-time high, IRA bombings were ravaging Great Britain, and civil war was raging across Somalia, the Sudan, and the southern former Soviet republics. "These aren't after-shocks," Kolesnikov and Poole agreed. "They're the growing pains of a motherless child drunk on absolute power. They're echoes of future terror."

Poole went about recruiting former Majestics abandoned by their house and their flag. He offered them the chance to continue their work without official sanction and without the fumbling, crippling checks and balances that had plagued them in the past. He promised them the opportunity to save the world on their own terms, and in most cases, they agreed.

Kolesnikov had different needs and a different agenda. He had all the blood he wanted, but it was important no one caught sight of the stains. Vultures circled the Soviet corpse, hard liner survi-vors and aspiring new political figures seeking their fair share of the Great Bear's remains. The Krypt was one of the Soviet Union's

best-kept secrets, shielded even from the prying eyes of Majestic Branch and the CIA's Project BRAINCHILD, but given the State Command's advanced rate of decay, it was only a matter of time before the operation went public or a new power player assimilated it into his schemes for the post-perestroika world.

Most Krypt personnel doubled as officers of the GRU, the country's military intelligence house. As such, they had access to the Soviet Union's remaining data and transportation infrastructure and used it to simultaneously relocate known agency cells and erase records of their existence. All across the chaotic country, Krypt agents cleared out of their station and safe houses, often reducing them to rubble to further cover their tracks. They vanished into the harsh winter, escaping in unmarked getaway cars, smoke-black stealth choppers, and armored trains first used by the Red Army at the turn of the century.

Only those disposing of the evidence peppered across the country's myriad government buildings lingered behind, ordered by Kolesnikov to cover the extraction and infiltrate whatever rose out of the Red Aggressor's ruins. This worked out well, as the GRU was one of the few State agencies to survive the massive waves of subsequent reorganization. Perhaps it was Kolesnikov's incredible foresight, perhaps it was blind luck, but once again, Krypt operatives were placed at the forefront of the evolving Russian command structure.

The allied Krypt and former Majestics took to calling themselves "Shadow Patriots" after their shared devotion to ideals they believed their nations had abandoned, and the need to conduct their operations without sanction, off the global grid. They kept things simple, setting up shop where they were needed and never staying longer than necessary to get the job done. Only the Krypt maintained a home office, and it shifted locale frequently to remain a step ahead of casual notice.

To the world at large, the Shadow Patriots became a radical fringe sect whose methods and motives were as confusing as they were elusive. At first, the British government refused to acknowledge them, hoping to neuter them before links to the former Majestic Branch — or worse, classified Majestic secrets — were leaked to the public. The Russians, on the other hand, openly blamed many of their worst scandals on the departing Krypt, deflecting attention away from their fumbling reconstruction. Eventually, media outlets in the East and West ensured the Shadow Patriots' reputation as a band of renegade zealots with a terrorist agenda.

As might be expected, the Shadow Patriots alliance was initially quite rocky. The Majestics were used to operating solo, with infrequent assistance even from others in their own ranks. They didn't have a central command structure or intelligence gathering arm and they didn't trust their former enemies enough

to answer to them. Several of their highest profile operations were in fact colossal failures, worsening already dire situations and contributing to the public's increasingly negative sentiment about their efforts.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Project BRAINCHILD was hurtling toward an unexpected standoff. With the election of President Isaac Hunt, the U.S. Administration stepped up its agenda to "police the world." Indeed, this was one of Hunt's most winning campaign strategies and surprisingly, he more than fulfilled its promise. (As a career politician of the worst order, Hunt was discreetly known for betraying his constituency, but his calculated personality allowed him to repeatedly sidestep responsibility for it. He was simply too likable to fall out of favor, no matter how transparent his agenda.)

Hunt's cabinet arranged a top-to-bottom accounting of government spending and systematically dissolved programs that didn't fall in line with their ambitious eight-year foreign policy plan, which called for increased military focus in areas of civil unrest threatening the global stage (as well as satellites of the former Soviet Union and regions in which the United States had a financial interest). Ostensibly, the policy called for the military to take a passive role, but behind the scenes, it soon became clear that Hunt intended to use the presence to dramatically increase covert activities across the globe.

Project BRAINCHILD was tapped to lead the charge, staging and in some cases executing dubious operations to undermine perceived threats as well as benign regimes possessing resources important to American growth. This sat poorly with the aging Gregory Goodchilde, whose experiment was very close to reaching fruition. With the Internet at its fingertips, BRAINCHILD could finally realize its full potential, expanding its functions and facilities worldwide to achieve a "heightened state of cerebral community," or "automated genius." Finally, he envisioned, his people could break free of the feeble communication limitations that had haunted them since inception; there was nothing they couldn't accomplish.

Unfortunately, the bean counters couldn't fathom Goodchilde's argument, and despite the many incredible advancements BRAINCHILD had made over the years — including the development of the Internet's predecessor, the DoD's ARPANET — they demanded a shift away from data collation and analysis and toward tactical operations planning. Goodchilde spent the last seven months of his life railing against this "shortsighted exploitation" of his work, which regrettably forced him further and further away from the close relationship he once shared with the brilliant minds at BRAINCHILD. Only his protégé, a wild and outspoken visionary named Nathan Sparks, spent any amount of time with him during this period, and always behind closed doors.

On November 14, 1993, Gregory Goodchilde was mugged and stabbed repeatedly on his way home from a meeting at the Pentagon. Paramedics were delayed by road construction and he died on the way to the hospital. The culprit was a drug user with no family whose body was "accidentally" cremated less than 18 hours after the crash. No one in BRAINCHILD accepted these facts on face value, but neither were any of them given time to investigate. Within two days, orders were passed down that divided the group into several independent units to be shipped to first wave spots in the police campaign.

The Shadow Patriots had been closely observing the situation in the United States and Sir Richard Poole made contact the day after Goodchilde's death. He offered the BRAINCHILD analysts an out — with a price. They could join the Patriots, but they'd have to leave their country behind. Like all the Krypt and former Majestics who'd joined the cause, the analysts would become soldiers without a flag, committed to the entire world or to no one at all.

This offer appealed to most in the think tank, especially Sparks, who shared Goodchilde's vision of a future without borders. Some believed they were better off on their own and argued to continue their mentor's work without assistance. A few remained loyal to the U.S. government and were promptly tied up and tossed in a basement until the rest could decide what to do.

After hours of heated debate, the majority of BRAINCHILD pulled up stakes and joined the Patriots, taking many of the group's inventions — and quite a lot of wildly expensive U.S. property — with them. A small number, headed by a recent recruit named Vivienne LeVan, headed for parts unknown to start over.

Sparks and his BRAINCHILD crew offered the Shadow Patriots a central intelligence clearing house, as well as an operational infrastructure; after all, the think tank had been doing the same for the CIA and U.S. military for decades. More importantly, they provided the Patriots with a near-impenetrable global communication network and a way to evade some of the meddlesome authorities that had hounded them since the start of the alliance.

Unknown to any outside its highest ranks, BRAINCHILD had built several special features into the ARPANET that were carried over in the modern Internet, including a way to piggyback secure messages on inconspicuous data packets and the means to invade and erase parts of national law enforcement records. Over the next several years, as the Internet grew and the globalization of such information commenced, this allowed BRAINCHILD to effectively wipe out or rewrite entire personal histories, down to credit records and sealed criminal files. The final piece of the puzzle was in place — the Shadow Patriots lived up to their name as invisible sentinels on the international espionage scene.

ELSEWHERE: BLOODLINES AND BLOODVINES

The Shadow Patriots didn't evolve alone in the 1990s. In China, the Nine Tiger Dynasty underwent a shocking transformation as one of Zhang Khan's hollow promises to his devoted followers was actually fulfilled, though not in the way he was expecting.

The cornerstone of the pseudo-philosophy the Khan sold to his flock revolved around the Eight Sacred Immortals of Chinese myth, cultural heroes said to have achieved life everlasting for their incredible deeds. According to legend, each of these beings is said to have visited the remote mountain fortress named Guan Gong Palace, and it is around this location that the millenarian cult later to become the Nine Tiger Dynasty was formed.

This cult believed that a Ninth Immortal would one day arrive to lead China's people to ultimate glory. The Khan exploited this conviction, reinventing the cult as a ruthless Dynastic army ready to march on China's enemy, whomever and wherever they might be. At first, the Khan had no intention of taking the ruse any further, but in 1985, when one of his "encounters" amongst the young

women in the Dynasty's families resulted in an impending child, he changed his tune. His paid "spiritual advisors" spoke of signs and portents, of everything the Dynasty had waited for, and he trumpeted the forthcoming birth as the dawn of a new age.

The Khan arrogantly assumed he could groom his son to assume figurehead control of the Dynasty, increasing its membership several times over in the process, but there were two problems with his plan. First, his "son" turned out to be twin daughters. Second, as he would learn to his mortification over the next 20 years, they'd want nothing to do with his grand global designs. For the moment, though, he was only faced with the first problem, and he overcame it easily enough: his spiritual advisors presented them as a divine gift, physical embodiments of the Yin and the Yang. "Without either," they said, "we would be only half as strong. With both, we are finally as one, whole and unstoppable."

Of course, this was all spin doctoring. The girls weren't special... save for the odd mirror-perfect streaks of crimson through their striking black hair. They didn't act as opposing yet complimentary forces of nature... save for Mai-Ling's natural empathy and grace starkly contrasted by Tai-Tzu's intense focus and near-military mindset. They couldn't possibly be some bizarre confluence of myth and fiction... could they?

The Dynasty's trainers first noticed that something more than coincidence was at work shortly after the girls' births, as certain members of the warrior caste began to exhibit unusual abilities. The most diligent students — those most dedicated to the ritual and regiment prescribed by the Khan's false philosophy — possessed an uncanny martial "edge." They ran faster, leapt farther, and hit with more force. Like the heroes of myth, they defied the limits of human strength, agility, and endurance, and the more zealous their dedication, the stronger they became.

The Khan was at a loss to explain these freakishly superior troops, but he wasn't about to let the opportunity elude him. He declared the warriors were "true agents of Heaven," gifts to the Ninth Immortal (which he jointly called the twins), and privately set about finding someone who could explain what was happening. He failed, as the warriors' remarkable talents baffled even the legitimate spiritualists he consulted, and in the end, he simply accepted that the fates or the gods or whoever was in charge had blessed his endeavor, and commended them on their astute wagering sense.

In Europe, the Marino Family was also enduring a reinvention of sorts. Dominic Demise, the Family's aging elder, had outlived or eliminated all competition and single-handedly controlled nearly every mob family across the Continent. His health was fading, however, and in the summer of 1995, he learned that cancer had spread through his throat and lungs. With only weeks to live, he made the final arrangements to pass his criminal legacy on to the one person he trusted: "The Orphan," a street urchin he'd taken under his wing years before.

The Orphan was in his mid-twenties by 1995, but he'd lived with Dominic and Dahlia Demise for nearly a decade, since he was caught trying to steal silver table settings from the mobster's sprawling mansion home. Dominic saw something special in the unwashed, untrained boy, and kept him on initially as an amusement, then later as a dedicated lackey. The Demises never learned the Orphan's real name — or, if they did, they never used it. The boy went by many names and sometimes none at all. He simply was.

Dominic's intention to leave the Marino Family's operations to the Orphan came as a sudden and appalling shock to everyone, especially Dahlia. She'd always assumed that barring a blood son, which she'd never provided him, she would step into her husband's shoes (many speculated that this was her plan all along). The patriarch's instructions were clear, however: the Business was the Orphan's to command.

Dahlia stormed out of the Demise home and out of the Family shortly after her husband's death, fleeing for parts unknown. Some believe she ran into the arms of one of her many semi-public lovers, others that she withdrew to plot the Orphan's murder and the acquisition of her rightful inheritance. Nearly a year after her disappearance, she was found in the wreckage of a car driven off the Autobahn, badly burned and comatose. She remains so to this day. No evidence of what really happened to her has surfaced, but the Orphan arranged to pay for all her hospital expenses and make her comfortable — until she woke or followed her husband into the great beyond.

Even with Dominic's secret grooming over the years, the Orphan's transition into his new role at the head of the Marino Family was far from smooth. It undermined decades of careful balance between the dons, once more reducing them to petty squabbling and backstabbing. It also made the Orphan a constant

Yerik Kolesnikov's killer is exposed at the end of the *Day of the Bullet* story arc, which is recounted with other crucial revelations about the setting in Chapter 2. As noted there, only a select few NPCs discover the killer's identity, leaving it to the Game Control to determine whether the player characters are in the know. Even if they are, players are warned against reading the relevant sections of Chapter 2, as they contain many details about the *World on Fire* the GC may want to reveal at his own pace, in his own way.

target, in and out of the organization; the dons wanted his seat at Fortune House and the Family's enemies finally saw the chance to topple the looming giant of the European underworld.

Bemused crime buffs expected the Orphan to back down, or run, but instead he simply... vanished, without warning, without a trace. In his wake arose an unexpected blood heir to the Family fortune — conveniently discovered Prince Giovanni Marino, of the incorporated Sicilian Mafia. The Prince stepped in and took over where the Orphan left off, fortifying the Family with many new allies across Europe and throughout the world, and entrenched its leadership behind a veritable army of dupes, fall guys, and cooked books. The modern Marino Crime Consortium was born.

Giovanni's decisions went unchallenged, all those seeking the Orphan's death now satisfied with the presence of deserving family at the Consortium's head. The boss rebuilt the criminal empire from the top down, starting with a string of lieutenants no one could question. Each of these lieutenants seemed a perfect fit for the Consortium, possessing the charisma, brashness, and strength of character to own his field of play, including everyone and everything in it. But they all shared a dangerous secret — they were all *one man*, at least at first.

Realizing that his tenuous rule over the Marino Family would never last, the Orphan had arranged his own disappearance, but only *after* he'd secretly spent months in a new role of his own invention: Giovanni Marino. Using Dominic Demise's private cache of stolen Nazi gold, and with the help of a small cadre of industrious Family loyalists who believed in his cause, the Orphan fabricated Giovanni's life down to the smallest detail. He stepped into his creation's shoes and played the role just long enough to establish it and transform the Family into the Consortium he desired. Then he handed the enterprise and the false identity over to a trusted pupil he'd personally prepared for the role and went to ground again.

Soon after, the first of the new lieutenants arrived — another of the Orphan's creations — and then another, and another, each in turn a fabrication claimed by a trusted ally. Without a single drop of bloodshed, the Orphan staged the greatest coup in organized crime history.

The Orphan's most recent guise has been that of Emilio Thorne, aka "The Rose," a playboy lieutenant planted squarely in the center of the Consortium's steep familial chain of command. Yet Thorne is ultimately one of the most influential criminal powers in Europe, controlling the Family's leadership from within. He calls the string of counterfeit identities at the head of the Family "The Bloodvine," and periodically treats them as a separate group altogether — "his own private Syndicate." The Bloodvine Syndicate.

THE BABY AND THE BATH WATER

As the Shadow Patriots faded into the backdrop, their actions faded from the headlines — for a time. Conversely, their conflicts with their former allegiances, and indeed, with nearly every territory in which they operated, only worsened. Few appreciated their uninvited efforts, even when they improved the situation. Of the three contributing factions, the former Majestics fared the best in the eyes of the world's leaders, in most cases benefiting from long-time personal relationships forged during their days at MI6. Often, however, even they were kept at arm's length to protect someone's political career, or to shield from undesirable fallout if a Patriot mission went belly-up (as they still did from time to time).

The Patriots operated worldwide, expanding their network to include troubleshooters, information brokers, mercenaries, couriers, spin doctors, and other specialists as needed. The factions blended together to a degree, learning from each other's strengths (though their weaknesses often lingered as well), and they traded agents frequently. They grew to warily accept each other like cousins several times removed who came to live together after years of empty letters. They were family, though far from nuclear and truly functional only on their best days.

Each of the Patriot factions — and many of their individual operatives — pursued crusades during this period. The most prevalent of these, and certainly the most explosive, was BRAINCHILD's continued harassment of the United States government. Sparks' crew routinely chipped away at President Hunt's international operations, exposing them or throwing up roadblocks whenever possible. This elicited retaliatory campaigns launched by BRAINCHILD's former cohorts at the CIA, as well as NSA and other federal agencies. Despite the former BRAINCHILD operatives adopting a secondary front as a group of anarchist hackers called "The Banshee Net," their actions frequently brought the wrath of these U.S. forces down upon the other Patriots as well.

Sparks' private war with President Hunt reached a crescendo by the turn of the Millennium, but it was waylaid by more pressing concerns in the spring of 2001. On March 20, the so-called "Day of the Bullet" *(see page 54)*, an elusive assassin known as the Triggerman shot and killed Yerik Kolesnikov on the shores of Lake Ilmen, Siberia — or so it appeared. The following morning, Kolesnikov's body was delivered to the authorities with evidence incriminating the Shadow Patriots in dozens of failed and illegal operations over the last nine years.

Public outcry was immediate and severe, but paled in comparison to what was coming next. Nathan Sparks watched the pundits' strings being pulled on every news channel. He listened to their baseless arguments and their senseless accusations, and he could smell who was behind it all. In his gut, he *knew* who'd paid the Triggerman's astronomical fee this year. *Hunt.* Hunt and his global allies.

Sparks couldn't prove it, but he was sure — and he couldn't let the attack go unanswered. Before his death, Gregory Goodchilde had given Sparks a collection of every dirty little secret BRAINCHILD had ever come across, every haunting skeleton in every closet the think tank's analysts had ever dug through. It consisted of literally millions grossly damaging documents, tens of thousands of pictures, and miles of audio and video surveillance footage. It was the proverbial "black book" of the intelligence game.

Goodchilde told Sparks to use the information as needed, to protect the project and if it came to it, to injure those threatening the cause. "Everyone important has a weakness," Goodchilde told him, "and they're almost all in here." After his mentor's death, Sparks continually updated the collection as well, and he knew it was primed to ruin any target.

Nathan watched the news and started taking down names, but he lost count at four digits. He realized that the Patriots were being crucified, scapegoated for every bad thing the loyal news hounds could dredge up from the last ten years. The events mentioned in the materials delivered with Kolesnikov's body were only the beginning; they were blaming the Patriots for things that Sparks had never heard of, things he was pretty sure never actually happened. In a fit of irrational bile, Sparks launched up a hundred anonymous websites and onto each he loaded BRAINCHILD's black book. All of it. Then he sat back and waited for the fireworks to begin.

UNITED WE PUNISH

Sparks' counterstrike swept across the globe like a plague, ruining careers, toppling corporations, and injuring governments, often with fatal consequences. Today, it's widely considered the single most devastating revelation of the media age, but in fact it wasn't just one revelation, or even a hundred. It was tens of thousands of crippling disclosures, stacked upon each other like cordwood for the pyres of a hundred times as many victims subsequently burned at the public stake. It was an apocalypse of honesty, more than any culture could bear, and the world has never fully recovered. Some claim it never will.

Overnight, better than half the world's leadership resigned, disappeared, were arrested, or worse. Another 35% followed within a year. Similar fallout was seen amongst high profile professions, including police, judges, and other legal authorities, military officers, Fortune 500 executives, filmmakers and celebrities, sports stars, political activists, and industry leaders in dozens of other career circles. The hated, the loved, the honorable, the wicked, all gone; without warning, society was left to start over.

Scandal and fear dominated the decision-making process in every arena. On a personal scale, people demanded everything from justice to retribution, but for the most part, nothing happened. The system was strained beyond the breaking point with so many outraged viewpoints that none of them could gain any true attention. The average citizen of any media-rich nation was so overloaded with facts and figures that more often than not, he simply stopped listening. It all just became white noise driving people away from the issues, including those of importance before the information's release.

On a global scale, the effects were profound. Currency rates plummeted, especially in the United States and Japan. Peace disintegrated in many long-beleaguered parts of the world, including Bosnia, the Sudan, Sri Lanka, and many parts of South America and the Middle East. International trade and other agreements suffered, and many collapsed altogether. Development of the European Union came to a near standstill, with new member countries and projects entering play at a crawl. Experts expect it may be 20 years before the previous rate of progress is seen again.

In Russia, President Kiril Fedotkin burned all his goodwill to salvage his position, but couldn't do the same for Russia's effort to stabilize the republic of Chechnya. Facing widespread rioting due to incendiary video footage of human rights atrocities committed by Federation troops, Fedotkin's only option was to pull out of the region entirely and focus on problems at home. This prompted a slow but steady movement toward independence amongst other republics, as well as calls for reform in *oblasts* (provinces) and *krais* (territories). Today, Russia's borders are weak and its people once again slaver for change, and given the intense turmoil, no one can predict what the nation will look like even five years down the line.

The disclosures upset the status quo in countless ways. Consumers raged against multi-national corporations that intentionally concealed medical advancements in the name of profit. Cures for life-threatening illnesses came to light, killing the profit margins of addicting or lifelong treatments. A super-efficient carburetor design dramatically skewed the petroleum economy, threatening to sink all but the most forward-thinking carmakers. "Energy crises" were revealed to be price-gouging scams concocted by backroom politicos.

Hollywood burned. Again. The adoring fans of Adam Graves, one of the world's most cherished if reclusive movie stars, learned that their idol had succumbed to a chemical imbalance, killed five, and then set himself on fire, and that his manager hired computer specialists to keep him on the big screen. Another story received less attention, but shouldn't have; as it turns out, the movie and music studios actually did slip subliminal advertising into movies, TV shows, and albums — and they still do.

Spies and murderers were named. Politicians faced their demons. Mysteries were solved. Revelation was everywhere, which was appropriate with so many calling it "the end of the world."

The sensationalists dubbed the massive info-dump "The Mouthwash Confession" and probed, debated, and editorialized it for months. They picked at the corpses of those the Confession claimed early, and helped to bring down those who fought to weather the slander-storm to follow. No one was safe and everyone with any brains at all ran for the nearest cover to plot early retirement. In one fell swoop, nearly all the Old Guard was gone, and much of the New Guard was too terrified to take any action not pre-approved by the masses — and what the vast majority of the masses wanted was blood.

It was easy for people to lay the blame for all the terrible changes in their lives at the Banshees' feet. The public only knew the hackers and the other Patriots for their failures — and the news bites prepared by the nations that wanted them jailed. The reasons for Sparks' release of the information weren't known, but the act fit the Banshees' M.O.: fast, dirty, large-scale chaos. In the end, a lot of people pointed a lot of fingers at a lot of other people, but the only targets nearly all of them could agree on were the Patriots.

Remaining and new United Nations delegates lodged a swarm of charges against the Patriots and other "terrorist forces" like them. They demanded swift and decisive action, and three and a half months later, they had it in the One World Doctrine. This turning point contract was supported by 159 of the U.N.'s member nations, with another dozen signing on since. As with all such agreements, it came with legions of addendums and compromises, but its primary function was crystal clear: it created a

single U.N.-sponsored organization dedicated to eradicating the terrorist menace in any and all forms, and it granted this organization near-unilateral power in the process.

Project Pitfall came into being January 1, 2002, with offices in every contributing nation. Almost immediately, construction began on a home base facility adjacent to the U.N. headquarters in New York City. The structure was completed in early 2005, though few can attest to what's inside, as only those with special clearance may venture past the ground floor. Pitfall's budget dwarfs any previous counter-terrorist effort, and rivals that of the entire U.S. Department of Defense. Its handpicked troops hail from all supporting nations' militaries and have the sovereign right to operate within any of those nation's borders, without warning and without explanation.

Most disturbingly, however, Pitfall is authorized to employ any measures necessary to apprehend suspected terrorists, up to and including lethal force. The One World Doctrine suspended terrorists' rights to trial and placed discretionary power to identify terrorists solely in the hands of Pitfall's leadership. Regardless of the intention, the agreement chucked checks and balances out the window, then created an army with the power of God and unleashed it with orders to take down anyone who looked at it the wrong way.

Even the genius Nathan Sparks couldn't have predicted how the Confession was going to change the world. Ultimately, he got what he wanted: among all its other effects, the Confession effectively castrated the U.S. government, at least at first. The proverbial 800-lb. gorilla of the post-Cold War world just didn't have the superior standing needed to throw its weight around with impunity anymore. Of course, that wouldn't stop it from trying — especially with current President George Winter in the White House.

Ironically, the Confession also castrated the one person who might have helped prevent the One World Doctrine: former President Douglas Westcott. Nathan Sparks never met President Westcott — which isn't surprising given the wildly different circles in which they ran — but if he had, he might have liked him. Idealistic, impassioned, scrupled to the core, Westcott won his nomination and eventually the popular vote despite the public's approval of his predecessor, Isaac Hunt (indeed, he had to bring George Winter on as his Vice President to satisfy the staunch Right).

Westcott came into office only weeks before the Mouthwash Confession's release, and didn't have the trust or the clout to contain the damage. Following the release, Westcott's own cabinet even sold him out, claiming he was blocking the U.N.'s One World Doctrine talks (he was, though not as overtly as was established). In part, they did this to deflect attention from their own now-public indiscretions, but conveniently, it also placed George Winter in power — and that, in many peoples' opinions, gave America a fighting chance in the age of Pitfall.

Winter is a career military man, a no-nonsense, true grit sort who stands up for what he believes in (and commonly knocks down whatever his opponents believe in, though most people rashly write this off as a facet of his training rather than a measure of the man). Winter believes in a strong offense, then a strong defense, and tossing around phrases like "peacekeeper mission" and "nuclear arsenal" if neither of those works out. He's just what the deluded masses think they want in an age when "the guilty are finally getting what they deserve."

THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY

The Mouthwash Confession is the ideal tool for customizing the *World on Fire*. It's explosive enough that nearly any event might result from it, yet so overwhelming that much of what you might expect to happen could wind up being lost in the angry haze. It's also recent enough that it only impacts history that's easily found in back issues of *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, and *People*.

Game Controls are encouraged to use the Confession as a grand McGuffin explaining any and all desired deviation from the real world. Significant changes on the order of the described upsets in the Russian border territories, and certainly anything as landmark as Project Pitfall's creation, should be explained at the game's outset, or as they come into play. Less prevalent changes can be withheld for an appropriately dramatic or comedic moment, or to support a plotline.

SEPARATE WAYS

Yerik Kolesnikov had long been the glue holding the Shadow Patriots together, and his death strained the Shadow Patriots to their breaking point. Sir Richard Poole respected the alliance, but he frequently questioned whether the contributors might be more efficient operating independently. "The Banshees already do," he'd argue, referring to their private campaign against the United States. With Yerik dead, the Patriots changed; no one realized it at first, but the agreement was already fractured, a lingering echo of the past.

The mourning process was difficult, and each of the Patriot factions acted out in its own way. Krypt operatives sought justice, lashing out at each suspect in turn until they'd throttled the innocence from them. The former Majestics looked to recurring and recent enemies, focusing on the Nine Tiger Dynasty (with whom the Patriots had tangled many times of late) and the Marino Family (which the Patriots had tried unsuccessfully to destabilize following the death of Dominic Demise). As is their way, the Banshees sought the truth, and they found it, or so they thought. Several times.

Surveillance photos of a former Majestic meeting with one of the Triggerman's suspected private identities in February 2001 got the ball rolling, but things got complicated when evidence also pointed to Krypt operatives concealing someone — perhaps the Triggerman — at a Novgorod safe house the day after Kolesnikov's murder. Even the Banshees themselves weren't free of suspicion, as investigation turned up satellite re-tasking ordered by their own people that conveniently created a wide image-free zone during a two-hour window surrounding the assassination.

No one knew what to make of the findings. Every false lead led to two fresh ones. Informants vanished, turned up dead, or never made it to interrogation. All the Patriots could say for sure was that it looked very much like someone in their own ranks was responsible for killing Kolesnikov, and that they were probably still trying to cover it up from the inside. The initial fallout from the Confession didn't help, overshadowing clues, distracting witnesses, and turning the screws on everyone until they couldn't think straight.

Morale plummeted and suspicion drove a wedge between the Patriot factions. Old grudges resurfaced and the first fights broke out within a few days. Before the close working proximity could destroy any chance of finding the real killer, the leaders of each faction decided it was time to let the dream die. The Patriots dissolved their agreement and went their separate ways.

The Krypt cut off ties and returned to Russia, reducing and refining the scope of their operations. The Banshees took a stockpile of money Gregory Goodchilde had left them and settled in Western Europe, losing themselves behind the static cover of the global computer network. The former Majestics decided to carry on the torch, adopting the Shadow Patriots name for themselves. Kolesnikov's dream might have died, but his legacy would live on.

Today, members of all three factions are ruthlessly hunted, but their work continues. From time to time, they work together, but mostly, they work apart. When required, they oppose one another. As has been said of the Cold War, "it is a complicated time." Personal relationships linger, forged during the nine years of shared command, and individual operatives frequently call upon one another for favors or to assist during well-suited missions. Yet one all-important question remains, and none of them will be able to trust the others again — nor even trust those within their own ranks — until it is answered.

ON THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

Though this book highlights a select number of notable real world agencies and operations, the intelligence arena is vast. The Cold War and post-Cold War eras saw innumerable covert groups, all of which are assumed to have existed alongside the Patriot factions, the Marino Family/Bloodvine Syndicate, and the Nine Tiger Dynasty. Many of these groups — and many of their missions — are still classified, providing Game Controls ample opportunity to develop their own original corners of the espionage world. For those wishing a truer-to-life accounting, we provide the following (incomplete) record.

AGENCIES

Agency for National Security Planning (ANSP): Republic of Korea's primary intelligence organization, which was ushered into its current form in 1980. Ostensibly, the ANSP is supposed to coordinate the country's intelligence assets, but it has sweeping, poorly defined powers and is prone to political entrenchment, supporting its favored leaders with a large collection of under-

handed espionage tactics. All ANSP operatives are part of the Republic's military, and designated either "black" (using a concealed identity during agency ops), or "white" (using an open identity during agency ops).

Allavedelmi Hatosag (AVH): Hungarian State Security Authority founded in 1945 by Soviet occupational forces. The AVH was organized according to the contemporary Soviet model — one agency controlling both foreign and domestic operations. Its "Avos" agents were responsible for uprooting over 100,000 suspected subversives, sending them to in-country detention camps or deporting them to the Soviet Union. In 1956, this prompted armed demonstrations and violence across the country, and by the end of the year, the AVH was disbanded with no replacement. Hungary became the only Warsaw Pact country to conduct the Cold War without an intelligence agency.

Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS): Australian intelligence-gathering agency founded in 1946 as a sister organization to Australia's defensive organ, the ASIO. The ASIS was originally modeled after MI6, but it has grown substantially since. Its missions are conducted along the Pacific Rim, where espionage, criminal, and terrorist actions threaten to spill into Australia. In 1954, the ASIS took its stand in the Cold War by prompting KGB operative Vladimir Petrov and his wife to defect. During his subsequent debrief, Petrov talked about British defectors Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess, members of the now-infamous Cambridge Spy Ring. He also mentioned a "third man," whom British papers rightly identified as Harold (Kim) Philby. Unfortunately, most of the rest of the ASIS's history is rocky, due mainly to operational misjudgment and leaks of confidential information to the media. In November 1983, the ASIS ran a mock surveillance and hostage rescue without informing the Melbourne police. The training mission involved rookie agents, who broke in a door, brandished automatic weapons, and generally terrified bystanders. *The Sunday Age* later printed the known names of the trainees and forced changes to the agency's covert action policies. Seven years later, the ASIS again came under public scrutiny as one of its bugging operations — targeting the Chinese Embassy in Canberra — was brought to light. Finally, news stories in 1993 and 1994 sparked inquiries about the ASIS exploiting its powers, and in 2001, the Intelligence Services Act made significant changes to the agency. No longer could its operatives carry weapons or conduct "violent paramilitary missions." No longer could they collect information about Australian citizens without ministerial approval. Most importantly, the ASIS would thereafter fall under constant review by a parliamentary joint committee. This continued until 2003, when amendments to the Intelligence Services Act allowed the ASIS to carry weapons under specific circumstances and participate in violent paramilitary actions undertaken by *other* agencies (such as MI6 and the CIA).

Australian Security and Intelligence Organization (ASIO): Australian counter-espionage agency founded in 1946 to defend against Soviet infiltrators disguised as immigrants from Eastern Europe. Per the UKUSA Agreement, the ASIO has always operated in tandem with intelligence agencies from New Zealand, the U.S., Britain, and Canada. Unfortunately, this has at times left it vulnerable to claims that its ideology is too strongly influenced by these countries. As with the ASIS, the ASIO's power was grossly limited in the 1980s following poor media scrutiny and several botched operations. New regulations required that the Prime Minister and

Attorney General be briefed about all the agency's operations from their inception, and that regular, detailed reports be submitted to the Security Committee of the federal Cabinet. Unlike the ASIS, the ASIO regained much of its stature by 1999, when it was granted sweeping power, with authority to bug nearly any location or hack any computer in Australia with minimal cause — and without a warrant.

Black Dragon Society: Long-feared Japanese secret society reportedly founded in 1901 by a protégé of Mitsuru Toyama, overlord of the infamous Genyosha underworld syndicate. The Black Dragon Society promoted "Pan-Asianism," a race hatred movement targeting Manchuria, and later China and Korea. Initially, Black Dragon operatives were inserted into military and political posts, where they discreetly promoted the society's aims and urged military action against the society's targets. The Black Dragons' funds were expansive, mainly stemming from their controlling interest in the Japanese drug trade (though at their prime, they dominated nearly all crime activity in the country). The organization gained quite a reputation in the 1930s, in part because of its romantic, ruthless mystique. Members called themselves "brave knights" and Western journalists often called its leader "The Darkside Emperor." The Black Dragons faded out of sight after Japan's defeat at the end of World War II, but the organization is believed to persist today, maintaining strong ties with the Japanese Yakuza.

Brigade 2056: CIA-trained Cuban exile force set up for the Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961. The exiles were named after the number of an unnamed soldier who died during training ("56"), and the "20" prefix was added to confuse Cuban intelligence about the group's actual strength (which hovered near 1,400). Unfortunately, Castro's people saw the invasion coming and Brigade 2056 was trapped, suffering heavy losses. U.S. military forces kept their distance and the Brigade was decimated. The survivors were captured and held for 18 months before American corporations raised $62 million in ransom. The debacle stained the reputation of President-elect John F. Kennedy and forced resignations within the CIA and other U.S. intelligence services.

Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV): West German Federal Office for Protection of the Constitution, the region's foremost counter-intelligence agency. The BfV was founded in 1950 and reports to Germany's Ministry of the Interior. It has no police powers and cannot perform arrests, searches, seizures, or interrogations, though it can and does conduct extensive surveillance targeting suspect groups and individuals. It also infiltrates such groups as needed. During the Cold War, the BfV frequently clashed with the East German Secret Police, the infamous "Stasi," and its persistent network of moles. Also during this period, the BfV accumulated an impressive computer archive focused on its primary enemy, the Soviet Union. Today, this archive is directed at terrorists and their organizations, including right-wing extremists and Neo-Nazis.

Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND): West German Federal Intelligence Service created as part of the new West German sovereign state in 1956. At first, the BND was heavily financed by the United States (to the tune of over $200 million in one ten-year period). Its early days were troubled due to the recruitment of former Nazi soldiers and widespread KGB infiltration, but a 1968 purge put the organization back on track, and it's since become a well respected ally of the CIA, MI6, and other influential agencies.

The BND focuses on foreign intelligence relating to policy and it maintains a vast network of cultural societies, trade delegations, travel agencies, emissaries, bank officials, and heads of international corporations to support this goal. The BND's operatives serve as embassy staffers in over 100 countries and monitor radio signals and international telephone and FAX lines. Unlike many intelligence agencies, the BND handles intelligence in and out of its home territory. It also frequently speaks out against European cryptography legislation, which would greatly hinder its operations.

Cabinet General Intelligence Bureau: Democratic People's Republic of Korea command agency, which is in charge of most of the country's intelligence agencies, and is in turn controlled by the Korean Worker's Party Central Committee. Information about the Cabinet's subordinate agencies is scarce, but two known ones include the Liaison Bureau, which operates spies and guerilla forces throughout Asia, and the Research Department for External Intelligence (RDEI), which gathers intelligence and performs international sabotage. The Cabinet also has the power to call upon the Korean People's Army as needed.

Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS): Canadian espionage agency formed in 1984 to protect the country from threats arising on its native soil. The CSIS produces regular threat assessments, which are in turn distributed to allied governments as warranted. It also conducts clearance background checks and processes citizenship and immigration applications. The CSIS was created to separate intelligence efforts from police work, which is the purview of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and this split has produced a limited rivalry between the agencies. Yet they must work together as the RCMP acts on the product of CSIS investigations (CSIS operatives aren't permitted to act as law enforcers, nor may they carry firearms). The CSIS doesn't possess operational sanction outside Canadian borders, though some of its agents find themselves assigned to diplomatic missions abroad.

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA): U.S. transformation of the CIG in 1947 as part of the National Security Act. The CIA answers to the U.S. executive branch and is subject to congressional review. Its initial mandate was to "correlate and evaluate intelligence collected from other departments" — in practice, the military — and (covertly) to engage in foreign espionage under the NSC's quiet direction. Today, it produces intelligence reports distilled from the findings of other U.S. agencies and delivers them to the President and National Security Council. It also continues to operate in foreign territories in which America takes an interest, using Case Officers to run cells of agents and "contract employees" (mercenaries). The CIA has no domestic police powers; such activities are left to the FBI.

Centro Nacional de Inteligencia (CNI): Spanish National Center of Intelligence, replacing CESID in 2002. The CNI operates in conjunction with Spain's Ministry of Defence, but may undertake its own missions by Royal Decree from the Prime Minister. The CNI is authorized to act inside and outside of Spanish borders, but like most intelligence agencies it relinquishes command once a mission slips into the operational purview of another Spanish agency. Its reports are delivered to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, and the Interior. All such reports utilize three classifications, in order from lowest to highest: Confidential, Secret, and Top Secret. The CNI's Madrid headquarters is called "The Star" after its distinctive "Y" shape.

Centro Superior de Informacion de la Defensa (CESID): Spanish Higher Center of Defense Information, founded in 1977. At the time, Spain's intelligence community was fractured and counter-productive, with many different agencies controlled by many different ruling bodies. These groups didn't communicate or cooperate with each other, and chaos generally ensued. In part, CESID was formed to solve this problem, offering Spain a unified intelligence group under the Director General's command. CESID was granted wide-reaching power and authority over a number of Spain's military forces. It was also expected to perform all the duties of an espionage and counter-espionage organization, with no further support structure. It prevailed, joining the ranks of the CIA and Mossad on the world stage, and kept its home front largely safe in the process. One of CESID's most celebrated operations uncovered a plot to overthrow the Spanish government in 1982. In 2002, the National Center of Intelligence (CNI) replaced CESID.

Chosa Besshitsu (Chobetsu): Japanese signals interception agency formed in 1958 as part of the country's Self-Defense Force (SDF). Chobetsu focuses its listening devices mainly on China, North Korea, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and the South China Sea. It operates mainly out of facilities built with the assistance of NSA and is a similar organization in many respects. With Japan as a "third party" signatory in the UKUSA Agreement, Chobetsu also shares information, though only certain facts and always at a leisurely pace.

Comitato Interministeriale per le Informazioni e la Sicuressa (CESIS): Italian Executive Committee for Intelligence and Security Services, a supervisory organ created in 1977 to control the SISDE (a democratic security branch, which handles HUMINT) and the SISMI (a military security branch, which handles SIGINT). The hope was that the massive 1970s reorganization of Italy's intelligence community would cleanse it of corruption, but the long-familiar domestic terrorism, political assassination, and money laundering continued. The 1990s saw another sweep in which the eldest leaders were foisted from their positions, which many of them had held for over 40 years. Their favorite tools — including the "Gladio" black ops paramilitary unit — were dismantled. Checks and balances were installed, privacy laws were remodeled, and back door practices were limited (e.g. arrested criminals were prevented from escaping charges in exchange for service to the state).

Communications Security Establishment (CSE): Canadian signals intelligence agency, which succeeded the Communication Branch of the National Research Council (CBNRC) in 1975. The CSE's charter is similar to that of the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA). It collects computer and communications data from the Canadian military, analyzes it, and supplies its results to the Canadian government and its allies (at whose installations it maintains key personnel). It hosts impressive computer and cryptology divisions and operates as part of the ECHELON system, which monitors all forms of communication for suspicious "watch words." Canadian law prohibits the CSE from monitoring domestic communications, though like the NSA, it interprets this as communications that originate *and* end inside the country. The agency regularly intercepts traffic into and out of Canada, and also makes exceptions for foreign embassies, foreign-owned businesses, and at times, even foreign citizens.

Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CSIC): Canadian criminal intelligence clearinghouse, formed in 1996 to coordinate and assist law enforcement agencies in and out of the country. At home, the CSIC's operations are divided into ten provincial Bureaus, the center of which is located in Ottawa. Along with over 85 allied organizations, these Bureaus work against organized crime and other threats to security. They combat drug rings, gun runners, smugglers, terrorists, economic and industrial spies, and other offenders, and they control Canadian immigration as well. The whole of the CSIS maintains the Automated Criminal Intelligence Information System (ACIIS II), a massive computer archive made available to all Bureaus and allies organizations, including INTERPOL.

Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA): U.S. organization formed in 1961 to house military intelligence units and clear all incoming intelligence from any agency. The DIA manages military attachés in U.S. embassies around the world, who collect strategic information about their assigned countries. It also operates the Defense Intelligence College in Washington, D.C., where students learn about the policies and technical aspects of the international intelligence community (this is the only college that offers a Master's degree in Intelligence). Recently, the DIA has started to provide intelligence to U.N. peacekeeping forces, and established the Defense HUMINT Service (DHS) to run agents and proprietary companies. The DHS absorbed the U.S. armed forces' human intelligence assets and retains them today.

Departamentul de Informatii Externe (DIE): Romanian Department of External Information, founded with the aid of the Soviets in the 1950s. By all accounts, Soviet influence waned almost immediately, and by 1962, the last of Russia's advisors were gone. Soon after, President Nicolae Ceaucesceau took charge of DIE, increasing its manpower and resources eight times over. He also became personally involved in its daily operations, micro-managing it on every level and vastly expanding its scientific and technological component, Brigade SD. Ceaucesceau was notoriously sensitive about "his agency" being associated with the Soviets and thus DIE clashed repeatedly with the KGB and GRU throughout the Cold War. Ceaucesceau even established Centrul National de Transmisiuni Cifrate (the National Center for Enciphered Communications, or CNTC), which countered the Soviets' interception of Romanian transmissions. DIE agents were well trained in languages and tradecraft, and often posed as wait staff at embassies and other known espionage hot spots. They also performed extensive wire-tapping and made movies to use in blackmail and slander operations.

Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire (DST): French Directorate for Territorial Surveillance, formed in 1910 to track and apprehend encroaching foreign operatives. In the 1970s, the DST was also made responsible for counter-terrorism and counter-subversion. The DST is controlled by the French Interior Ministry and employs many former police officers. It is believed to have the largest wire-tapping operation in Europe, and to employ an adjunct law enforcement branch called Renseignements Generaux, which keeps detailed files on foreign spies and political militants. Approximately one quarter of the DST's resources are devoted to counter-terrorist operations in France.

Direction Générale de la Securité Extérieure (DGSE): French Directorate General of External Security. The DGSE is the 1982 successor to the SDECE and handles strategic and electronic intelligence, as well as counter-espionage outside France. Its military

staff is officially part of the 44éme Infantry Regiment based in Orleans and its civilian agents are referred to as "honorable correspondents" (a name originated by the SDECE). Today, the DGSE focuses most of its effort on industrial espionage — so blatantly, in fact, that the CIA warned U.S. aerospace companies to beware of French spies at the 1993 Paris Air Show. It's also believed that the DGSE has periodically bugged Air France flights to listen in on traveling businessmen, though no proof supports this claim. At present, the DGSE's spy networks are strongest in Africa and the Middle East, particularly in the former French colonies.

Directorate for Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI): Pakistani intelligence agency formed in 1948, which today has incredible, near-autonomous power. The ISI is completely unsupervised and its budget and assets are a mystery to all outsiders. Its operations run the gamut from counter-espionage to SIGINT collection to covert action, at home and abroad. It jams broadcasts from neighboring countries and routinely transmits its own propaganda. It also colludes with underworld and terrorist factions, particularly in Afghanistan, India, and Bangladesh.

Directorate General of Intelligence (DGI): Cuban secret service created in 1961 with the support and supervision of the KGB. The DGI was highly respected in the intelligence community for its many Cold War successes, as well as turning every known CIA operative in its home territory through the 1980s. Due to a recent drug scandal, however, the agency's power has been transferred into the hands of the Cuban military and the organization has been renamed the Intelligence Directorate.

Durzhavna Sigurnost (DS): Bulgarian Committee of State Security, brought together in 1965 by the occupying Soviet forces. The DS remained independent for six years, during which it tried and repeatedly failed to quell political uprisings in its home territory. In 1971, it was absorbed into Russia's Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and truly came into its own. According to unconfirmed reports, the DS excelled at wetworks operations. It is linked to the assassination of Bulgarian émigré George I. Markov in London in September of 1978. Markov was a playwright by trade but moonlighted for Radio Free Europe and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). He was stabbed with a KGB-designed umbrella during the morning rush hour and died of ricin poisoning a few days later. In 1981, the DS was implicated in the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II, though except for the assassin's dubious assertion, no proof was forthcoming. The remnants of the DS collapsed with the Soviet Union in the 1990s.

Federal'naya Agentsvo Pravitel'stvennoy Svaryazi i Informatsii (FAPSI): Russian Federal Agency for Government Communications and Information, formed in 1994 to secure all physical and electronic communications, including snail mail, Internet traffic, and everything in-between. All permitted frequencies in the Russian Federation had to be leased from FAPSI. Further, FAPSI approved all national data encryption protocols and rumors persisted that the agency used its access to collect sensitive information about foreign businesses and citizens (it is public knowledge that the agency targeted Russians in this fashion). FAPSI had its own proprietary satellite network and worked closely with other agencies dedicated to electronic intelligence, such as the GRU. In 2003, Russian President Vladimir Putin disbanded FAPSI, ending its information monopoly and redistributing its resources between the Federal Security Service (FSB) and the Russian Defense Ministry.

Federal'naya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti (FSB): Russian Federal Security Service, created in 1995 to take over the remnants of the KGB. At the FSB's inception, its operatives were granted the right to enter any residence if they suspected a crime was taking place, or had taken place, inside. They could also pursue suspects into any structure. Later reforms granted them the authority to pursue any mission in or out of Russia that "enhanced the country's economic, scientific-technical, and defense potential." This has led to widespread concern and liberal controversy around human rights violations. Regardless, the FSB remains the most powerful of Russia's special services. It continues to serve Russia in its prescribed role, countering threats to the nation and seeking ways to increase its strength in the global espionage and political markets.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI): U.S. law enforcement and counter-intelligence agency. The FBI's foundations date back to 1871, but it didn't enter the intelligence arena until America joined World War I in 1917. At the time, the Bureau's agents and methods were wild and eccentric, but things eventually settled down as J. Edgar Hoover took charge. During Hoover's command, which ran from 1924 to 1972, the FBI became a powerhouse bureaucracy. Its field agents, formerly called "superintendents," became "Special Agents in Charge." Standards were raised and the FBI's renowned forensics division was established (it remains unmatched today). In 1952, the agency introduced its Ten Most Wanted List. Yet one thing remains the same: the FBI's mandate

still calls for its agents to hunt spies, saboteurs, and terrorists on U.S. soil. As the investigative arm of the Department of Justice, the FBI focuses on violent, organized, federal, white collar, and drug-related crime (especially any that happens across state borders). It also counters civil rights violations.

Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoye Upravlenie (GRU): Soviet Chief Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff, a military intelligence organ established in 1918, during the Russian civil war. Though the GRU was initially subordinate to the KGB, its officers maintained extensive networks of agents and acted largely without oversight. The GRU later expanded its goals from collecting and collating military data to also include foreign espionage, especially with regard to technical and scientific information. Free of the domestic spy mandates plaguing other Russian agencies, the GRU grew on its own terms (except, of course, during Stalin's purge of the organization in 1937). During the Russo-Finnish War, the GRU shepherded the creation of the first Red Army Special Forces — the Chasti Spetsial'nogo Naznacheniya, also known as the infamous "Spetsnaz." It infiltrated the German High Command, stole atomic secrets from both Cold War super powers, and ran countless operatives and spy rings across the globe. The GRU even survived the collapse of the Soviet Union, though its budget was slashed like that of all the other re-envisioned Russian intelligence organizations. Today, the GRU excels at HUMINT (through military channels across the globe) and SIGINT (using a broad range of surveillance assets including overflights and satellite spotting). The GRU isn't without its faults, however — it sometimes acts as a global fixer, putting mercenaries in contact with those in need of their services. As has always been the case, all GRU agents are graduated officers from the Russian Red Academy.

Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ): British signals intelligence (SIGINT) agency, founded in 1946 to crack enemy codes. During World War II, the GCHQ's direct predecessor, the Government Code and Cipher School (GCCS), managed "Ultra Operation," which was responsible for decoding the Germans' presumed-impenetrable Enigma communications. The GCHQ has grown quite a bit from these illustrious roots and now focuses primarily on signals intelligence, especially radar and radio traffic. Two of its foremost listening stations are the 560-acre Menwith Hill facility and Ascension Island in the South Atlantic. It still maintains its cryptologic unit, however, which acts as a separate branch of the agency. Per the 1947 UKUSA Agreement, the GCHQ shares its findings with NSA, Australia's Defense Signals Directorate (DSD), Canada's Communications Security Establishment (CSE), and New Zealand's Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB).

Hauptverwaltung Auflärung (HVA): East German Main Department for Intelligence created in 1956 as the foreign operations arm of the Ministry of State Security (MfS). Its initial front was that of the Institute of Economic Research, which specialized in stealing industrial secrets (on the grounds that it was cheaper than developing new technologies from scratch). Its concise and discerning intelligence analysis teams are also credited with precipitating many Soviet advances, including those in Poland and Czechoslovakia. The HVA's first head was the roguish Markus Wolf, who favored female spies so he could slip them into the clerical offices and typist pools of target organizations. Like its parent agency, the HVA closed its doors in 1989.

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL): Multi-national service supporting law enforcement efforts in all of its 182 member countries. INTERPOL's headquarters are in Lyons, France, but a National Central Bureau (NCB) is located in each member country to help coordinate operations and serve as a point of contact with the agency's home office. An Automated Search Facility allows authorized electronic searches of INTERPOL's databases, as well as the U.S. National Crime Information Center and U.K. National Criminal Intelligence Unit databases. INTERPOL doesn't maintain its own field operatives; when it acts, it calls upon local police in the mission area, which are temporarily re-assigned. INTERPOL has four official languages: Arabic, English, French, and Spanish, and produces general information packets called "Diffusions" in all of them. Diffusions are color-coded: red for arrest warrants, blue for queries, yellow for unidentified persons, black for unidentified corpses, green for the movements of international criminals, purple for MO's, and grey for organized crime.

Iraqi National Intelligence Service (INIS): Iraqi intelligence organization set up and funded by the CIA following the U.S. invasion of 2003. The INIS is intended to collect information regarding to threats to national security, and to assess those threats for the good of the Iraqi government. It is in many ways a template for the Iraq of the future — at least, the Iraq seen by the U.S. and its allies. The INIS is civilian-controlled and subject to legislative oversight (its charter is public domain and it has no powers of arrest), but there's still the fact that its funding — over $3 billion in three years — is being funneled in through CIA coffers. Many expect the INIS to become all but a foreign branch of U.S. intelligence within the next few years, conducting operations throughout the Middle East to support American interests.

Joint Task Force II (JTF II): Canadian counter-terrorist agency formed in 1992 as part of the country's armed forces. It replaces the RCMP's Special Emergency Response Team (SERT), splitting the country's police and counter-terrorist efforts. JTF II operates worldwide but is highly covert, maintaining a small and elusive command structure. It employs many tactics common to the British Special Air Service (SAS) and works closely with U.N. peacekeeping forces, particularly in beleaguered regions like Bosnia, Haiti, Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Kosovo, and Macedonia.

Komitet Gosudartvennoy Bezopasnosti (KGB): Soviet Committee of State Security formed in 1954 to handle foreign intelligence, counter-intelligence, and counter-subversion. The KGB's power was formidable and widespread, felt in Russia and around the world. At the height of its power, the KGB's budget was in the billions (second only to that of the Soviet military). It fielded tens of thousands of agents and its SMERSH division — which mercilessly hunted and killed traitors and defectors — was widely feared. One of the KGB's most favored tactics was entrapment, especially using attractive women (whom the agency referred to as "swallows"). It also made extensive use of surveillance equipment, even going so far as to plant a bug inside the Seal of the United States inside the U.S. embassy in Moscow. The KGB was disbanded in 1993, following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Komitet Informatsyia (KI): Soviet Committee of Information established in 1947 under the Council of Ministers (though in fact headed by the ambitious Foreign Minister Vyacheslav M. Molotov). The KI placed Soviet foreign operatives under the direct control of ambassadors in each territory (though the operatives frequently ignored this chain of command and in some cases actively thwarted it). The KI was short-lived, with elements responsible for monitoring Soviet diplomats, staff, and émigrés transferred to the MGB in 1948. The rest of its personnel were absorbed into the same organization in 1951.

Kouan Chousa Chou (PSIA): Japanese Public Security Investigation Agency, created within the country's Ministry of Justice in 1952. The PSIA ensures public safety by conducting general counter-espionage for the nation, as well as hunting subversives and terrorists. Most of the time, the PSIA declines to take action against its targets, instead deferring to the Japanese military or police as appropriate. Occasionally, however, it lobbies the Public Security Examination Commission for authority to infiltrate or undermine a particularly troublesome enemy. From time to time, the PSIA sends operatives to work for a short time with U.S. or U.K. agencies. A few of these are assigned by the Ministry of Justice to long-term posts at foreign embassies.

Lishka Lekishrey Mada (LAKAM): Israeli Defense Ministry's Office of Scientific Liaison, created in 1960 to collect technical data in the United States and other developed countries. LAKAM also spearheaded Israel's nuclear program. It supervised and concealed the country's foiled attempt to build a reactor in the Negev Desert and established a false front — the Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation (NUMEC) — to abscond with 200 pounds of enriched uranium. Later, under the control of Ariel Sharon, the agency expanded as a worldwide intelligence network, targeting the U.S. despite a no-spying pact between the nations. LAKAM was reportedly disbanded in 1985 after the embarrassing arrest of Jonathan Jay Pollard, one of Israel's most successful spies in the United States. In truth, however, it was merely renamed and placed under the Foreign Ministry's control. It was closed down without fanfare at some later date, perhaps as reported in 1993.

Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (MfS): East German Ministry for State Security, popularly known as the "Stasi." The MfS was the 1950 successor to Kommissariat 5 (K-5), the region's first secret police agency. It bore many striking similarities to the KGB and operated more than 5,000 agents out of its East Berlin headquarters during the height of the Cold War, most of them targeting West Germany and NATO. Its incredible collection of informants numbered in the hundreds of thousands — out of a population in the scant millions (in 1990, 1–2 out of every 100 East German citizens was on the MfS payroll). The MfS operated until 1989, just before East Germany collapsed. In the end, Stasi officers scrambled to destroy as many of the sensitive files contained in their headquarters as possible, but there were simply too many — over 33 million pages. American and other intelligence agencies picked over the corpse and their voluminous findings, often referred to as the "Rosenholz Files," have become some of the most staggering in the twilight of the Cold War.

Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti (MGB): Soviet Ministry of State Security renamed in 1946 from the wartime People's Commissariat of State Security (NKGB). For seven years, the MGB was Russia's foremost police force. Then, following Josef Stalin's death in 1953, Politburo member and ambitious conspirator Lavrenti Beria transformed the MGB into the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), of which he took command.

Ministertvo Vnutrennikh Del (MVD): Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs, which replaced the NKVD during the massive 1954 reorganization of Josef Stalin's intelligence apparatus. Initially, the MVD managed the Soviet super power's internal security, commanding its own complement of troops, as well as the border guard and the staff of the nation's prison and labor camps. It also kept the peace on Russian streets, enforcing order and investigating crime. These resources and duties continue today, but the national climate of lawlessness in the Russian Federation often overwhelms the agency, preventing it from rooting out the growing organized criminal element. The MVD's Internal Security Troops are used to quell unrest and frequently clash with rebellious forces in the Federation's modern satellite territories, including Chechnya and Northern Ossestia. These troops also guard critical government facilities such as travel hubs and detention centers. The MVD's elite troops are the Detachments of Special Designation, or OMON (the "Black Berets"), which are fielded against terrorists, drug smugglers, and during riots.

Ministry of Public Security: North Korean internal security agency, also known as the Social Safety Ministry, founded in 1948 to police the country, maintain its prisons, protect its borders, observe the citizenry for signs of uprising, and collect census and personal background information. In practice, the Ministry also spearheads much of North Korea's counter-intelligence effort. Its presence is felt everywhere; its tendrils reach even to the smallest villages in the country. The populace must report travel of any kind to the Ministry, which produces strict regulations concerning where and when such travel is permitted.

Ministry of Public Security (MPS): Chinese law enforcement organization created in 1949 to control the country's police assets, promoting the communist regime's authority and ideology. The MPS has largely unilateral power to investigate, arrest, and

incarcerate, and its actions are often considered arbitrary. It monitors nationals returned from abroad and those involved with suspicious political activity. It patrols Chinese borders and catalogues travel, provides security for economic and military installations, manages "labor reform camps," and conducts intelligence operations in Macao, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Local station houses record births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and possession of "potentially subversive" items like computers and FAX machines. Secret MPS plainclothes police regularly infiltrate businesses and locations suspected of treasonous action.

Ministry of State Security (MSS): Chinese foreign intelligence agency founded in 1949 and reorganized in 1983. The MSS has always been at the forefront of the Chinese intelligence effort, though it's only gained a true footing on the world stage in the last 20 years (before that, China's isolationist stance hamstrung the agency's espionage activities). Today, the Ministry's duties range from rooting out enemy spies to gathering technological and scientific intelligence, from preventing defection to vetting foreign companies moving into the region. Its Foreign Affairs Bureau promotes relationships with many countries, including Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan. During the late Cold War, it also maintained good relations with the United States, though the shifting climate has destabilized this association. The MSS runs its own espionage academy, the Beijing College of International Relations, as well as a think tank called the Institute for Contemporary International Relations, which publishes a classified journal distributed to senior Communist Party officials.

Mossad Letafkidim Meouychadim: Israeli Central Institute for Intelligence and Security created in 1951 and placed under the control of the Prime Minister's office. Mossad's budget is enormous but kept a close national secret. Its Katsas (case officers) number only in the dozens, but they are supported by thousands of Jewish volunteers collectively called the Sayanim, who offer money, lodging, medical care, and other mundane assistance. Mossad maintains a strong technological arm and employs some of the world's foremost mathematicians and cryptographers. It's also the primary exporter of intelligence about Middle Eastern terrorist organizations, which it provides freely to the Western powers (Mossad has always worked closely with the CIA, and in some cases its operatives have even been trained and equipped with CIA resources). One of Mossad's best-known sections is Special Operations, which hunts war criminals who have wronged the Jewish people. This group has staged many noteworthy missions, including the open kidnapping of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann from the streets of Buenos Aires (Eichmann was smuggled back to Israel, condemned in a show trial, and hanged in 1962). Another well-known Mossad resource is its special army unit, the Sayaret Matkal (the General Staff Reconnaissance Unit, aka "The Guys"). The Sayaret Matkal has conducted many illustrious operations, including a series of assassination raids in Beirut in 1973 and the rescue of Jewish hostages at Entebbe in 1976.
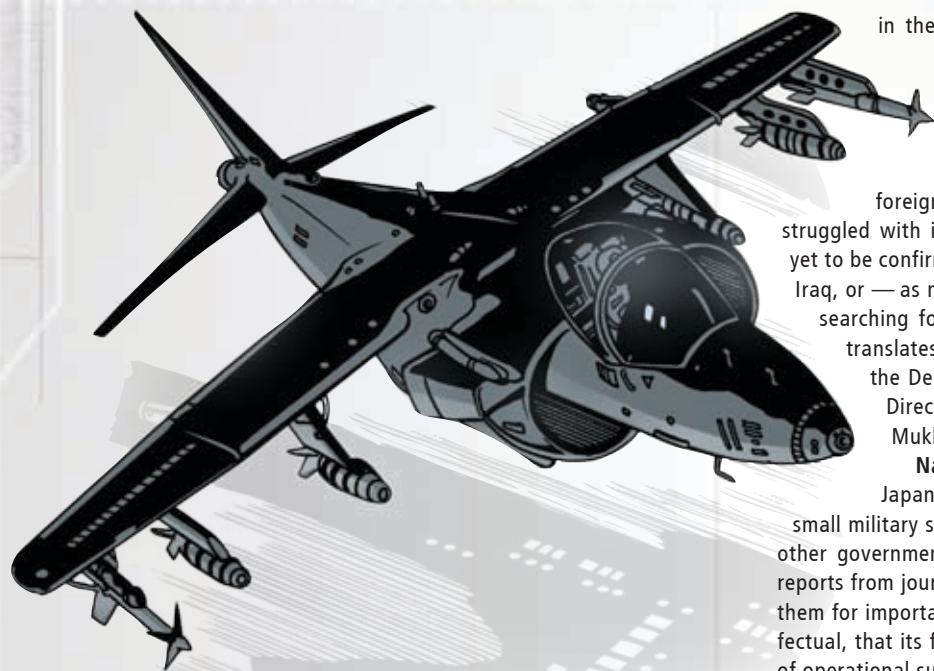
Mubahath el-Dawla (GDSSI): Egyptian General Directorate of State Security Investigations, the country's primary domestic defense agency since 1977. The GDSSI investigates and interrogates anyone who poses a threat to the Egyptian government, most often Islamic extremists and other terrorists. It spies on visiting dignitaries and journalists and develops informants in all levels of Egyptian society. Its methods are suspect, however, and reportedly include mail tampering, phone taps, and brutality. In 1986, former Al Jihad captives brought 322 charges of torture against the GDSSI, but after two years of trial and deliberation, the defendants were acquitted. Despite finding that the torture had indeed occurred, the court couldn't link it to those charged, and the case fell flat.

Mudiriyat al-Amn Al-Amma (GSD): Iraqi General Security Directorate, formed with U.S. assistance following the invasion of 2003. This organization is intended to root out terrorists and violent resistance to peacekeeping efforts in the country. It also enforces the Prime Minister's newly instituted security measures, including checkpoints, curfews, banning certain public demonstrations, and surprise searches of suspected insurgent hideouts.

Mukhabarat (IIS): Iraqi Intelligence Service formed in 1968 as the Ba'ath Party gained control of the country. The IIS combined Iraq's civilian and military agencies, becoming the foremost espionage organization in the country's history. It featured two departments, one for external (foreign) spying and one for work at home. Above these departments are a collection of spymasters who, until recently, dominated Iraq's police networks and other state institutions, including the army and social groups for youths, women, and labor. An adjunct section directed paramilitary operations. In the 1980s, the IIS was attributed with countless assassination attempts, most successful. In 1983, it murdered over ninety members of Ayatollah Al Hakim's family, and finished the job by liquidating the Ayatollah himself

in the Sudan five years later. In 1993, it even tried (and failed) to kill U.S. President George Bush and the Emir of Kuwait with a car bomb. The agency was also linked to a wide range of crimes, including money laundering and arms deals. The IIS began to scale its foreign operations back in the 1990s, after which it struggled with infighting for many years. Its ultimate fate has yet to be confirmed; it may have perished in the U.S. invasion of Iraq, or — as many suspect — it might simply be lying in wait, searching for ways to liberate the country. The IIS's name translates as "The Listening Post." It is also known as the Department of General Intelligence of the General Directorate of Intelligence (either translates as Al-Mukhabarat Al-A'ma).

Naikaku Chousashitsu Betsushitsu (Naicho): Japanese Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office, a small military security group formed in the 1960s to coordinate other government agencies. Today, Naicho primarily purchases reports from journalists and private institutions, filtering through them for important information. Critics decry the agency as ineffectual, that its focus on data collection has crippled any chance of operational success.

National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS): U.K. criminal archive founded in 1992. The NCIS doesn't collect or analyze information on its own, but rather receives and collates data provided by MI5, Scotland Yard's Special Branch, U.K. constabularies, and others. It only records material pertaining to criminals, though it doesn't discriminate thereof; all miscreants ranging from football hooligans to organized crime bosses are fair game. The NCIS offers its collections of fingerprints, offender profiles, case histories, and more to U.K. agencies, as well as INTERPOL, with which it shares close ties.

National Intelligence Agency (NIA): Republic of South Africa's counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism force established in 1995 during the region's shift to Democracy. Like many espionage agencies, the NIA has no law enforcement powers, instead relying upon the South African Police Service (SAPS) to make arrests. The NIA may, however, search property and collect evidence. In its investigative role, the NIA frequently calls upon information sources and other assets originally set up by its predecessor, the maligned National Intelligence Service (NIS).

National Reconnaissance Office (NRO): U.S. agency formed in 1960 to manage aerospace espionage, including the CORONA and SAMOS programs (though SAMOS was cut short after only several launches and low intelligence yield). The NRO designs and maintains a fleet of state of the art satellites that can read restaurant menus from orbit, which it uses to monitor arms control, military movements, and natural disasters. During the Cold War, the NRO operated completely off the books; indeed, the executive branch didn't even admit its existence until 1992 and most NRO personnel are classified within the U.S. Air Force Intelligence staff. Further, it was discovered in 1995 that the NRO had socked away over $4 *billion* in excess unreported funds. This prompted firings amongst the NRO's leadership and proposals to replace the agency with a new organization to work closely with all arms of the U.S. government. So far, this hasn't come to pass, though parallel and sister groups are being established.

National Revolutionary Police (PNR): Cuban National Police force established in 1953 and gradually molded into its current form over the course of five tense decades. Controlled by the Ministry of the Interior, the PNR handles all of Cuba's police investigations through a vast network of municipal divisions and operates several specialty sections dedicated to foiling espionage, sabotage, and border incursions. Its assets include a small naval contingent, two secretive paramilitary units, and the Committee for Defense of the Revolution, a collection of informants and neighborhood watch patrols.

National Security Agency (NSA): U.S. eavesdropping and cryptology organization, formed in 1952 by President Harry Truman. At its inception, NSA consolidated all of the United States' military, espionage, and diplomatic decryption units. Today, it's officially part of the Department of Defense and answers directly to the Secretary of Defense. Its budget is outrageous — exceeding that of the FBI and CIA combined — and its head of operations is almost always a high-ranking military officer. It receives a staggering amount of information — enough to fill the Library of Congress every three hours — and calls upon a veritable legion of decipherers, mathematicians, programmers, linguists, and other experts to wade through it. NSA is incredibly secretive. Except for a brief blurb released in 1984 noting how it's exempt from certain COMINT laws, NSA's entire charter and all its operational details are classified. Its operatives may only visit dentists who already possess the appropriate clearance, just in case they reveal something under anesthesia. Coupled with recurring evidence of its misdeeds, NSA's shadowy reputation has earned it the distinction of being the most dubious U.S. intelligence agency. It is routinely blamed for black operations circum-

venting the rights and privileges of government staff and private citizens at home and abroad, and by any reasonable assessment, nearly all these claims are true.

National Security Council (NSC): U.S. supervisory group formed in 1947 as part of the National Security Act. NSC coordinates intelligence operations using information provided by the Director of the CIA. It is considered the most powerful agency in the United States, with a leadership consisting of senior U.S. representatives under the direct supervision of the President.

Org: So-called "Gehlen Organization," an experimental agency sanctioned by the United States but run by Soviet defector Reinhard Gehlen. The Org was initially founded in 1946 and brought under the CIA's command in 1949, at which point it focused on operations in Czechoslovakia and infiltrations of the East German government. The Org employed anyone, including former Nazi and Gestapo officers who were given false names to avoid persecution and conditioning. Org agents were called Vertrauens Mann, or "V-Men" ("trusted men"). They were identified by an alphanumeric code in which the letter denoted their area of expertise (infiltration, local surveillance, transportation, technology, counter-intelligence, and a final letter for "top agents").

Radio Free Asia (RFA): U.S. broadcasting system out of Taiwan that began transmitting propaganda into Soviet-controlled Asian countries in 1949. Today, it's a non-profit Free Press corporation broadcasting timely news across parts of Asia that are without standard reporting channels.

Radio Free Europe (RFE): U.S. broadcasting system in Western Europe that began transmitting fact-based propaganda into Soviet-controlled Warsaw Pact countries in 1949. Seven years later, it supported the Hungarian rebellion. Radio Free Europe

received open government funding as of 1973 and its links to the CIA were revealed in 1975. Today, it operates in conjunction with Radio Liberty as a private, international news service to Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Middle East. It can also be heard via the Internet.

Radio Libertad: U.S. broadcasting system out of Florida that began transmitting propaganda into Soviet-controlled Cuba in 1961.

Radio Liberty (RL): U.S. broadcasting system in West Germany that began transmitting fact-based propaganda into East Germany and other Soviet-controlled areas in 1949. Radio Liberty received open government funding as of 1973 and its links to the CIA were revealed in 1975. Today, it has merged with Radio Free Europe as a far-reaching international news service.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP): Canadian Security Service enforcing federal law in all regions except Ontario and Quebec, which maintain their own police forces. The RCMP conducts internal security and investigation (in a role analogous to the U.S. FBI) and VIP safety (in a role analogous to the U.S. Secret Service), as well as forensic analysis, immigrant evaluation, customs regulation, and environment protection. Its Criminal Records and Information service links all Canadian law enforcement agencies, and cooperates with INTERPOL and other groups worldwide. It also operates the Canadian Police College and a private training academy known as "The Depot." The RCMP's opposition is wide reaching; it has combated smugglers, organized crime, foreign spies, hackers, and subversive political groups. Its record is far from spotless, however — it was sanctioned in 1981 when evidence of illegal trespassing, wiretaps, and other transgressions came to light (this event prompted the creation of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service).

Sazamane Etelaat va Amniate Kechvar (SAVAK): Iranian secret police organization propped up by Mossad and the CIA in 1956. SAVAK reported directly to the Shah

and kept all opponents at bay while he brought Iran into the modern age. The CIA left SAVAK to handle its own affairs, trusting its reports about the country's development and turning a blind eye to the organization's capture and in some cases torture or murder of outspoken rebels. SAVAK was disbanded after the Islamic revolution of 1979.

Secret Intelligence Service (MI6): British foreign intelligence agency, formed in 1909 as Military Intelligence, Department 6 under the War Office's command (it later joined the Foreign Office). MI6 collects information considered vital to its nation's causes. It absorbs substantial government funds but doesn't experience sweeping supervision, answering only to the British Cabinet. Less than 20 years ago, it was rebuked as an old boys' club scouting exclusively at elitist colleges (where social weaknesses were common). Questions arose about the patriotism of many of its operatives, but reforms have since widened the recruitment criteria. Most modern operatives are familiar with several languages, and can be stationed anywhere, often as military or cultural attachés in British embassies. They work closely with the CIA and French intelligence services, and rely heavily upon classic, low-tech espionage techniques to acquire information about their enemies. In the old days, the MI6 chief was always referred to simply as "C," after Mansfield Cumming, the first man to hold the position, and Ian Fleming satirized this in his James Bond novels.

Security Intelligence Service (SIS): New Zealand domestic security agency established in 1956 to ensure the country's domestic safety against espionage, terrorism, sabotage, and subversion. It also acts as a consulting group for all government institutions, including law enforcement. Like many intelligence organizations, the SIS cannot arrest or prosecute, and must work with local police to enforce its findings. Its operatives require a warrant to search mail or conduct wire tapping, though they can automatically search the home of any suspect with cause. The SIS operates with the highest possible level of discretion and publishing or distributing information about the group is a criminal offense.

Security Service (MI5): U.K. counter-intelligence agency, founded in 1909 as Military Intelligence, Department 5 under the War Office's command (it later joined the Foreign Office). MI5 is widely regarded as one of the most effective national security forces in the world, despite numerous media scandals following World War II and throughout the Cold War. Unfortunately, its successes happen behind the scenes and rarely become public knowledge. The agency's specialty is covert investigation, which it accomplishes through warranted mail tampering and surveillance, and with the help of a wide array of civilian informants. So well shielded are its operatives that they can even decline identification during trials stemming from their investigations, claiming "public interest immunity" (i.e. that revealing themselves or their methods wouldn't be in the public's best interest). MI5 has had a troubled history with its intelligence partner, MI6, particularly during the Cold War. MI5 chiefs and operatives often refer to their MI6 counterparts as "brigands," and on occasion, even "the enemy." In turn, MI6 agents tend to look down upon MI5's "common policemen."
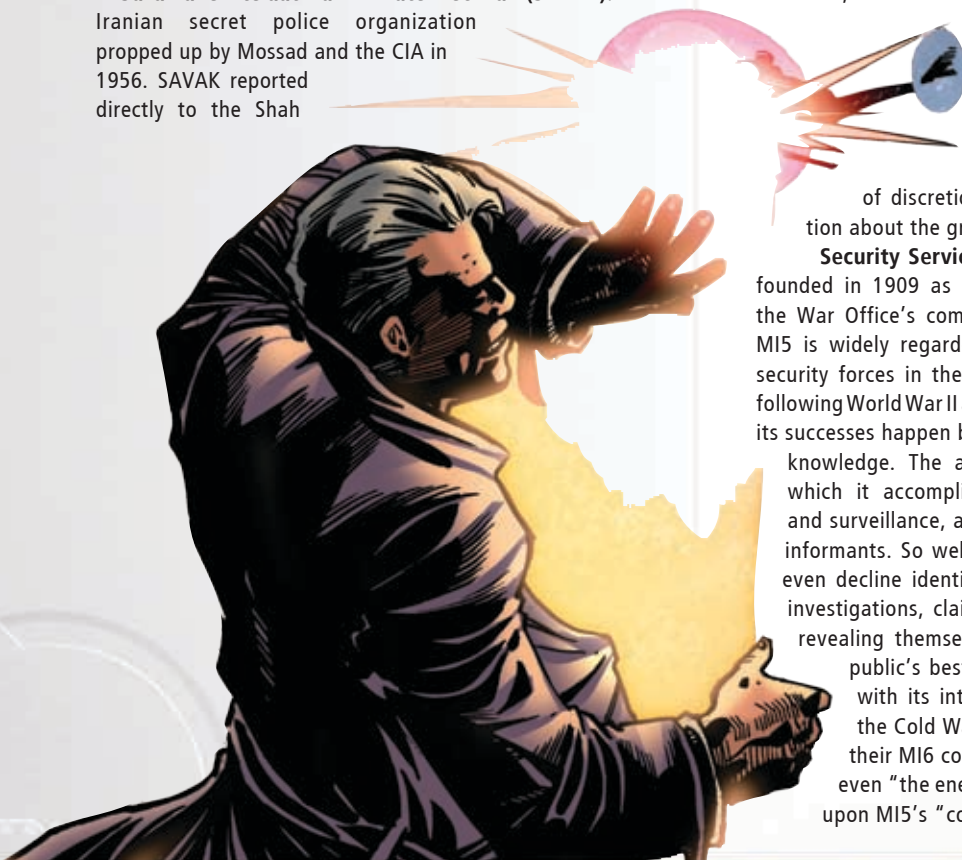
Service de Documentation Extérieur et de Contre-Espionage (SDECE): French Service for External Documentation and Counter-Espionage created in 1958 to seek "information and documents that might inform the government." The SDECE kept "smear" files about many outspoken liberals and left-wing radicals in France and had the distinction of (reportedly) never being compromised by a foreign intelligence agency. It did, however, suffer grave infighting between its military and civilian complements, and entrenched itself in many questionable operations. It funded France's participation in the Vietnam Conflict using monies siphoned from the indigenous drug trade. It also supported secessionists during Nigeria's Biafran War, which claimed more than half a million lives. In 1982, due to intense political pressure, the SDECE was reorganized and renamed the DGSE. Initially, many turned their backs on the DGSE; operatives resigned and supporting networks collapsed. Some who remained refused to work with the new command. Eventually, however, the DGSE's shifting leadership weeded these non-believers out of the mix and the agency learned to thrive again.

Sherut ha'Bitachon ha'Klali (SHABAK): Israeli General Security Service, which is known abroad as the Shin Bet. SHABAK's motto translates roughly to "Defender (Shield) who shall not be seen" and it has more than lived up to this promise, operating at the center of a vast web of undercover operatives and informants in every walk of Israeli life. SHABAK focuses its efforts primarily on extremist groups, Arab nationals, and foreign spies. Its archives include detailed background and personality profiles on Arab terrorists, which it periodically extends to foreign agencies when justified. SHABAK has survived several scandals, including reports of violent interrogations, yet remains at the forefront of the Middle East conflict.

Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa (SB): Polish Security Service, derived from the Urzad Bezpieczenstwa (UB) in 1956. The SB was a communist intelligence agency and secret police force that operated plain clothes agents out of Poland's Ministry of Internal Affairs, rooting out any and all subversion (in fact, Polish slang for a secret policeman is "Ubek," an abbreviation of the SB's first name). During the 1940s and 1950s, the SB hunted anyone suspected of sympathy for the West, and clashed with the Polish anti-Soviet resistance called Armia Krajowa (Home Army). It also managed Branch 5, which recruited spies from the substantial Polish émigré populations in the U.S., France, Britain, and elsewhere. In 1968, after a period of quiet, the SB was re-envisioned as a force of political suppression, especially against the Solidarity movement. The SB ended its tenure in 1990, when Poland exited the Warsaw Pact.

Sluzhba Vneshney Razvedki (SVR): Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, created in 1991 as successor to the KGB's First Chief Directorate. The SVR gathers political, economic, scientific, and technical intelligence and prepares reports about these topics for the Russian President and the Federal Assembly. It is presumably organized and directed in a similar fashion to its predecessor, operating illegals and moles, and indulging in "active measures" (covert operations). Unfortunately, like the whole of the Federation, the SVR is still hampered by a top-heavy command scheme that requires information to travel all the way to the top before it can trickle back down to where it's needed. Reportedly, the SVR suffers from serious budgetary limitations, having lost over 40% of the First Chief Directorate's resources since the transition.

SMERSH: Russian counter-sedition branch of the KGB famed for its grisly kidnapping and murder methods, which included custom weapons and poisons. SMERSH directed these distasteful tactics at any and all traitors and opponents of the Communist regime. It also hired criminals to perform its dirty work, which it hoped would deflect attention away from the political reasons for its killings. SMERSH was formed in 1917 as the Ninth Division of the original KGB (Terror and Diversion), and later became Department V of the KGB's First Chief Directorate (which was hidden inside the Russian Army's security department). Its existence remained a closely guarded secret until 1954 when one of its operatives, KGB Captain Nicolai Khokhlov, defected to the CIA and identified two fellow assassins in the process. More defections followed. SMERSH is believed to have lasted in various forms until the 1990s, when Russia's intelligence apparatus was overhauled and the need for such a bloody unit was reconsidered.

Special Branch: Britain's counter-espionage division of Scotland Yard, in operation since 1883. Special Branch initially combated Irish terrorism in London but has since expanded its mission to include the protection of royalty and foreign dignitaries, as well as general cooperation with MI5, the country's primary defensive intelligence agency. Since MI5 operatives cannot make arrests, Special Branch frequently accompanies them in the field, taking adversaries into custody and standing against them at trial. Special Branch also shields MI5 from unwanted media scrutiny and periodically works with MI5's (frequently rival) counterpart, MI6, as well as the FBI, INTERPOL, and other law enforcement agencies. Special

Branch investigates and interviews all citizens and immigrants suspected of espionage, and makes use of street-level informants it calls "snouts."

Statni Tajna Bezpecnost (STB): Czech State Security Service, founded in 1948 when the Soviets moved into the country and assumed control of its intelligence agencies. The STB's initial focus was surveillance and disinformation, and it was also the first Soviet Bloc service to integrate computers into its operations. The Soviets used the STB against any and all enemies, both on and off the agency's home turf. The STB sought to undermine the CIA's Radio

U.S. Secret Service: U.S. executive protection and federal enforcement arm. The Secret Service was founded in 1865, but was only responsible for guarding against counterfeit operations at the time. Since, it has performed many functions for the U.S. executive branch and combated many enemies of the state, from drug smugglers to spy rings to terrorists to dissident groups like the Klu Klux Klan. Yet as other agencies assumed control of operations the Secret Service once managed, its charter narrowed. Today, it primarily protects the President, Vice President, and their families, as well as certain political candidates and visiting heads of state.

Free Europe operation and collected data about everyone from NATO to the Vatican. It was familiar with religious trappings, its headquarters a former Roman Catholic monastery along the Vltava River in Prague's Old Town district. Strangely, the building was considered too precious to defile with renovations and so the STB had to make do with the existing ambiance (including portraits of Catholic saints) and poor security (including tourists regularly passing within feet of the installation's entrances). All this made the STB eminently capable at urban operations. The agency developed one-way street plans to control traffic around its headquarters and utilized rotary license plates later seen in the James Bond movies.

At times, it is also tasked with safeguarding valued items on loan from other countries. Counterfeiting is still on its radar, as are fraud and forgery in all mediums and across all media.

Vezerat-e Ettela'at va Amniat-e Keshcar (VEVAK): Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security, founded in 1984 to handle domestic security and foreign espionage. VEVAK incorporated many former operatives of the Shah's SAVAK, took complete control of the country's spying assets, and claimed a huge, undisclosed budget that it uses to promote Islamic "revolution" and sponsor like-minded terrorist groups. VEVAK has a fierce reputation for abuse of power, repression, and torture. Like many

spies, VEVAK operatives sometimes integrate into their country's embassy staffs, but they also use covers as students, merchants, and bank clerks, as well as pilots and and stewards for Iran Air (the country's official airline). Recently, they have even sought political asylum as a way of getting close to targets in enemy governments.

OPERATIONS

ABLE ARCHER (1983): A series of NATO war games conducted to simulate a nuclear strike against the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, ABLE ARCHER came on the heels of several events that had spiked paranoia in the Soviet Union. In March, U.S. President Ronald Reagan started preaching the benefits of the Star Wars defense system, which the Russians feared was actually offensive in nature. In May, KGB chief Yuri Andropov responded with Operation RYAN, a cross-agency effort to observe American government assets and outposts for any and all signs that the U.S. was considering a nuclear first strike. In August, the U.S. sent a recon plane to collect PHOINT and ELINT about a Soviet missile test on the Kamchatka Peninsula and a navigational error simultaneously sent Korean Air Lines flight 007 over the same area. Soviet fighters shot the passenger plane down, killing all 269 people on board. In October, the U.S. invaded Grenada, fearing a Marxist takeover of the island, and the Soviets misinterpreted the flurry of subsequent communication between Washington and London as more evidence of impending military action. NATO launched ABLE ARCHER just days later. It even kept the President, Vice President, and Joint Chiefs of Staff out of the operation, fearing the Executive Branch involvement would trigger a Soviet response. Of course, this was just what RYAN was watching for, and combined with the sudden changes in NATO communications, it sent the Russians into a frenzy. Nuclear-capable planes were placed on standby at East Germany air bases and everyone waited for the order to send them up. The only thing that kept the worst from happening was CIA Director William Casey flying to London for a briefing with double agent Oleg Gordievsky, who warned of Russia's fears. The U.S. toned down its rhetoric and took steps to bring the Nuclear Clock a few ticks back from midnight.

Air America (1946–1976): The codename — and eventually, the actual name — of CIA-sponsored operations contracting the Civil Air Transport (CAT) passenger company. During the Chinese civil war, Air America delivered food, weapons, ammunition, and other supplies to troops deep behind enemy lines. Eventually, it helped evacuate the same troops to Taiwan. In the Korean War, Air America dropped supplies to the French at the Dien Bien Phu fortress in Indochina. In Vietnam, the service dropped thousands of tons of food, rescued civilians and downed U.S. aircrews, and participated in emergency medical operations. Finally, during the 1975 fall of South Vietnam, it helped to evacuate those trapped in Saigon. All told, Air America lost over 240 CIA operatives and civilian employees, but it saved many, many more.

AJAX (1953): The joint CIA-SIS operation to remove Iranian Defense Minister Mohammad Massadegh from power. AJAX was commanded by CIA officer Kermit "Kim" Roosevelt, grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt, and was coordinated through the Shah of Iran, whose initial concerns about Massadegh led to the operation. AJAX led to mass rioting and military action, but eventually resulted in Mossadegh's surrender. The operation was known as BOOT in the United Kingdom.

ANADYR (1962): The Soviet multi-agency effort to place missiles and military forces in Cuba. The original plan was monolithic in scope — 60 missiles capable of striking U.S. targets and over 51,000 troops to protect them — but it was never fully realized. The first deliveries arrived in July, when issues in Berlin and Vietnam were distracting U.S. leaders. U-2 overflights in June and August spotted the preparations and build-up, and additional flights were instituted to confirm the CIA's dread suspicions. Their findings sparked the Cuban Missile Crisis, pushing the world as close to nuclear war as it has ever come.

AQUATONE (1954–1959): The CIA's construction of 30 high-performance aircraft capable of flying over the known ceiling of Soviet radar, and what eventually became the famed Utility-2 (U-2) spy plane, codenamed IDEALIST. AQUATONE was precipitated by the need to aerially photograph a Soviet missile test center at Kapustin Yar on the Volga River, but its first operational flights in 1956 targeted the heart of the Soviet Union. They yielded incredible intelligence about atomic and aircraft developments in Moscow and Leningrad, but didn't escape Soviet detection. Protests stalled AQUATONE for several months before the operation was moved to locations in Pakistan and Japan.

ARTICHOKE (1952–1953): The second set of CIA tests using drugs and hypnosis during interrogations (after BLUEBIRD), reputedly to achieve mind control. This time, the tests were undertaken in Europe and protocols were expanded to include electroshock therapy and sensory deprivation. The goals included were forced confessions, amnesia, and post-hypnotic suggestions.

BIG LIFT (1979): The Mossad Special Operations mission in which three demolitions experts attacked a nuclear reactor production plant in Marseilles believed to be producing components for Iraq. The explosion breached the Iraqi-bound reactor's containment core and inflicted over $25 million in damage, setting the Middle East country's nuclear development back by at least two years.

BLACK SHIELD (1967–1968): Twenty-two CIA flights over North Vietnam and the Demilitarized Zone using OXCART-produced A-12 spy planes. The flights focused on SAM missile sites and other strategic targets. Preparations for launch sites were identified but no completed sites were photographed. Air Force SR-71 Blackbirds resumed the effort following BLACK SHIELD's official conclusion.

BLUEBELL (1950): The CIA infiltration of North Korea following the outbreak of the Korean War. The mission focused on planes and troop movements and utilized many South Korean refugees trapped behind enemy lines. Though many of those involved were captured, the operation yielded information of great value to the U.S. war effort.

BLUEBIRD (1950–1952): The first set of CIA tests using drugs and hypnosis during interrogations, reputedly to achieve mind control. North Korean POWs were most likely used as unwilling subjects.

BOHEMIA (1948): An American operation run by Soviet defector Reinhard Gehlen. The operation scored a major coup by convincing a head of Soviet-dominated Czechoslovakian intelligence to also defect, bringing along countless sensitive files. BOHEMIA went on to effectively end Czech spying in western Germany at the time.

BUFFALO HUNTER (1960s –1970s): U.S. drone flights launched out of Hercules C-130 cargo aircraft over North Vietnam to collect tactical data. At peak operation, BUFFALO HUNTER flew 30–40 drones a month into the region.

CENTERING (1940s–1950s): The U.S. Air Force's long-range program for detecting atomic weapons testing and production, utilizing air samples captured by specially modified bombers (including the B-29). CENTERING flights primarily took place along the Turkish border, over the Mediterranean, and between Japan and Alaska. They were generally considered lower risk than photographic missions because the samples could be collected at a great distance from the target. In 1949, CENTERING discovered the detonation of an atomic device in Semipalatinsk, prompting the U.S. Joint Intelligence Committee to increase its estimate of the Soviet atomic stockpile.

CHALET (1978–1981): A spy satellite reconnaissance program focusing on Soviet missile and R&D sites, as well as defense ministries and their supporting industries. Someone in President Jimmy Carter's administration revealed Operation CHALET to *New York Times* reporter Richard Burt, and the front-page story prompted a reclassification of the program to VORTEX.

CHAOS (1967–1972): The FBI attempt to disrupt student protests against the Vietnam War, on the assumption that they were fueled by Soviet propaganda. Despite collecting files on 7,200 American citizens — including many who visited Russia before and after protesting — no hard evidence of a link was ever found. CHAOS was revealed to the public during the Watergate Scandal.

CHOIR (1955): MI5's bugging of the Soviet Consulate in London. Security Service operatives snuck into the building next door when it was being renovated and drilled a pinhole through the wall, planting the bug without notice. It transmitted for six months before soundproof walls were installed, likely because a member of the Cambridge Spy Ring tipped the Soviets off.

Cinnamon and Shrimp (1960s): The CIA-sponsored pacification project that produced a 500-man paramilitary force to protect the Saigon-Vung Tao road in South Vietnam. Wealthy businessmen also supported the operation, seeking to clear their transportation routes of communist guerillas. "Cinnamon and Shrimp" was largely successful and also yielded the U.S. government considerable intelligence about the area and enemies therein.

CLEF (1980s): The covert U.S. SIGINT operation out of Wakkanai, Japan, which was ostensibly tasked with monitoring Soviet General Staff and Air Defense Force radio chatter. In August of 1983, CLEF listeners overheard Soviet alerts about an intruding plane flying over Kamchatka and Sakhalin Island, as well as orders to scrambled fighters. Others mistakenly assumed the alerts to be part of a training exercise, but CLEF listeners were among the first to determine the truth — that Soviet interceptors had tracked Korean Air Lines flight 007 for two and a half hours before shooting it down. Their findings allowed Secretary of State George Shultz the opportunity to embarrass the U.S.S.R. in a press conference the following morning.

CLICKBEETLE (1967–1970): A series of U.S. Navy spy ship tours in the Far East, each lasting from four to six weeks and focusing on the patterns of Soviet vessels. CLICKBEETLE hosted two ships — the *U.S.S. Banner* and the *Pueblo,* an Army cargo ship converted specifically to collect ELINT. In 1968, a North Korean patrol ship captured the *Pueblo* and most of its crew, who were beaten and forced to write espionage confessions. They remained in custody for eleven months, after which the U.S. admitted they were spies. The North Koreans spent years sifting through the hundreds of classified documents and advancements found on board the *Pueblo* before they put the ship on display in Wonsan Harbor. It remains there today.

COINTELPRO (1956–1975): The FBI effort to sow discord in "subversive left-wing movements" in the United States, such as the American Communist Party, American Nazi Party, Anti-War Movement, Black Panthers, Ku-Klux Klan, Nation of Islam, and even the American Indian Movement. The operation also targeted supporters of Martin Luther King Jr. and Puerto Rican independence. It fed destructive propaganda into the ranks of its targets and created false causes to distract and diminish them. Sometimes, it even pushed them to violence so the FBI could step in and make official examples of them. COINTELPRO was a product of the FBI's longest-running director, J. Edgar Hoover, who often treated the agency as his own personal army. This operation in particular left a bitter taste in people's mouths and Hoover's successors had to focus great effort to recoup and turn the agency's reputation around.

CORONA (1958–Present): The CIA reconnaissance satellite program initially run alongside Lockheed's SENTRY/SAMOS effort. CORONA focused on a recoverable re-entry satellite model, where the camera capsule would return to earth. The first live test of the program sent *Discovery 14* into space on August 18, 1960. The satellite conducted an overflight of the entire Soviet Union, capturing many rudimentary photographs with a resolution of 50 to 100 ft. Some time later, the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) was developed to coordinate the CORONA and SAMOS missions and their photo collections. Under NRO guidance, CORONA gathered images critical to identifying and blueprinting Plesetsk, the first Soviet ICBM site.

DAMOCLES (1962): The Mossad operation to intimidate and kidnap German scientists working with Gamal Abdul Nasser's Egyptian government, many of whom were former Nazis. Israeli operative Wolfgang Luntz, "the horseback spy," sent letter bombs and things escalated. Dr. Heinz Krug, director of an Egyptian dummy company called Antra that was building missiles, was murdered. Other assassination attempts followed. Eventually, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion halted the operation, concerned that it might harm relations with Germany.

ECHELON (1962–Present): NSA global communications filter, through which virtually every phone call, FAX, email, and telex message passes. Intercept stations across the globe capture satellite, microwave, cellular, and fiber-optic transmissions and a massive computer network sifts through them for suspect "watch words" or phrases. Any that match a profile are flagged and transcribed for later human review. Through the UKUSA Agreement, NSA operates ECHELON in conjunction with Britain's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), Canada's Communications Security Establishment (CSE), Australia's Defense Security Directorate (DSD), and New Zealand's General Communications Security Bureau (GCSB).

ENGULF (1956): The MI5 bugging of the Egyptian Embassy in London, which yielded audio recordings of cipher machines being set. This allowed the agency to intercept discussions with the Egyptian Ambassador in Moscow that convinced the British government the Soviets intended to enter the Suez Crisis. Later, MI5 also bugged the French Embassy in London as part of ENGULF, under the subsequent codename STOCKADE.

EPIGONI (1964–1968): The KGB counter-subversion operation targeting Russian authors publishing anti-Soviet rhetoric through Western pseudonyms. Lengthy surveillance and interrogation revealed the culprits to be Yuli Daniel and Andrei Sinyavsky, courier Helene Zamoyska, and their publisher, Andrei Remizov.

+ DATA STREAM [X.35.73.9] +
VERIFYING IDENTITY
+ + SEARCHING + +
CREATING PERSONNEL FILE #4856
INTERPOLATING
FACIAL DATA MESH
POTENTIAL MATCH RESULTS
CLARISSA STONE
ALEXEI BARINGTON
SAMANTHA JENNINGS

>> CHAPTER 1
1 LITTLE WORLD LOST

Daniel, Sinyavsky, and their allies were only the beginning, however; by the end, EPIGONI apprehended over a dozen subversive writers and investigated many more.

FEEDBACK (1951–1954): The U.S. RAND Corporation's exploration of the potential for satellite reconnaissance. FEEDBACK provided the U.S. military with a two-volume report in 1954, which in part planted seeds for the nation's hesitant entry into the realm of space espionage.

FICON (1952–1959): A series of U.S. aerial reconnaissance missions undertaken by Republic F-84 fighters. What made the FICON missions so bizarre was the fact that pilots didn't fly their fighters to the objective area, but were rather transported there by an enormous ten-engine Convair RB-36 Peacemaker bomber. The Republic fighter was "hooked" into the Peacemaker and held in the bomb bay with its wings and tail hanging beneath the fuselage. As the bomber flew over the target area, the pilot clambered into the fighter, which was disengaged, and after scouting the objective, the fighter reconnected with the bomber for the ride home. This process allowed a smaller, lower-fuel plane to reconnoiter a location it wouldn't normally be able to reach, and increased the chance that the enemy would miss the operation.

FLOWER GARDEN (1960s): A far-fetched U.S. intelligence operation using large passive antennas to catch Soviet radar signals as they bounced off the moon.
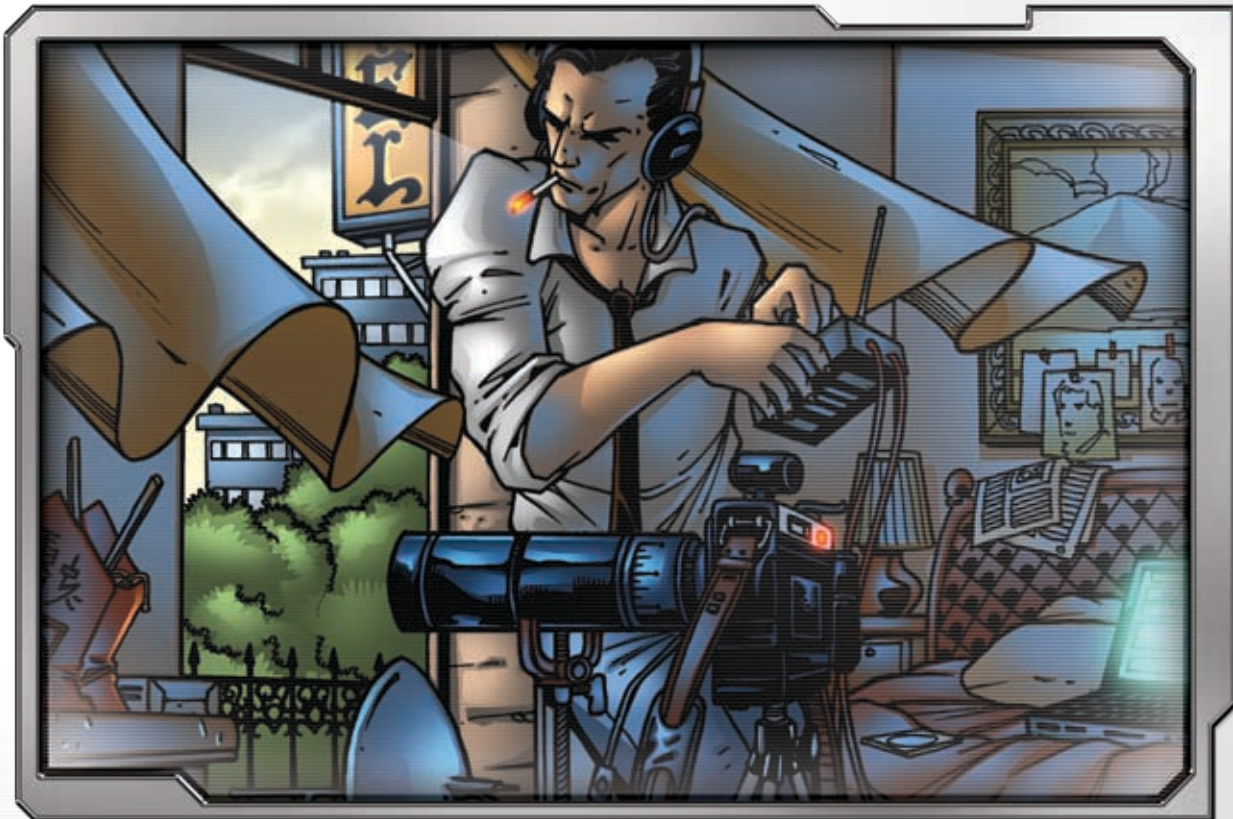
FORTY (1960–1961): One of many CIA plans to topple or kill Fidel Castro, which originally had exactly 40 members, but was eventually expanded to include over 70. Operation FORTY was responsible for many acts against the Castro regime, including the detonation of *La Coubre,* a ship flying the Belgian flag in Havana Bay, in which over 75 people perished.

GAMBIT (1963–1984): The U.S. "close-look" photographic reconnaissance satellite program, which launched with the Keyhole-7 (KH-7) camera system. GAMBIT operated at a lower altitude than previous CORONA models (as low as 70–80 miles above the earth), allowing images with far greater resolution (as low as 18 inches). Once the operation proved feasible, the NRO used it to follow successful CORONA missions, targeting specific locations of interest with greater and greater resolution.

GENETRIX (1956): The U.S. Air Force attempt to use balloons to carry cameras over the Soviet Union, gathering PHOINT. Of the 287 balloons sent up, however, only 44 were recovered. The U.S. Navy version of this program — codenamed MOBY DICK — met with the same marginal degree of success. Earlier Air Force codenames for this operation included GOPHER, GRANDSON, and GRAYBACK.

GOLD (1954–1956): The infamous joint CIA/MI6 operation that constructed a 1,476-ft. tunnel from a false American radar installation to underground telephone cables carrying messages from Moscow to the East German Soviet headquarters. The operation yielded so much intelligence about Soviet military movements that another five years were required to process it all. East German repairmen eventually discovered the tunnel, but the operation could have been compromised much earlier if the KGB had heeded the warning of George Blake, one of its double agents within MI6. The KGB didn't believe the enemy could decipher its coded messages and overlooked the alert.

HEXAGON (1971–1972): The U.S. sun-synchronous satellite reconnaissance program, which kept its KH-9 optical system on target at the same angle as the sun. This permitted photographs to be taken without confusing illumination. Typically, two HEXAGON overflights were made over each target, one in day-

light and one in darkness. Overlapping cameras simultaneously clicked images of each location, allowing for precise definition and verification.

HOLYSTONE (1959–Present): The risky U.S. naval operation using specially equipped attack submarines to gather ELINT, SIGINT, and PHOINT along the coasts of the Soviet Union, Vietnam, and China (and sometimes even *inside* occupied enemy ports). Due to the close operations range, noise was a significant issue; electronic and sonar gear was strictly forbidden and all hatches were tied down to prevent rattling. The HOLYSTONE missions lasted approximately 90 days each and their crews' legends claimed they were part of undersea geodetic survey teams. Among other information gleaned during the HOLYSTONE missions were the identifying "voice autographs" of many Soviet submarines, which allowed U.S. technicians to track the enemy vessels until their decommissioning. All but one HOLYSTONE sub are believed to have come through unscathed; in 1968, the *USS Scorpion* mysteriously sank on its way back to Norfolk, Virginia for reasons that have never been explained to anyone's satisfaction. HOLYSTONE continued with many similar missions, including PINNACLE, BOLLARD, and BARNACLE.

HONETOL (1964–1965): The ill-conceived CIA-FBI search for moles within the Agency, prompted by the claims of Soviet defector MARTEL (Anatoliy Golitsyn). The operation moved forward despite Martel's sketchy submissions — for example, that one of the moles' names began with "K" and possibly ended in "–ski;" that he'd worked in Germany, was of Slavic descent, and went by the Soviet codename SASHA. In the final analysis, the operation cost the United States hundreds of thousands of dollars, seriously distracted from anti-Soviet efforts, injured loyalty and morale, and ended the careers of several loyal agents. The effects were still being felt nearly a decade later.

IVY BELLS (1970s–1981): A CIA project following on the heels of JENNIFER, which was later abandoned and picked up by the U.S. Navy and NSA. An "induction pod" was fixed to a key Soviet communication cable at a depth of 400 ft. in the Sea of Okhotsk, recording traffic without making direct contact with the wires. Navy frogmen retrieved the pod's tapes twice a year. Unfortunately, Ronald Pelton, a Soviet mole in NSA, compromised the operation (though his involvement wasn't discovered until his arrest some time later). Today, one of the induction pods is on display in the museum set up in the former KGB headquarters in Moscow.

JENNIFER (1974): The U.S. endeavor to retrieve ciphers, vehicle and ordnance specs, nuclear missile and targeting data, and other information from a sunken Soviet Golf-class submarine 750 miles northwest of Hawaii. Project JENNIFER called upon the expertise of eccentric mogul Howard Hughes, who provided the *Glomar Explorer,* a unique sea platform that could theoretically use a derrick

to lift the submarine from the sea floor. Hughes also produced the *HMB-1,* a submersible barge roughly the size of a football field that was covered by an oval roof blocking potential satellite observation. The plan called for the *HMB-1* to grab the submarine with its enormous claws and haul it to the surface. Unfortunately, at 5,000 ft., the rear two-thirds of the submarine broke away and sank back to the seabed (it's believed the claws scraped across the sea floor and became damaged before the haul). The operation only yielded two nuclear torpedoes, several journals and manuals, and the corpses of six Soviet seamen. The bodies were reverently buried at sea during a nighttime ceremony in which the American and Soviet anthems were played. Video was taken and later given to Soviet President Boris Yeltsin by CIA Director Robert Gates. The CIA name for this operation was AZORIAN.

JMWAVE (1961–1968): The secret CIA base at the Naval Air Station in Opalocka, Florida, from which clandestine paramilitary operations were launched against Communist Cuba. Reportedly, JMWAVE controlled up to 400 front companies at any time and its budget spiked up to $50 million. Many Operations were launched out of JMWAVE, including FORTY and MONGOOSE.

KHODOKI (1968): The KGB's effort to justify a Russian military occupation of Czechoslovakia following Alexander Dubcek's attempt to "modernize" communism in the country. Operatives planted evidence that Dubcek sought to overthrow the government and backed it up with caches of American weapons. By the time they were done, the summit between Dubcek and Russian leaders was almost unnecessary — even most of the Czech people welcomed the invasion.

MINARET (1967–1973): The Top Secret NSA program to intercept phone and cable communications between foreign U.S. nationals and overseas contacts, or involving U.S. citizens suspected of civil disturbance, especially concerning opposition to the Vietnam War. MINARET observed the private conversations of over 1,500 American citizens and over 6,000 foreign nationals and groups, including suspected drug smugglers and the family of James Earl Ray after he assassinated Martin Luther King, Jr.

MKSEARCH (1963–1972): The fourth set of CIA tests using drugs and hypnosis during interrogations, reputedly to achieve mind control (after BLUEBIRD, ARTICHOKE, and MKULTRA). This time, budgets were slashed and most staff was reassigned. MKSEARCH was officially the final CIA operation of its kind, though rumors attest that the Agency continued the effort off the books, using ever more esoteric and paranormal catalysts for controlling human behavior.

MKULTRA (1953–1963): The third set of CIA tests using drugs and hypnosis during interrogations, reputedly to achieve mind control (after BLUEBIRD and ARTICHOKE). MKULTRA tests were expanded to include many toxins and contagions, including military-grade irritants and bacteriological weapons. They were conducted on willing volunteers as well as unwitting prison inmates and college students across the nation (the latter through "anonymous drug trials" coordinated with obliging university psychology departments). The U.S. Army's Chemical Corps assisted through the adjunct program MKNAOMI, which developed poisons and counter-agents to KGB poisons. One of the most public signs of MKULTRA involved MKNAOMI scientist Dr. Frank Olson, who leapt from the tenth story of the New York Statler Hotel hours after Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, one of MKULTRA's head researchers, spiked his drink. Forensics found it unlikely that Olson jumped of his own volition.

MONGOOSE (1961–1962): The foremost CIA attempt to assassinate Cuban Communist dictator Fidel Castro, or alternately to overthrow him with a campaign of economic and military espionage. MONGOOSE was the most heavily funded CIA operation at the time. It hired or formed many mercenary units, including Task Force W, which employed over 400 Americans and 2,000 Cuban exiles to sabotage shipments and attack production sites. An equally violent operations group was Alpha 66, which at one point strafed a hotel to kill a group of Soviet advisors, killing over 20 bystanders in the process. MONGOOSE considered many less conventional options as well, including a pyrotechnic display made to appear celestial in order to support the Second Coming — "but only if that godless communist Castro went first." The operation even recruited Mafia figures Castro had thrown out of Cuba and organized them as a hit squad (the criminals vanished after being sent in-country, presumably liquidated by the DGI's ruthless counter-espionage agents). MONGOOSE came to an abrupt end with the explosive Cuban Missile Crisis.

NOAH'S ARK (1969): The Mossad "acquisition" of five gunboats from Cherbourg harbor on Christmas Day. Israel designed and funded the boats' construction, but an arms ban enacted by French President Charles de Gaulle kept them from being delivered. Mossad operatives slipped into cargo boxes placed on board, seized control, and sailed the boats home, deeply humiliating the French government.

OVERCALLS (1948–1949): A series of U.S. military reconnaissance missions focusing on the Eastern Siberian Sea, the Kuriles, and Kamchatka, including the Chukotski Peninsula. OVERCALLS confirmed airfields at Velkel, Anadyr, and Lavrentiya, as well as barracks and storage buildings near Provideniya and submarine facilities at Petropavlovsk and the Tarinski Bay Naval Base.

OVERFLIGHT (1956–1960): Hundreds of U.S. spy flights undertaken by U-2 bombers, targeting the Soviet Union, Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, and Middle East. The flights sometimes gathered PHOINT or ELINT; other times, they used the High Air Sampling Program (HASP) to collect air pockets after nuclear tests. The U.S.S.R. protested, but only quietly, as it didn't want to reveal its sub par aerial strength, and the U.S. simply denied the spy planes' existence.

OXCART (1959–1968): The U.S. Lockheed Corporation's development of a high-speed, high-altitude reconnaissance plane to replace the defunct U-2, which in 1962 yielded the A-12, the predecessor to the Air Force's SR-71 Blackbird. Three years later, the CIA rolled out the first fully functional single-seater A-12, which flew at Mach 3.6 (2,400 miles per hour) at an altitude of 92,500 ft. Eighteen months after that, the plane saw its first field action in operation BLACK SHIELD *(see page 33).* OXCART was discontinued a year later, shortly after the first of the Air Force's SR-71s arrived at Kadena Air Base in Japan.

PAPERCLIP (1945 and on): The United States' recruitment of Nazi scientists to work in its space, missile, and aircraft programs. Scientists in all fields were accepted, but those with aerodynamics, rocketry, medical, and chemical weapons expertise were most highly prized. Nearly 500 scientists and their families were reputedly brought into the country and kept at the White Sands Proving Ground and other classified locations. Operation PAPERCLIP was originally called OVERCAST.
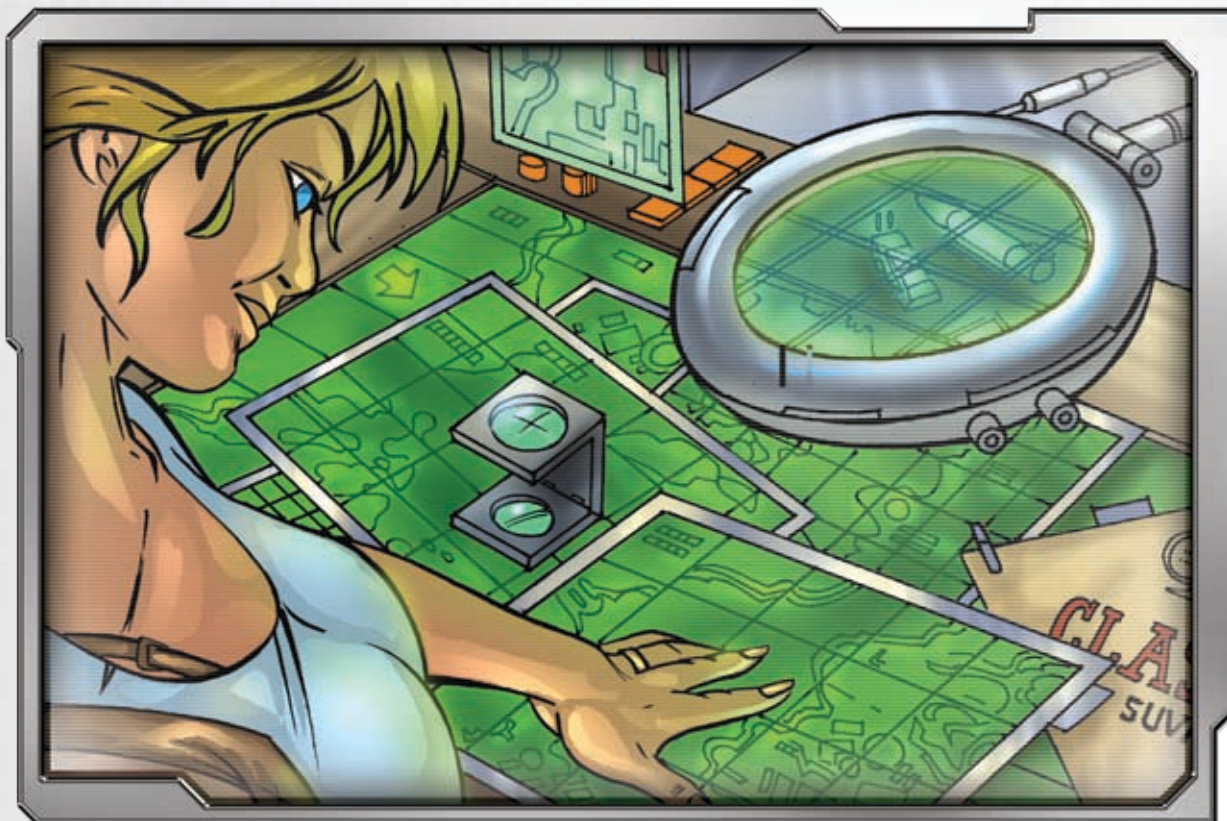
PARTY PIECE (1955): MI5's covert entry into a Mayfair apartment, which netted over 55,000 files about Great Britain's Communist Party, including the names of its entire membership. MI5 timed their break-in for a weekend they knew the headquarters would be empty (based on previous phone taps), and entered using a wax impression of the apartment key.

PENN (1950s): The U.S. Air Forces Europe (USAFE) establishment of U.S. Air Force Security Service (USAFSS) SIGINT stations at Karamursel, on the Black Sea coast. The stations were important because they were well poised to observe Soviet naval drills involving new technologies and tactics, as well as early missile test launches.

PHOENIX (1967–1971): The CIA program plotting to liquidate the Viet Cong infrastructure, one commander at a time. Others included in the plot were the U.S. Army, the South Vietnamese Police, and South Vietnam's Central Intelligence Organization. By many accounts, the mission claimed the lives of over 20,000 Viet Cong, some merely sympathizers and others unconfirmed suspects. It was also responsible for capturing over 28,000 and granting amnesty to another 17,000.

Plan 34A (1964): A series of CIA operations supporting the South Vietnamese by infiltrating them into North Vietnam while simultaneously performing hit-and-run attacks upon North Vietnamese shore installations. Unfortunately, the operation's planners didn't realize that it coincided with DESOTO, a U.S. Navy mission sending destroyer patrols into the Gulf of Tonkin to gather ELINT. High-speed North Vietnamese patrol boats responding to the Plan 34A attackers repeatedly assaulted the Navy destroyers, prompting President Lyndon Johnson to order retaliatory strikes. The situation escalated and Johnson eventually pushed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution through Congress, dragging the U.S. into the Vietnam quagmire.

PLUMBAT (1968): The Mossad theft of the *Scheerbergs,* a German vessel carrying 200 tons of uranium oxide. The ship vanished shortly after leaving Antwerp and reappeared later with a different name and forged papers, filtered through a series of Mossad dummy companies. No one outside the Mossad learned of the operation until ten years later, when a former Norwegian chief prosecutor claimed to have successfully interrogated a Mossad operative who'd been involved.

POCHIN (1966): Five KGB listening posts in Washington, D.C., the first of which was located in the Soviet embassy. POCHIN was wildly successful, monitoring the Pentagon, FBI, State Department, local police, and many other agencies. Among the secrets it gathered were the identities of over 90 candidates for high-level posts in the first Nixon administration (well before the selection process began).

QUICK FOX (1962): A series of NSA-sponsored military reconnaissance missions targeting Soviet holdings in Cuba, for which many aircraft and naval assets were re-assigned, and a C-130 Airborne Communications Reconnaissance Platform was transferred from Europe to the United States. Findings were inconclusive, but revealed an unmistakable military escalation in the region, including a number of what appeared to be combat troops.

REDSKIN (Cold War): The long-term CIA intelligence gathering operation that called for tourists, journalists, businesspeople, scientists, academics, athletics, chess players, and church leaders to collect publicly available information about target cities and buildings. The information requested was always innocuous and easy to obtain (e.g. the color of smoke rising out of a factory building, the registration letters of a passenger plane, etc.). REDSKIN provided vast amounts of basic information about the enemy, including available resources,

production estimates and materials, and the disposition and placement of key manpower. It also generated pictures of ICBM production and deployment, one of the first Soviet nuclear submarines, a missile-launching destroyer, and over a dozen SAM missile tests.

REDSOX (1949–1954): The CIA's effort to infiltrate agents into the Soviet Union by air, sea, and land from Scandinavia, West Germany, Greece, Turkey, Iran, and Japan. REDSOX was one of the first official operations commanded by the CIA's Office of Special Operations. Many of its most significant finds occurred at public gatherings in Moscow such as May Day, Revolution Day, and Soviet Air Shows.

RHYOLITE (1970–1978): The CIA's development of geosynchronous telemetry satellites in conjunction with defense contractor TRW. The program successfully captured signals across the VHF, UHF, and microwave frequency bands, allowing American intelligence agencies to remotely collect enemy radio chatter. RHYOLITE satellites were controlled from the Joint Defense Space Research Facility in central Australia, which was codenamed MERINO.

RICE BOWL (1979): The joint CIA/DIA operation to rescue fifty-three U.S. citizens taken hostage during the Iranian revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini. It involved dozens of agents moving in and out of Teheran but failed when a marine helicopter crashed into its refueling plane, killing five airmen and three marines. Operation RICE BOWL was also known as EAGLE CLAW.

RYAN (1983): The first joint KGB-GRU operation, in which massive technical and human resources were devoted to second-guessing the American nuclear stance. The operation's codename stood for Raketno Yadernoye Napdenie, or "Nuclear Missile Attack." Across the globe and in orbit, spies, signals, and satellites were dedicated to watching for the first indicators that the United States planned an assault. Soviet leaders in charge of the operation were wildly alarmist and their directives spiked the already strained tensions between the super powers.

SAPPHIRE (1962): The KGB spy ring of 12 operatives that infiltrated the French SDECE, revealed by the Soviet defector MARTEL (Anatoliy Golitsyn). Due to MARTEL's accusations, many prominent figures were suspected of being part of SAPPHIRE, including Louis Focart, Charles de Gaulle's personal intelligence and security adviser, SDECE deputy head Colonel Léonard Hounau, and SDECE counter-intelligence chief Colonel René Delseny. No solid evidence of their involvement ever came to light, however, and the resulting investigation contributed to a break in French-U.S. intelligence relations from 1964 to 1967.

SATANIC (1985): The covert DGSE attack upon the *Rainbow Warrior,* intended to prevent the Greenpeace vessel from leading a protest against underground French nuclear tests near the Mururoa atoll in the South Pacific. Photographer Fernando Pereira was killed in the attack, sparking scandal that forced the resignation of French Defense Minister Charles Hernu and Admiral Pierre Lacoste, head of the DGSE. Only two of the six DGSE personnel involved were arrested, however, and they received reduced sentences in a U.N.-mediated settlement.

SOLO (1954–1977): An FBI counter-intelligence operation targeting the U.S. Communist Party, in which two of its members, brothers Jack and Morris Childs, informed on its operations. They revealed much about the Party, including the fact that Stanley Levinson, advisor to Martin Luther King Jr., was a member. In response, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover set about discrediting the civil rights leader, spreading word of his "communist ties."

SUSANNAH (1954): The Israeli operation to use a network of Egyptian spies to discredit the popular Gamal Abdel Nasser before sweeping sentiment forced Britain and France to relinquish control of the Suez Canal. The SUSANNAH plan was to detonate bombs in various high-traffic areas in order to make Egypt appear hostile to the West, but a series of mishaps and dud explosives brought the mission to light and resulted in most of the participants being jailed. SUSANNAH's field commander, Avri El-Ad, escaped and fled to Europe, leaving Defense Minister Pinchas Lavon, the highest-ranking official believed to be part of the operation, to resign. Operation SUZANNAH was also referred to as SUZANNA.

TRACK I (1970): The approved CIA effort to destabilize the Chilean economy and rally opposition against President nominee Salvador Allende. TRACK I relied heavily upon media support, generating 726 articles, broadcasts, editorials, and other news items supporting the cause. Concurrently, it cut off U.S. economic support to Chile and lobbied other governments to follow suit. Despite widespread panic in Chile, TRACK I failed and Allende was elected to office. In 1973, Operation TRACK II attempted to overthrow Allende and resulted in his death during a subsequent coup.

ZENIT (1956–1962): The first successful Soviet reconnaissance satellite program, which launched *Cosmos 4* on April 26, 1962 and collected intelligence about targets across the United States. ZENIT satellites traveled at a higher orbit than their U.S. counterparts, allowing them to remain in flight longer but yielding lower image quality. They also returned to earth in their entirety, rather than ejecting their film capsules, as was the case with the American models.

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THE CULPABILITY OF CHAOS

One might view the calamitous state of things today and reach out for a source, someone or something to hold responsible for all the world's suffering. It's easy to believe that all the tragedy, all the grief and confusion is somehow planned. This idea gives people the strength to keep fighting, to hunt down the malignancy at the heart of it all and excise it for good. Sadly, this view is also horribly naïve.

Villainy, in concept and in practice, is subjective. Except for the mentally unhinged, people rarely relish inflicting pain or instilling fear, and within the mind of nearly every so-called "evildoer" is a commitment to some greater cause, a justification for every so-called "injustice." By example, most of Project: Pitfall's stalwart operatives tenaciously believe that the extreme steps they take are justified and that any unfortunate fallout from their actions is a far cry from the inevitable alternative. As will become evident throughout this chapter, this is also the case with two of the *World on Fire's* less obvious "antagonists"...

HONOR IN VENGEANCE: PROJECT PITFALL

Ephraim Roth was a proud man. He was proud of his heritage, his parents having smuggled him out of Nazi Germany at the eve of the holocaust so that he might live the dream they were denied. He was proud of the life he'd led since then, a life founded on strong ideals and even stronger convictions. He was proud that he'd always fought for causes he believed in, never backing down because he was hurt or afraid. He was even proud of the little things, like his kinship with animals, birds in particular.

Before this latest unhappy business, Ephraim had indulged this, his greatest passion. His life was simple. He ran an avian sanctuary and toured with an old-fashioned bird circus. His family — he never called them "pets" — they performed complex aerial tricks, acrobatic stunts, and feats of ingenuity and charm. He even trained messenger birds he would send from one tour location to the next with amusing notes he would read for the audience.

Ephraim's work had been noticed and he'd scored several high-end clients, including some in Hollywood and, surprisingly, with the U.S. military. It seemed that in this age of satellite imagery and instantaneous global chatter the safest forms of communication were in fact the simplest ones. Ephraim trained several carriers for his new employers, though he demanded and received clearance to work directly with the spy birds as they performed their secret work. He never knew much about the people for whom he worked, though his birds were never mistreated or used for anything he knew to be wrong.

Nine years ago, Ephraim came to understand that his government employers had at some point broken away from U.S. intelligence and branched out on their own. By this time they were calling themselves the Banshee Net and they appeared to be part of a broader network operating without a parent state. They undermined groups that they claimed were threats to the entire world, but Ephraim didn't buy into this bombastic claim, instead withdrawing his services and returning to civilian life.

He'd half expected retribution, men in black vans in the middle of the night, but none ever came. Ephraim lived an unmolested life for another six years before a very different visitor appeared on his doorstep: a strikingly beautiful woman with shocks of shoulder-length auburn hair. She reminded Ephraim of his mother in her glory days in the old country, and her scent... That elusive fragrance still clouded his mind.

The woman introduced herself as Julia Fine, though in retrospect he was sure that wasn't her real name. She explained to Ephraim that he was needed again, that his unique services would aid the Banshee Net against a new villain that could not remain in power: U.S. President George Winter. Julia produced reams of evidence indicting the leader of the free world with crimes rivaling those of the most infamous warlords — kidnappings, torture, political warmongering, and worse.

Ephraim didn't want to believe her, didn't want to believe that this could happen again, here in his new home, to the people he'd come to respect and love. God help him, though, he did, at least at the time. There was a lot about that night and the following months that Ephraim couldn't clearly recall, though it was coming back to him now that he was out of Julia's grasp, out of her sweet embrace, away from those intoxicating lips...

"Come on Ephraim..." The pleasant interrogator with the boyish face leaned in over the pictures spread across the cold steel table — pictures of Julia, or as the interrogator called her, Minx. "We've shown you the truth about her. She lied to you. She drugged *you. That's what she does. She seduces men into helping terrorists."*

Ephraim tried to process it all. If it was true, he'd trusted the wrong people. Twice. There was no way to be sure. For three years he'd believed that the man in front of him was the enemy, that Stephen Century and his Pitfall cronies were nothing more than stormtroopers with a new flag.

He wished he could remember his meetings with Julia. He knew they'd met regularly since he'd come back into the fold and he knew she'd briefed and debriefed him about his courier duties for the Net. The details, however, were... hazy, like a fading dream.

"You're a good man, Ephraim," Century said. "You've done good things with your life. You can do more. We aren't looking to hurt them, but they're dangerous. We already know roughly where they are, but we're running out of time and we need what they know about this Nightfall virus."

Ephraim's entire life he'd lived under the open sky. His first memories were of a vast expanse of unbroken blue, and it was there that he'd always found peace. He hated being in this windowless room, beneath this harsh artificial light. He missed the cool breeze at home and the gentle cooing of his birds.

"People are dying, Ephraim. Help us save them."

Images flooded Ephraim's mind's eye, first the pictures spreading through the news services earlier that day. The virus victims, their neurochemistry severely compromised, had literally torn each other to shreds. Even so, the losers of these brutal battles were the lucky ones; the survivors were slowly reduced to messy piles of pulpy flesh, their humanity stripped away cell by dissolving cell.

"The Banshees know who's doing this, Ephraim, if they aren't doing it themselves."

Ephraim squinted his eyes shut but the images kept coming, now from somewhere else. Memories, he realized, of a body on a table not unlike the one in front of him, a steel death slab where

his fingers and jaw would be removed to prevent identification. The poor soul was one of them, a Banshee, but he'd been turned by one of the organization's faceless enemies. One of Ephraim's birds had delivered the man's picture to a field operative. He was to bring the man on the slab home, presumably alive...

They'd killed him. The Banshees were afraid of what the double would reveal, so they'd killed him and mutilated his corpse. Why hadn't Ephraim remembered that before? Why did he suddenly taste fine wine? The same wine Julia loved, that she drank the night Ephraim learned he was a murderer. She'd kissed him...

"I remember," he said.

"What, Ephraim?" Century asked. "What do you remember?"

Ephraim Julias Roth, codename Conduit amongst the Banshees, made his choice. "I'll help you," he said, "but I have terms."

Stephen Century stepped out of the interrogation room and closed the door. He approached General Cornelius Fitch, who had been observing from behind a one-way mirror. The General didn't shift his stance, didn't look Century's way. His face was a stern mask of focused planning.

"You see, General? No violence, no threats." Century was quite pleased with himself. He'd scored a victory in that room. He'd proved Pitfall didn't have to do it Fitch's way. Not every op had to end with blood on the floor.

Fitch was not amused. "We lost twenty-eight and a half minutes to that production, son. How many more people do you think ripped each other apart in that time?"

The staccato clack of icy heels approached from a nearby hall. Madeline Sax was making an appearance, though as she entered the room she uncharacteristically yielded to one of Fitch's aides, a young lieutenant with an eager stride.

"General, Captain Drake reports we've successfully breached the target's upper floors."

Century interrupted Fitch's response. "I didn't agree to an attack, General."

"I did, Stephen." Sax, her charming voice laced with betrayal. "Like you said, we're running out of time."

"There were terms," Century stammered. "I assured him we wouldn't use lethal force."

Fitch looked at Century for the first time. If anything, his jowls were clenched even tighter than usual. "We aren't selling a used car here, son. We don't owe him anything."

"I gave a man my word, General."

"Wrong," Fitch said. "You successfully processed an enemy combatant."

Century's face burned as Sax pushed a sheaf of papers into his hands. "Memorize these. The press conference is in an hour."

The papers crinkled in Century's gripping fist. He whipped around at Sax and screamed, "How the hell do you know more of us won't come out of there in body bags than them?"

Sax produced a second sheaf of papers. "Just in case," she said smugly.

Century's hand shot out toward one of the nearby monitors. On the screen was more news of the mounting casualties around the world. "How do you know any of this is even gonna matter?"

Sax reached for yet another sheaf...

THE FELL HAND OF FREEDOM

Stephen Century's press conference broke into every major broadcast in the world that night, lauding Pitfall's latest victory with a carefully scripted blend of pride and arrogance. The organization's finely tuned public relations arm massaged the teleprompter text right up to the moment the feed went live, milking every image and crafting every word for maximum effect. As usual Pitfall camera crews had accompanied the front line troops, documenting their successes for promotion and cataloguing their foibles for reproach. This time they'd struck PR gold. The sweep had gone well, tearing through the halls of the Illuminated Futures Building with no known escapees and only three Pitfall casualties — one a cameraman lost to friendly fire (Century made the call to the woman's family three hours later).

Away from the cameras, Century railed against the spin doctoring, offended by its skewed depiction of the day's events. Sax's crew squarely laid the blame for the Nightfall virus on the Banshees, playing on the public's outrage to justify the attack. They focused attention on Pitfall's win, omitted mention of civilian casualties, and took credit for rescuing the world from certain doom *(even though Century and others knew otherwise – see The Nightfall Virus, page 45)*.

This is just one example of how the Pitfall organization that is perceived by the public differs from the reality. At the highest levels, Project: Pitfall is far from the united force for freedom seen above the fold; rather, it's as divided as the populace that never got to vote on whether to raise the stakes in the so-called War on Terror. Stephen Century is the organization's poster boy, the man credited with leading the charge, but he must contend with several other personalities lurking just outside the spotlight.

His biggest rival in the organization is Madeline Sax, former Deputy Communications Director for the White House and head of Pitfall's Public Relations branch. Sax was appointed several months ago when Century blasted U.S. President George Winter for a speech equating humanitarian Gideon Barbary's aggressive peace tactics in Eurasia to the Banshees' "opinion bombs" *(for more about Gideon Barbary and the Eurasian Conflict, see page 48)*. Sax is the mastermind behind Project: Pitfall's unblemished public image, even in the face of declining terror attacks and the agency's questionable necessity. She's also a fierce patriot whose first loyalty is to her President, which often threatens Century's desire to keep Pitfall's mission clear, focused, and uncorrupted.

Sax respects Century's charisma and ability to hold Pitfall together, but she frequently voices private doubts regarding his methods and personal agendas. In particular she believes that Century's apolitical views marginalize Pitfall's influence and endanger its longevity. She knows that the pendulum of public opinion will eventually swing the other way, that people will grow weary of the struggle and want to withdraw with as much dignity as they can manage. She also knows that if Pitfall isn't ready to weather the subsequent storm of discontent, it will succumb to it — and she'll have to find a new cause to support.

A force covertly tugging at Pitfall's strings is CIA Director of Central Intelligence Oliver Johnson, who seeks to usurp many of Pitfall's resources to supplement the U.S. espionage campaign. Unlike Sax, Johnson has no vested interest in Pitfall's continued success, or even its existence (indeed, the CIA's job would become easier without a brash, rogue military force trotting the globe). Johnson is mainly concerned with the funds, manpower, and other tools at Pitfall's disposal, including many U.S. intelligence resources that were originally earmarked for the CIA. To date, Johnson has

focused on ways to burrow into the new organization's hierarchy, corrupting it from within. Many of the former Agency staffers reassigned to Pitfall are responding favorably to Johnson's advances and are quietly redirecting resources to CIA operations across the globe. This hasn't seriously impaired Pitfall's function yet, but it's only a matter of time before it comes to a head, especially with Century taking a personal interest in more and more of the organization's field missions.

U.S. General Cornelius Fitch, assigned at Pitfall's inception to advise Century in tactical matters, is a less insidious but equally competitive threat. Like his longtime personal friend President Winter, Fitch views Project: Pitfall as a strategic asset in a massive yet conventional global conflict and strives at all times to apply blunt, straightforward logic when making operational decisions. Century, on the other hand, understands that Pitfall is facing an entirely new kind of enemy, one that demands a new kind of strategy. Fitch also supports President Winter's clandestine attempts to convert Pitfall into an operational arm for the current U.S. administration.

Toward both of these ends, Fitch frequently undermines Century's leadership, always taking the stance that matters of military importance require immediate, decisive response, or simply claiming them as his sole dominion. Trapped in a prolonged infancy, Project: Pitfall lacks the established protocols to prevent this infighting, and the organization's effectiveness is often crippled as a result.

Within this predatory den of wolves, Stephen Century defiantly holds true to the promise he made to former U.S. President Douglas Westcott days before fallout from 9/11 and the Mouthwash Confession drove him from office. Westcott knew what the One World Doctrine could mean for the changing global landscape and while he couldn't prevent Project: Pitfall from happening, he could certainly make sure it pointed in roughly the right direction.

Westcott nominated Century as Pitfall's operational commander for a number of reasons. For one, he knew the former U.N. investigator would stand a chance of being appointed. Century's apolitical nature was well known and he'd already established himself with many of the member nations voting to assign the organization's personnel. More importantly, Westcott was familiar with Century on a personal level and knew that he would accept neither a bureaucratic quagmire nor a puppet regime. He was confident that Century would fight tooth and nail to keep Pitfall on the straight and narrow, moving toward the goals for which it was conceived.

As Westcott expected, Stephen Century has wholly dedicated himself to distancing Pitfall from governmental opportunists and would-be power mongers. He's isolated the organization's leadership from outside influences, including its biggest sponsor, the United States. Unfortunately, he's isolated himself from potential supporters in the process and must now fend off the jackals at the ramparts alone.

Stephen Century is a ferociously principled, all-American pragmatist who deals in cause and effect, the mechanics of situations rather than the motivations for them. He's acutely aware that without clear, unbiased stewardship Pitfall will eventually become exactly what it combats — an engine for inciting terror. This is especially true so long as George Winter remains in office, as the President has on more than one occasion tendered that terrorists will only stop once they're shown the consequences of their actions. Several times Winter's speeches have hovered just shy of Biblical eye-for--an-eye rhetoric, urging Pitfall to meet the terrorist threat "in kind" and with "due prejudice."

WHY "PITFALL"?

An early Banshee asset was the Planetary Information Trust, or PIT, a network of highly skilled moles, doubles, and undercover couriers who gathered sensitive information and sprinkled seeds of insurrection in target governments and organizations. The PIT was responsible for assembling a good chunk of the Mouthwash Confession and spearheaded much of the harassment campaign against former U.S. President Isaac Hunt.

During the chaotic first weeks following the Confession's release, the Planetary Information Trust was the most visible name to which the media sharks could assign blame and so the network became known to the public for a time as the sole culprits. The Banshees quietly disbanded the PIT and faded into the background, leaving the wolves to sniff at the corpse, but as the U.N. began constructing an organization to hunt and apprehend terrorists, it latched onto and warped the most widely accepted term for them.

Thus, Project: Pitfall was born.

Many other world leaders, most injured by the Mouthwash Confession, have followed suit, whipping the people into a vindictive frenzy that can't be ignored. As a U.N. majority can terminate Pitfall appointments at any time, Century is forced to keep up appearances, delicately balancing his own weary conscience against the popular demand for sanctioned revenge.

Truth be told, Century's efforts have been in vain more often than not. He can't be everywhere at once and whenever he counters one corruption of the organization, it's a safe bet that several others are festering just out of sight. In Pitfall's four years in operation, Madeline Sax has managed to internationally brand suspected terrorists as "Strangers" and make the term a household name. In fact, this masterful manipulation was so successful that in a horrific parallel to Nazi Germany, private citizens now hunt for signs that anyone they know or meet should be reported to Pitfall as a Stranger. How ironic that paranoia and fear are at an all-time high when more steps are being taken to counter enemies to peace and security than ever before...

This mounting unrest is felt even within the loftiest halls of power, where Sax, Johnson, and Fitch work together to ensure that Pitfall remains at the forefront in the War on Terror. They spin horror stories about unchecked enemies and entice leaders with promises of massive public support for conclusive action. Coupled with the public's ecstatic approval, these conversations, held outside Century's earshot, ensure that Pitfall continues to receive *carte blanche* "so long as the bodies keep rolling in."

The efforts of Century's rivals have also had another, far more chilling effect on the global stage. With government and public support for Pitfall soaring to new heights, career politicians eager to be associated with the organization have pushed for and realized laws expanding its operational parameters and pouring astronomical funds into its already swollen coffers. Every day Project: Pitfall grows stronger and is hampered less and less by pesky obstacles like civil liberties and governmental oversight.

TRIUMPH AND TURMOIL

At the center of it all, Stephen Century searches for opportunities to do right by his ethics and his word. His most notable success is Triumph Tower, or what became of the captured Illuminated Futures Building and its Banshee, Krypt, and Shadow Patriot occupants. The ultra-modern structure was always impressive, its exterior surface consisting of sheer, windowless mirrors, reflecting Amsterdam back upon itself in all directions. Yet under the Banshees' control it appeared to the outside as nothing more than a glistening silhouette spiking out of the urban vista. Under Pitfall's command, the location has become a veritable *hive* of activity, an operational epicenter through which literally thousands of operatives pass around the clock, each and every day.

and marginal improvements upon DARPA's powered exoskeletal and drug therapy enhancements. Far worse in this reactionary age, especially in the hands of an unmonitored group like Pitfall, the facility contains a fully functional Biosafety Level 4 laboratory and a handful of short-range ballistic nuclear missiles. Pitfall also regularly brings captured pathogens and other high-grade weapons to this facility for study and potential application.

The former Illuminated Futures structure has changed as well. The Banshees had originally cored out two sections of the building: the top four floors for Nathan Sparks' masterpiece of computer engineering, the Chaos Engine, and several floors immediately beneath that for a concealed and rarely utilized heliport. The heliport was severely damaged by the detonation of a powerful explosive device that was used to locally deliver the Nightfall antigen but Pitfall has since repaired it and included a long runway that extends out of the building in both directions to accept plane traffic.

Below, Pitfall has cored out the rest of the structure as well, replacing it with crisscrossing catwalks, a central pillar of elevators and guard stations, and nearly 1,000 high-tech prison cells.

The U.N. has purchased or appropriated all land out to a distance of two miles from the building, making it part of the legal body known as the Pitfall Partnership. Edifices in the area have been torn down and replaced with several barracks and ground services buildings, as well as the start of proprietary highway and train hubs. One of the best known "secrets" of the modern espionage scene is that the Tower and several of these exterior buildings also access a labyrinthine subterranean facility code-named Noble Grove, from which some of Pitfall's central operations — and presumably many of its most devastating armaments — are now commanded.

Another secret that is as yet been largely under wraps is that Noble Grove contains experimental troop and vehicle upgrades, including advanced drone technologies, re-envisioned military vehicle designs,

Surrounded on five sides by reinforced metal and facing out through bulletproof glass toward the guard posts, each of these cells contains two pull-down bunks, a private toilet and grooming station, a video receiver built into the wall, and a two-person table that doubles as a work station.

By day prisoners are assigned duty shifts throughout the building. Most perform menial labors, such as custodial work or manning the cafeterias and laundries, but a small cadre of favored and highly skilled inmates indulge their specialties, maintaining the building's cutting edge computer systems, including the Chaos Engine, which Pitfall has renamed The Mutiny Engine.

One hundred monitors, twelve multi-tasking server farms, and fifteen thousand secure computations per second, the technological marvel was once the epicenter of Gregory Goodchilde's ambitious intellectual pursuit, "Automated Genius." However, the Engine lay in ruins after the raid, severely damaged in the explosion that saved the region. Pitfall's finest tried to salvage the device, but none of them could piece together how it worked.

Its systems bordered on fringe science, operating on principles that the techs were only faintly confident they could unravel... given unlimited resources for several years.

This proved the catalyst for Stephen Century's most unconventional move, and one of the most bizarre social experiments of a generation. He proposed that rather than locking the captives up and throwing away the key, Pitfall could put them to work and learn from them in the process. The Chaos Engine could be rebuilt, and even improved. The Engine could be turned toward Pitfall's primary mission — locating and detaining terrorists *before* they strike — but only with the help of the captured Banshees, Patriots, and Krypt agents.

This time Century used Sax and her media machine to his advantage. By convincing her that the move was bold and ingenious enough to capture the attention of the entire world, cementing Pitfall as the altruistic organization it plays on TV, Century in turn convinced the U.N. delegates whose votes were required to make it happen. Winter, Fitch, and Johnson vehemently opposed the proposition but were drowned by a thunderous wave of enthusiasm from New York and abroad.

As Century expected, there were caveats. Qualified experts in relevant fields would closely supervise all work undertaken in sensitive areas and armed guards would always be available to keep the prisoners in line. Triumph Tower would keep uniform hours and no electronics or communications gear of any kind would be allowed in the prisoners' cells (though they could request reading materials, a variety of craft and hobby supplies, and certain video feeds during the evenings). More comfortable detention facilities were part of Century's plan for winning over the prisoners, though Pitfall's sponsors made it clear that the primary focus must still be *detention*.

Media coverage would never depict the Banshees as comfortable or content, let alone happy. This was explicitly laid out for Sax, who languished in meetings for weeks drafting an exhaustive list of what could and could not be seen by the outside. No one, least of all Sax, wanted Triumph Tower to be viewed as one of those laughable white-collar country clubs where celebrities were "incarcerated" before an inevitable comeback.

Early on, it was made clear that Century's experiment would have to regularly produce hard results to continue. The Mutiny Engine was a long-term project — the original estimate was eighteen months of solid reconstruction and refitting — but smaller, more frequent successes were required in the meantime. For a start, the prisoners of Triumph Tower would support the law enforcement and intelligence agencies of Pitfall's sponsor nations. Information would be delivered without context, with specific instructions or requirements to be fulfilled. Unsolved cases, coded product, unrelated incident files, and more would be shipped to the Tower, split into seemingly harmless chunks, and handed over for processing. Each prisoner would work with a designated partner from the source agency and together they would bring new perspective to the data. These partners would simultaneously provide additional oversight for Pitfall, bringing hollow comfort to those signing off on Century's experiment.

This system would also serve as the inmates' debriefing (another of Century's ideas put into practice). The partners would attempt to casually engender themselves to the prisoners, extracting information from them in conversation rather than interrogation. Century hoped that this would help establish good relations within

THE NIGHTFALL VIRUS

Professionally, German researcher Dr. Friedrich Kholera spearheaded much of the research that defines modern biological warfare — not prevention or containment, but *warfare*. Kholera was never all that interested in the struggle to save the human strain. He watched the explosive population growth in his lifetime alone and stood in abject horror of what would surely follow: the raping of the planet as natural resources were consumed at an unsustainable rate; the homogeny of the species as cultures grew together geographically and genetically; and society's inevitable collapse as it was ravaged by war and disease. At least, though, this final outcome had some positive side effects — it was like natural selection pruning the weeds sprouting up in the Garden of Eden. Perhaps, he considered, he could help the process along...

Dr. Kholera called his philosophy the Extinction Agenda. The goal was to eliminate 99.9% of the current human crop, leaving the rest to enjoy a renewed Earth free of the stress, chaos, and noise of the current era. The good doctor reasoned that the most direct method of realizing his dream was to work with the military, which during the Cold War seemed hell bent on waging the arms race until someone lost. Sadly, though, the military had other plans. It seemed that they wanted Kholera's work to sit on a shelf, acting as a deterrent to enemies rather than a lesson to the breeding ninnies and their maddening spawn. No, no. This wouldn't do at all. One day, everyone at Kholera's lab suddenly came down with a violent case of the mumps and died during lunch hour, leaving the researcher to casually take his work and stroll into the history books.

The Extinction Agenda's first major success came when Kholera allowed cynicism to guide the process. Instead of utilizing typical delivery methods, such as exposure or inhalation, the spread of which was limited by the proximity of potential victims, Kholera developed a contagion that relied on the most beloved act of human intimacy. AIDS affected everyone universally, could linger dormant in a carrier's system for years, and best of all it gave people a reason to fear the very practice that was causing the loathed population boom. The irony was sublime.

Still, AIDS wouldn't deliver the quiet, refreshed world Kholera so desperately sought. For that he required a pandemic with a greater sense of... urgency. He set his sights on a single day as the appropriate length of time he wished to endure his fellow man's inevitable wailing and thrashing, and this gave him the idea of incorporating the Earth's rotation into the design. His masterpiece, the Nightfall virus, took nearly two decades to perfect. It was flawless. Random mutation ensured the proper mortality rate without accidentally wiping *everyone* out and advanced gene therapy could salvage those Kholera felt were worthy of the new Garden. Best of all, the virus' release trigger was both unique and diabolically effective: as the sun set on each time zone, 99.9% of those infected in the area would perish.

THE NIGHTFALL VIRUS (CONTINUED)

Beyond devious, the Nightfall virus was cruel; the first stage of infection sent the victims into a horrifying, unstoppable blood rage, compelling them to viciously attack all living beings around them. Those who survived this savage battle royal were doomed to lose all motor function before their flesh and organs, then their muscles, and finally their bones liquefied, leaving nothing but a stain of bloody puss in their memory. Kholera relished the idea of peoples' slimy remains seeping back into the cracks in the planet they'd nearly destroyed, posthumously restoring its fertile glory.

The release of the Nightfall virus was carefully planned. There would be many sources of the contagion; mercenaries would deliver it into food and water supplies at strategic locations across the globe and an unsuspecting host would simultaneously be infected and driven from one location to another over a 24-hour period. Kholera expected that one or two of the sources might be discovered and countered, leaving the rest to run their grisly course. Indeed, the elaborate and ostentatious plot surrounding the host was developed specifically to occupy the Shadow Patriots and their allies, those despicable, self-appointed defenders of the world. Every contingency had been considered — or so Kholera believed.

The plan went into effect Monday the 19th of July, 2004. Dr. Kholera's mercenaries took care of the details as he withdrew to his island headquarters in the Baltic Sea with the hundred or so people he'd determined were "evolved" enough to live. The host fled from several teams that were instructed to make as much noise in their pursuit as possible. Several other teams descended on key facilities controlled by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as other groups around the world whose business was combating deadly outbreaks, and as each facility was crippled, humanity's hope dwindled a little more.

Only a concerted effort between the Shadow Patriots, Banshee Net, Krypt, and surprisingly the Bloodvine Syndicate staved off utter annihilation, and the price was still extremely high. Over a hundred operatives perished in the joint operation and the worldwide death toll topped ten million. The populations of South America and central Europe were the hardest hit, where entire cities were literally decimated. Some were rebuilt, among them social hubs like Monte Carlo, but others have become modern day ghost towns or have simply dropped off the maps altogether.

It was months before life returned to a semblance of normal following Dr. Kholera's vile plot. Some say that the 9/11, the Mouthwash Confession, and the Nightfall virus set the stage for the unthinkable, such as China's invasion of Russia weeks after Kholera's demise . If this is true, perhaps the *World on Fire* is headed for even darker times as crisis and tragedy take the wheel.

For greater detail about the release of the Nightfall virus, visit **www.crafty-games.com** *and download the* World on Fire *fiction series!*

the Tower and still satisfy the bean counters upstairs who were constantly demanding new reports. Ultimately, this part of the endeavor met with mixed results, as the captive Patriots and Krypt agents were far more experienced at resisting passive interrogation than the Banshees. Fortunately, they were also less suited to the work in this sector of the Tower, so it was an easy fix to move them onto more productive projects and employ more conventional, though still extremely low-impact, debriefing techniques when yielding intelligence from them.

The final caveat was more of a veiled threat. Despite any spin-doctored promises of favorable media exposure, skepticism ran high at the U.N. and Winter, Fitch, and Johnson worked diligently behind the scenes to seed this discontent. The gravity of the situation was not lost on Century, who understood that his place in the organization, and indeed the rest of his career, was interwoven with this project. Pitfall would go on if Triumph Tower failed, but Century would no longer be part of the equation.

Ultimately, Century prevailed and Triumph Tower was largely a success, though many wonder how it happened. Even Sax, who understands the power and appeal of Century's character better than most, questions his irrational influence over the prisoners — influence that seems to extend even to their allies outside the facility. In Triumph Tower's year and a half of operation, not one attempt has been made to free the detainees, not one blip of communications traffic that any such attempt is in the works, nor any other indication that the Banshees, Patriots, and Krypt want their personnel back at all.

Speculation runs wild as to how Century pulled this off, but as is often the case, the truth of the matter is stranger than the fiction. It began with a meeting in the spring of 2004, months before the capture of Illuminated Futures. While in Belgium to meet with some European tactical advisors Fitch had pressed upon him, Century was approached for the first of many times by a man whose appearance and voice were disguised. Eventually the man would take to calling himself "Paradox" but at the time he was just another would-be informant looking to stool for Pitfall. Century didn't pay him much mind, though he took the tips provided and passed them along to Pitfall's Investigative Branch.

Surprisingly, the tips led to many impressive successes, allowing Pitfall to make record arrests and seizures, often without bloodshed. The contact returned several times, always finding Century and refusing to meet or work with anyone else. He also refused to divulge anything about his background or where he acquired his information. Eventually, a tip led to the capture of a Banshee codenamed Conduit, who revealed the location of the terrorists' headquarters, the Illuminated Futures Building. This was the greatest coup of Pitfall's two and a half years in operation and Century was indebted. As the dust settled, Paradox met with Century again and this time he proposed a deeper, more rewarding partnership.

Paradox revealed that his ultimate aim, at least as he was willing to state at the time, was similar to Pitfall's. He wanted to bring down several key organizations, including the Big Three that had initially prompted Pitfall's creation: the Banshee Net, the Shadow Patriots, and the Krypt. He offered that the key to stopping these terrorists was the most experienced, most deeply entrenched of their agents, Sir Richard Poole, who was famous in the intelligence community for his Cold War victories. "Kill their beginning," Paradox said, "and you control their end."

Thus began a secret alliance that would redirect Century's efforts and ultimately threaten his entire worldview. The information coming in from Paradox shifted away from immediate opponents and toward the looming connections behind them. Much of what Century received from Paradox in the next several months was not useful intelligence data, at least not in terms of generating new mission objectives. Rather, it painted a frightening picture of a world at the mercy of a vast conspiracy of incalculable scope, with Poole somehow connected to all of it. Countless times over the last four decades, when this immense organization stirred and the world trembled, Poole was close at hand. Was he hunting these mysterious shadows, working with them, or was something stranger afoot?

The captives agreed and Triumph Tower became a reality. Work proceeded per the needs of all interested parties, though it focused more on actual threats rather than the prisoners' organizations. Arrests and seizures of these organizations' assets still occurred, though as often as not they were intentionally arranged by the prisoners to bring needed resources closer to hand.

The Mutiny Engine was completed six months early, though its unveiling in July 2005 was not the smooth media spectacle for which everyone hoped. As the machine went online, it commingled millions of government, military, and civilian databases around the world, as well as the whole of the free Internet, sampling data as well as processing power from almost everywhere at once.
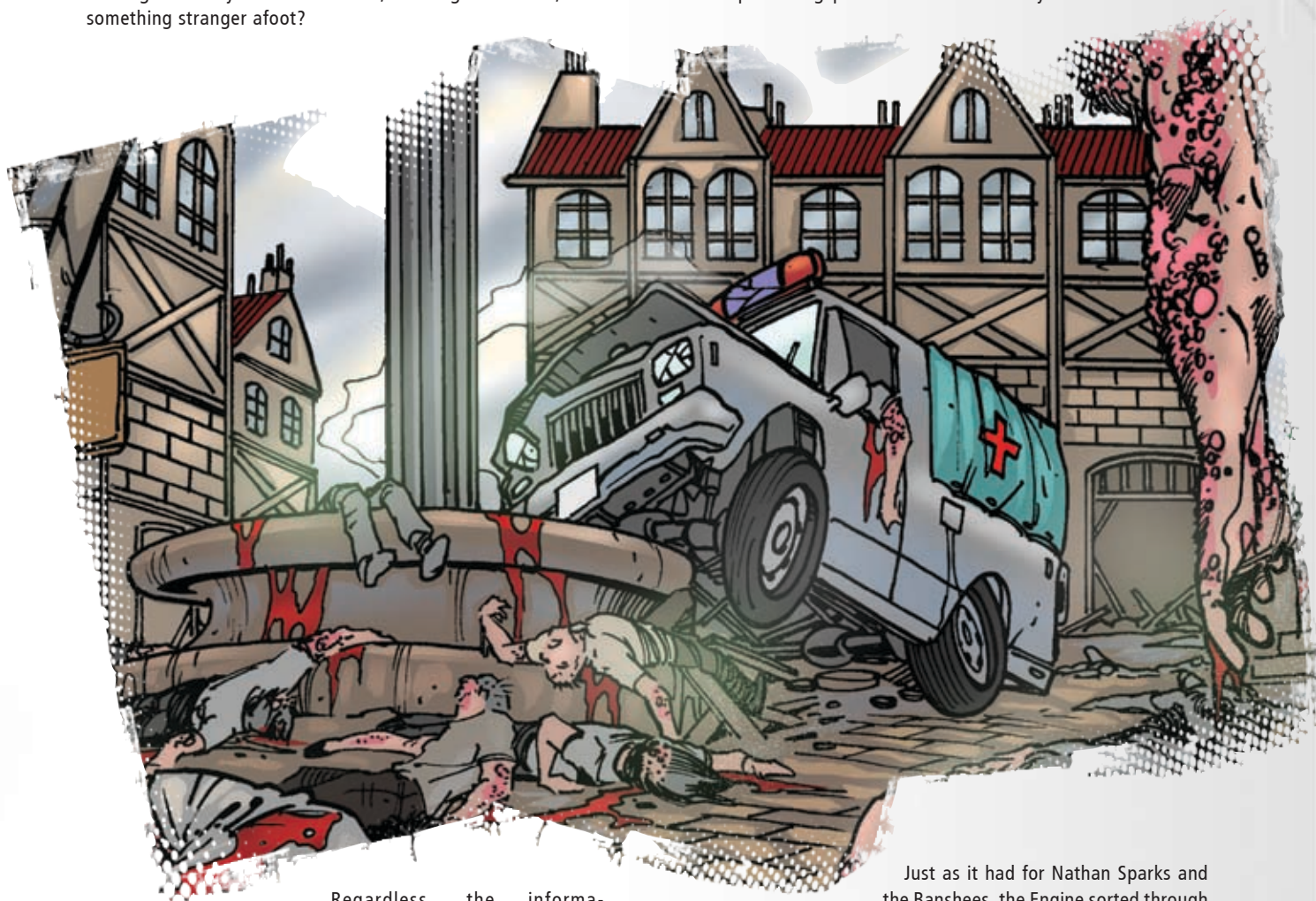
Regardless, the information gave Century his in with the captives of Triumph Tower. Several of them had mentioned the conspiracy during their initial interrogations. They called it "The Franchise" and had apparently been tracking it for some time. Under the guise of "coercion" sessions, Century privately met with several captives he felt would have the greatest sway with the rest. He revealed some of what he knew about the Franchise and offered more in exchange for a commitment to the Triumph Tower project. He also promised the captives restricted one-way communication with their friends on the outside, both as a display of trust and to keep the Banshees, Patriots, and Krypt agents from coming for their people.

Just as it had for Nathan Sparks and the Banshees, the Engine sorted through billions of information streams, automatically identifying suspicious activity and flagging it for human review. Dozens of new missions were generated out of the first few minutes' collation, but one flagged series of items saw the live broadcast cut short and the Engine shut down for nearly a month as people reeled from their revelations.

The items in question related to recent upheaval in the Far East, where in the late summer of 2004 hundreds of illegal Chinese nationals living in Siberia were ruthlessly slaughtered, their homes burned to the ground. The source of this savage attack was reputedly Colonel Ivar Vavrikova, an estranged, xenophobic Russian military commander with a history of extremist tirades on the

virtues of ethnic cleansing. Violence erupted across the languishing border states and Vavrikova was murdered in the ensuing chaos, his corpse strung up outside the barracks at his post.

The Russian government quickly absolved itself of blame for the tragedy, issuing a statement that Vavrikova had acted independently and had long been suffering from psychological strain. Yet the Colonel's death was far from enough justice to satisfy the Chinese government, let alone the Chinese people. Still harboring resentment over the czarist occupation of Far East Siberia, envy of Russia's territory and natural resources, and paranoia from

repel enemy attacks on its land forces. Yet despite all this, the unimaginable somehow happened, and it commanded attention the globe over.

The immediate worry was that nuclear weapons would enter the picture, which might drag the rest of the world into the nightmare scenario everyone had feared since 1947. Chemical weapons were also a very real danger. There was also concern that any of the myriad surrounding countries might enter the fray, or that the United States, European Union, or others would step in, further escalating the situation.
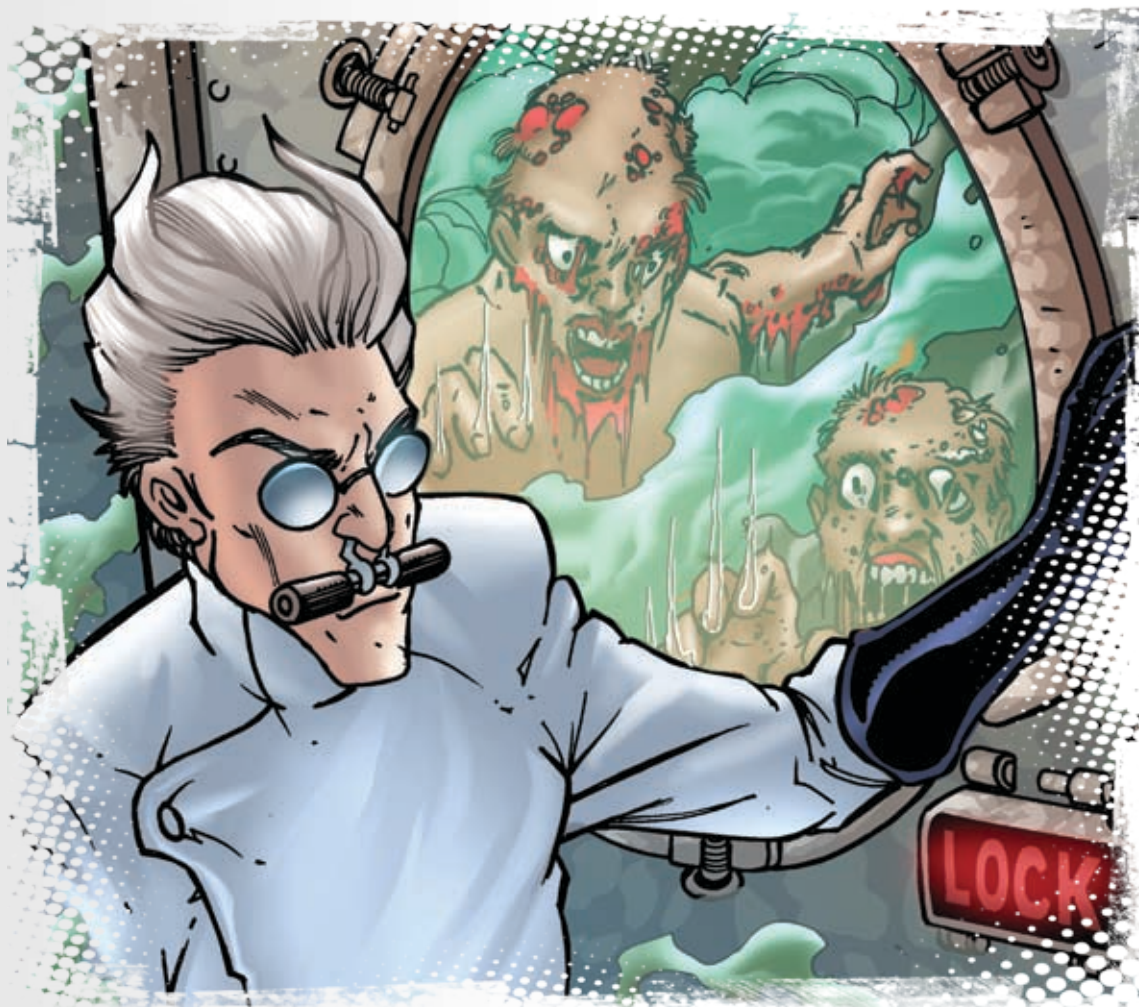
the Cold War and long before, China adopted the atrocity as a *casus beli* for invasion. In a brutally effective two-pronged attack, Chinese military forces suddenly and definitively eliminated Russia's defenses at Irkutsk and swept up through the contested lands north of Vladivostok.

The assault was stunning and took Russia and the rest of the world off guard. There were so many reasons it shouldn't have happened. China wasn't prepared to mount a land war, or so everyone assumed. The nation relied on Russia for oil and weapons, and the campaign threatened all the economic progress in the region over the last 20 years. China's army was poorly organized and its top-heavy command structure should have made versatile, large-scale operations impossible. Its air force was weak and couldn't

Fortunately, though all of these outcomes were only a razor's edge from reality for several months, none came to pass. This was due in no small part to the efforts to one man, Gideon Barbary, an India national who'd dedicated his life to peacekeeping efforts throughout the region. Only by virtue of Barbary's level head and many trusted contacts did the region claw its way back from the brink of all-out war, though sadly, a peace fire was not to come for many months.

Eventually, the conflict ground down to liberal trench fighting throughout southern Russia, the squad skirmishes accentuated by long-range artillery duels between the nations' heavier forces. Thanks to corrupt Russian officials on the Chinese payroll and the freakishly timely presence of advance Chinese troops, several sec-

tions of the Trans-Siberian railroad were destroyed early on, harrying the already sluggish Russian ground response. The Russian air force thinned the PLA forces, though China seemed to have bodies to spare and it wasn't until winter that Russia began to make headway with its counter-offensive.

Behind the scenes, pretty much everyone with intelligence clearance knew that Zhang Khan was back in action. The warlord had spearheaded aggressions with Russia during the Cold War *(see page 7)* and his aspirations had only grown more grand and deviant since then. Independently and together, the Banshees, Patriots, and the Krypt launched investigations into the true causes and goals of the conflict, each with an eye toward lowering the regional blood pressure. All of them were reasonably certain that the Nine Tiger Dynasty had somehow arranged Vavrikova's episode, but none found the evidence to prove it. What they did find, however, was enlightening and not a little disturbing.

As the fighting raged at the border, small squads consisting of Chinese soldiers and Dynasty operatives covertly snaked further north, past the mountains and into the Russian tundra. Other squads moved into Tibet, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Thailand, the Koreas, and other surrounding territories. They were looking for something. Rather than move in and potentially compromise their investigation, the operatives tracking these squads held back, giving them the room to reveal their intentions in due course. Within two months, the squads focused their search in two areas: Cambodia, and north through the Sayan Mountains, into the southeast of the Russian Federation. Simultaneously, the Chinese military redirected a division to move south through Laos. Just as the initial invasion had distracted attention from the previous searches, this offensive covered for its covert parallel.

In September, the heart of the Cambodian effort was tracked to the ancient city of Angkor Wat by a group of star recruits fresh out of the Shadow Academy (a training program jointly instituted by the Banshees, Patriots, and Krypt). Two experienced operatives, Bishop and Spoilsport, accompanied the recruits as their field trainers, though neither of them came home. Neither did Evgeniy Volka, a recruit who gave his life so the other two would have a shot at completing their mission. The other recruits, Eddie Stratton IV and Maxine Wright, narrowly survived the encounter, escaping only with their lives and news that two of Dr. Kholera's former lieutenants, Jason Hellman and Strik-9, were traveling with a group of covert Russian combat troops. In the Angkor ruins they'd recovered something they called the "Godspike," which appeared to have been the focus of the Dynasty and Chinese operation as well. Unfortunately, Hellman and Strik-9 disappeared again shortly after the recruits' return and were not seen again for some time.

Project: Pitfall also responded to the invasion, focusing on its geopolitical and collateral oddities. As a third mass of Chinese troops built up near the Xinjiang Province in the west, the analysts of Investigative Branch started to question how the country was funding the campaign. China had always maintained a huge standing army — at times up to twice the size of Russia's — but its equipment and vehicles were more numerous and in better shape than anyone expected. Pitfall traced the source of the new armaments to hidden staging grounds in northeast China and the nearby Yablonovy Mountain Range, close to the Buryat capital of Ulan-Ude. More importantly, they determined that the money paying for the upgrades was only partially provided by

the Khan himself; the rest was being filtered through the Nine Tiger Dynasty from an affluent European family, the de Lunas. This name was synonymous with an organization Pitfall knew all too well: the Bloodvine Syndicate.

The reasons the Syndicate might want to help fund a land war in Asia eluded Pitfall, though several peculiar details didn't. First, it appeared that the Khan had recently arranged marriages for each of his twin daughters, though only one ceremony was held — between Khan Mai Ling and Augustin de Luna, second son of Don Cesare de Luna, head of the family and a member of the Bloodvine Syndicate's ruling body. The second marriage, between Khan Tai Tzu and Severyan Valiulis, a judge on the Russian Federation's Supreme Court, was aborted when the groom turned up dead in his chambers, hung with his own tie. The death was ruled a suicide, though Valiulis was by all reports a cheerful, optimistic man whose career was on the rise and who was excited about his forthcoming nuptials.

Clearly, there was more to the conflict between China and Russia than race issues and border disputes, though Pitfall was sidetracked before it could put it all together. The Mutiny Engine had found something and it was disastrous. Throughout the late spring of 2004, encrypted email had been exchanged between representatives of the U.S. and Chinese governments, as well as black market information brokers throughout Asia and Eastern Europe. They intimated that the senders, including U.S. President George Winter, not only knew the Eurasian Conflict was coming but in fact *planned* the murder of the Chinese nationals in Siberia, intentionally sparking the war.

Sax and Century immediately went into damage control mode, restricting access to the information and issuing a press release that the broadcast had been cut short due to technical difficulties with the camera feed. The Mutiny Engine continued its work, they said, and they promised amazing results from it in the near future. Both grappled personally with the shocking revelation, as it seemed out of character for the President to be so sloppy. He was ruthless, to be sure, and neither discounted the possibility that he could be involved, but the whole situation seemed... *off*.

All too soon, their suspicions were confirmed, though only Century learned the truth. Once again he was approached with information in exchange for a partnership. This time the person offering was the head of a small hacker collective calling itself the Phage. She went by HOPSCOTCH, or the Operator, but as Century soon learned her real name was Vivienne LeVan and she had been part of Gregory Goodchilde's BRAINCHILD operation during the Cold War *(see page 15)*. As Nathan Sparks led most of the think tank's membership toward anarchy, crying for bloody revolution, LeVan preached reform, believing that the system could be improved and didn't need to be destroyed or replaced. This approach appealed to Century's patriotism and gave LeVan the moment she required to tell him what he needed to know.

LeVan explained that the Phage had long combated the Banshee Net and its extremist actions, and that while monitoring one of the Net's recent operations they'd uncovered the fabrication of a series of emails linking the U.S. President and other world leaders to the Eurasian Conflict. She produced electronic proof of her claims, though she admitted that there was little chance Century would be able to prove her claim over the Engine's findings, or vice-versa. "In this," she said, "I leave you to your faith. You have your smoking guns. It's up to you which you use."

THE LONG ARM OF PITFALL

Five years ago, a small minority of the United Nations opposed Pitfall's institution, voting against the One World Doctrine as a massive step backward for freedom and democracy. Unfortunately for the world, the most powerful and influential members were cut deeply by the Mouthwash Confession and supported the plan. To this day several countries renounce Pitfall, formally objecting to actions staged on their soil and involving their citizens, but these objections generally fall on deaf ears. Until the opinion of the public and more importantly the officials sway, Pitfall can and will continue to operate anywhere it pleases with impunity.

This book does not identify the nations supporting or decrying Project: Pitfall so that Game Controls can set the conditions in their Worlds on Fire to their liking. This also helps to keep the setting topical even with changes in the United Nations membership and the global stage.

LeVan made the Phage available to Century should he require future assistance outside Pitfall and the Triumph project, but he has not yet taken her up on the offer. He struggles every day with the mounting weight of a crumbling world's debris. Too many voices are telling him too many secrets, and where once he feared a future in which Project: Pitfall became the enemy, now he fears he may not survive long enough to prevent it.

WITHIN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

If terrorists are the boogiemen of the new millennium, Project: Pitfall is the world's million-candlepower nightlight. As the only major agency to be conceived and erected entirely within the 21st Century, the organization globalizes intelligence and law enforcement efforts, merging them into a fluid symbiotic whole. It combines the finest technologies, personnel, and training of dozens of supporting U.N. nations into one unstoppable army that is uniquely prepared to combat threats that ignore national borders and conventional rules of engagement. In all corners, it's praised as the blueprint for hunting terrorists on their turf and neutralizing them *before* they strike.

Pitfall has changed little in its five years of operation. It is cleanly divided into three branches, each of which is currently headed by one of the Directors of the Executive Committee (the DEC, or "Deck" amongst the troops — e.g. "Orders from the Deck are…"). Expectedly, some wise acres have taken to calling Pitfall's core three the "Dicks" as a result, though never to their faces.

Stephen Century heads Investigative Branch, colloquially known as the Quiz Shop, which gathers and combs over HUMINT, ELINT, and SIGINT, compiling threat matrices for the organization's other two branches. IB teams swim against a perfect storm of information fed to them 24 hours a day, seven days a week by the Mutiny Engine and other sources, sorting and prioritizing disparate and seemingly random leads for kernels of true intelligence. IB operatives are stationed at Pitfall's many regional stations, though they frequently venture into the field to explore and verify leads, as well as to support the other branches as forensic investigators, informant handlers, and hackers.

Colonel Cornelius Fitch runs Enforcement Branch, Pitfall's no-nonsense operations arm, which yields most of the "results" applauded by the folks at home. This part of the organization includes the urban tactical squads who sweep through hi-rises with none the wiser in surrounding structures, the Special Forces troops who infiltrate terrorist strongholds at the farthest corners of the globe, and the amphibious assault teams who sabotage enemy vehicles before major One World Doctrine offensives. Much to Century's chagrin, Enforcement Branch also fields so-called "Big Thunder" teams, which are brought in when the U.N. delegates feel an enemy is too entrenched or too well armed for any other response. BT tactics are generally of the "overwhelming numerical advantage," "superior firepower," and "scorched earth" variety, consuming the enemy in a firestorm of rounds, shells, and if necessary, bodies. Collateral damage is often extremely high and true intelligence is rarely yielded when these blunt instruments come to play, though Investigative Branch is still brought in to pick through the wreckage as Sax and her crew spin the devastation as a major step forward for worldwide security.

For her part, Madeline Sax commands Public Relations Branch, a legion of specialists who artfully craft and preemptively edit the agency's actions for media and public consumption. Promoting the work of government-sponsored thugs is a thankless, never-ending task, demanding constant attention and a keen view of mob psyche, and it is for these reasons that Sax has assembled some of the world's best advertising executives, campaign managers, and even con artists for the job. In her mind, only those trained to lie and cheat for a living are prepared to ride the ill-tempered bull that is modern broadcasting, let alone tame it. In most cases, the need for Sax's PR crews doesn't arise until after — commonly *just* after — the actions of Enforcement, though her people are sometimes sent out in advance to massage local newscasters and anyone else who might speak out against the agency.

A two-thirds vote amongst the DEC is required for any major Pitfall offensive, though smaller operations are handled within each branch. This system is problematic, as the definition of "major offensive" is hazy. As illustrated by the assault on the Illuminated Futures Building, a Director will periodically act without the knowledge or approval of the others, dragging the whole agency through an operation that may jeopardize other ongoing missions, explode into a costly long-term effort, or simply wind up a very bad call.

The United Nations is supposed to act as an additional safeguard. It maintains an oversight committee that assesses Pitfall's progress and picks over mission reports, turning its findings over to delegates of the supporting member nations for review. Technically, these delegates could revoke any of the Directors' appointments, though in Pitfall's five years of operation this has never happened. The delegates came close once, when Century took a stand against President George Winter *(see page 42)*, but they instead chose to form Public Relations Branch — which had not originally existed at Pitfall's inception — and assign Sax to keep Century in line.

Due to Pitfall's relative autonomy, it must simultaneously operate like a national and civil government, a military and para-military force, an intelligence agency, and a law enforcement arm. The organization's complex day-to-day operation requires a top-down chain of command, but thanks to Stephen Century's influence each level is granted extensive authority to manage itself. It is Century's belief that the best people to establish protocols are in fact the people doing the work and this promotes great diversification and loyalty. It also allows for much of Pitfall's lasting change to occur bottom-up, with individual teams making improvements at their own discretion. Proven concepts are eventually noticed

completed, as the Engine's personnel program favors continuity of care, but it is not unheard of for someone possessing eclectic or highly specialized abilities to be rotated frequently, never remaining anywhere for very long.

Field teams are likewise formed, reformed, and disbanded as needed, though they commonly consist of a balance of personnel from all three branches. Another oddity of Pitfall staffing is that team leaders are appointed not by seniority but according to experience in whatever the team is facing. This can mean that a team's leader actually changes several times over the course of a single mission.
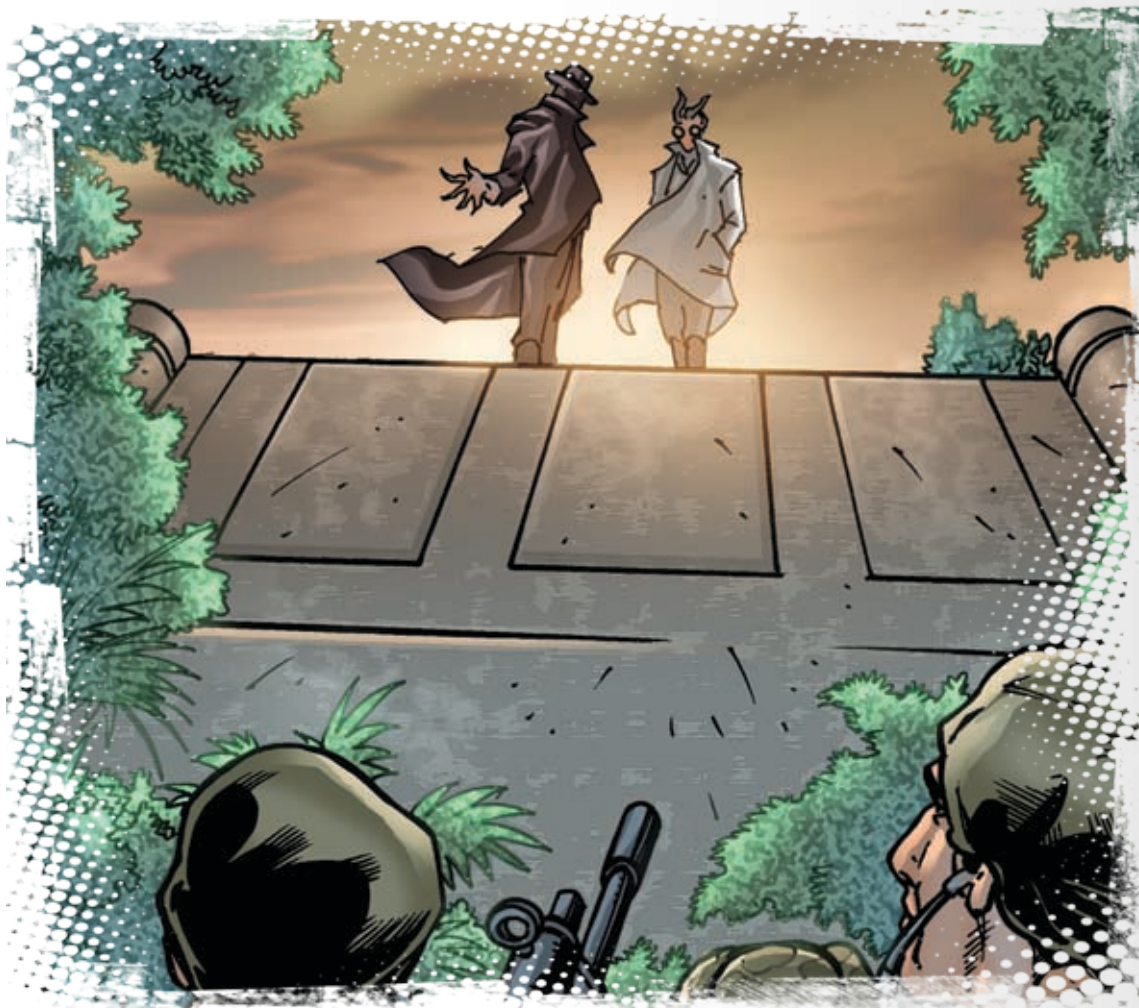
and implemented at the highest levels. This is one of the strengths that keeps Pitfall running so well despite its increasingly dubious mission and periodically fractured leadership.

Another example of Pitfall's uncharacteristic nature is the fluid management of its personnel, with roughly 80% receiving assignments on an entirely as-needed basis. Each morning, as the previous day's intel is processed and a new list of priorities is drafted, the Mutiny Engine reviews the assignments of every Pitfall operative, making sure it's still the best use of that person's skill set. Reassignments are received at the start of each shift, or in the case of round-the-clock field missions at the next regularly scheduled check-in. Operatives usually remain on assignments until they're

Recruits come to Project: Pitfall from all over the world, though a slight majority are American. Typically they're aged 25 to 32 with military or law enforcement experience, often with multiple decorations or commendations. Most are idealistic and many are opinionated, viewing the world with few shades of gray. Some are spoiling for a fight, indoctrinated as converts of Winter's high-stakes War on Terror.

Exhaustive psychological batteries weed out recruits whose sensibilities might interfere with the agency's goals, as well as those who might not be able to adapt to its unusual environment. Little attention is paid, however, to cultural, patriotic, or professional concerns. Pitfall operatives are thrown together regardless

of nationality, allegiance, or specialty, and differences must usually be worked out at the team level. Rivalries, biases, and other differences sometimes drive wedges between teammates and a few operations have even imploded due to internal strife. As yet, no policies are officially being revised to alleviate this issue, leaving operatives to solve these problems on their own.

Working for Pitfall quickly becomes the center of a new operative's life. Days or weeks on duty are not uncommon, particularly when the operative is assigned in the field. In an operative's rare time off, he is always on call; he is required to carry a GPS-enabled cell phone that updates his position on the Pitfall surveillance grid every 15 minutes. He cannot discuss most of what he does with anyone outside the organization, or in fact anyone below his pay grade. In many ways, a position with Pitfall is like a solitary confinement sentence and this grim reality is having a debilitating effect on many operatives, whose personal lives are disintegrating by the day.

Meanwhile, after five years at the forefront of the War on Terror, the organization's seniormost operatives are growing weary. What was once an exuberant, righteous clash with evil is grinding down to a bitter ideological stalemate. As the conflict snares more and more combatants from all corners of the globe, as it twists the way people think and the sacrifices wear thin, Pitfall's finest are coming to realize that the valiant, united struggle is in fact a contentious powder keg with a dangerously short fuse. These operatives see every nation on earth standing by with a zippo, with none willing to be the first to douse their flame, and in their hearts, they know the War on Terror has become World War III... It's just that no one has figured out what side they're on yet.

Pitfall's role in this changing world is uncertain. Its reticle refocuses each time the term "terrorist" is modified and expanded, every time peoples' fears leap from those who *have* wronged society to those who *might*. These days, the term "terrorist" isn't even invoked half the time; just six months ago, Pitfall beheaded five of Columbia's largest cocaine cartels, setting their facilities ablaze and hauling their figureheads away in the night. Like all the other notable enemies Pitfall has captured over the years, these drug lords were treated to a single heavily publicized walk of shame before they vanished from the public eye forever.

This is perhaps the most frightening outcome of all: the possibility that the War on Terror could in fact end and no one would notice. Pitfall would continue to appropriate new technologies, assimilate military and police forces, and mount greater and greater actions against less and less relevant targets. The Directors would keep the nations of the world on edge to justify Pitfall's continued existence. Worst of all, the public would continue to cheer them on, happily engaging Pitfall's spectacular efforts on TV like they have the last few "remote control wars" that have scored so high in the ratings.

Critics of Pitfall, in the all too brief window of opportunity they receive before Public Relations Branch quashes their message, sometimes ask the right question: "What happens when Pitfall has no more enemies to fight? Who comes next?"

The answer, of course, is anyone.

Everyone.

You.

EMPIRE OF THE BLIND: THE FRANCHISE

March 20, 2001. The Day of the Bullet. Russia.

The view through the sniper scope was a blistering curtain of howling white. In the distance, nearly at the rifle's maximum range, Yerik Kolesnikov stumbled through the heavy bed of snow blanketing the shore of Lake Ilmen, heading toward a metal pillar pushing up through the drift. The pillar's face cracked open, revealing a series of aged controls and a circular cavity that matched a cylinder gripped in Yerik's right hand.

The shooter's right hand slipped into place over the rifle's grip and trigger guard, flexing to keep the blood pumping — and to offer another few seconds to think. The moment just before pulling the trigger was always the hardest, as every doubt bubbled to the surface. This was indeed the most difficult kill the shooter had ever faced.

He must be stopped, the shooter reasoned. *The horror he's about to unleash will end it all, shatter the fragile peace we've worked so hard to build, but must he die?*

Yerik's many contributions weighed in his favor. He helped to found the Krypt and solve the riddle that was the Cold War. He built a force for peace in the Shadow Patriots when the world seemed hell bent on annihilation. He was a dignified inspiration for countless soldiers, spies, and one of the Krypt's most cherished treasures, his own daughter. These and many other laudable traits rumbled through the shooter's mind as the rifle's reticle found a bead over Yerik's left calf...

But... The shooter's mind flooded once again with the awful discoveries of the last two days: the Franchise, Yerik's private agenda, and his deranged plot to reshape the entire world. How could you? How could you betray everyone you've ever known? Order the deaths of lifelong friends as if they were complete strangers? Lie to all of us every time you spoke of forging a better world? Sentence millions to die to satisfy your own petty sense of self-importance?

Maybe that's the better world you always envisioned. Maybe this is what you wanted from the start. Is that it? Is this your way to go out in a blaze of glory, fighting to the last for what you believe?

The shooter's shoulder nudged forward and the reticle slid up Yerik's backside, coming to rest squarely over the back of his skull. Tears welled at the edges of the shooter's eyes but she fought the impulse. She only needed them to remain clear for a moment longer.

You always taught me loyalty above all. Well, father, today my loyalty is to the world, and I can't let you destroy it.

Alexandra Kolesnikov's right index finger jerked and Yerik was gone, disappearing as a momentary splash of crimson against the white, salty haze clouding her vision. The crack of the gunshot echoed through Alex's ears as she let the cold consume her...

SEEDS OF EVIL

Alex Kole first started to suspect that her father was less than the hero she'd always worshipped two days before she killed him. As a GRU cleaner, she was sometimes assigned to follow up on the deaths of agency personnel, to make sure they left no sensitive information behind when they shuffled off this mortal

coil. On March 18, 2001, this duty brought her and her partner to the home of Nikita Rudenko, her professional mentor and a close personal friend of her father.

The house had burned down in a fire that apparently began in the basement, where Rudenko had been duct-taped to a chair and severely beaten before he was drenched in lamp oil and set aflame. Investigation of the site revealed a fireproof room beneath the foundation, in which surprising evidence pointed to Rudenko having lived a double life for years. The room's contents consisted of years of surveillance targeting Alex's father Yerik as well as the Shadow Patriots organization he'd helped to establish in 1992, but here Yerik and the Patriots were painted as elements of a dangerous criminal organization called "The Franchise."

Spies regaled each other with professional ghost stories about the Franchise. According to the myth, it was a nefarious shadow cabinet of master criminals that was responsible for everything from the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand to the explosion of the Challenger space shuttle. The stories followed that each of the Franchise's seemingly unrelated operations was building toward a grand design of staggering proportions. Like chess moves on a global board, each disaster was just another step in some incomprehensibly evil master plan.

Everyone understood that the Franchise was the spy game's equivalent of a bedtime story, nothing more than a spooky tale to spin for raw recruits, but Rudenko's notes took it seriously. They made plausible connections between events, people, places, and more, spinning a web of criminal meddling that was hard to entirely discount. Worse, they mentioned something called "The Timetable," indicating that Franchise actions were picking up in speed and scope, and that the alleged masterpiece was all too close at hand.

Intrigued by the findings, Alex planned to continue Rudenko's work, at least far enough to prove that he was wrong, but she was never given the chance. The following day, Rudenko's files were stolen from inside the GRU headquarters. Nothing else was taken, but every scrap of information Rudenko had collected was gone — all save two items Alex had spotted on a single piece of paper, which she'd had the foresight or fortune to memorize: a single line of alphanumeric nonsense and the address of an anonymous flash account. Assuming the gibberish meant something to at least one of the potentially thousands of recipients, Alex took a chance and sent the line. She half expected never to see a response, let alone the one she got.

The following day, as the world braced for another Day of the Bullet and the GRU reassigned Alex to the Triggerman case *(see page 54)*, she found a CD in her car's player. The recording was a male voice disguised through a metallic filter. The man claimed to have information about Rudenko's death, the Franchise, the Timetable, Alex's father, and more, and promised it all if she would meet him beneath the Pcholkin Bridge in one hour. She went, though she didn't go unarmed; using a new vehicular gadget the Krypt R&D guys had dubbed "flash lamps" — a pair of headlamps that projected a rapid light pulse designed to overwhelm a target's nervous system — Alex disabled and captured the informant.

He called himself Paradox and he claimed to be part of a society dedicated to hunting a group he referred to as "The Eternals." This group, he said, was very old and responsible for many of the world's ills, including the Franchise. Yerik Kolesnikov, Alex's father, was the mastermind behind the project, which was a

PANDORA'S BOX

The Franchise is an intentionally open-ended plot device allowing the Game Control great latitude when tailoring the setting to his liking. Virtually any criminal enterprise can be attributed to Yerik's Great Machine and it's trivial to envision nearly any situation coming out of the Timetable or the organization's wild out-of-orbit spin. Likewise, the majority of the Alliance of Evil Geniuses is left blank so the GC can insert his own villains and groups at the head of the setting's current swell of evil.

Using these tools, an industrious Game Control can simply slot the *World on Fire* as the actual backdrop for his ongoing campaign, or steal the pieces he likes from the setting and leave the rest. Like all things *Spycraft*, this product's modular nature makes it a trivial exercise to, say, lift the Franchise and leave Pitfall, take the Eternals and leave the heroic factions, or whatever.

massive effort to spin the entire world into a new covert conflict, with spies and their ilk at the front lines. "As the world sleeps," Paradox said, "Yerik and his armies will wage their own private war!"

Unable to reconcile this, Alex confronted her father, and shockingly, he confirmed everything Paradox said. Promising answers that would "satisfy and amaze" Alex, Yerik took her to Siberia, to Lake Ilmen, where he indulged her with a story about his long and illustrious career in the Great Game. From his perspective, it was not the grand experience she'd been raised to revere, but rather the twilight years of a once noble profession betrayed by the very peace it had constructed. "We are an endangered species," he told her, "and we must defend our existence as fiercely as any cornered predator. I have devised a way."

The Franchise, Yerik explained, was devised to establish new, covert combatants and a reason for them to clash. "That reason," he presented with grand, dramatic flair, "is the Godspike." With this he produced a three-inch sphere of clear glass. Inside burned a single wisp of intense fire. "Cold fusion," he told Alex. "The long-sought source of near-unlimited power made real."

Yerik never told Alex how he came into possession of the technology, though he wasted no time laying out how he would use it. "My darling, the world takes a bold step forward today. Leagues away, a device is buried under the ice that will unleash cold fusion onto the world in the only terms those feeble government worms understand. The Godspike will set a hundred miles to burning for ten thousand years. It will end this senseless democratic prattling and strike fear in the hearts of every nation without the proverbial 'red button.' Everyone will blame everyone else for the blast, and in the end, we'll see another hundred years of paranoid, backbiting glory — another hundred years or more when we, the kings and queens of espionage, will reign supreme. Once more we will stalk the shadows. Once more we will be *gods*!"

At great personal cost, Alex prevented her father from setting off the Godspike that day and Yerik's plot was seemingly thwarted. For a time, she naively assumed that the Franchise had died with her father, though she's learned since how wrong she was.

THE GREAT MACHINE

The massive criminal empire Yerik dubbed The Franchise is known by many different names. The Banshee Net, for instance, know it as the Great Machine, a wild theory Nathan Sparks developed during his BRAINCHILD days. He used to say that "when you're tired, bone tired, just-saved-the-world-and-haven't-slept-in-days tired, you can almost hear it: the faint clicking of gears, the groan of grinding wheels…" This visual represented the odd undercurrent he sensed in the world, the strange relations linking events to people and causes to effects. At the time, he didn't realize he was so close to the truth.

The Patriots, Krypt, and Nine Tiger Dynasty were unaware of the Franchise until recently, when the Timetable began to pick up speed, making the links more obvious. The Bloodvine Syndicate, on the other hand, has known about the Franchise for close to fifteen years, having skirmished several times over territory with various subsidiary elements of the organization. However, like Paradox, the Syndicate has inaccurately assigned ownership of the Franchise to the Krypt, which Yerik secretly used as a hub for many of the organization's early transactions.

In fact, the Franchise is far more insidious than anyone realizes, and even Yerik could not have envisioned what it's become since his death. The myth is only part right; the Franchise is in fact a *web* of criminal enterprises, a grand union of mischief and vice, but it's also the entity behind countless well-meaning groups, including the original Shadow Patriots. It has crept across the globe for decades, undermining governments, militaries, businesses, media conglomerates, and more. Even as you read this, its longest tendrils are wrapped around the roots of its newest, most elaborate creations — seven invisible shadow nations poised to launch the first salvos of Yerik's covert war.

Yet the Franchise is a headless beast, a mammoth army with no commander, S.P.E.C.T.R.E. without Blofeld. Yerik is ashes in the wind, but his scheme continues in full tilt, hurtling out of control. His plan was ultimately selfish and never took into consideration the possibility that he might not be present to witness its fruition. We have inherited his dream, but it is our nightmare.

The specifics of the dream were simple. In order to achieve the covert war Yerik desired, two major players had to be introduced — a "heroic" faction whose altruistic nature would drive it to protect the world from a vast malignancy. The Franchise satisfied the latter need and in 1992 Yerik convinced BRAINCHILD, the Majestics, and the Krypt to become the former. The Godspike gave them something to fight over and as an added bonus it reset the global arms race to zero.

Quite happy playing the hero, Yerik intended to lead the Shadow Patriots once the war commenced. Command of the Franchise he yielded to his partner in the project, who would step forward when the time was right. In anticipation of his partner's arrival, and to ensure a suitable challenge for himself, Yerik conceived the Franchise as a constantly evolving menace. It is a network of loosely connected cells not unlike the classic secret society model, except with one of the most bizarre operational compacts of any group in history. Each of the many thousands of Franchise cells pursues its own agenda, but also acts upon complex instructions Yerik scripted to ensure the organization would constantly grow and adapt. Even with no one at the helm, new cells form and old ones are eliminated or merge with others already in play. Agendas crystallize in response to world events. New personnel is recruited and trained, new resources are developed, assimilated, or stolen, and new protocols are established each and every day.

A foremost agenda of the Franchise is the spread of terror, usually in the form of ramping paranoia amongst the sheeple and the creation and nurture of subsidiary criminal organizations. Like a social von Neumann machine, the Franchise is custom-built to generate one cancerous empire after another, raising masterminds and their lieutenants to power and providing them with armies of minions and all the devastating toys required to bring the world to its knees. Dr. Kholera was one such product. From identifying the good doctor as a potential candidate to offering him the military biowarfare position that defined his place as a villainous mastermind, from the blockade of his precious research to his discovery of the Nightfall virus and the unexpected windfall that allowed him to realize it, the Franchise was behind it all. Though no one working in the Franchise knew it at the time, all this was just another staged hazard for the Shadow Patriots to overcome — if, of course, Yerik's death hadn't driven them apart. Fortunately for the world, the former Patriots saw past their differences just long enough to save the world. Again. Whether they'll be able to do the same the next time the Franchise tosses something at them is anyone's guess.

As ambitious as all this is, it's just window dressing for the true threat posed by the Franchise. Yerik's covert war has loomed darkly over the players of the Great Game for years and it's all about to come to a brutal head. This is the purpose of the "Timetable" that has recently come to light for those with the inspiration to watch for it. In essence, the Timetable is a series of priority instructions for all Franchise cells that prepares the world to accept Yerik's vision. It helped to set up the original Patriots and established many of the nefarious front organizations to fight them (and keep them from tracking down the central Franchise cells). Recently, the Timetable was also responsible for two major events that changed the world: The Day of the Bullet and the Murder Lottery.

March 20 is well known around the world as the Day of the Bullet, when an elusive assassin called the Triggerman makes his annual appearance and takes a single life. There is no apparent rhyme or reason to the deaths; the victims come from all walks of life and rarely have anything in common. What isn't clear from the outside of this Franchise operation is that each of these deaths has pushed the world one step closer to Yerik's world of covert chaos. In 2005, for instance, the intended victim was Gideon Barbary, a popular and extremely effective advocate for peace who eventually arranged a cease-fire between Russia and China *(see page 48)*. Had the Shadow Patriots, Banshees, and Krypt not intervened to save Barbary, strife in the region might have worsened, likely also spilling out into the rest of the world.

Rumors of the Murder Lottery started to crop up in late summer 2006. According to the grist, it was a gruesome competition to be held over seven days in late October. A global hit list would be distributed through anonymous channels and the world's professional killers, would-be professional killers, and indeed anyone looking to break into the bloody game would compete to close the most contracts by the end of the week. Those at the top of the pile would be invited to a unique event: the auction of countless resources "for the betterment of criminal geniuses everywhere." Everything

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CHAPTER 2
2 TRACES OF TERROR

from headquarters facilities to doomsday weapons to armies of well-trained minions was on the block, and there were additional rumors that the highest bidders would be offered something even more tantalizing.

The first of the Murder Lottery lists went out at midnight on Sunday, October 29, 2006. Distribution of the lists was similar to that of rave directions — in graffiti, on fliers stapled to telephone poles, on bulletin boards in real and virtual space, and spread by hand and word of mouth. The blitz was seemingly random but incredibly effective; by dawn the second day, 30% of the first list — over two dozen people — were dead.

The lists continued to show up at midnight each day, though in a twisted turn the names of those who'd successfully closed contracts were included as well. By Tuesday, the competition exploded into a global shootout and cities across the world became bloody modern parallels of the OK Corral. The names of Franchise enemies also migrated onto the list, including many members of the Shadow Patriots, Banshee Net, and Krypt, as well as the enigmatic man called Paradox.

Meanwhile, Project: Pitfall came up with its own response to the Lottery: Enforcement Branch started rounding up everyone on the list, as well as anyone suspected of partici- pating, and locked them up. The hope was that interrogating the prison- ers would yield informa- tion needed to take the fight back to the Franchise, though this tactic only led to one dead end after another.

Stephen Century had another idea, one that's placed an operative as close to the Franchise as anyone has ever gotten. Without telling his fellow Directors, he arranged for a highly competent operative codenamed Orchid to take responsibility for "kill- ing" several of the participants in Pitfall's holding cells. Even a small number of the people captured by Enforcement Branch were more than enough to score Orchid an invitation to the auction — and a place in the Lottery's final phase, which was as much a surprise to her as it would soon be to the rest of the world.

As the Lottery lists ground the participants down to a few highly talented killers, the Franchise worked behind the scenes to finalize Yerik's shad-

ow nations. Their borders disregarded existing territories and governments, instead carving the world up into seven invisible colonies of espionage might, each cradling a seat of power propped up behind and within the accepted halls of power.

Using hundreds of billions of dollars purloined from Pitfall's over- flowing coffers — money Stephen Century didn't expect would be missed for at least eight or nine hours — Orchid bought herself a set at the head of one of these nations. This also earned her a role in the Timetable's ultimate creation, the Alliance of Evil Geniuses.

The Alliance made itself known on November 5, 2006, when the following words were heard over every airwave, cutting through every broadcast: "This is a public service announcement for all who appreciate living in an enlightened age. Your lives are about to change. Forever. Soon, you'll come to know us as the Alliance of Evil Geniuses. Consider this a sample of our power."

The next second the lights went out — everywhere — and all sources of power and all forms of communication went with them. The entire globe went dark and stayed that way for several hours. A second demonstration followed the next day. As the Patriots, Banshees, Krypt operatives, and others launched a massive joint operation to track the Alliance down, Orchid was delivered to the Alliance headquarters, a space station in orbit, and came face to face with Yerik's long- estranged partner: Sir Richard Poole.

Part of the Timetable had always been responsible for summoning the Franchise leader when it was time for him to take his position at the head of the Alliance of Evil Geniuses. In this the Franchise was entirely successful, though not in the way Yerik and Poole originally expected.

Early in 2006, after the most recent Day of the Bullet, Sir Richard Poole began suffering what he could only describe as blackouts. It began as a mild sense of vertigo but quickly evolved into agita- tion, irrational emotional outbursts, and eventu- ally lost time. The stress of dealing with the amplified evil coming out of the Franchise took its toll, aggravating the symp- toms, and it all came to a head shortly before the Murder Lottery, when Poole learned that his longtime col- league, close friend, and short-time lover,

BREAD CRUMBS FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

Nathan Sparks has hunted the Franchise for years, never realizing that the key to unlocking its innermost secrets was in his hands all along. His mentor and the founder of BRAINCHILD, Gregory Goodchilde, believed in the myth as well. He compiled hundreds of pages of information about the criminal organization and to keep it safe he coded it into a separate document: the Mouthwash Confession.

Sadly, the Franchise responded before Goodchilde could let Sparks in on what he'd found. In what appeared to be a random carjacking murder, Gregory Goodchilde became the Day of the Bullet victim in 2001 — on the same day Yerik was killed.

The unrealized value of the Confession is Goodchilde's legacy and if anyone were to compile the original release and feed it through two or three months of state-of-the-art decryption filters, they'd have a veritable treasure trove of data about the Franchise. Central cell locations, core personnel, communication procedures, and best of all the bulk of Yerik's Timetable instructions, all in one place.

Unfortunately, just gathering the Confession as it was released in 2001 isn't enough. Sparks and other BRAINCHILD analysts modified the document before sending it out, further scrambling the ciphered material. Only by reversing those changes can someone make use of the Confession as Gregory Goodchilde intended.

Alex Kole, had murdered her father. He snapped, spent several days in an angry, violent dreamscape, and by all accounts turned into an entirely different person. He wasn't entirely sure what he did while he was lost to the blood haze, but with several friends battered and bruised, not to mention several informants simply *gone*, he feared the worst.

The catalyst, at least, made sense. Poole had respected Yerik like no man he'd ever known. He'd supported everything the Colonel General proposed in 1992 and threw his support behind the Shadow Patriots union as much because it was Yerik's idea as because he believed it was a good idea. What Poole didn't realize then is that his reasons for trusting Yerik so completely had very little to do with the experiences he *thought* they'd shared...

In 1975, Poole was already knighted, a venerable pillar of the British establishment, and a cornerstone of the Majestics' efforts to safeguard the world from the likes of Dr. Kholera and the Khan.

He was also bitter and disillusioned about the state of the world, seeing no end to the Cold War and arrogantly assuming he could solve it all if only he were given one day in charge. "People find comfort in absolutely defined power," he figured. One man, and only one man, could bring the world peace.

This was the man who, while thwarting a string of assassinations across Europe, saved Major General Yerik Kolesnikov from the knife of a hitman who called himself Beowulf. Yerik and Poole became fast friends, sharing a common displeasure with the direction of the world in general and their profession in particular. By this time Yerik had been devising his Franchise Timetable for many, many years, and when he felt that Poole was ready to hear of it, he laid it all out. Yerik half expected Poole to try and take him into custody, or simply silence him for good, and as a precaution he arranged for another of his allies, a dwarf mercenary named Targeno, to protect him.

Poole didn't make a play for Yerik, though he did make a play for the Franchise. He saw promise in the grand scheme and wanted in. Yerik welcomed him with open arms and they started to plan the covert war, with Poole heading the Franchise and the Alliance of Evil Geniuses, keeping things interesting for Yerik's Shadow Patriots. Poole remained with the Majestics during this time, feeding information to the Franchise as he continued to enforce his own brand of justice in the field.

A year later, Beowulf again faced off with Poole, this time as the hitman was sent to capture the Majestic for his superiors, a group called the Eternals *(see opposite)*. The mission was successful and the Eternals brainwashed Poole, programming him to return to Yerik and drag him off for good. If not for Targeno's intervention, Yerik might have vanished that night; as it was, Yerik was able to reverse the brainwashing and save his friend, though the damage was already done. Poole persuasively made a case that the Franchise was vulnerable with two people at its head and convinced Yerik to make one last adjustment, since he had already access to the Majestic's mind. Yerik buried Poole's memory of their association, but programmed him to remember when the Timetable exposed him to several pre-set trigger conditions. Blind to his criminal aspirations, Poole returned to England with renewed dedication, once again taking up the mantle of star troubleshooter. It was a part he would play for another 20 years.

Following his loss of several days in 2006, Poole began searching for answers. He eventually found them with one of his most trusted informants, the secretive man everyone called Paradox. The informant recognized the symptoms of memory tampering and claimed to have experience reversing it. Paradox believed he was helping a hero salvage his mind, but in fact he unleashed a villain who'd spent twenty years trapped behind a false personality of Yerik's device, and he lost his life for it.

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CHAPTER 2
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After murdering his savior, the revived leader of the Franchise took his seat at the head of the Alliance, met with Orchid and the other Evil Geniuses, and doused the lights. Fortunately for everyone, Poole killed Paradox before he regained access to the instructions Yerik provided for seizing control of the entire Franchise. It's only a matter of time, though, before he does. Until then, Sir Richard Poole leads the most powerful collection of villains in history, which is enough to keep him amused.

HUMANITY UNBOUND: THE ETERNALS

Yerik tried to blink the blood from his eyes.

The Wraith crouched on his chest, driving the air from his lungs. The short blade in his hand pricked delicately at the hollow above Yerik's left collarbone. Blood seeped from a dozen ragged cuts across both combatants and scattered like black beads on the stones.

So many ways to die, Yerik thought. With the smallest thrust, the blade would sink down through his skin and muscle, slide past his ribcage unopposed and puncture his heart. Or the Wraith could simply hold his position and crush the light of centuries from Yerik's eyes. Already the edges of Yerik's vision filled with black spots, announcing the end.

Three hundred bloodthirsty voices cheered the combatants on. Nearly a hundred thousand years of life experience between them and they roared with approval that he was about to die. Primitives. Ingrates. Useless hedonists, one and all.

Yerik had faced the Circle before. Twice he'd walked away unscathed as his would-be murderer bled out. This time he'd clearly offended the wrong faction...

"Ignore them, Yerik. This is between us." The Wraith's voice was clear despite the tide of sound. It ground into Yerik's skull. "You move too quickly, brother. Your ideas are a threat, your actions... You jeopardize everything we've built."

Yerik wasn't eager to be lectured on the way to the grave. He tried to shake his head, to reject the old brute's summary, but he couldn't focus. All he could see were the Wraith's eyes, shining in a sea of darkness. His fingers grew cold...

"No, no," the Wraith breathed, "We aren't done." The attacker shifted slightly and Yerik tasted a tiny slip of air. It smelled of fruit blossoms and sweat. At that moment it smelled like life itself. "The Lights are as slow and stupid as you think, boy. They can rot. Show me my place in your little scheme. Tell me how I can be part of your ambition."

Blood trickled from Yerik's lips, oozed in slow streams down his arms and legs. What answer could satisfy the world's oldest living killer? What would be his dying breath?

He whispered a single word and the Wraith blinked, then rolled off Yerik's chest. Reflex alone allowed Yerik to draw the sweet evening air into his chest.

The crowd was suddenly silent, as if the Wraith had choked the life from them instead. With a fluid, practiced kick, the Wraith sent both daggers skittering from the circle, announcing that the fight was over. His arm reached out to help Yerik to his feet.

"Stand up, brother," he said. "We have much to do and the night is young."

A ghastly grin split Yerik's face. "So were we, once."

THE LOOSE THREADS IN HISTORY

The Eternals are simultaneously an extended family half blind with madness, a circle of the terminally bored in search of fresh amusement, and a secret society pulling the strings of five billion puppets... They are less an organized faction than a freakish sub-species of mankind, a scattered tribe of timeless warriors, scholars, and eccentrics trickling through the ages like phantom fears or triply recessive genes. Maybe they have always been here, or perhaps they merely forgot how to die. Regardless, Eternals walk among us, living dreams and nightmares we in our feebly short lives can scarcely imagine.

By science, faith, or accident, no Eternal has ever died of natural causes. Many have died by violence, disease, and other overt methods, but left unmolested the Eternals effectively live forever. Most age until adulthood and simply stop, going on so long as they stay out of the path of danger, though a few inexplicably linger at different ages. Some visibly grow "old," taking guises as wizened elders and experienced veterans. Others yield when very young, becoming old souls in children's bodies, discomforting curiosities to some and loathsome aberrations to others. Logic fails the process. The "gift" of endless life does not transfer to offspring. It can't be predicted, nor can it be controlled, much to the frustration of those who've tried to tap its source, and to the Eternals themselves.

Most Eternals pity the rest of humanity, we short-lived, incomplete souls whose aspirations are dust in just a scant few decades. They call us "flits" as we vanish in a blink of their eye. We are not worthy of their attention, their love, or their hatred, and yet somehow we all too often receive it.

BEACONS OF THE SOLITARY EVERLIFE

The Eternals are not well equipped to form significant relationships outside their species. Fate notwithstanding, they're destined to outlive virtually everyone around them; family, friends, loved ones... All collapse into dust draining between their fingers. It's no wonder the leading cause of death amongst Eternals is suicide. As many as one in four simply can't cope with the countless lifetimes of loss and succumbs to the grief of ages.

Those with the will to press on are often prone to other failings. Many lose themselves in dangerous pastimes and are quickly annihilated by their vices. Others become obsessed with their own preservation, isolating themselves from the world until they quietly go mad. A few thrive, finding a place among the flits. They often continue the lives they'd led before realizing their true potential. They become great leaders, artists, hunters, courtesans, craftsmen, generals, philosophers, and spies, and their work defines generations.

Fewer still embrace their gift to the fullest, lending a sense of majesty to their kind that draws other Eternals like moths to the flame. These passionate, regal figures are known as the Leading Lights and they stand as inspirations for their kin, giving them reason to defy the bitter ravages of time.

Modern armchair sociologists might describe the Leading Lights as cults of personality, but in fact they're closer to tribal chieftains, holding sway over the rest of the Eternals with a powerful blend of tradition, seductive zeal, and unique genius. Each Leading Light is a respected paradigm, commanding throngs of lesser Eternals and flits alike. He may choose his own honorific titles, as well as those of his followers, and like the titles of world leaders in flit society, he keeps such titles forever.

ONE SECRET, MANY LIES

The Eternals' blood science is an open-ended McGuffin responsible for each and every instance of the supernatural in the World on Fire. This intentional compartmentalization allows the Game Control to easily expand or remove all unrealistic elements from the setting without severely impairing or even changing the remainder. Likewise, the Eternals could be removed, or rendered entirely mortal, leaving behind a persistent secret society of power brokers that the Nine Tiger Dynasty and others inaccurately perceive as more than human. Indeed, even that assumption can be dropped, leaving the Dynasty and others to view the Eternals as nothing more than a long-winded criminal eyesore to be torn down.

Should the Eternals and their blood science be retained, we recommend the GC present an air of mystery surrounding them. The conversations held behind closed doors at the Eternals' strongholds and Conclaves... The research conducted within the Vault Cities and buried in the Koffin (see later in this sidebar), as well as the twisted gifts afforded those who are exposed to it... These are things of dark mystery and high suspense, best suited to investigative and conspiratorial campaigns. Players should learn about them slowly and never truly understand their nature; just as they think they're close to the truth, the GC should reveal another surprise to spin them in a new direction.

Further, should the GC wish to keep the blood science in his setting consistent with that of the official World on Fire, two rules apply. First, the strength of an Essence effect is limited by the amount of Eternal blood used to distill it, as well as the number of Eternals whose blood was mixed in the process. This is the reason possession of the Mald-Mabbone is so coveted; on average it contains the blood of two-thirds of the Eternal population in the world.

The mortal Rasputin understood this rule. After deducing the nature of the Eternals and the basic principles of their blood science, he captured two of them and bled them dry, performing a gory transfusion of his own blood. Contrary to some legends, this didn't render him immortal, but it did leave him with incredible recuperative powers, as evidenced by the shocking amount of punishment he withstood before his eventual demise at the hands of the other Eternals.

The second rule is less universal but provides many avenues for dramatic roleplaying. By and large, while Essence effects are often extremely useful, they're also extremely flawed. It cripples and deforms as often as it empowers or enhances. One example is a pitiful creature the Eternals refer to as "the Dreamer," a flit who was prone to infrequent bouts of faint and completely uncontrollable clairvoyance before his exposure to the Essence. For twenty-five years since, he's been able to accurately draw locations he's never visited and people he's never met, precisely as they look at the moment. He can draw nearly any location on Earth, but he's incapable of verbally describing them, trapped in the drooling, twitching shell that his former body has become.

Leading Lights are neither appointed nor elected; rather, when an Eternal gains enough prestige or popularity, some of his peers simply start referring to him appropriately and the term either sticks or it doesn't. The process is very much like gaining a nickname. Falling out of favor happens the same way, with the Eternals shifting their favor to new blood. Such was the case with the great political rivals Gullan the Librarian and Innat the Storyteller, who once held absolute sway over Eternal affairs. Now these Leading Lights are considered to be out of touch. Their throngs are smaller and they are rarely consulted except for their insight and knowledge of Eternal ceremony.

An unusual side effect of this social system is that the establishment of a new Leading Light often begins with an apprentice betraying his master. As the master's favor wanes, that of his apprentice is often on the rise. Frequently, the apprentice simply replaces his master in the eyes of the other Eternals, which is generally considered a boon to all. New ideas are tested directly against experience, promoting strength over tradition.

The Leading Lights perform many services for their people. They seek Eternals who have yet to discover their nature, helping them through the turbulent early centuries of their development. The first three hundred years are typically the worst, as the newcomers grapple with trauma, grief, exhilaration, arrogance, and despair. If they can survive these rugged times, most find their way, though they must still contend with the unexpected limitations of their new lives.

For instance, young Eternals elated at the idea of endless, idle exploration are usually crestfallen to learn that their elders' memories are not shining things of crystalline clarity. Outside poignant moments and carefully maintained skills, few Eternals can recall more than the last eighty years in any detail.

The Lights are also responsible for establishing and enforcing the complex series of by-laws that define and protect their species. One thing that keeps typical Eternals vibrant is their urge to act — those with an interest in the arts usually become performers, not critics, and those with a passion for war don't theorize, they fight! This constant need to become involved in the affairs of the outside world must be carefully regulated, lest the Eternals' secret come to light, endangering everything they've so carefully built.

Most Eternal transactions are governed by the Codes of Siat. The origins of this covenant predate the flawed memory of even the oldest Eternals and their written record only proves that their laws are at least as aged as the Code of Hammurabi. Yet while the origins of the Codes have provided centuries of scholarly argument, the point is largely moot. The Codes work and that is enough.

For any set of laws to bind those who are unshackled by the laws of time itself, they must be painfully simple, ruthlessly primitive, and appeal to the gut, defining a system of justice that is both decisive and unvarnished by mercy or regret. The Codes are all these things and at their heart they reflect the fact that the Eternals have never truly advanced beyond the tribal stage as a people.

While the Codes ensure a modicum of courtesy and hospitality, they exist primarily to keep the peace between the ageless. The foremost Code drilled into every fledgling Eternal is the Right of Retribution — that the life of any being who causes an Eternal to be killed, for any reason, is forfeit. This law binds all Eternals to seek out vengeance for each and every death within their

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CHAPTER 2
2 TRACES OF TERROR

extended family. The only exception to this Code is the death of one Eternal for causing the death of another. This closes the chain of retribution and requires no further action.

The Right of Retribution has been invoked many times and vengeance is typically seen in short order, though two Eternals have recently been lost without satisfaction. The best known is Yerik Kolesnikov, who fell to an assassin's bullet on March 20, 2001. It was discovered almost immediately that Yerik's murderer was in fact his own daughter, Alexandra *(see page 52)*, but she was spared when one of the Leading Lights' most loyal servants, the mercenary Beowulf, made a convincing plea in her defense. He argued that she would never have reached the impasse at which she killed Yerik if not for the meddling of a long-reviled enemy of the Eternals, Paradox. Beowulf also promised that should Alex be spared, he would devote himself fully to making Paradox pay for Yerik's death. He killed Paradox three days later, but the disguised foe reappeared shortly thereafter. Beowulf has killed him another five times since and is beginning to tire of their little game. He aims to end it soon.

The other Eternal whose death has yet to be avenged is Severyan Valiulis, a Russian judge whose murder was made to appear as a suicide *(see page 49)*. Valiulis' killer has yet to be identified, but when he — or she — is, the Eternals will return the favor.

Despite many attempts, one critical issue that has never been sufficiently codified is how the Eternals may interact with flits. There is much debate as to how much of the Eternals' society flits should be exposed to (if any at all), and just as much debate about how much influence the Eternals should be allowed to exert over the outside world. Possessing knowledge and science unavailable to the flits, the Eternals could easily change the face of history if they aren't careful. Fortunately, fear has so far kept most of the ageless in line; being just as fragile and weak as the rest of humanity, the Eternals understand all too well how greed, paranoia, and other emotions can run amok, especially when facing the unknown.

Some Eternals take the chance and quietly draw flits into their private worlds, though they rarely reveal much of the secret ageless society. The vast majority of an Eternal's human servants, business partners, and lovers never learn of their immortality. They grow old and die, ignorant of the greatness that briefly touched their lives. Of the tiny fraction of flits who are favored with knowledge of the Eternals' enduring nature, even fewer realize that their Eternal is not alone in the world.

Lacking strict Codes on how to interact with flits, Eternals periodically squabble over the details. On very rare occasions, these differences of opinion have become violent, even erupting into full-scale wars. The sacking of Alexandria resulted from one such episode and is generally regarded as the most damaging of the Eternals' historical arguments. These periods of infighting leave the survivors with a renewed admiration of Siat, however, and the Codes are largely upheld to this day. Even Yerik Kolesnikov, one of the most maverick Eternals of all time, respects them more often than not.

Yerik's private endeavors to manipulate the flits for his own amusement came as a surprise to the other Eternals. They learned of the Franchise in 1908, when Yerik's only major trial of the Godspike technology flattened Tunguska, Russia. One might think that the Eternals would act immediately, moving to intercept the blatant meddling without delay, but as Yerik presumed, their longevity had conditioned them to view even the most pressing issues as "so much passing history." Within hours of learning of the explosion in Russia, most Eternals were saying the same thing: "That deserves attention. Perhaps tomorrow... Or the next day... Certainly by next year."

The Eternals finally responded seventy years later, as the Franchise endured the last of its birth pains. After decades of private debate, they sent Beowulf, a flit assassin who was loyal to several of the Leading Lights, to collect their errant brother. Beowulf was instructed to return Yerik alive, but to make it appear to the outside world that he had met a grisly demise. The Eternals planned to lock him away until they could dismantle his fledgling plot to seed world chaos.

Yerik's aggressive, forward-thinking nature had served the Eternals well in the past. He'd conceived and constructed the Krypt to help protect them from the outside world, especially from a dangerous secret society that had decided they were a threat *(see page 53)*. Under his leadership, the Krypt had also established several important projects for the Eternals, including their research into passing their gift on to their offspring *(see page 61)*. None of this compensated for the Yerik's more destructive aspirations, however, and the Eternals were finally ready to do something about them.

Unexpectedly, a zealous and highly competent British secret agent, Sir Richard Poole, thwarted Beowulf's attack. Poole also nearly killed the favored servant, his well-placed bullet lodging just millimeters from the assassin's heart. Beowulf was saved through the miracles of Eternal science, though the process left him with a gradual degenerative condition that aged the skin over roughly half his body.

The Eternals' next attempt to bring Yerik home again involved the operative Poole, this time as the target. With Yerik expecting more from them now, they knew they had to be inventive to get close to him, and they decided to turn Poole, who had become Yerik's latest ally, against him. They sent Beowulf to waylay the Majestic so they could use another of their sciences to reprogram him. This almost worked, but Yerik once again managed to escape

ONE SECRET, MANY LIES (CONTINUED)

Some outcomes of Essence research are too warped to be of any use to the Eternals. These are shipped to a Vault City called the Koffin, where the shattered remains of all failed Eternal experiments go to be forgotten. This grisly menagerie contains thousands of unfortunate test subjects wallowing through their final years, as well as countless devices with just enough value to avoid destruction. In moments of crisis, and when the Eternals remember, these rejected cast-offs are sometimes pulled out of mothballs for one glorious mission before being tucked away for good.

Even with all the drawbacks, the Essence is still the greatest weapon in the Eternals' arsenal. It allowed them to achieve atomic power in the late 1800s and workable cloning in the 1920s. It produced the science behind cold fusion and Yerik's Godspike. In the fields of chemical and medical advancement, the Essence is unrivaled. It is only in the last few decades, as electronics and computer technology has taken center stage, that the Eternals' technological dominance is slipping. Given time, even that hurdle may be cleared.

capture thanks to Targeno, a mercenary newly in his employ. He deprogrammed Poole and braced for further reprisal from his kin *(see page 56)*.

None came. Instead, the Eternals decided to let Yerik come to them. They waited for the next Conclave.

ANYONE WHO'S ANYONE WILL BE THERE

The centerpiece of Eternal society is the Conclave. For eleven days every seven years, the reclusive species convenes to exchange news, renew alliances, rule on pressing matters, and grind their axes in person. Long ago, the Conclaves were held only once every century, but the quickening pace of life, the ease of travel, and the growing number of things demanding Eternal attention have precipitated more and more frequent gatherings.

The location of each Conclave is a carefully guarded secret, known only to the host and the Leading Lights until the last few weeks before the event. Most who object to this dramatic process are newly realized Eternals who have yet to learn just how mortal they are and how many enemies seek to illustrate that point to them. The elders are quick to remind them that just a few decades ago the Nine Tiger Dynasty — which has long known of the Eternals and viewed them as aberrations to be cut down — learned the venue for a Conclave and arranged the murder of five Leading Lights, as well as seven others.

Like all aspects of Eternal life, the Conclave is dominated by ritual. The first day, for example, features the Enthronement of the Cauldron, a ceremony in which the host unveils the *Mald-Mabbone*, an ancient black iron vessel that travels to each Conclave. Upon arrival and once each day thereafter, each Eternal at the gathering is required to cut himself and bleed one hundred drops into the vessel. This is symbolic of the Eternals' unity and also provides the principle prize for the year's political wrangling *(see opposite)*.

Another ritual is the Right of Remonstration, which permits any Eternal at the Conclave to seek mortal satisfaction from any other attendee for any grievance, real or perceived. The Eternal writes the attendee's name on a slip of parchment or paper and pins it to a tall wooden post, the *Imjah*, using an ornate dagger chosen from several matching pairs provided by the host. He keeps the other dagger in the pair.

There is no etiquette for Remonstration notes. Most are sophisticated and gentlemanly while others plunge into wild rants. Some are carefully formulated over decades while others are impulsively scrawled in response to something at the Conclave. The author may include the nature of his grievance in his note or he may keep it private. Indeed, he needn't even identify himself; all notes are weighed with the same gravity — even the ones that show up anonymously in the middle of the night.

The notes are read aloud for all attendees at dusk each day, providing an opportunity for the author to publicly besmirch the target's reputation or violate their honor. Consequently, some notes are rife with dramatic flourish, mixtures of scathing wit and dripping bile. In some cases, especially between famed rivals, these readings can become veritable shouting matches, with the accuser, accused, or both arguing their cases before the assembly. The most effective of these presentations, amplified by the inevitable gossip that follows, can drive one or both of the participants to irrational rage — which is precisely the goal. An angry opponent is a weak opponent.

On the final day of the Conclave, all notes are tallied and the attendee who is identified the most times becomes one of two combatants in the only duel to the death permitted by the Codes of Siat. In the case of a tie, the attendees perform a secret ballot to determine who fights. The second combatant is chosen at random from the first combatant's accusers; the daggers used to pin the notes calling him out are hidden in small coffers and he chooses one. Whoever produces the matching dagger has the right to fight him.

The duel is the Conclave's second-to-last event, held during dinner on the gathering's last day. Each combatant's right ankle is shackled to the *Imjah* and a circle is drawn fifteen feet out from the fighters. The only weapons they are allowed are the daggers used to issue the challenge. Armor and other gear is likewise prohibited. The dinner tables are set around the circle and the duel commences as the meat course is served. Generally, only one of the combatants still breathes as dessert makes its appearance.

It is a mark of Yerik's controversial charisma that he's fought as the accused in three of the last six duels. At the 2000 Conclave, Yerik faced the Wraith, who is widely regarded as the single deadliest of all Eternals in personal combat. Behind the scenes, the Leading Lights arranged the duel, ensuring that more notes named Yerik than any other attendee. They also provided the Wraith with the matching dagger, hoping to finally close the matter with their troublesome brother once and for all. The Wraith refused to deliver the killing blow, however, sparing Yerik at the last moment. His reason for this remains unclear, though he avoided Yerik thereafter, even refusing to attend Conclaves so long as his opponent lived.

Two final pieces of business follow the duel. First, the assembly decides the next Conclave's host by three rounds of majority vote. Second, the Leading Lights announce the recipient of the *Mald-Mabbone* and its precious contents. All Eternals realize that their blood is the key to their immortality, and that it also contains many special properties that may easily be exploited. Thus, the Leading Lights entrust the *Mald-Mabbone* to only one of their kin at any time. However, due to tradition that has stood for centuries, the recipient of this honor is not always the most qualified.

Per the Codes of Siat, and perhaps due ultimately to poor translation of the old texts, the Eternal best prepared to undertake this mission is the most "preferred" by his peers. Though it's commonly accepted that this was intended to mean the most esteemed, particularly with regard to the science of the task at hand, the Eternals are slow to adapt to change and still use the literal interpretation. Thus, acquisition of the *Mald-Mabbone* is a matter popularity rather than merit.

The Eternals jockey throughout the Conclave for this honor and the significant advantages it presents. In the past, this has often become an extension of the gathering's social calendar, each Eternal trying to one-up the rest by telling the best stories, garnering the most laughs, or even pulling the most applauded pranks. It also takes the form of political machination, with Machiavellian Eternals coaxing or coercing support while undermining their contenders for the prize.

All compare their achievements out in the world, trying to impress the Lights and each other. The lords show off their holdings, the collectors show off their sets, and the scientists shock and amaze with outrageous theories and bizarre contraptions. The master manipulators reveal triumphs of misdirection and control, ensnaring the world in ever-deeper webs of patronage, blackmail, and secret fealty. Here the Eternals' basic cruelty and callousness is laid bare, as all their uninhibited schemes rise to the fore. For the lord, it is not enough to merely gloat over territory; the audience must understand how

brutally it was acquired. Scientists make it clear they stride the world with the confidence of gods and manipulators paint shameful pictures of their victims' sorrowful lives.

Ultimately, the Leading Lights choose one Eternal whose presence is clearly the most felt at the Conclave, leaving the *Mald-Mabbone* in his or her charge until the next gathering. Ostensibly, the chosen Eternal is honor bound to seek a way for the species to reproduce during this time, but many who win the privilege have other ideas…

TROUBLED GODS IN TINY GLASS CAGES

No obstacle facing the Eternals is more pressing than the survival of the species. Since the first of their kind wept over the graves of their offspring, the same questions have plagued them: "Why are we different?" and "What causes us to live forever?" For millennia the Eternals have pondered the source of their immortality and how to transfer the gift to their young, yet so far their search has been in vain.

Theories range from the rationally plausible to the wildly speculative, from science to science fiction. The ideas have evolved with the times: possession by divine spirits in the Dark Ages, unique energy coursing through their bodies as electricity was developed, radiated tissue after the splitting of the atom, nanotechnology and alien modification during the E.T. craze of the late 20th Century, and most recently the quantum behavior of blood proteins. The belief that the Eternals' gift is somehow trapped in their blood has been the most aggressively researched, in part because that research has yielded many other remarkable discoveries; even if the Eternals' blood is not the source of their longevity, it is most certainly the wellspring for many other won-drous effects.

Several hundred years ago, the Eternals managed to distill from samples of their blood a powerful reagent they call the Essence, a substance that comes as close as the Eternals have ever managed to a "cure" for the human condition. Surprisingly, though the Essence lengthens the lifespans of flits, it does not grant true immortality. It does, however, produce a number of benefits in humans that the Eternals do not exhibit and are as yet unable to recreate amongst their own — most notably a collection of bizarre, fate-defying properties collectively called the Edge.

The most prominent examples of the Edge involve the Bloodvine Syndicate and the Nine Tiger Dynasty. The Syndicate happened into one of the Eternals' experiments when they acquired a lost stockpile of Nazi gold *(see page 11)*. Long ago, an Eternal attempt to infuse physical items with Essence unexpectedly resulted in them acquiring a strange yet powerful form of karma that carried from owner to owner. A sword used to kill would subtly aid future wielders in the same act, while hindering those who tried to save or spare lives. Money used to pay for heinous acts would further support atrocities and fall short when used to rebuild or promote.

Interestingly, this effect spread out of the Eternals' control, "infecting" other objects that crossed paths with the original items. This chain reaction was slow and hard to predict, but cropped up in all sorts of unforeseen places. During World War II, Hitler's Fourth Reich corrupted thousands of objects that continue to stain the world today. The Eternals hunt these objects, futilely hoping to purge their mistake, but even the ones they've man-aged to capture must simply be locked away; as yet, no one has figured out how to negate this form of the Edge.

As for the Bloodvine Syndicate, its tone, direction, and leadership darken by the year, slowly succumbing to the phantom taint of the bloodstained gold funding the enterprise. Syndicate actions grow needlessly brutal, its messages unnecessarily cruel. The Eternals have attempted several times to steal the gold, always acting through various fronts and always disguising their true intent as plays for territory, attempts to influence European crime circles, and struggles to control the region's black market. This has prompted retaliatory action from the Syndicate's leaders, who've seen through the Eternals' ruse and sparked a slow-build war with them that lingers today.

The Nine Tiger Dynasty possesses a very different form of the Edge, which the Eternals intentionally seeded to test the bounds of physical human potential. In order to distract from the true source of these seemingly 'mystic' abilities, the Eternals timed their meddling with the birth of the Khan's twin daughters, whom he was promoting as the coming of the Ninth Immortal of Chinese myth *(see page 15)*. The Khan and his spiritual advisors have since discovered the true source of their troops' abilities, but rather than investigate further or make contact with the Eternals, they've rewritten their scripture to depict the immortals as ancestral enemies of the faith, ancient villains to be hunted for their scheming and heretical research.

Ultimately, this was the true reason for China's invasion of Russia *(see page 47)*. The conflict concealed the Khan's raids of various Eternal facilities, including several of the so-called "Vault Cities" in which the immortals conduct their blood science. Many related projects were compromised and several important resources were captured, but the Eternals — and the whole region — were in for worse. As the conflict raged across Southeast Asia, the Bloodvine Syndicate sent several operatives into Russia to search for information related to the Franchise and destabilize the local government, which they assumed was supporting the crimi-nal network. This assumption was not entirely correct, of course; Russia's support of the Franchise was limited to Yerik's manipula-tion of the Eternals' long-standing connections in those crumbling halls of power. Still, the damage was done. Stretched thin at every front, Russia recoiled and lost ground, gladly accepting Gideon Barbary's peaceful advances several months later.

Many Eternals were killed in the brief conflict — more than over the course of the last five years. The remainder of the species went to ground, scrambling to survive until the next Conclave, and this ignited further chaos throughout Russia, where many Eternals had recently settled into prominent public roles. The focus of the next Conclave will undoubtedly be leveled on the Dynasty and the Syndicate: the punishment they deserve and how to exact it. Until then, the Eternals have returned to two tasks with which they're well familiar and for which they're extremely well prepared: watching and waiting.

Another priority at the next Conclave will most likely be restruc-turing the Eternals' fractured community. There was a time when most of them lived relatively close together, allowing them to inform and support each other, but since the advents of rapid travel and global communication, many have settled into comfortable king-doms at and beyond the far corners of civilization. Now, with their numbers dwindling, enemies massing against them, and the world in a seemingly constant state of upheaval, it's becoming evident that a firmer social system is required. To date each of the Eternals has had to face major upsets alone and this archaic approach is taking its toll. Unless the immortals find a way to come together again in the modern age, they'll never see the future.

CHAPTER 3- CONTENTS

ARCHITECTS OF DECEPTION

In the last century, espionage has become one of the most romantic domains of popular entertainment. Books, computer games, movies, and television have delved into the lives of fictional agents like James Bond and real-life spies like Mata Hari. *World on Fire* is a careful blend of fiction and reality, an action drama set against a genuine backdrop that can easily explode into untamed cinema (and often does). Regardless of the tone and flavor, though, the trappings of espionage remain the same. All spies barter in a unique currency called "tradecraft," a mixed bag of refined techniques and impromptu troubleshooting.

Especially in the real world, most tradecraft involves methodical plotting. Spies watch trends, analyze data, and dream up scenarios; the vast majority of them are office jocks. Fortunately, roleplaying sessions are rarely this passive, and concessions are made to support exciting game play. Nearly always, player characters become an investigative arm of their agency, meeting objectives in the field where similarly aggressive enemies oppose them. It is in these activities that this basic primer is focused.

All operatives are advised to read this material thoroughly. Their survival will all too frequently depend upon the lessons that follow.

THE SECOND-OLDEST PROFESSION

As long as there have been secrets, spies have tried to protect, steal, and exploit them. Almost two thousand years before the birth of Christ, Hammurabi's scouts chiseled what they saw while visiting enemy territory into "secret tablets." Others chiseled assassination orders for his finest warriors. In the Old Testament, Moses' successor Joshua was a spymaster, collaborating with a prostitute named Rahab to hide his operatives in the red light district of Jericho (it's possible Rahab's home is the first safe house on record).

In 17th century France, Armand-Jean du Plessis — later to become famous as Cardinal Richelieu — became head of foreign affairs and eventually prime minister, amassing the most expansive and effective espionage network the world has ever known. His ability to ruin men and nations alike was legendary. "Give me six lines written by the most honest man," he said, "I will find something in them to hang him."

Governments and goals have changed, but the profession — like its oldest predecessor — remains the same. The 20th Century was a hotbed of espionage activity. The discovery of nuclear weapons gave rise to the super powers, polarizing the political and economic fields of battle for decades. For nearly fifty years following World War II, an uneasy game of chicken arose with America and the Soviet Union staring each other down, their fingers poised on the proverbial "big red button" in case the other blinked.

As the leaders and pundits jockeyed for airtime to wage their ideological Cold War, others fought battles in the new trenches of Europe and Asia. There, spies lurked in the shadows, playing a delicate game of cat and mouse for the ultimate prize: knowledge.

Legions of operatives from the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. recruited legions more in their satellite states, unfortunate pawns in a lethal global chess game. Countries and agencies alike were propped up and knocked down. Motives and objectives were crafted and unraveled daily, often by the hour. Yet despite all the lies and liaison, the Great Game was relatively simple then. It was all about which side you were on, and in the final analysis, there were only two sides to choose from.

Modern espionage is far more ambiguous. Now that the Cold War has ended, the world's intelligence agencies are reorganizing their agendas. The nuclear arms race has taken a back seat to the ideological conflicts of a new era, led primarily by extreme terrorist movements. The weapons of the past five decades are being auctioned off to fanatics whose goal is not expansion but annihilation.

The Soviet Union's collapse left a power vacuum the new Russian Federation hasn't managed to fill, and the rise of countless new world orders has prompted a global industrial boom. Corporations long hungry to expand vie for control of oil reserves and other natural resources, as well as technological talent and new fountains of profit. Everywhere, these ambitious conglomerates take advantage of lax laws and corrupt officials, undermining governments in the name of progress.

Spy agencies have evolved along parallel lines, and many new agencies have cropped up in remote countries with private agendas. The corridors of espionage are growing more and more confusing every day, as small territories defend themselves and large territories fight over who gets to topple them. In all this, spies come out on top, their services as valued as they were four thousand years ago.

CLOAKS AND DAGGERS

A spy wears many cloaks. At times, he's a diplomat or seducer, an investigator or an assassin. Often, he's all at once. A spy's life is complicated; he must be disciplined and determined enough to follow precise orders, yet independent and resourceful enough to handle the unexpected.

A spy carries many daggers. His most decisive weapons are his fists and guns, but these are clumsy, leaving undesirable evidence. Ultimately, a spy's greatest weapons are his ideas and words, his subtle manipulations and the mental snares into which he leads his prey.

Cloaks and daggers change for every mission. Spies undertake many different missions, the most illustrious of which follow.

ASSASSINATION

Killing is a dirty business, but intelligence agencies often find it a necessary evil. Opposing leaders become too strong or too loved to ignore. Enemy operatives become too effective. Allies and contracted employees betray the agency, prompting retaliation. Regardless of the reasoning, assassination is never taken lightly, and missions of murder are only sanctioned with great care or reckless emotion.

When assassination is conducted to weaken an enemy, or remove an impediment, the assassin's goal is misdirection. He is usually ordered to make the death look like suicide, an accident, or a disappearance, or to hint that someone else was responsible. This is a complex mission with great risk, both to the operative and his government. Many episodes of the original *Mission: Impossible* series involved this sort of mission: getting rid of someone without implicating the U.S. in the process.

When an assassination is carried out for its effect on others, the mission becomes far more perilous. Executing a beloved leader can cripple a nation — or send it into a vindictive frenzy. Often, the reaction can be controlled with the killing method. Messy, public assassinations tend to prompt more violent reactions than staged suicides, which are often accepted at face value (and can have great impact if the goal is to instill a sense of hopelessness). Collateral damage — like that caused by concentrated explosives or chemical weapons — almost universally produces terror (and aftershocks that are difficult to gauge). This is especially true with large-scale attacks with no discernable origin or rationalization, as they instill a lingering sense of dread.

Revenge attacks are almost universally accompanied by claims of responsibility. Only the most self-assured agency goes out of its way to kill someone for spite and not make its reasons known. Indeed, most vindictive assassinations are expressly orchestrated to send a message, usually to embarrass the target or his allies, or to prove the acting agency's superiority. This type of mission is common against successful operatives who thwart villainous organizations. S.P.E.C.T.R.E. hatched such a plan against James Bond in *From Russia with Love.*

Most of the time, agencies distance themselves from assassinations, hiring freelancers to undertake them. This prevents the loss of assets and generates plausible deniability, allowing the agency to disavow involvement if the mission is compromised. (Many think this is how the CIA evaded responsibility for killings to which it was linked in 1976, when the U.S. Senate absolved it of complicity.)

Assassinations also involve meticulous plans relying upon the target's schedule, habits, friends, colleagues, weaknesses, and other factors. The chief concerns are getting close to the target and getting away without notice (or with whatever notice is demanded in the mission briefing). Few assassins take on additional risk by adding infiltration or invasion to the assignment; rather than trying to get to the target in his home or office, they wait until he's in the open. Only the most secure targets require assassins to infiltrate their personal circles, and only the brashest operatives comply without rock solid cover identities.

Timing is key during an assassination. The target must not be able to call for help, or be killed where his body is likely to be found by passersby. The target must be at his most vulnerable and the assassin must be able to escape undetected, leaving room for error if at all possible. Problems always arise in time-sensitive killing missions, and leaving too much to chance can explode in the operative's face, often literally.

Knowledge of forensics and the ability to quickly and competently go to ground are critical during an assassination's final stages. An operative must understand the methods investigators will use to determine the cause of death and track the killer. He must be able to eradicate evidence of his involvement, as well as that of his superiors, and thereafter vanish for as long as required to evade any pursuers.

In the real world, no agency has more often or extensively used assassination than the KGB. Its special laboratory, the *kamera*, brewed exotic poisons and developed special killing tools like acid-spitting cigarette cases and walking sticks that could inject poison pellets into a target. Its SMERSH bureau was responsible for hundreds if not thousands of brutal slayings, including that of Leon Trotsky, Josef Stalin's political rival.

INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence is the spy's mainstay, his primary *raison d'être*. On a global scale, the basis for all educated (read: sound) agency decisions is a critical understanding of political, military, criminal, and other climates, as well as the backgrounds and means of all players involved. On a personal scale, intelligence is the means to most of a spy's immediate ends. Only with keen insight into an enemy's mind does an operative stand a reasonable chance of outwitting the enemy at a crucial impasse, or second-guessing his motives during a chaotic mission. Likewise, information about a location can provide the best routes in or out of a target area, or shortcuts to important objectives, personnel, or defenses.

Spies don't gather intelligence — they *conduct* it and benefit from it *(for more information about this distinction, see Spy Jargon, page 94)*. Information captured in the field but not yet vetted (that is, authenticated and confirmed) is merely "raw data." Only after an organization's analysts have poured over data and added their perspective does it become true "intelligence." This activity isn't the focus of most *Spycraft* games, and therefore doesn't qualify as a common mission type, though the GC can certainly entertain dedicated analysis operations if he's so inclined.

As an activity, however, intelligence is extremely common in espionage missions. It encompasses many different activities, including surveillance, infiltration, cryptography, interviewing, and more. Operatives assigned to intelligence missions may find themselves scouting military forces, flying spy planes over enemy lines, bugging and following important researchers, or even posing as a foreign general's newest aide, listening in on his conversations with visiting dignitaries.

Surveillance can mean far more than watching one or more locations or people. Spies take pictures and video of important targets, especially strategically important ones like politicians, businessmen, criminals, airports, weapons depots, and labs. They monitor electronic, radio, satellite, and other traffic. As seen at the start of *Three Days of the Condor*, they even sift through newspapers, magazines, and other publications. Often, they're told to look for something without understanding what it is or means. Sometimes, they're given no specific instructions, but rather told to simply watch for anything "noteworthy." It is in these cases that an operative's skills and ingenuity are most helpful, as he is acting not only as the eyes of his agency but also its most forward analyst.

Interviewing and interrogation are delicate pursuits, requiring an accurate understanding of human psychology. An operative rarely engages a target immediately — instead, he studies behavior, becoming familiar with the target's mannerisms, emotional triggers, and intellectual weaknesses. Even with these cues at the ready, verbal sparring is perilous. The immediate threat is that the target will realize he's being probed and shut down, or warn others, or both. Alternately, the target might react unexpectedly to the conversation, upsetting agency plans. Absolute control is essential during an interview, lest it produce more problems than the resulting information is worth.

Double agents, moles, and other "insider" operatives are extremely effective at intelligence, but they are risky to cultivate and use. Often, an agency will choose to rely instead upon one or more operatives with three key qualities. The first two are alertness and attention to detail, as a spy who can't keep his eyes open and differentiate important things from the mundane is worthless for intelligence work. The third is the ability to blend into one's surroundings. Almost all intelligence occurs in sensitive territory and anyone undertaking intelligence assignments must not only be able to get into the area without drawing attention, they must also linger and leave unnoticed.

Intelligence missions are as varied in the real world as they are in fiction. Atomic spy rings were formed before, during, and after World War II, gathering information about their nations' rivals in the nuclear arms race. Spy planes became something of an obsession in the latter half of the 20th Century, as the altitudes at which they could capture useful images skyrocketed, or in some cases plummeted (many skirted the ground to avoid radar blankets). Today, as resources are dwindling and nations rise and fall according to their financial well-being, insider trading is far more than a profitable criminal enterprise — it's one of the most influential sources of funding an intelligence any agency can gain. Spies penetrate big business at every level, stealing critical economic and industrial data to keep their governments at the forefront of the development curve. Future intelligence may target everything from medical advancements to communications and space race technologies. As always, one thing is certain: there will always be more data to learn, barter, or steal.

RECRUITMENT

Operatives are always on the look out for new recruits, studying every person they meet for signs that they might make a good addition to their cause (of course, they also watch for signs that they might already be opposed to it, but that's a facet of counter-espionage).

A recruiter develops a knack for identifying a potential candidate's desires and weaknesses. He learns to recognize which candidates might be willing to join his cause and which must be coerced or tricked. He spends the time necessary to cultivate a relationship with each candidate, uncovering the target's idiosyncrasies over time, and he hones the skill to know when a candidate simply isn't worth pursuing, and how to extract himself and move on when necessary.

Care must be taken in approaching and pitching a candidate, as applying the wrong formula can be devastating. It can permanently damage the recruiter's relationship with the candidate or drive him out of the game altogether. Worse, it could send the target into the accepting arms of another group, potentially bolstering a rival organization at the home office's expense.

There is an old espionage maxim that categorically identifies the reasons people spy. Its acronym is M.I.C.E., which stands for "Money, Ideology, Compromise, and Ego."

- *Money* is a fast incentive, but it appeals primarily to the greedy and the needy. Both personality types tend to be sloppy, rushing through their duties in order to get paid. Real life CIA officer Aldrich Ames was offered money to filter secrets to the KGB in 1985. He was responsible for at least 10 deaths in exchange for nearly $3 million, which he used to pay debts incurred by his compulsive fiancé.

- *Ideology* is the most effective incentive, producing highly loyal recruits. Their belief in the operative's cause drives them to take great risks and endure great hardships, but their pride often makes them susceptible to mental ploys designed to reveal their true allegiance. Real world MI6 officer George Blake acted as Head of Station in the Korean War. The North Koreans captured him and appealed to his communist roots, convincing him to feed British intelligence secrets to the KGB, which he did for eight years after his return in 1953.

- *Compromise* is a dangerous incentive, but useful when there appears to be no other option. It plays on the target's insecurities, identifying his dirty little secrets and threatening to expose them if he refuses to cooperate. Most people are fragile and extremely vulnerable to compromise, though a few rail against the tactic, lashing out with unusual passion. An example of one who didn't is John Vassal, a real world clerk at the British embassy in Moscow, who was compromised by a KGB sting operation revealing his embarrassing sexual preferences. He passed information to the Russians for years before he was caught.

- *Ego* is an incentive for adventuresome, narcissistic sorts. Praise for abilities or accomplishments the agency wants to exploit often instills an arrogant (and false) sense of control in the target, encouraging him to embrace his perceived value to the agency or to believe that he can best its operatives at their own game. Recruits manipulated with this tactic are often writers or leaders, whose work influences (or seems to influence) many others. In 1947, the MGB — later the KGB — seduced economist Hugh Hambleton to their side with flattery and the promise of excitement. Years later, as a valued professor, he spied on NATO for them.

Civilian recruits demand special attention. The uninitiated are usually shocked to receive offers to enter the espionage world. A few are even impossible to recruit and an operative must know how to spot and avoid them. Such high ideals and strong opinions often fuel attitudes of moral superiority or resentment against one or more factions (or even the entire intelligence community), and can drive the target to act against a recruiter to satisfy fear or indignation.

Cultivating spies is dangerous work — notwithstanding the technical, scientific, linguistic, and other "mundane" specialties, of course, which can often be satisfied by advertising in the newspaper. Bringing true intelligence operatives into the fold can easily attract the attention of the police or a candidate's family and friends, who question new actions, mysterious income, or association with elusive friends such as the recruiter. Also, the closer a candidate gets to sensitive secrets or assets, the greater the chance that operatives of other agencies may pick up his scent, possibly even attempting to eliminate him or recruit him as a double agent.

For all these reasons, approach is key to any recruitment effort. The recruiting operative must be friendly and approachable, open to others' interests and points of view. He must be able to share jovial conversations about topics he doesn't necessarily enjoy. Most importantly, he must be patient, willing to string candidates along for weeks or months before making any requests of them.

This ideal process is called a "warm approach," but it isn't always an option. Sometimes, a recruiter must go from first meeting to first offer during a single encounter. This is called a "cold approach," and its only redeeming quality is that the encounter isn't rushed. This is not the case during a "hot approach," when the recruiter is forced by circumstances to make his play in minutes or seconds, often targeting the first person that loosely meets his needs. One example of a hot approach might involve a blown operative behind enemy lines. On the run and needing help to distract approaching agents, the operative might try to charm a woman he finds walking alone, in whom he senses a motherly instinct and a weakness for roguish men. Hot approach pitches must remain extremely simple; in this case, the operative might try to convince the woman that he's trying to escape some violent men to whom he owes money. This lets her "save" a man to whom she's attracted, seemingly placing her in a position of power with him (though in this case, she'd be wrong).

Some agency operatives coordinate multiple recruits. These operatives are called "case officers," "principals," "handlers," or "Controls," and their collected recruits are called "spy rings" "cells," or "networks." Most networks are heavily compartmentalized, featuring a pyramid-style command structure and many "cut-outs," or go-betweens. This keeps any captured operative or recruit from revealing the rest of the operation.

One of the most expansive networks in espionage history was the Red Orchestra (Rote Kappelle), which spread across all of Western Europe during World War II. Although the Red Orchestra ultimately answered to one man, Leopold Trepper, it was broken into over twenty groups, each of which had its own internal structure. At any time, its lowest-level operatives were dozens of layers removed from Trepper.

On the other hand, some networks benefit from no compartmentalization at all. The famed Cambridge Spy Ring consisted of five pro-communist students who worked together to filter information back to Moscow. In many ways, this group operated like most player character teams, as one unit with many agendas. The small number of participants and their equivalent stature allowed them to escape notice for years, and for the most part to successfully defect to Russia when they were discovered.

Recruiters often work as "legals" (that is, they have an official cover and diplomatic immunity supported by their government). They find posts at embassies, where the concentration of suitable candidates is high, and focus on support staff who are close to but not directly part of the action. Secretaries, chauffeurs, maintenance staff, and similar workers are ideal candidates, spending time near sensitive data and the people who possess it, and they're often innocuous enough to be overlooked as a security risk. These candidates also tend to have potentially compromising information about others employed at the same location, including many superiors.

Recruiters also employ "talent spotters" or "access agents," who locate and vet potential candidates. Talent spotters are often stationed at high-traffic areas like airports, restaurants, and clubs, especially those frequented by academics and intelligence professionals. They rarely make contact themselves, however, instead passing likely candidates along to others who initiate contact.

Once employed by an agency, recruits may take on many roles to achieve many different results. Few recruits stay in constant touch with the operative who recruited them, for a variety of reasons. Some are considered unstable or unreliable, often because their motives or personalities are too independent. These include "stringers," freelancers who only report information that *happens* to cross their path, and "floaters," who see infrequent use, performing only a handful of actions before they're discarded.

Other recruits are kept at arm's length to ensure their continued usefulness. Snitches and informants of all kinds are only as helpful as their street reputation permits, and known links to intelligence operatives tend to spoil their perceived impartiality. Likewise, "sleeper" agents are provided a trigger, told what to do when it occurs, and cut loose, sometimes never to be contacted again.

Then there are those recruits who maneuver through enemy camps. "Fabricators" pass false intelligence and "travelers" visit foreign countries for fun and business, collecting pertinent details along the way. "Moles" are inserted into enemy organizations and enemy agents are turned, or "doubled," so they can collect sensitive information, spread disinformation, and conduct sabotage.

Meanwhile, out in the court of public opinion, "agents of influence" manipulate media and government sources, and "agent provocateurs" incite riots and rebellion.

Many recruits are "deniable" — that is, the agency can disavow knowledge of them if they're discovered. Some become "illegals," operating without an agency cover or diplomatic immunity. These are the hardest for enemy operatives to detect, but they live on the very edge of the Great Game, likely facing serious criminal charges if identified.

Loyalty is always a dire concern in the spy game, and this is never truer than with new blood. Recruits must be watched carefully and the agency's need for them to feel secure must always be balanced against any risk they pose. Like anyone, recruits need attention and support, lest they grow idle and wander. Treating them like suspects can also drive them away, but embracing them as loyal friends leaves the agency vulnerable to betrayal.

In the proper maintenance of a recruit, periodic debriefings are critical. This allows a handler to pose plausible questions and search his recruits' responses for inconsistencies. It also lets him

monitor the recruits' mental states, warning ahead of time about fatigue, stress, and worse. Finally, it lets him measure the recruits' levels of betrayal (against his friends, his employers, his family, his country, and even his religion). With each debriefing, a handler can nudge his recruits further from their former lives and closer to the agency's end plans for them.

RESCUE

Operatives are sometimes called upon to find or free items, people, or even locations. A key piece of gear might be stolen from a scuttled destroyer or a downed spy plane, a fellow operative might be captured during an op gone bad, or a hostage situation might erupt in a contained biohazard zone. Bringing a kidnap victim home, extracting a defector who's been caught trying to flee his allegiance, arranging the death of a master specialist the agency wants to recruit, liberating a POW still trapped behind enemy lines — all of these situations call for immediate decisive action.

Rescue missions are straightforward when the target's location is known, but this is all too rare in the spy game. Generally, if operatives are being called in, the target has been lost. The bulk of such a rescue mission is the hunt, during which the operative and his associates must piece together the target's most recent movements, as well as those of the suspected (or known) instigators. In most cases, this plays out like a police procedural, with the team threading from witness to witness, clue to clue until the case breaks. Frequently, a time limit harasses them throughout.

Periodically, rescue missions explode into greater epics. In *Thunderball*, for example, James Bond is tasked with finding and recovering a stolen Vulcan bomber carrying two atomic bombs. This leads to a SPECTRE plot to extort $100,000,000 from NATO, with locations in both the U.S. and U.K. at stake.

Rescue missions are not solely the purview of spies. Commandos also undertake these missions, but their methods are different. Where military troops embrace violence to get the job done, operatives embrace stealth and guile. A successful commando mission often leaves flames and wreckage in its wake, or at the very least bullet-ridden or stabbed corpses. The same success by spies leaves no trace at all — only an empty chair or bed, a pair of handcuffs lying on a stone floor, or a curtain billowing in an open window leading to freedom. Of course, with failure, commandos and spies are very similar. Both resort to improvisation and, more often than not, many, many bullets.

Whenever the public becomes aware of a rescue mission or its subsequent fallout, it's likely that federal or local law enforcement will become involved. This can be especially troublesome if these forces are unaware of the operative's allegiance. In a tense situation without confirmation that the operative's intentions are noble (and particularly if evidence supports the contrary), police and other opposition is likely to assume the operative is hostile, or at least an interloper. They may attempt to capture him, or even open fire on him if he doesn't surrender. They may set up blockades and try to intercept him as he escapes the area, especially if they think he's kidnapped or stolen the target of his rescue mission. Even if the operative manages to escape, his faction must clean up the mess — usually by revealing itself to the authorities and cooperating to remove notice of the event, or through clandestine maneuvers behind the scenes. Either way, the cost is paid in secrecy.

Finally, some rescue missions demand that the objective be destroyed rather than left in enemy hands. This places discretionary power in the operative's hands, as he must decide when the mission goes from improbable to impossible, and hold off taking the final shot or throwing the final satchel charge until the last possible second. This level of responsibility is granted only to the most experienced and capable operatives.

SUBVERSION

During the Cold War, Eastern Bloc espionage agencies focused heavily on capturing or eliminating anyone opposed to the existing regime. The targets of this sort of subversion have changed throughout history, yet the methods have remained the same: blackmail, slander, frame-jobs, disinformation, propaganda, and sabotage. For a start.

Subversion missions seek to rot a target group's structure until it can't support itself and collapses under its own weight. Most subversion missions are slow political affairs, undermining or corrupting personnel and other resources. Influential spokesmen are the most prized prey, regardless of their rank in a target group, as their strength of conviction makes them ideal mouthpieces for dissident cant. Failing that, their command of the masses can be turned against the group by revealing their subversion, making them an example of their cause's futility. Successfully arranging for a spokesman to be caught in an activity to which his group is vehemently opposed can support either objective, as can simple recruitment .

Targeting critical personnel works best in tandem with broader missions. A target group's functions can be ruined by mysterious invitations that draw thousands of undesirables. Books, magazines, radio, TV, and the trusty rumor mill can all be used to attack a group's reputation, sometimes with lies, often merely by revealing the truth. The goal is confusion, which generally leads to fear. Enough of either and the enemy turns on itself, doing much of the hardest work on its own.

Most of the time, subversion missions that seed disinformation in the minds of enemy minions can be disguised as seemingly accurate data. Operatives can pose as new allies or defectors to deliver it, or expendable recruits can be cut loose and directed to turn toward the enemy, providing planted information on their arrival. Alternately, they can let "secrets" slip during phone conversations they know are tapped, or "misplace" important papers that later fall into enemy hands. The media can also be helpful, whether they're tricked into reporting a staged story or brought into the intelligence circle and fed the information directly. In all these activities, the trick is portraying the disinformation as a boon or strategic victory for the enemy. Even suspicion that it's a set-up significantly decreases or even kills any advantage that might be gained.

Occasionally, physical infiltrations must be conducted to disrupt a target group's industrial, economic, or scientific/technical assets. Moles and double agents can perpetrate minor, annoying sabotage over long periods of time, wearing away at the group's morale. Major disorder is usually saved for critical junctures when the group is at its most vulnerable, when a display of gross misfortune or perceived incompetence can irreparably wreck loyalty and permanently destabilize the system.

With enough time, subversion can be disguised as simple human error. Factory workers can produce substandard parts, clerks can lose files and evidence, and secretaries can produce typos in critical documents (which is especially effective in sensitive diplomatic correspondence).

All subversion missions — whether they involve politics, disinformation, or physical incursion — benefit from a backup plan. Operatives are tripped up in conversation or caught in places they shouldn't be. People see through fabricated facts. Accidents and acts of God happen. First and foremost, any backup plan must be plausible. It must also be something each operative involved can support on his own if needed. For example, when a backup plan contends that the operatives are diplomats, only one or two of them should be soldiers, and they should be readily identified as bodyguards or other combative types. If a soldier is caught alone, an entirely new backup plan is in order.

Single subversion missions rarely target any group larger than a few dozen people. Undermining a major intelligence agency or government requires a careful campaign of many missions, often taking months or years to complete. Operations MONGOOSE, TRACK I, and TRACK II are examples of such lengthy operations *(see pages 37 and 39 for details)*.
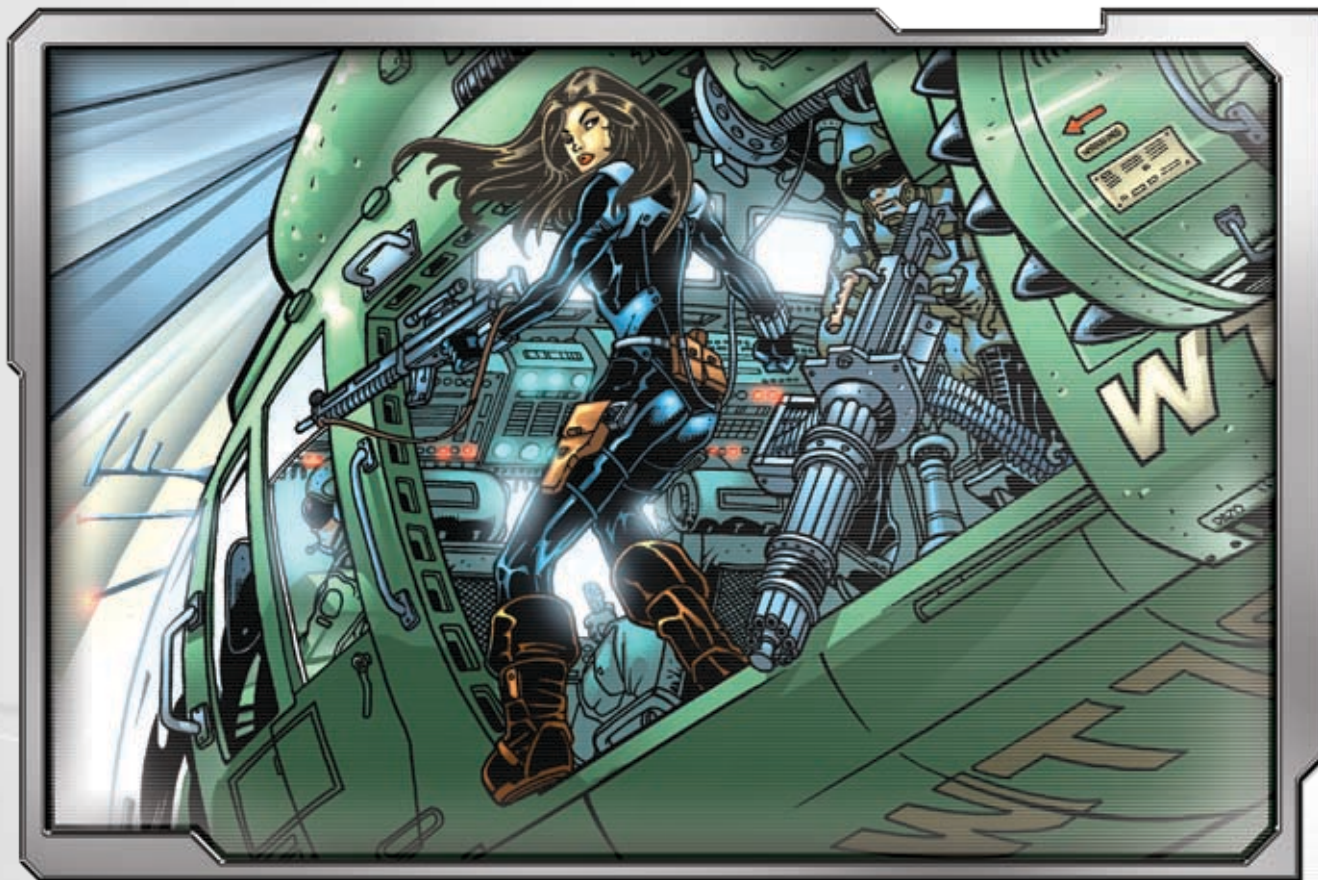
TRANSPORTATION

One of a spy's most basic functions is the surreptitious transportation of people, objects, and information. This type of mission takes two basic forms. The operative might be assigned to retrieve something or someone, returning it to the home office or another location, or he might he ordered to guard someone or something as they move from place to place. In either case, the operative's superiors believe the target to be in danger or they wouldn't be dedicating their big guns to his or its protection.

Secrecy also plays an important role in espionage-themed transportation missions. The operative is rarely given authority to reveal his true allegiance and identity to any but his ward, and in some cases, even that disclosure is prohibited. For example, the operative might be given a cover identity to use when helping a foreign national to defect, just in case the national turns out to be a lure or worse, an enemy agent trying to draw out the operative or his allies.

In some transportation missions, the operative is only expected to possess the ward for a short time. He might even be part of a long chain of custody, only knowing the couriers at either end of his route by password or scripted action. This often happens when the ward passes through a major population center, as it confuses pursuers and provides opportunities to replace the ward with a duplicate if necessary. Unfortunately, chains of custody sometimes break. If even one forward courier is knocked out of action, the operative could wind up being cut off until he can make discreet contact with the home office or the people to whom the ward is to be delivered.

Alertness is vital during a transportation mission. The operative must keep his eyes open for aggressors, traps, pursuers, and curious bystanders. He should always have at least one escape plan at the ready, and never let his guard down for any reason. Even through long periods of dull travel, he cannot falter, lest he leave himself and his ward vulnerable to attack or capture.

Each incident during a transportation mission must be carefully studied for links to other evidence collected along the way. Some missions begin with little to no information about potential enemies, leaving the operative to piece together identities and motives. Everything is important — the nationalities of those involved, their choice of weapons, their tactics, their aftershave. Every tiny detail can lead to revelations about the people after the target, and how to stop them.

It's important to avoid obvious travel plans as well. Direct flights are only advisable when time is too short for another option; also, airports and planes also provide few escape routes (though busier hubs are excellent for brush passes and dead drops). Cars, buses, trains, and even boats are superior — travelers aboard them are harder to track, plus it's easier to shift plans and vehicles without preparation.

Particularly adamant or widespread pursuit may even require the operative to take the mission off the grid. The black market maintains countless illicit smuggling tunnels for drugs, weapons, and other contraband, and the operative and his ward can catch a ride to nearly anywhere for the right price. Of course, keeping underworld figures quiet is a risky proposition and often boils down to who paid them most recently. For this reason, many spies keep tabs on criminal activities whenever possible, just so they know who to go to for the best service. Some even befriend smugglers and other law-breakers so there's a reason beyond money for them to remain loyal.

Some transportation missions benefit from a limited distance between the operative and his ward. The operative might secure the ward at some location the first time he enters an area or interacts with people of unknown alliance. If he suspects that he's being followed, he might even arrange for his ward to travel separately, in disguise or hidden inside a parcel or other object, at least for a time. This tactic benefited WWII French house painter Rene Duchev, who as part of the resistance group Century stole blueprints for the Nazis' Atlantic Wall along the country's southern border. He couldn't initially hide them on his person so he hid them within a mirror inside the very house where he'd found them. Later, he retrieved them and headed to a café to hand them off, but Gestapo soldiers raided the building. This time, he hid the blueprints within the pocket of a Nazi coat hanging near the door. Despite searching every other person in the café, the Gestapo didn't bother with the Nazis, and Duchev was once again able to collect the blueprints after they left. From there, the stolen plans were sent to Paris by train, sealed in a cookie tin, and shipped by fishing boat to England.

A variety of obstacles can complicate a transportation mission. Information may be left out of the briefing, sometimes on purpose, sometimes because the agency wasn't adequately informed. Sometimes, defectors and others may only agree to come along if the operative also rescues loved ones, or a valued research project (and if the project is valuable enough, the home office is likely to agree).

Alternately, the agency may assign the operative to perform a "hostile extraction," or kidnapping. Such was the case with Mordecai Louk, an Israeli double agent who worked for Mossad and Egyptian intelligence. The Egyptians drugged him and locked him in a special trunk to be flown to Cairo. Unfortunately, a delay caused the drugs to wear off and customs officials freed Louk when they heard him struggling. This kind of "noise," or unwanted attention, is not unusual during a kidnapping, and violence is often required to close the op. This can cause additional problems with the police, or prompt tension between state cells as they try to direct the attention at each other.

Hostile extractions are often followed by interrogations, which the agency may also place in the operative's hands. Scientists may be questioned for their discoveries and enemy agents may be broken and tuned as doubles. Either might be coerced to continue their work for the agency, or be bartered to gain more heavily guarded people or items in another group's custody.

The Hunt for Red October is an excellent fictional example of a large-scale transportation mission targeting a defector and a valued piece of gear (in this case, a multi-million dollar piece of prototype military hardware).

For more about espionage travel techniques, see page 91.

COUNTER-ESPIONAGE

Since the end of the Cold War, as many government resources have been devoted to defending against spies as to spying itself. Counter-espionage broadly includes the many ways to prevent and foil all the other missions described here. An operative may be assigned to capture one named enemy agent or root out an entire network. He may target one enemy operation or a large-scale espionage incursion. Or he might be assigned full-time to a counter-espionage agency or division, such as the United States' FBI, Britain's MI5, or Canada's Joint Task Force II.

HONOR AMONG SPIES

Spies are elite warriors fighting a private shadow war with their own unique rules of engagement. Like samurai or gentlemen duelists of a bygone age, all spies recognize one another as kindred spirits, treating even the most despised enemy with the respect due any peer. Though their unspoken code has never been committed to paper, all understand that it defines their lives... and deaths.

Success Before Survival

The mission is God. No operative can hope to fully comprehend his superiors' intentions or the needs of his agency and nation, nor should he try. Espionage organizations are rooted in military tradition for a reason; when missions fail, people die. Ideals die. To preserve the cause, every operative must understand that his very life is secondary to completing the mission as briefed. No questions, no excuses. Anything less and the operative has no place in the service.

Defeat is a Matter of Degrees

Espionage is akin to a global chess game. Civilian specialists, operatives, governments, and even countries fall like pawns before the shadowy kings and queens of the intelligence community. Leaders must always be wary of sacrificing too many of their tools, however, lest their empires collapse, leaving them vulnerable to attack or annexation. This delicate balance of gains and forfeits demands discretion, and the understanding that no war can be won all at once.

Business is Business

Grudges between spies are inevitable, but taking a grievance into the private sector benefits no one. Personal vendettas lead to distraction, sloppy fieldwork, and in extreme cases dereliction of duty, all of which cost lives. No intelligence agency tolerates private retribution. Spying is a business, and there is no room for petty squabbling among professionals.

One Civilian, Ten Spies

Spies ultimately exist to protect civilians; their actions sponsor their nation's principles and further their nation's aims. When a civilian perishes during an espionage operation, a little piece of the spy's purpose perishes with them. Likewise, civilians never die, or even disappear, without fallout. Bystander deaths crucify intelligence agencies and the governments that control them. Good spies are tried and jailed, or linger in the public spotlight so long that they become useless. This benefits no one.

The Great Game is Private

The most intractable tenet of spying is that of keeping the Great Game quiet. Revealing an enemy's existence or actions to the authorities, the media, or other outsiders certainly complicates missions, but it also complicates lives, careers, and politics. The public is notoriously unforgiving of spies, even those working for their own governments, and revealing even one player risks upsetting the entire game. Those who violate this precept rarely last long. They are often preemptively eliminated to prevent further exposure, sometimes by their own allies.

Unlike most other spies, counter-espionage operatives enjoy many legally bestowed law enforcement powers. They are frequently issued weapons permits and may make arrests. Some can interrogate suspects, gain court-ordered search warrants, and place electronic bugs. Counter-espionage operatives also enjoy largely cooperative relationships with the police in their officially sanctioned work areas. All this is especially true for parallel counter-*terrorist* forces, which are receiving greater and broader powers in the wake of major attacks across the globe *(for an extreme example, see the information about Project: Pitfall in Chapters 1 and 2).*

On the down side, counter-espionage forces are generally held to the letter of the law. They can't simply barge into private residences and they are barred from the use of excessive force. They must collect evidence and prove intent, motive, and method if charges are to be brought (and without charges forthcoming, the opposition tends to go free). Of course, this is why some counter-espionage agencies and divisions operate entirely off the books, becoming black ops defenders of the realm.

Counter-espionage operatives spend a lot of their "down" time watching hot spots like embassies and government facilities, as these tend to contain their highest-priority dependents. Unfortunately, many of those who might threaten these assets are employees at these facilities, on loan from their home territories. They benefit from diplomatic immunity, which means that the best operatives can hope for is to drive them away if they break the law. For this and many other reasons, counter-espionage tactics tend to skirt the line between legal and necessary.

One of the most effective counter-espionage tactics is doubling foreign agents. The most famous example of this is Operation DOUBLE CROSS, which MI5 managed through WWII to contain the influx of German agents in England. From 1939 to 1945, MI5 turned nearly every agent sent across the English Channel, using the Abwehr's own spies against it. The disinformation these doubled spies fed their former superiors was so well received that it altered the course of the war in many ways, even concealing the true date and time of the D-Day invasion.

Another effective tactic is posing as an enemy of the state in order to attract others of like conscience. This can be extremely useful when hunting moles and information leaks within one's own agency, a process otherwise known as "plumbing." This is generally a thankless, demoralizing job, as it brings operatives face to face with their own agency's darkest underbelly. In their quest to verify the loyalties and actions of potentially hundreds of agency employees, plumbers are likely to encounter countless embittered administrators, disgruntled bureaucrats, and disillusioned minute-minders, each of whom is guilty of a variety of things, but rarely treason. Ferreting out the true culprits in such a Byzantine morass requires undaunted commitment and no small amount of luck.

Counter-espionage is the loneliest trade in the loneliest of professions. Operatives who live and breathe defense normally find themselves unable to trust or form significant bonds with others, and while this is true of all spies, it's proven daily for the sentinels. They can never be entirely sure that their colleagues and commanders aren't working against them, and this eats away even at those who give in a bit to faith. Stress is alarmingly high amongst counter-espionage operatives, who all too often suffer the worst fates of any in the spy world.

SPYMASTERS: THE HOME OFFICE

Espionage agencies take countless forms, from small cell-structured conspiracies to widespread multi-national bureaucracies. Even families can evolve into spy factions, as happened with Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, codenamed Antenna and Liberal, who were part of a massive effort to steal U.S. atomic research and pass it along to the Soviets. Although many modern espionage agencies have evolved into quasi-autonomous entities with little or no accountability, virtually all of them have roots in government, and like all government organs they have well defined structures and policies. Certain practices are common to all of them, as are certain philosophies. This section seeks to establish such commonalities in the intelligence profession, clarifying and expanding where needed.

THE INTELLIGENCE CYCLE

In the espionage world, the process of collecting information and preparing it for consumption by the policy makers is known as the Intelligence Cycle. This process consists of five phases.

I. Planning and Direction: The home office identifies the need for intelligence about a specific topic and assigns resources to collect it. In the United States, the National Security Council and other government bodies make these decisions.

II. Collection: Operatives are briefed on the topic and dispatched to gather data from a wide variety of sources, some public (e.g. foreign broadcasts, newspapers, books, etc.), some military (e.g. friends in military service and closely associated intelligence branches, civilian experts, etc.), some commercial (e.g. friendly administrators, corporate watchdog groups, etc.), some private (e.g. loyal citizens, responsive journalists), and some technical (e.g. government contractors, knowledgeable "web hounds," etc.).

III. Processing: Home office collators sift through the data gathered during Phase II, using calculated parameters to narrow the material to only what is particularly relevant to the topic at hand. Also, foreign language material is translated, electronic material is formatted to meet the agency standard, and codes are decrypted.

IV. Analysis and Production: Home office analysts pour over the processed information, searching for important or recurring details, or special revelations about the target topic. They add their insights, interpretations, and recommendations, and organize the material in a concise report.

V. Dissemination: The completed report is delivered to everyone with clearance and need to know. The policy makers often apply additional classifications before the report leaves their hands to narrow the list of recipients.

At its core, the Intelligence Cycle is the basis and initial legwork for most missions, informing the operatives' superiors and guiding their decisions. It is a rare and exciting event when a team of operatives is the first investigative arm of an unexplored topic. Usually, at least one cycle has already occurred by the time the operatives receive their mission briefing; often, many previous Cycles inform the proceedings, dating back months, years, or even decades.

THREAT ASSESSMENT

As described in Chapter 4 of the *Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook*, the threat presented by a mission and the agency's rough level of concern are jointly summarized in the mission's Caliber, a number that ranges from I to V. "Caliber" is a game term and subject to change in each setting. *World on Fire,* for instance, utilizes colors — White, Yellow, Blue, Red, and Black, respectively — though other settings may use codenames, or Def-Con levels, or another scheme of the GC's design. The import remains the same, however, as does the agency's commitment.

CALIBER I (WHITE)

The home office views the mission as a minor obligation or an intriguing curiosity, without danger or potential fallout. The operatives are left entirely to their own devices and communication with Control is frowned upon unless the scenario elevates to Yellow or higher. The mission is noted in each operative's personnel file; success or failure is not.

Sample Caliber I missions might include pursuing an analyst's wild hunch, observing minor criminals, conducting general counter-espionage in a relatively secure area, or transporting minor diplomats and Confidential documents. As an example, the operatives might be assigned to close down a loan sharking operation known to cater to junior agency executives and technical personnel. The operatives are to capture and interrogate the loan shark, seize his files, and vet his agency customers for potential breaches of security.

CALIBER II (YELLOW)

The home office considers the mission pressing, but not urgent. It expects few casualties and little chance of exposure. Supervision is minimal and communication with Control is discouraged. Success earns the operatives brief praise and footnotes in their personnel files; failure generates brief chastisement.

Sample Caliber II missions might include establishing a spy network in a calm enemy city, capturing a wanted criminal, busting a crime lord controlling the black market in New York City, or transporting Secret documents. As an example, the operatives might be assigned to investigate Danielle Bianchi, an agency programmer who's recently taken several vacations in questionable territories. She has mentioned new acquaintances to a couple of her colleagues, who also report that her demeanor has suddenly improved. The operatives are to tail Bianchi during her next vacation — which conveniently begins in a matter of days — and verify her loyalty.

CALIBER III (BLUE)

The home office is genuinely committed to the mission, but redirects resources as necessary to Caliber IV and V operations. Casualties are a possibility, as is marginal exposure, and first-tier operatives and assets are sometimes withheld to prevent their loss. The agency remains largely hands-off unless the operatives are in dire need. Success translates to accolades within the agency but little if any mention elsewhere; though the mission's outcome is relayed to authorized government officials, mention of the team's involvement is not. Failure often results in minor reprimand, as well as slightly demoted budgets and other allowances in upcoming missions. Fortunately, operatives can usually live such censure down fairly quickly, especially with one or two successes of equal Caliber.

Sample Caliber III missions might include planting a mole in an enemy agency, contending with a major hostage situation involving relatives of government officials, busting a criminal ring smuggling weapons to most of Europe, or transporting Top Secret documents. To upgrade the former example, the operatives might be assigned to intercept Danielle Bianchi, an agency programmer who's scheduled to go on holiday in a matter of days. She's in severe debt and a suspected security risk. The operatives are to use her as bait to capture a known terrorist group that may be planning to approach her for files related to an experimental rail gun project. She is expendable, but the files are not — in fact, the operatives are to ensure the files never leave her facility.

CALIBER IV (RED)

The home office considers the mission a priority and dedicates substantial resources to its completion. Threats of casualty or exposure are taken at face value unless evidence contradicts them, and the most capable operatives are assigned unless they're needed elsewhere. Control is in periodic contact with the operatives, offering advice and nominal direction. Success earns the operatives the thanks of mid-level officials, as well as a hero's welcome within the agency. Failure prompts lasting censure and likely impacts missions for months to come.

Sample Caliber IV missions might include preventing an international crisis, overthrowing a dictator with access to nuclear power, finding a terrorist cell before it can launch a major strike, or transporting a scientist whose discoveries could revolutionize global oil production. To further previous examples, the operatives might be assigned to pursue Danielle Bianchi, an agency programmer who's recently gone missing while on holiday. She is known to be in severe debt and may be the subject of blackmail. This is substantiated by the disappearance of several key files related to an experimental rail gun project. The agency can't determine when the files went missing, but is reasonably certain that Bianchi took them, or that she was forced to take them. The operatives are to recover the files and Bianchi (in that order), and determine the causes for their disappearances.

CALIBER V (BLACK)

The home office views the mission as vital to the continued survival or progress of its government, territory, or people. High casualties and exposure are an accepted necessity. Control remains in constant contact with the operatives, dictating their actions whenever possible. Successfully completing the mission is a major feather in the operatives' caps and probably earns them dinner with a major government figure, such as the President of the United States or the Queen of England. Failure may prompt permanent censure and likely impacts missions for years.

Sample Caliber V missions might include preventing a war, capturing a world-class criminal, rooting out a mole within the agency that has already caused irreparable damage, or transporting the access codes for an experimental weapon of mass destruction. To further the previous examples, the operatives might be assigned to pursue Danielle Bianchi, an agency programmer recently identified as a double agent loyal to the Alliance of Evil Geniuses. She has only been spotted once since she went off the grid, meeting several known terrorists in Gibraltar. These terrorists have been moving large sums of cash and the agency fears they may already have built a rail gun using Bianchi's intelligence. The operatives are to find and capture the weapon (or destroy it if capture isn't possible), and capture or liquidate everyone involved.

MISSION PROTOCOLS

The pattern of the average mission is well known. It usually begins with a briefing, in which the operatives are gathered and all relevant facts and objectives are presented — at least, all relevant facts and objectives the operatives have the clearance to know.

Unless the agency is caught unawares, it has probably devoted incredible resources to the mission briefing before the operatives are exposed to it. Every known variable has been accounted for, and every probable complication has been addressed. This doesn't account for human error, however; facts might be left out of provided documents or not fully explained in person. It also doesn't factor hindsight into the equation; the analysts or Control may not stress details that become important later. For these reasons, the operatives are expected to clear their minds and commit everything presented to memory. They're also encouraged to ask questions to gain a clearer view of the situation before venturing into the field.

A mission briefing always includes the Caliber and the operatives' objectives. It may also include any, all, or none of the following.

· A mission plan, ranging from sketchy to elaborately detailed, depending upon the needs of the operation, Control's personality, and the availability of information.

· Profiles of involved agencies and other organizations, potentially including their known goals, assets, operational theatres, front companies, and personnel.

· Dossiers of involved agents and other individuals, potentially including their known allegiances, aliases, preferred gear, contacts, proclivities, and personality quirks.

· Blueprints of any facilities the operatives are expected to infiltrate, potentially including security systems and occupant schedules.

· Authorized code words and their meanings. Code words may be provided to identify operatives, locations, standard operating procedures, special objectives, and more. The operatives are usually allowed to designate their own code words as well, though they must do so in the briefing if they wish other home office personnel to know them (and even then, it's possible the agency's bureaucracy won't get the information to others in time to be of use).

· A method of contacting a disassociated agency asset for new gear. Commonly, this is an 800 number, discreet forwarding email address, or dead drop location. It is always separate from Control's contact information, which is more secure yet only to be used sparingly, if at all.

· Emergency training that's available. This option is rare, as it's considered unnecessary during low-Caliber missions and high-Caliber missions generally happen so quickly that crash courses are out of the question.

Estimates are often provided when the agency isn't sure of something. The operatives aren't always told when estimates are made, however, and so taking the briefing at face value is often a calculated risk. Again, in all but the most dictatorial agencies, the operatives are expected to pose questions to Control to flesh out their mission profile.

Following the mission briefing, the operatives pick up their gear. In the real world, most gear is *assigned* rather than chosen, and operatives are only given what the agency believes they'll *need* in the field. Excess equipment slows an operative down and makes him vulnerable to suspicion. Traditional espionage fiction follows this model but generally allows for choice of sidearm and a small amount of customization. Roleplaying models offer much greater freedom of choice, though *Spycraft* still keeps the amount of gear down to realistic levels.

Out in the field, the operatives are given considerable leeway when choosing how to tackle their assignment. They are expected to be inventive and independent, to adapt and improvise as needed. Though they're usually provided ways to contact the home office, they are prompted not to use them except as scheduled — unless one of two things occurs.

a) The conditions of the mission change so drastically that the operatives believe a new Caliber is warranted.

b) The team can only proceed with assistance from the home office.

This is a security issue. Under most circumstances, intelligence agencies must keep a respectable distance from their operations to maintain plausible deniability. Even missions that seem wholly noble can rapidly go south, requiring the use of questionable "black" tactics. Also, by restricting communication between agency resources, the chance of enemy interception and infiltration is greatly decreased. Agency assets must always keep a low profile, even with each other.

All communications with the home office must be justified to Control. Using the standard dead drop procedure to request diving gear in order to investigate a missing shipwreck is perfectly reasonable, for instance. Making a non-secure phone call to demand interrogation tools to frighten the locals, however, is grounds for censure.

When a mission inevitably takes a turn, whether for the worse or just in an unexpected direction, the operatives are expected to contain and resolve the situation in the agency's best interests. Much of the operatives' formative training with the organization defines these "best interests" and how to achieve them, and in a roleplaying environment, the players are perfectly within their rights to ask the GC about them.

Finally, every mission ends with a debriefing. Each operative gives an individual accounting of mission events, in writing and sometimes in a verbal statement or Q&A session. All mission objectives are discussed, as are organizations, individuals, events, and other things encountered in the field. Both the agency and the operative receive closure before moving on to the next assignment.

Every debriefing is recorded for future reference. For one thing, it's a form of intelligence gathering, forwarded to the analysts like any other new information. For another, it's a way for Control to monitor operatives for stress or falsehood. The first may result in a period of ordered relaxation, probably at an agency-sponsored facility. If the second is damning on its own or as part of the operative's career performance, censure is likely warranted.

CENSURE

From time to time, the agency is compelled to reprimand an operative, or a team of operatives, for their actions. There are many reasons censure may be leveled: allowing innocents to die, deceiving the agency or its assets, insubordination, botching a mission, or worse. No operative lives in a vacuum, and if his superiors perceive a lack of discretion or professionalism, he may be disciplined.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

The mildest form of censure is administrative leave, which is common when the operative's judgment is being called into question. Accidental civilian death or property destruction may trigger this reprimand. No disciplinary stigma is associated with administrative leave, but recurring incidents may raise red flags.

When on administrative leave, an operative may only participate in missions if an agency superior feels he is necessary to the success of a mission, or the survival of a VIP. Agencies rarely have enough personnel to go around and it's bad policy to bench operatives who can positively contribute to an important op.

SUSPENSION

An operative is suspended when he directly violates agency policy. Deliberate, unsanctioned murder or massive property destruction may trigger this reprimand, as might suspicion of deceit or mental instability. The operative's file is flagged and he is banned from participating in missions, regardless of circumstances.

FORCED RETIREMENT

When an operative proves to his agency that he can no longer serve his function, there is no recourse but to permanently relieve him of duty. Forced retirement is generally reserved for operatives who have been censured several times before and show no signs of improvement. Certain major offenses, such as public scandal and losing or destroying major agency assets, may immediately result in forced retirement.

Few operatives leave the service with blemishes on their records, as it attracts foreign powers hungry to recruit seasoned professionals. Instead, all but the worst offenders are "honorably" squirreled away in some comfortable, easily observed location and left to rot (the worst quietly leave the home office on a slab, mutilated and marked "John Does" in a local morgue, or they're simply never seen again). Forcibly retired operatives are watched round the clock, just in case they decide to re-enter the game, in which case they're either reminded of their status (if they still have friends in high places), or liquidated.

SEVERANCE

Sometimes an operative's actions or circumstances jeopardize the entire agency, or a large portion of it, and all ties with him must be severed (in the espionage world, such an operative is said to be "disavowed" or "burned"). Any disgrace that demands outside punishment, such as the death of a beloved public figure or monument, may prompt this response. Proof of disloyalty or betrayal might as well.

An operative rarely knows when he has been severed. Instead, his agency channels suddenly dry up, his requests go unanswered, and in the worst cases — when the agency feels he is a liability — other operatives come gunning for him. There is very little recourse for a severed operative; few with the power to reinstate him would risk losing it to do so. More often than not, the operative must find a completely new profession, as well as a new name.

OPERATIVE LIFESTYLE

An argument could be made that no spy is ever "off duty," and the home office commonly prescribes the personal lives of its operatives. In the case of most real world intelligence organizations, this translates to strict rules about where an operative may live and shop, what doctors he can see, where he can travel, and those with whom he can interact. Most of the time, the operative must live in middle-class housing within approved neighborhoods near agency stations. He endures regular observation by agency watchdogs, some of whom even pose as friends and neighbors. He isn't allowed to visit suspect countries without advance approval and even has to submit romantic interests for vetting before the relationship progresses.

Though spies protect critical national secrets, they aren't afforded secrets of their own. Their private lives are the stuff of interdepartmental reports, subject to scrutiny by supervisors and strangers alike. Operatives undergo impromptu psychological

examinations and many are forbidden from keeping journals or diaries. Only a few are permitted to tell their loved ones what they do, and even then they must keep the vast majority of their work to themselves. Elaborate cover stories are developed to conceal their activities, complete with trade dress and contact personnel for the companies where they say they're employed.

The fanciful superspies of fiction, who dash about the world of their own volition, dropping insane amounts of money from vaguely defined "personal accounts," are a myth — though they're an intriguing one that can easily be established in an RPG. Likewise, a *Spycraft* game could revolve around operatives who aren't even permitted the simple freedoms of their real world cousins; these spies might be confined to secluded enclaves between missions, guarded against unwanted attention and casual slips of the tongue. Certainly, both of these models have occurred in the real world, though they're the exceptions rather than the rules.

In any scenario, spies are far from prisoners. They are, after all, inherently crafty, trained to evade detection and act without notice. Many real world spies maintain healthy lives separate from their duties. Some amass small fortunes through freelance contracts, trading secrets, and gambling. Others keep multiple lovers or even wives in cities around the world. The most ambitious of them double or triple their services, betraying and re-betraying their loyalties for cash, ideals, and gratification.

COMPENSATION

Like any employee, a spy earns a salary. The actual amount ranges widely, with some servants making paltry sums as low as $30,000 U.S. per year and certain highly prized operatives breaking the $100,000 U.S. mark. Most fall between $50,000 and $80,000. The important facet of these salaries is regularity. It's critical that intelligence professionals receive regular payments, that they feel financially secure, though never flush. This guarantees their continued loyalty. Also, to dissuade uneven performance, bonuses are rare, if offered at all.

Of course, such standards have not always been in place, and still don't apply in some parts of the world. During the Cold War, when the stakes were sky high and intelligence outfits commanded wildly disproportionate percentages of their governments' budgets, a savvy spy could retire after a single highly successful mission. Today, most have to work a little longer — though not necessarily harder — to achieve the same result.

Payments are mostly made on the books, by standard company check. Again, this was not always the case. In the old days, spies were often paid in cash, in part to conceal the operation but also because the agency preferred that the money be *spent*. The thought process followed that a spy who saved his money wasn't reliant upon it, and was therefore a potential risk to the home office.

An operative's salary is generally consumed by mundane life expenses, private "off-screen" endeavors, and perhaps most commonly, the proverbial "nest egg" on which every veteran spy dreams of retiring. Savings can be tapped, of course, to supplement mission resources, as represented by the mechanic for permanently reducing Wealth *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, Chapter 4)*. Most rational operatives avoid this tactic, however, valuing their own finances over temporary comforts in one field op, especially since excruciating penalties tend to apply.

DISCRETION

Spies inhabit a twilight realm all their own, which none outside their ranks can truly understand. Ultimately, they are warriors alone, liars to all and friends to none. Their greatest defense — discretion — is also their straight jacket. It keeps them safe from prying eyes and piercing bullets, but it also forces them to live forever on the outside, looking in on a world they can never know.

THE FUNDAMENTALS

A great spy must be an excellent judge of people, able not only to read others for tell-tale signs of deception but also to monitor himself for slips of the tongue, betraying facial expressions, and obvious body language. His actions are of equal importance, as they weave the protecting web in which he lives. The following rules of conduct apply almost universally, and a spy should make sure he's weighed the pros and cons before ignoring them.

· Never gossip, except to win someone's trust. Then, focus on meaningless topics of import to no one but the target. Gossip leads to distraction and distraction leads to deadly mistakes.

· Never commit anything to paper unless you have to. Hone your mind to recall anything and everything you've ever encountered at a moment's notice. You never know when an obscure fact may come into play. If this isn't possible, encrypt your records and conceal them as mundane items like receipts and street pamphlets.

· Never approach an ally unless you're sure that you're both free of suspicion. Compromising another operative is akin to murder. Also, never approach an ally "cold" (without warning) unless a critical mission is at stake. Caught off guard, the ally might slip and reveal you both.

· Never wear a wire unless you're reasonably certain it won't be found. Not only does it identify you as an infiltrator, it reveals that you're not working alone.

· Never trust those you find attractive. They already have you at a disadvantage.

· Never manipulate someone's emotions unless you're indifferent toward them; doing so leads to distraction. See gossip.

· Always be inventive in your deceptions, but take care not to overcomplicate the mission. The fewer steps and the fewer things to remember, the better.

· Always meet people — even your own people — at locations of your choice. When bargaining or engaging in mental ploys, also make people travel great distances by circuitous routes, as it will leave them weary and easily hoodwinked.

· Always know your enemy's patterns and restrictions. For example, if enemy agents may only operate in a given area without special permission, make sure your private meetings happen elsewhere.

· Always conceal your talents until they're needed. Taking an enemy by surprise is sometimes the surest path to victory. Likewise, people may speak freely in your presence if they think you don't understand their tongue.

- Always nurture your contacts, providing them emotional, physical, and data support whenever possible; this care will be returned in kind. Also, weigh the value of acting on contact-supplied information against potentially losing the contact if he is identified as the source. Finally, know when to let go of contacts, and keep track of the ones who know too much about the agency — these should only leave your employ when they shuffle off the mortal coil.

- Always keep your questions broad and general. Not only will this give you the best chance of discovering unexpected details, but it also may make others less suspicious of your inquiries.

- Always burn sensitive documents and items you discard. Also, pound and scatter the ashes, as print and other details can sometimes be read microscopically.

- Always know your limits and warn Control when you feel you can't accomplish a mission. There is no shame in this. Your profession is unforgiving and stronger spies than you have succumbed to burnout, depression, obsession, and paranoia. These traits serve no purpose in the Great Game, however, except as ways for your enemies to exploit you.

COMBAT: THE LAST RESORT

Intelligence agencies recognize that they can't oversee every aspect of every mission, particularly when operatives work undercover. Consequently, field teams are always authorized to use at least a limited degree of force, though only to overcome obstacles. Outside violence prescribed in the mission briefing, which has been carefully considered beforehand, combat is generally regarded as sloppy and unprofessional. Weapon discharges, casualties, and property damage must all be reported during the debriefing, and operatives who frequently engage in unnecessary and gratuitous murder are not tolerated. Killing, while sometimes necessary, is a filthy business, and operatives with a ravenous bloodlust are eventually burned or liquidated.

Still, operatives receive intense combat training, on the grounds that should they ever enter a fight, they should dominate. Fast and quietly lethal attacks are favored, with an emphasis on small arms, melee, and unarmed fighting. There is one exception: an agency's "cleaners," who specialize in concealing evidence and salvaging derailed missions. Cleaners are notorious for ruthless tactics, often involving heavy firepower intended to simulate terrorist action. Many operatives fear cleaners, as their arrival is an indication that the team has gone seriously astray, or worse, they've already been burned.

Operatives should strive to enter combat on their own terms. Blind entrances often mean death. Outside, satellite photography and reconnaissance gliders can be used to quietly scout a location. Inside, the operatives can sneak up to an adjacent wall and use an endoscope (a camera that can be snaked through a drill hole) or an electronic stethoscope (for audio intelligence).

If at all possible, the team should become familiar with a new location, its layout, surroundings, utilities, defenses, security, and construction, before entering. Are there unusual points of entry, such as sewers or vents? If the location is a building, does it have a superstructure or is it made with older materials, such as brick? What are its weak points? Do the doors open in or out? (Rams are far less useful against doors that open out.) How strong are the locks and

hinges? All of these details can be used to turn the situation against the enemy by trapping him or attacking the structure instead. Of course, explosive force is to be avoided in population centers, and a cover story must be prepared for any obvious destruction.

The operatives should try to obtain keys to any location they plan to enter. This allows them to come in quietly and secure doors as they proceed, potentially slowing pursuers or confining enemies. Without keys, the operatives should probably consider entering through the location's weakest point (with an average U.S. home, this is commonly the rear door). Lockpicking is ill advised in any situation involving imminent combat, as it's time consuming and requires delicate manipulation.

Another early focus in any hostile scenario is containment, with begins with cutting off the enemy's lines of external communication (i.e. visible phone lines, radio transmitters, etc.). Next comes a surveillance net, which usually extends out by at least 1 city block. In a perfect world, the agency would provide twice the opposition's number to this effort, using them as spotters on the ground or to observe the area through traffic cameras or keyhole satellite photography. This option is frequently out of the question, though, and so the operatives might simply keep the police on speed-dial. After all, they can always break their friends and enemies out of jail later (though they must do so quickly, lest interrogations reveal sensitive information to the authorities).

An ideal plan to enter any hostile building dedicates at least two friendlies to each entrance and exit, and another one outside to watch each facing with a low window. Also, the team might disable any vehicles in which the opposition may try to flee, or simply block their exits. A crafty team might even use vehicles and other obvious exits as lures, posting armed personnel nearby to ambush anyone trying to use them.

Regular communication intervals must be established, as well as a specific order in which every friendly is to check in. This allows the team to quickly realize when an asset has been compromised and react accordingly. All communications should be in code, using pre-designated hand signals or innocuous voice commands. Thus the team can communicate complex orders in a few seconds without fear that the opposition will discern their tactics.

Code is also established for major features of the combat location. For example, each side of a building might be labeled with a color (e.g. white for the front, black for the rear, green for the left side when facing the front, and red for the right side when facing the front). Compass directions are rarely applied as they may not match the building's facing. Floors can be labeled with letters — always from top to bottom, to avoid confusion with structures having more floors on one side (e.g. a building on a hill, whose basement doesn't exist below half the "ground" floor). Likewise, windows, utility panels, fences, and other features can be numbered from forward facing left to right. Using this scheme, the third window beside the ground floor entrance of a three-story building might be identified as "White Alpha Three" *(see The Phonetic Alphabet, page 83)*.

To avoid friendly fire incidents, each operative and ally should dress the same, perhaps incorporating some obvious item such as a distinctive patch or lapel flower. Uniform generally match the local terrain and time of day, and any items that produce glare should be removed. Finally, if there's time, each operative is advised to perform a "jump test," hopping up and down to make sure nothing rattles. This will prevent unfortunate stealth failures once the action starts.

Snipers are another consideration. Most teams will utilize only one or two, in which case they are generally placed on opposite sides of a combat location. If a team somehow has five or more snipers available — perhaps in a major assault upon the front company of a criminal organization — four can be placed to create crossfire and the rest can be placed alongside them to increase the chance of successful kill shots.

A team must always allow its snipers to choose their own "hides" (firing positions), as they are specially trained to do so. Most will choose level or slightly elevated positions inside an adjacent building, away from windows where the barrel might be spotted. Some place a damp cloth over the muzzle to prevent dust from kicking up when the weapon is fired. Rooftop positions are generally avoided due to weather exposure and poor conceal-ment, though some snipers use cardboard boxes disguised as air conditioning or heating vents to get around these issues.

Finally, just before entering a location, a team with night vision capability may consider dousing the lights so they can enter under cover of darkness. This ruins the chance of a covert entry to gain additional intelligence, but often overwhelms an unprepared enemy. Even with night vision capability, enemy combatants chased out of a location might be blinded with bright lights (e.g. car headlights, flashlights, etc.).

Per standard police entry technique, a four- or five-man team sweeping a building usually designates its members as follows.

· The first operative entering each room is the "point man," who carries a handgun and uses his free hand to open doors, throw concussion grenades, and operate either a mirror or a SWAT Cam (a small camera mounted on an extending pole with a view screen at the other end).

· The second operative in is a "clearing man," who commonly carries an SMG and is the first to engage targets. He and the point man also act in concert to flank enemies.

· The third operative in is the "team leader," who carries either a handgun or an SMG. He acts as a second shooter and secures suspects as the first two operatives move into the next room.

· The fourth operative in is another "clearing man," who carries a shotgun. He acts as a backup shooter and uses his shotgun to blow through door locks and hinges when necessary.

· Finally, a "rear guard" may trail behind the rest of the team, carrying either a handgun or SMG. In SWAT and similar forces, the rear guard may alternately carry and use a battering ram.
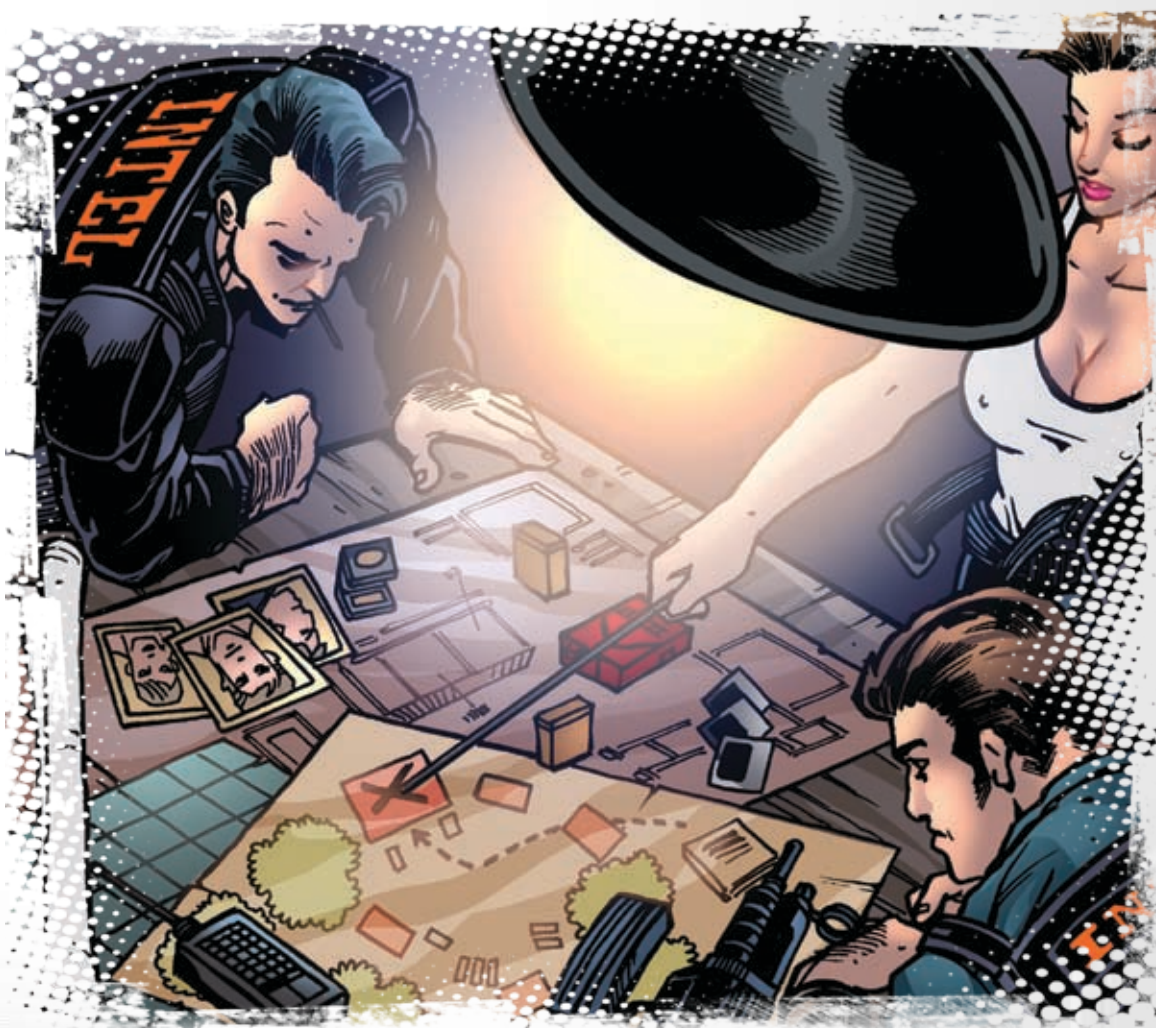
A sweep may be *covert*, involving slow, precise movement and careful observation. During a covert entry, the team priority is finding a hidden position from which it can collect intelligence about the enemy: their numbers, weapons, movements, and other important details. A covert entry team should also scan the ground for booby traps, debris, and other conditions that might make noise, giving followers away. It should take special note of any hazardous, flammable, or explosive materials in the area, which might be used to augment its attacks — or those of the opposition. Finally, unless the team knows its communication channel is compromised, its members should continuously relay all information gleaned to other members.

Alternately, a sweep may be *direct*, quickly and efficiently clearing locations in a bold assault. Shock and intimidation are key components to success here — if the team manages to catch its enemy unawares, it can often bully them into surrendering without a fight. The direct sweep forsakes cunning in favor of speed, control in favor of brute force. Split second thinking is required, as all the details a covert sweep team can search for must still be noticed and relayed, only more quickly.

In both types of sweeps, several common rules of hostile engagement apply.

- Whenever possible, leave guards behind at each juncture and with each group of prisoners or witnesses.

- Establish who fires first. No one else attacks except at the chosen fire lead's command, or when he engages the enemy. Also, establish a chain of command in case the fire lead fails to check in at an appointed time. Finally, say important commands like "Fire!" twice to prevent confusion with a loss of communication (i.e. "Fire! Fire!"); otherwise, combat may ensue following a garbled instance of "Do not fire!"

- Keep your weapon at the ready until the team leader signals an "All Clear," meaning all locations have been scouted and secured. Hold your weapon pointing up, as dropping your arms to fire is superior to raising them. It reduces reaction time and increases accuracy.

- Keep radios and other noise-producing devices silent. Even a sub-cochlear microphone can give a team member away at a critical moment.

- Avoid standing in doorways or near windows, even when they're closed and covered. Your silhouette or shadow may still be visible, providing your enemies with an angle of attack. Also, take care when moving from lighted areas to dark ones, as those in dark areas might be able to see you when you can't see them.

- Peek around corners at low heights, as others are likely to be watching at head height. A low profile may also save you from many impulse attacks, which tend to go high.

- Use high-intensity light — such as that cast by a tactical flashlight — to reveal silhouettes behind most glass tinting, including mirrored windows.

- Use easily understood terms to identify new enemies (e.g. "The Whale" for an obese person or "Miss Blonde" for the only flaxen-haired female).

- Use data provided in the mission briefing to second-guess enemy strategies. Avoid leaps of logic, however; rely only on *facts* to outwit armed opponents.

- Secure any witnesses for questioning, even if they claim not to have any knowledge. Present your team as ordinary police if possible, or an intimidating native group like a U.S. SWAT squad if the witnesses become curious or suspicious. Use false credentials if they're available. Never reveal your true identities and always couch your questions in a plausible police narrative.

- As soon as possible, check prisoners and witnesses for weapons and other important items, such as identification. Usually, a simple "pat down" is sufficient in the heat of the moment, though operatives may conduct more thorough searches if they have the time or feel the target is particularly shrewd.

- Use snipers to provide intelligence visible only at long range, to shoot out lights when the rest of the team is using night vision gear, and to take the first shot during an assault (commonly followed by the use of chemical gas). Care must be taken when snipers fire through glass, as this can produce "spalling" (an explosion of glass shards that can injure innocent bystanders). Intervening obstacles can also deflect the sniper's shots, sending them off target.

- If trained attack animals are available, use them to confirm which sections of an interior location are unoccupied. Animals are problematic in hostage situations, however, as they may not be able to discern between aggressors and captives.

Once the bullets start flying, an operative's primary concern should always be disabling the enemy as quickly and quietly as possible. His primary targets should be anyone who might alert others, followed by enemies whose capture or death fulfills a mission objective, followed by everyone else, in descending order of presumed threat. Fleeing targets are often pursued immediately after alerts are prevented, depending on the team, its orders, and its preparation.

By and large, unless the operatives are confident that the situation is contained — that they can overcome the remaining opposition without notice or substantial injury — they should avoid moving beyond five seconds' run from the nearest exit. Failing that, they should try to remain within a few feet of cover at all times, just in case.

Cover is vital during any combat. Ideally, an operative shouldn't move without having his next cover both within his line of sight and within three to five seconds' run. All operatives learn the adage: "Move with cover whenever possible. Failing that, move with concealment. If neither is available, remain stationary and pray."

Shooting on the move is generally considered wasteful, as the chance of an effective hit is wildly reduced. Operatives are also trained to avoid trick shots, as they're almost always more trouble than they're worth. Contrary to popular fictional accounts, skilled shooters usually aim for center mass (i.e. the torso) rather than the head or vitals. An important exception is the sniper, who treats every encounter short of an open engagement as a rescue scenario. He takes kill shots only to save lives, and devotes the rest of his fire to incapacitating enemies (so they can be interrogated) or harrying them (so others can capture them, with the same effect).

COVER IDENTITIES: WALKING IN ANOTHER MAN'S SHOES

An operative working in public requires at least one cover identity, which is used to conceal his true name and profession. There are two kinds of cover identities — "legends," or sophisticated biographical histories complete with forged documentation, and "escape identities," which are use-and-lose covers designed only to withstand casual scrutiny. An operative is advised to use a legend at all times, keeping at least one escape identity in reserve in case the mission tips the wrong way. Intelligence agencies maintain collections of both, often in vast quantities.

Cover identities are comprised of many elements. Some are physical — passports, driver's licenses, business cards, school diplomas, personal letters, and the like, along with suitable clothing or uniforms, a residence, and a vehicle. Elaborate identities also include verifiable histories, with planted information in electronic and physical databases that may include criminal records, credit card histories, tax records, or birth certificates. The most delicate identities require that others "backstop" for the operative (i.e. be available for corroboration, posing as colleagues, friends, family members, former teachers, and the like).

Most employment included in a cover identity is arranged through an agency front company, where questions and visits can easily be controlled. In fact, many of those verifying a cover identity don't realize they're working for an intelligence organization. This makes them less likely to betray an operative because they're telling the truth as they see it when they verify him. Operatives are usually given remote jobs requiring little communication, explaining why none of their co-workers have met them face-to-face. As an aside, front companies supporting escape identities often have plausibly complicated bureaucracies, poor phone service, and other ways to prevent authentication.

Intelligence agencies try to keep cover identities simple. The more details involved, the more chance an operative will slip up or that someone will notice a discrepancy. Whenever possible, the agency tries to match one or more of an operative's true areas of expertise to those of his cover identity, reducing the chance of a mistake. Further, most cover identities are related to finance, trade, journalism, computers, engineering, security, fine arts, or antiquities, with built-in logic for travel and inquiry.

Operatives are frequently provided months or years to "get into character," living and working in their cover identities until they become second nature. This usually happens in remote, uninteresting parts of the world where the operative isn't likely to be needed at a later date. Other operatives, in particular sleepers, are thrust into their new lives without warning and left to fend for themselves. This is dangerous, however, and reserved for highly trained personnel.

In the field, it is an operative's responsibility to support his cover identities by affecting disguises, accents, and mannerisms as needed. He is also encouraged to collect appropriate "pocket litter," the little debris his cover identity would be expected to carry (e.g. ticket stubs, receipts, change, transport tokens, etc.). Related conversational information is also helpful, as it enhances the operative's ability to "chat" believably in character, a vital aspect of any adopted identity.

DISGUISES:
LIVING IN ANOTHER MAN'S SKIN

Some cover identities require the use of a disguise. An operative might not be old enough for anyone to believe his cover story, or his nationality might need to be changed to support his allegiance to a given organization. An operative can put on or remove a disguise to lose the authorities or enemy agents. Most operatives do so prior to committing a crime, just in case they're spotted in the act.

The simplest disguises merely involve a change of clothes (and many agencies issue reversible outfits for just this purpose). Accessories that are quickly applied, like hats, gloves, glasses, wigs, false facial hair, and arm slings, are equally simple and marginally effective. A skilled operative can change his voice and vocabulary, adjusting his apparent age, nationality, ethnicity, social status, and education. He can walk with a stiff leg, possibly wrapping something around his knee to make it harder to bend, or he can affect a limp, putting something in his shoe on the same side to remind him which side to favor.

With just a little more time, an operative can cut his hair or part it differently. Female operatives can let their hair down or pin it up. Either can put in contact lenses to change their eye color, or add a false heel to their shoe to alter their gait. Padding can be added to make an operative look overweight, with faked breathlessness and heavy sweat completing the picture.

Disguises involving make-up and prosthetics generally require much more time to develop, though they can be extremely convincing. Make-up alone is preferred, as prosthetics like false noses and chins tend to make a person's appearance look artificial. The best complex facial disguise is aging, as it doesn't require the make-up artist to adjust the look of the person's bone structure. Any adult can be aged decades simply by darkening the skin and enhancing pre-existing lines and wrinkles. Make-up can also mimic or conceal illness and injuries, or lighten or redden skin tone.

Two of the most important things to consider when developing a disguise are where and how it will be used. Disguises intended for escape should blend with the expected environment, while others may help the operative stand out, perhaps as a specific person or for a specific effect. Subdued or obvious clothes can support the desired approach; they can blend or clash with the terrain and others expected to be nearby. The operative's voice and other facets of his disguise can mesh or differ as well. The only consistent requirement is that the operative's true identity remains a secret.

Most of the time, an operative cannot hide with a disguise alone; he must also act in concert with his appearance and surroundings. Old and fat people rarely move quickly, for instance, and sitting alone on a park bench at three in the morning is as conspicuous as standing next to one's wanted poster. Watching the sky in a busy pavilion on a bright cloudless day is almost as telling, as it gives everyone nearby plenty of time to watch the disguised person's face, increasing their chance of providing a description or noticing a flaw in the façade. Thus, many operatives carry newspapers, handkerchiefs, or umbrellas to cover their faces when people pass close by. Others wear their collars up or duck out of sight when potential enemies are near, possibly turning away to window-shop, asking the time of a stranger, or stooping to tie their shoelaces.

Finally, when using a disguise, an operative should avoid surveillance of any kind. Photographs of him can be picked apart and modern computer imagery can easily breach most disguises. This can damage an existing cover identity and worse, injure the chances of greater mission success. Animals are also problematic and should be avoided, as they tend to see (or rather, smell) right through all but the most thorough concealments.

CRYPTOLOGY:
THE SCIENCE OF SECRETS

Encryption is vital to our modern world. To some degree, nearly every phone call, email, television and radio transmission, professional CD and videotape is encrypted. Airborne signals are sent through global satellite networks and protected from hijacking, while email is routed through phone cables and guarded from eavesdropping. Most of this public encryption is rather tame, but the fact remains: it's part of every aspect of our daily lives.

Privately, governments and many businesses embrace military-grade encryption, which far surpasses anything envisioned by most "specialists." Their brand of "magic math" is an ever-evolving set of counter-measures designed to deflect prying eyes, to keep the commerce of secrets as low profile as possible. In the fight against hackers and other infiltrators, these shadow cabinets are always seeking new and more cunning ways to conceal data, which the hackers and infiltrators in turn see as a formal challenge. The game continues.

The so-called "encryption race" is a complicated issue. Eavesdropping has been a staple among police forces for centuries and is now an anchor in the fight against government abuse of power, corporate espionage, and terrorism. Despite their own need for secure communication channels, many law enforcement agencies view cutting-edge encryption as the last refuge of the talented criminal elite — including many culprits hiding inside seemingly reputable governments and businesses. Who will win this ideological conflict remains to be seen, but the race that inspired it doesn't look to be slowing down anytime soon.

BASIC CONCEPTS

Apocryphally, encryption began with Julius Caesar. Not trusting the messengers he used to send mail to his allies, Caesar wrote every message by hand, then copied it with each letter shifted one or more positions in the alphabet: "A" became "D," "S" became "V," and so forth. To the messengers, the letters looked like gibberish — they could only be read by someone who knew the "cipher" (Caesar's method of shifting each letter by a set number of positions), as well as the "encryption key" (the number of positions to shift each letter). This was allegedly the first "cryptosystem," or "cipher system," a method of disguising an original message — called "clear text" or "plain text" — so that only those with the proper information could make sense of the disguised version, which is also known as "cipher text" or a "cryptogram."

Several related disciplines come together in the study of ciphers and codes. "Cryptography" is the science of making them while "cryptanalysis" is the science of breaking them. These fields are jointly referred to as "cryptology." The equipment used in the process is called "cryptomaterial" or "cryptosystems," and the process itself is called "cryptosecurity."

There is a contrast between ciphers and codes. A cipher manipulates a message by substituting letters of the alphabet, while a code manipulates a message by substituting words or phrases. Either must be read using cryptography or the proper key.

TRANSPOSITION

Rearranging the letters in a message is called "transposition." This technique produces an anagram that is more secure as the message increases in length. One example is the "rail fence" system, in which a message is staggered between two or more lines, the letters spread alternately between them. For example, "Richard Poole is a bloody maniac" would look like this...

```
R C A D O L I A L O Y A I C
 I H R P O E S B O D M N A
```

Then the second and later lines are added to the end of the first. In this case...

RCADOLIALOYAICIHRPOESBODMNA

The message could be read by reversing the process.

Another example is "scytale," which dates back to the fifth century B.C. This system calls for a strip of parchment or leather to be wrapped around a round or polygon-cut dowel. A message is written horizontally across the strips, which are then removed from the dowel. Read from top to bottom, the strips mean nothing, but when they're wrapped around another dowel of the same shape and diameter, they reform the secret missive. The strip could then be hidden along the inside of a belt or in the lining of a hat.

SUBSTITUTION CIPHERS

Replacing each letter in a message with another corresponding letter is called "substitution." For example, the "Caesar shift cipher" replaces every character with the letter three places later in the alphabet (wrapping the alphabet around from Z to A). Thus, the message "Alex Kole owns the night" would read "DOHA NROH RZQV XKH QLJX." This technique requires all cipher users to possess a key showing the translation of letters.

On its own, the Caesar cipher isn't very secure, but if the alphabet is rearranged before it is applied, this simple cipher theoretically becomes far more difficult to crack. For example, if the substitution alphabet were reordered as follows...

MGZDARTBVWKXYFENHCOUQLJIPS

...then the same message, "Alex Kole owns the night," would read "MXAI KEXA EJFO UBA XVTBU." The words can be merged together into one unbroken stream for even greater security: "MXAIKEXAEJFOUBAXVTBU."

Another variation of this involves choosing a key word or phrase, such as "Rear Window," removing all the repeated letters ("REAWINDO"), and lining the rest of the alphabet behind the result...

REAWINDOBCFGHJKLMPQSTUVXYZ

Thus, only the key word or phrase is required to read messages created with the cipher in question. This also allows for easy memorization.

Countless other options follow. Unfortunately, a technique called frequency analysis allows for relatively easy decryption by studying how often letters are used in substitute cipher text. In the English language, the letter "e" shows up approximately 12–13% of the time, whereas "q" and "z" are very rare, appearing far less than 1% of the time. An examination of substitution cipher text tends to reveal certain patterns based on these established percentages, reproducing the cipher key one letter at a time. This process applies best to lengthy samples where the average appearance of letters is less likely to deviate from the norm, and tends to produce complete keys in a landslide — all at once right after a few letters have been discovered.

Substitution ciphers developed after frequency analysis are more inventive. One example assigns a letter to each of 26 numbers ranging from 1–99, leaving all the other numbers as "nulls" to be ignored by an intended recipient. The nulls can be sprinkled throughout an encrypted message, leaving those studying it perplexed about its true length and composition. Another introduces a "dowbleth" symbol in place of the first of two side-by-side identical letters, reducing the chance that they'll be spotted. The Great Cipher of Louis XIV uses a set of 587 numbers in place of French syllables.

A method that tries and in the end fails to elude frequency analysis is the homophonic substitution cipher, which replaces each letter in the alphabet with one or more symbols or numbers, depending on the letter's frequency. The letter "e," for instance, which shows up approximately 12–13% of the time, is replaced 12 different ways, while "r," which shows up only 6% of the time, is replaced 6 different ways. Unfortunately, the study of extremely strict letter combinations, such as "q" followed by "u," can yield lists of the replacements in each case, and the cipher begins to unravel.

The Vigenére cipher, developed in the 16th century, seems to render frequency analysis effectively useless. This cipher stacks 26 Caesar shift cipher alphabets on top of one another to form a "Vigenére square." Each alphabet is shifted by a different number of places so each begins with a different letter. To encipher a message, a codeword is devised and repeated end to end over the plain text. To find the alternate letter for each plain text character, the Caesar shift alphabet beginning with the corresponding code word letter is applied. Since the Vigenére cipher uses no consistent cipher alphabet, there is no way to study character frequency.

This still doesn't preclude decryption, however. As proven by 19th century visionary Charles Babbage, the Vigenére cipher is vulnerable to mathematical analysis involving the number of times a certain cipher letter combination appears and the number of characters between appearances. The factors of this number presents a list of possible codeword lengths and the number of times the word must have appeared between instances of the cipher letter combination in each case. By comparing several results from several samples, a common codeword length may be found, allowing the message to be broken into smaller chunks. For example, if the codeword is known to be eight letters long, every eighth letter is translated with the same Caesar shift cipher. Frequency analysis can then be applied to every eighth letter to determine the code word, and with that in hand, the message is easy to read.

A series of substitution methods introduced in the 1820s by Thomas J. Beale are known as "book ciphers" and variations are often used today. The concept is simple: every word on a given page of a book is numbered and in the cipher alphabet, each number translates to the first letter of the corresponding word. For variety, every fifth word can be numbered, or the seventh word on every page. Large networks using a book cipher tend to choose popular or widespread volumes, such as the Bible, though many elite spies prefer obscure literature or books of personal importance. Some even pen their own key text, often in the form of memoirs. Generally, the less known the key text, the more secure the cipher, though cracking a book cipher often becomes a game of second-guessing the encrypting operative more than piecing together letter relationships.

SUBSTITUTION CODES

Letters, symbols, and numbers can also be substituted for entire words or phrases. For instance, "V" could be code for the word "Franchise," "π" could be code for the word "operation," and the number "99" could be code for "midnight." In this case, when describing a Franchise operation planned for midnight, an operative's message must simply be "Vπ99." Alternately, the phrase "Franchise operation" might be coded simply as "π," making the entire message "π99."

Given the vast number of words or phrases that might be used, frequency analysis isn't as helpful against substitution codes. By the same token, however, memorization is nearly impossible, and a system with any utility at all requires a dictionary-like code-book that must be carried at all times and may fall into enemy hands. This makes substitution codes a far less appealing prospect for anything but the leanest communication needs.

A limited number of code words are sometimes combined with a cipher alphabet to form a "nomenclator." This allows for variation that harries but rarely stymies decryption specialists and keeps the size of any codebook down to something that can easily be hidden or memorized.

Codes have generally fallen out of favor in modern cryptology, due to their limited utility and clunky compatibility with electronic encryption. They are, however, still in use by certain enthusiasts, including old-fashioned spies and military personnel.

ONE-TIME PADS

The only truly unbreakable codes in the world today are one-time pads, the so-called "Holy Grail of cryptography," which were first introduced at the close of World War I by Major Joseph Mauborgne, head of the U.S. Army's cryptographic research effort. A one-time pad consists of hundreds or thousands of sheets, each containing a string of meaningless letters. Two — and only two — copies of each pad are made, one going to a message sender and the other going to the recipient. The strength of a one-time pad is that the hundreds of characters on each sheet can be used as a single completely random Vigenére cipher "key word" that exceeds the length of nearly any message. This thwarts the Babbage decryption method and many others developed later. Also, as both sender and recipient destroy a page after enciphering and deciphering each message, there is no extended data from which to draw.

One-time pads have significant drawbacks, however. In any mass communication scenario, they produce literally tens or hundreds of thousands of pages a day, all of which must be produced, distributed, and destroyed precisely lest the system devolve into chaos. Military application, for example, would generate hundreds of battlefield couriers and bookkeepers, not to mention untold bureaucracy and delay. Today, one-time pads are reserved for those seeking ultra-secure communication on a very controlled scale. Even most intelligence agencies forsake them in favor of more efficient methods.

CIPHER WHEELS

In the 15th century, the Caesar cipher inspired the world's first cryptographic machine, the cipher wheel. This device consisted of two or more concentric discs connected at their central points, each inscribed with the standard alphabet. The cipher wheel could display any Caesar shift simply by moving one disc's first character away from another disc's first character by the desired number of shifts (e.g. to view a Caesar shift of 2 on a two-disc cipher wheel, the inner disc's "a" was moved below the outer disc's "c"). Any variation of the Caesar cipher was possible using a cipher wheel, including the use of keywords to vary letter relationships.

The cipher wheel was used all the way through the American Civil War and inspired countless public amusements thereafter, some, like the "Code-o-Graph" given away to fans of the early U.S. radio drama *Captain Midnight*, even incorporating symbols and numbers.

ENIGMA

The most illustrious encryption device ever made was the Enigma machine, which the Nazis used during World War II. Enigma's power was derived from its many components, which the user could set to create over 10,000,000,000,000,000 possible cipher keys. Three scrambler discs could be inserted into the machine in any order with each assigned to any key letter. Additionally, a plug board could be set to jumble letters before they were sent through the scramblers. All of these settings were changed daily as listed in codebooks provided to the Nazi communications specialists in each theatre of operation. Thus, the machine was useless without a current copy of the relevant

codebook and vice-versa. Also, the Germans dedicated the first six letters of each message to a unique scrambler setting key that changed after each transmission. At first blush, Enigma encryption appeared to be unbreakable.

Enigma *was* eventually broken with a combination of espionage and tireless reasoning. The feat wouldn't have been possible at all if not for the greedy actions of disaffected German Hans-Thilo Schmidt, who worked at the Berlin *Chiffrierstelle*, the center of his nation's cryptology effort. Schmidt was destitute and loathed his successful brother, who'd secured the government job for him after several of his businesses had failed. He accepted money to let a French spy codenamed REX photograph an Enigma machine's internal workings, and gave REX examples of the German codebooks.

This gave the Allies the tools necessary to begin, though it wasn't the French who eventually made use of them. In Poland, fear of invasion spurred a new cryptologic approach involving mathematics as much as linguistics. Twenty of the country's greatest minds were dedicated to the project, but one — timid statistics specialist Marian Rejewski — eventually realized how to overcome the cipher machine's formidable security. He attacked the scramblers alone, leaving the plug board out of the equation, and discovered that each scrambler setting produced predictable results. For an entire year he catalogued the 105,456 results, creating a reliable list of all possible scrambler settings and their relationship to each result. With this information, he could pick apart captured Enigma messages by limiting his research to relevant results and scrambler settings, and re-introduce plug board settings to unravel any remaining gibberish. Later, Rejewski invented "bombes," units of six modified Enigma replicas working in concert to determine each message key. This mechanization was fragile and subject to breakdowns, but vastly sped up the process, gleaning each key in approximately two hours.

In 1938, the Germans increased Enigma's security with two new scramblers that could be swapped into the machine's three slots, and a year later, they added four new plugs. The number of possible cipher keys spiked to 159,000,000,000,000,000,000. To compensate, Rejewski would have to somehow work out the new scramblers' wiring and increase each bombe to 60 replica machines that required constant, delicate maintenance. This effectively halted the Polish effort, at which point British and French specialists were brought in and briefed about Rejewski's progress. This was fortuitous, as in September of 1939, the Germans invaded Poland and World War II began in earnest.

The British Government Code and Cypher School (GC & CS) set up shop in Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire, where they brought in mathematicians, scientists, linguists, classicists, chess grandmasters, and crossword addicts to build upon Poland's successes. With the necessary banks of bombes, they were able to get the process of decrypting the new Enigma messages down to several hours. They also discovered several "cillies," or common keys the Germans re-used in the heat of battle, as well as patterns to the scramblers' and plugs' placements which were intended to make the machine more secure but in fact had the opposite effect.

The most important Bletchley Park advancement, however, was a single machine devised to pick apart Enigma messages by running through scrambler settings and using accepted control words and phrases called "cribs." The machine also worked without relying on the repeated key at the start of each Enigma message, which had been a pillar of Rejewski's decryptions. This remarkable

THE PHONETIC ALPHABET

Military-minded individuals, including most spies, often utilize a phonetic alphabet to clearly and accurately convey letters and numbers.

From A to Z, 0 to 9, the phonetic alphabet reads: Alpha (AL FAH), Bravo (BRAH VOH), Charlie (CHAR LEE), Delta (DELL TAH), Echo (ECK OH), Foxtrot (FOKS TROT), Golf (GOLF), Hotel (HOH TELL), India (IN DEE AH), Juliett (JEW LEE ETT), Kilo (KEY LOH), Lima (LEE MAH), Mike (MIKE), November (NO VEM BER), Oscar (OSS CAH), Papa (PAH PAH), Quebec (KEH BECK), Romeo (ROW ME OH), Sierra (SEE AIR RAH), Tango (TANG GO), Uniform (YOU NEE FORM), Victor (VIK TAH), Whiskey (WISS KEY), X-Ray (ECKS RAY), Yankee (YANG KEY), Zulu (ZOO LOO), Zero (ZE RO), One (WUN), Two (TOO), Three (TREE), Four (FOW ER), Five (FIFE), Six (SIX), Seven (SEV EN), Eight (AIT), Nine (NIN ER).

When using the phonetic alphabet, each character is read out in sequence. For example, the correct phonetic reading of a license plate bearing "DEG 131" would be "Delta Echo Golf One Three One."

innovation was developed by Cambridge genius Alan Turing, who had long theorized that machines could be used to work out wildly complicated problems. Turing's early speculations were proven with the "Turing bombe," which went on to establish many foundations of modern computing.

Combined with daring espionage missions to acquire codebooks and other cryptologic intelligence — some of which were conceived by James Bond creator Ian Fleming, who worked in British Naval Intelligence at the time — Bletchley Park was vital in turning the tide of the war. Like the Poles before them, the British cipher crackers became heroes in the ever-escalating war between those would bury secrets and those who would do anything to exhume them.

OTHER WARTIME ENCRYPTION

The Germans weren't the only ones with cipher machines. The Japanese had their Alphabetic Typewriter 97, or "Purple" machine (as it was known to U.S. decryption specialists). Purple was a derivation of Enigma, though it used many switches in place of the rotor scramblers. Like its predecessor, it couldn't translate numbers and featured an alphabet of Roman characters instead of Japanese ones.

Purple consisted of two linked typewriters; a message typed into one would be encrypted and emerge from the other. Cracking its cipher took the U.S. Army's Signals Intelligence Service nearly a year and a half, and one of the first messages successfully decrypted involved the attack on Pearl Harbor. Unfortunately, the subsequent warning didn't arrive until the morning of the attack and wasn't read before the first bombers released their deadly cargoes. Ironically, the staff of the Japanese embassy in Washington D.C. didn't manage to decipher their own Purple messages in time to issue the planned declaration of war, which should have preceded the attack.

MORSE CODE

With the invention of the telegraph came Morse code, a method of spelling out words using dots and dashes. It can also be conveyed using a light source (by flicking it on and off quickly for a dot or slowly for a dash). The Morse alphabet follows.

A	· —
B	— · · ·
C	— · — ·
D	— · ·
E	·
F	· · — ·
G	— — ·
H	· · · ·
I	· ·
J	· — — —
K	— · —
L	· — · ·
M	— —
N	— ·
O	— — —
P	· — — ·
Q	— — · —
R	· — ·
S	· · ·
T	—
U	· · —
V	· · · —
W	· — —
X	— · · —
Y	— · — —
Z	— — · ·

Thus, the word "Franchise" would be · · — · / · — · / · — / — · / — · — · / · · · · / · · / · · · / · . "SOS" is the most famous Morse code message of all time, and it's intentionally very simple: · · · / — — — / · · · .

Message senders worried about telegraph operators reading their mail often used encryption methods before handing it off.

The British Royal Army and Air Force used the Type X (or Typex) machine, and U.S. forces relied upon the M134-C device (codenamed SIGABA), both of which were also clones of Enigma (though SIGABA was developed independently and involved several key differences). Both employed rotors like Enigma had, though SIGABA had ten that rotated more often during use, producing a higher number of keys. The American machine was also an online design, built to transmit directly over radio or telephone line. In practice, however, it was used offline, printing cipher text across ticker tape for independent transmission.

Another American wartime innovation was the introduction of the Navajo language as a verbal code. By all accounts, the Axis powers were largely ignorant of Navajo speech and those who spoke it could accompany critical units and dictate their messages over radio lines in real time. This was an incredible improvement over cipher machines, which could only encrypt written messages, and only at a painfully slow pace.

Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, twenty-nine Navajo began training with U.S. Marine Corps communications specialists. A lexicon of 274 words was developed so the Navajo could refer to things that were indescribable in their archaic vernacular. Commanding officers became "war chiefs," platoons became "mud-clans," battleships became "whales," and bombs became "eggs." Also, a unique phonetic alphabet was established so the Navajo could spell out unexpected terms *(for more about phonetic alphabets, see the sidebar on page 83)*.

The Navajo language also eliminated the need for codebooks. Memorization wasn't an issue because the Navajo had very little written script and were accustomed to telling and retelling their history orally. Best of all, the language had no root similarities to Asian or European languages and completely thwarted enemy transcription — those unfamiliar with it found its sound and cadence unintelligible.

By 1942, over 83 Navajo "code talkers" were active in U.S. military service, most with bodyguards to protect them from the enemy and cases of mistaken identity (they were frequently confused for Japanese and antagonized by unknowing American soldiers). The lexicon was increased to 508 words and standard encryption methods were applied to the special phonetic alphabet. By the end of the war, there had been 420 code talkers. Their special brand of encryption was never compromised.

ELECTRONIC ENCRYPTION

Hitler didn't trust private communications with his generals even to Enigma. Instead, he ordered the development of the Lorenz SZ40 machine, which operated on similar principles but was far more sophisticated. Breaking the Lorenz cipher was impossible with Turing's bombes, as it required critical judgment, something not factored into the high-speed calculators' designs. The problem gave rise to Colossus, the world's first programmable computer.

Computers shape encryption methods in profound ways. First, they accelerate the process millions or billions of times over. Second, they can simulate incredibly complex and diverse cryptologic procedures that no machine could possibly replicate — imagine an Enigma machine with an unlimited number of scramblers and plug board combinations, set up in an unlimited number of ways, producing an infinite number of possible cipher keys. Third, and most importantly, computers convert everything into numbers, assigning lengthy binary strings to every character. These strings can be manipulated in whole or in part, producing many more layers of encryption than ever before.

Initially, computers were limited to governments and military institutions and this provided even greater security, but the mass production of high-power machines has leveled the playing field somewhat between those in power and the average business or private citizen. Individualized encryption exploded, particularly in the business sector, where computers made proprietary communications and trade secrets vulnerable to outside view. By 1973, America's National Bureau of Standards started looking for a common ground amidst the proliferation of independent business encryption methods. Their first answer was an IBM product called Lucifer.

This scrambling operation divided half of a message into manageable chunks, mangled the chunks, and folded them over and into the other half of the message. This process was repeated sixteen times with each message, each time using a predetermined numerical key to guide the computations. Lucifer was viewed as extremely strong and used by many companies but the U.S. National Security Agency lobbied to reduce its effectiveness before it was introduced as an encryption standard. Ultimately, NSA wanted to ensure that no public encryption was beyond its current decryption abilities. The agency got its wish, and in 1976, the modified Lucifer cipher was introduced as the Data Encryption Standard (DES).

A lingering problem for commercial encryption was key distribution, getting encryption keys to those who needed them to decipher business messages. At first, companies used trusted employees to transport keys across the world in now infamous steel briefcases handcuffed to their wrists. As the number of keys in use at any time skyrocketed, however, and the rapid encrypted communication became a necessity for profitable business, new key distribution techniques were introduced. The most significant of these involved a blend of revolutionary mathematical alchemy and the development of the information superhighway known as the Internet.

The RSA public key cipher is unique in that it's asymmetrical — that is, the encryption and decryption keys are not the same. The basic idea is that a recipient makes their encryption method and public key available to everyone and keeps their private key to themselves. Messages sent to the recipient are encrypted using the offered method and key and these messages can only be decrypted using the recipient's private key. This requires a basic mathematical principle applied to astronomical numbers. The public key is always the multiple of two extremely large prime numbers, and these two prime numbers are the private key. With suitably large numbers, the process of factoring the prime numbers used to create the public key takes years, or in the case of modern application, literally longer than the lifespan of the universe.

This advent is the foundation of modern electronic security. Behind the screen, email accounts are associated with encryption methods that look very much like those first devised centuries ago. Public keys are made available across the expanse of the Internet in giant digital directories and private keys are kept under close guard. In the blink of an eye, computers handle calculations that would have taken the forefathers of cryptology their entire lives to complete, and most of us are none the wiser.

Of course, the computing power required for the most extreme RSA keys places them outside the reach of the average citizen, and so the size of the numbers used to secure communications is relative to the machines involved. Governments and large businesses with super computers dominate the field while those using personal computers linger at the low end of the scale, their security still impressive but nowhere near as impregnable.

The 1991 introduction of the Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) freeware made high-end RSA encryption an option for everyone, and as an added benefit it embedded a signature into each post that proved its point of origin. Unfortunately, it also sparked a patent infringement lawsuit and government concern that criminals might use it to evade police observation. With new and more powerful forms of encryption constantly appearing for all levels of society, the controversy isn't likely to subside anytime soon.

For the moment, the RSA cipher has established a theoretically invincible line of defense against straightforward decryption. Experts once thought the Vigenére and Enigma ciphers were invincible as well. Only time will tell whether RSA truly is the ultimate peddler of secrets. Meanwhile, the encryption race continues in another form, between those embracing this seemingly perfect system and those would circumvent it.

One of the most prevalent challenges to electronic encryption is simple interception. If someone can access a public key in transit and replace it with his own, the message will be encrypted for him and not the intended recipient. All he need do is intercept the message and its secrets are his. This is a favorite tactic of hackers and cyber-thieves, who forge messages to elicit confidential information. In response, "certification authorities" have been established, companies that verify public key ownership.

Another challenge that completely circumvents the encryption process is TEMPEST, a technology that tracks the electromagnetic signals given off by various computer functions, including keystrokes. With the proper equipment — which requires government sanction and runs in the hundreds of thousands of dollars — a person can record a message as it's written and before it's encrypted, though he must be near the source to do so. Some
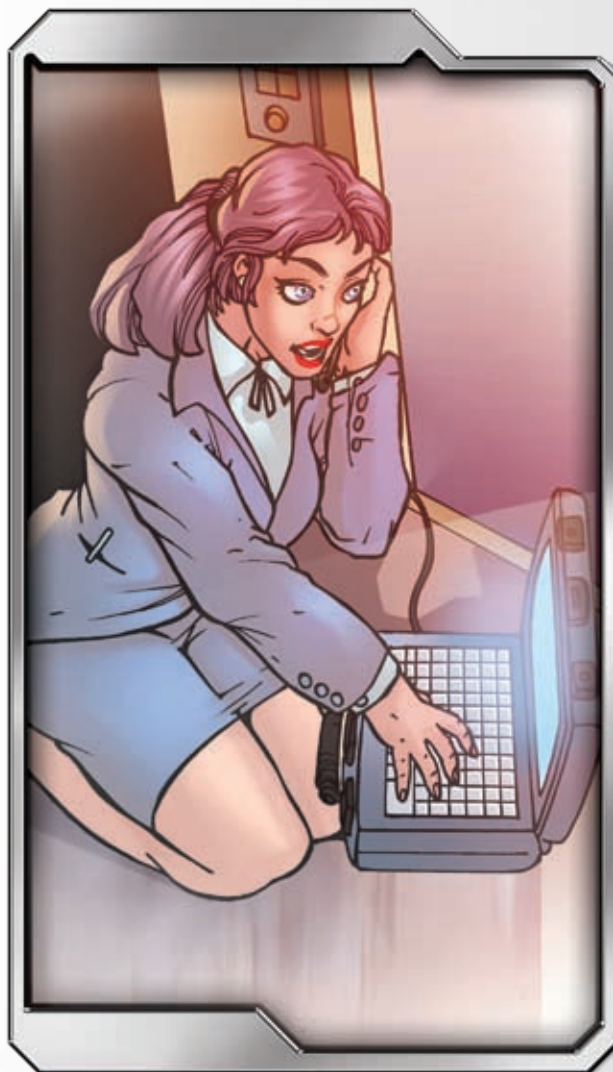
businesses sell shielding that protects against TEMPEST surveillance, though again, a government-issued license is required to legally install it.

Computer viruses also threaten electronic encryption. Some are designed to send plain text versions of messages sent from infected machines to a designated email account each time the user logs onto the Internet. Others look like and operate like PGP and other encryption programs, except that they also send plain text messages. Some merely collect and redistribute a user's private key; others create a back door in the user's system, granting access to the program's creators. The possibilities are endless and security specialists and their software designs are in constant competition.

PLAIN SIGHT ENCRYPTION

Since the 19th century, when the public first became enamored with secret messages, people have devised clever ways to hide messages in plain sight. One of the earliest methods was pinprick encryption, which involved adding dots or poking needles through paper below letters that, when read in order, formed words. This was especially prevalent in the mid-1800s, when a person could send a newspaper through the post for free. Frugal letter writers would encrypt messages using the words on a given page, allowing them to send missives without charge.

STEGANOGRAPHY

The art of concealing the existence of information is called "steganography," which includes invisible ink, microdots (reducing a picture, usually of a document, down to pinpoint size), and even tattooing information on a person's shaved head and allowing the hair to grow back over it. Today, digital steganography allows people to use graphic design programs to hide information within electronic images, either as separate layers or by weaving it into the image in a plausible fashion. Others can later extract the information by using the reverse process. The downside of steganography is that information hidden with it may be compromised if someone merely intercepts it. No puzzle must be solved to understand it. Thus, encryption is often used as an additional layer of protection.

VOICE SCRAMBLING

Like steganography and plain sight encryption, voice scrambling isn't cryptologic in nature, but deserves mention due to its widespread use in deterring communication intercepts. The frequency of each tone in a verbal message can be adjusted to create incomprehensible noise, often by the second. All sound in a recording can be muffled to a degree that only experts and special equipment can pick it up. Recent innovations allow engineers to add overwhelming background noise, blotting out all speech. All of these techniques and many others may be used in conjunction with encryption — of a broadcast's contents, or the signal itself.

MEETINGS AND DROPS: COVERT COMMUNICATION

When in the field, it is not uncommon for operatives to contact one another to obtain information or assistance. This is risky, however, as spies are often under surveillance, and every transfer is a chance that everyone involved will be compromised. Under most circumstances, snail mail is an operative's best avenue of communication. Government agencies open few letters without cause, and information can easily be concealed in print. A common espionage practice involves sending predetermined post cards or junk mail to convey set messages. Often, these lead to purchases that contain items or information for the operative, or to meetings at advertised events.

One might assume that email and telephone calls are superior, but in the modern world, these channels are routinely monitored for unusual chatter and suspect keywords. Electronic communication does have its advantages, however. It's fast, which makes it perfect at those infrequent critical junctures when it's more important to react quickly than remain discreet. It's also prolific — there's a chance that, unless the operative is the target of active surveillance, his message might simply be lost in the shuffle.

Most intelligence agencies maintain 800 numbers and email and forum accounts, but advise operatives to avoid using them unless so directed by the mission briefing, or under very specific and highly controlled circumstances. It's practically impossible for an agency to secure such channels, leaving the operative's message extremely vulnerable to even mildly competent enemies. For this reason, operatives are trained to always encrypt any message that might be read by those without the need to know. Some use simple metaphors and code words or phrases, which is especially useful when the message is intended to blend into the surrounding traffic; others apply complex cryptologic methods as described in the preceding section.

The uninitiated often assume that spies carry impossibly secure cell phones that magically penetrate all surveillance. Unfortunately, such devices are largely fiction, more akin to the technological wizardry of Q Branch than the standard-issue field gear afforded any real world intelligence office. The most secure phones in the world are still vulnerable to contemporary listening devices and this is particularly true of cell phones, which don't benefit from the physical protection sometimes surrounding a landline. Many commercial cell phone signals are even accidentally picked up through computer speakers and shortwave radios! Obviously, government models feature superior designs but there is only so much that can be done to guard a signal passing through the open air. Operatives are advised to avoid confidential cell chatter at all times, reserving phone use for low-grade intelligence and dire emergencies.

As with snail mail, an operative's best use of electronic communication is to prompt a meeting, or arrange a live or dead drop. His agency most likely maintains a list of code words and phrases intended for just this purpose. The operative calls a designated number, sends an email, or visits a web forum and posts a previously decided trigger to alert his superiors of his intentions. Part of the code always varies, indicating the location and time. Nearly every mission briefing includes a list of specific codes for this purpose. Occasionally, these correspond to pay phones in a given area where the operative can talk with less fear of interception, and in such cases, older models are usually chosen, as they react poorly with global surveillance grids.

Meetings are kept to a minimum and usually held in neutral areas with lots of open space like public squares and subway stations. When a political asset is involved, the meeting site must be within his operational area to avoid suspicion (in the Cold War, this was often a 30-mile radius around the asset's assigned embassy or station). A meeting site must always feature at least one mode of public entrance per participant so none use the same one (and to provide many routes of escape if necessary). It must also place the participants out of hearing range from any who might pass nearby; thus, contrary to popular belief, few meetings occur at busy restaurants and bars.

When approaching a meet, an operative should take his time if at all possible, stopping occasionally to window shop or "smell the roses." This gives him an opportunity to scan everywhere, including behind, and see if he's being followed or if anything else looks out of the ordinary. Windows and other reflective surfaces are especially helpful for this. The operative should also approach the meet from an indirect route, preventing anyone tailing him from realizing where he's headed.

A fallback site is often planned in case the first site is occupied or otherwise compromised. Any fallback site must be decided upon when the meeting is arranged, as subsequent communication is generally considered too hazardous. Another facet of the meeting to be decided up front, or pre-arranged during the mission briefing, is each participant's "recognition signal." This is an action or series of actions that identifies the participant and signifies that he's safe from surveillance (or so he believes). An operative might carry one half of a ripped laundry ticket, having given the other half to his asset during a previous meeting. Alternately, he might carry a specific book and wear a specific coat and glasses, all of which are known to those he's meeting. The second option is far more secure, as it doesn't require the participants to be in close proximity and also allows for special predetermined messages, such as the operative taking his glasses off to indicate that he's being followed, or to drop the book to indicate that one of the other participants has been made.

Meetings very rarely interrupt an operative's cover, and when they do, the other participants are always disguised to blend into the surroundings. At a private home, they might take roles as delivery people, a utility crew, or others with reason to come inside. At an office, they might simply schedule plausible meetings with the operative. Particularly bold allies might simply drive up next to the operative's car and exchange a few words under a bridge or intersection, though this is only recommended if everyone involved is relatively certain they aren't being watched.

During a "live drop," the operative secretly hands something off to an ally, commonly as they pass on the street or by accidentally bumping into him (some operatives choose to make this seem like they're picking the ally's pocket, just in case they're spotted). Alternately, the operative may drop the object into the ally's pocket or purse, or even sit beside the ally for a time, leaving the object behind when he leaves. A small object is sometimes placed on a dog the operative walks, allowing the ally to grab it as he or she reaches down to pet the animal. Any of these techniques is called a "brush pass" and requires practiced agility and timing. Unlike a meeting, a brush pass preferably takes place in a crowded location, such as an airport, train station, or busy thoroughfare.

A "dead drop" operates like a live drop, except that the operative never meets his ally. Instead, he leaves the object behind for later pickup. Dead drops almost always happen in innocuous public locations where no one would question the operative's presence. The godfathers of espionage used park trashcans that weren't scheduled to be emptied for several hours, as well as knots in pavilion trees, public lockers, cracks in walls, and hollow posts and curbstones. They even hid drops beneath movie theater seats, in rarely used reference books at the library, and behind lavatory mirrors and under sinks (occasionally on trains and buses). Some drops don't involve a hiding place; certain spies are instructed to drink a particular brand of soda, slip messages into the empty cans, and drop the cans in a specific part of a nearby wood (always washing the cans thoroughly to prevent animals from dragging them off or insects from invading them).

Ideal dead drop sites are near but obscured from public areas, allowing the operative to approach easily yet preventing anyone from noticing him when he leaves the object. They provide a marginal degree of cover and offer reasons for the operative to hover (statues and other art are ideal). They shouldn't be located midway along straight, uninteresting paths, as anyone walking down them may keep the operative from depositing the object. Likewise, they shouldn't be located near tall buildings where people can observe the operative through windows. Dead ends and detours are only helpful when the operative can logically visit them as often as needed.

A particular form of dead drop involves a third party, who collects the object for safekeeping until the pickup person arrives. Such a third party must have a reason to regularly exchange objects; he might be a pawnbroker, a department store salesman, or a postal clerk.

When an operative doesn't have time to warn his superiors of an impending dead drop, he employs a "signpost," a mark left in another location calling for a pickup at the appropriate drop point. Signposts also vary, but could be chalk scrawls across predetermined stones or bricks, placing a flowerpot outside a window, or posting an otherwise meaningless flier to a public bulletin board. They can also be activities, like jogging a particular route or buying a particular item at a nearby store.

Signposts can convey additional messages as well. The color of the chalk scrawls might indicate that the inscribing operative is under surveillance, blown, or needs extraction (or all three). The text on a flier can indicate a place to meet after the drop is retrieved, or request a second drop containing necessary gear. Such tactics should never attract undue attention, however.

Timing is critical when using a signpost, as the drop could be discovered or swept up in a routine cleaning. Thus, agency personnel constantly observe signposts, sending notice up the chain of command whenever they're used. Signpost marks are always removed before the corresponding drop is retrieved, to ensure that the message isn't inadvertently confused as another drop, or worse, written off as a mistake, leaving the agency watchers unaware of another drop at the same spot.

An operative must remain wary at all times that his dead drop sites aren't compromised. There are a number of ways to do this. The operative can create and use false drops and then observe them for a day or so afterward. If anyone is following him, they may try to intercept the drop's contents. Likewise, when using a genuine drop, the operative can balance seeds, dirt, hairs, or other small, lightweight bits of debris on or in his object or message; if they're disturbed when the recipient picks the object or message up, it's been intercepted.

Whenever a drop has been compromised, it should be moved and all encryption methods used in conjunction with it should be re-keyed. Alternately, the drop can be maintained and periodically used, but only for unimportant transfers. This latter option keeps enemy agents busy and doesn't prompt them to look for the operative's new drop.

All meeting and drop locations and protocols should be changed regularly to avoid detection. The main exceptions are those used by a deep cover or other operative who remains out of contact with the home office for long periods of time. Such an operative knows to avoid contact except when absolutely necessary, since he has a limited number of options open to him during each mission.

Intelligence agencies provide many gear options to support dead drops. Hollow spikes are custom-fitted for film rolls and other common loads and may be driven into soft ground with the operative's heel. Magnetic clam cases can be fixed to the underside of metal benches or inside drainage pipes for subsequent retrieval and waterproof bags are weighted so they drop to the beds of rivers or sewers. Every common item imaginable has been hollowed out for this purpose at one time or another, from lamps to logs to walnuts to toilet paper holders. Some feature nails, screws, and other protrusions that can be pulled out to unlock cleverly disguised containers.

Operatives are trained to remain calm at all times before, during, and after any of these procedures, as panic or suspicious action can compromise the agency's communication system and the mission. When operatives visit movie theatres, for instance, they remain through the presentations to avoid arousing suspicion. Also, safe houses are usually avoided during meetings and drops, as they are carefully cultivated over months or years and shouldn't be endangered during routine transfers.

Finally, unless an operative feels he's already being watched, he should scout any potential meeting or drop site ahead of time, casually searching for bugs and other ways the transfer might be compromised. Counter-surveillance gear is recommended, but only if the operative can use it without notice.

LEGAL CONCERNS

In espionage, the first rule when dealing with public authorities is: don't. Secret agencies maintain their covert status by avoiding such entanglements, and with good reason. Government and local authorities aren't secure; they are invariably perforated with leaks, monitored by reporters, and supervised by politicians. They have no interest or investment in supporting intelligence operations whose agendas very often conflict with their own, and many authorities routinely perform counter-espionage activities to keep their backyards clear of infringing operatives and other interlopers. Operatives are advised not to communicate with local law enforcement and other organizations unless such action is specifically warranted by the mission briefing or becomes an absolute necessity in the field. Missions should always remain off the radar until and unless it's beneficial for the team — and by extension, the agency — to become known.

There are a number of concerns during any mission in a policed region, the foremost involving the possession and use of weapons. Most nations restrict firearms in some fashion, requiring licenses at the federal or local level, limiting the custody of loaded guns, or even banning ownership altogether. Despite fielding armed operatives, many intelligence agencies do not seek legal sanction, and those that do usually limit legal possession to their own government's territories. In short, there are no international gun licenses and globetrotting operatives are commonly either told not to carry outside their homelands or left to their own devices in foreign regions (and in the latter case, the agency almost always looks the other way, refusing to involve itself if the operative is caught and prosecuted).

In the modern espionage game, weapons are a liability. Indeed, all lawbreaking is dangerous, but antagonizing an internationally sensitive issue related to terrorism is asking for real trouble. People already have plenty of reasons to doubt and fear intelligence agencies... Why attract the ire of millions? Why become

the organized target people can't identify in this dizzying global guerilla war? Better to simply give up the firepower and avoid the issue. After all, operatives are trained to resolve situations without violence, aren't they?

Yes. Unfortunately, their enemies don't share this preference, and that's where things get complicated. In the old days of gentlemanly espionage, it was easy enough for all involved to keep the calibers low or forsake guns entirely. The spies of yore waged a war of wits and guile over brawn and bullets. They were trained in the use of firearms and they often carried handguns and other easily concealable weapons, but they often went entire missions without firing a shot.

The enemies are different today, and so are the rules of the game. Terrorists, warlords, and other true *villains* don't care about laws, and often flagrantly break them to make a point. They revel in mayhem and command with shock. In many ways, they treat the espionage game like a war that's never been officially declared. They arm soldiers and erect armies. They expect losses and send people off to die.

How are operatives to abide the law when combating such a menace? In many cases, they can't, and it makes their jobs much harder. All but the most covert agencies hammer on their operatives to keep firepower to an absolute minimum, and the ones that don't tend to completely disavow or even sever their field assets when they get caught breaking the law. Few agencies can withstand public controversy for long, and even fewer are willing to sacrifice their budgets and authority to save a sloppy or unfortunate mission team, even one with a previously spotless track record.

In the end, operatives are usually left to their own devices and warned that every violation of the law is a personal risk that might cost them their careers, or even their lives. Most agency Controls and quartermasters prefer not to limit an operative's choice of sidearm, but nearly all draw the line at heavier weapons such as assault rifles and submachine guns. Military ordnance like rocket launchers, flamethrowers, and grenades are often right out unless the mission is very clearly tactical in nature (and well away from civilian centers). In determining available weapons, the operatives' ability to keep them secure and hidden is always considered, as are relevant control laws.

In virtually 80–90% of all regions, handguns, semi-automatic and automatic weapons, and weapons modified for concealment are restricted in some fashion or another. Many countries allow handgun use only in authorized shooting clubs. Those that permit private ownership usually require citizenship, licenses, and often registration. Compulsory gun use courses and formal examinations are commonplace. Laws define where and when a weapon can be carried, whether it can be concealed and loaded, and how it must be stored when not in use (respectively, most countries severely restrict public carry of any kind, prohibit all concealed possession, and require storage in a hard wood or steel container approved by the police).

The Interpol Weapons and Explosives Tracking System (IWETS) provides a semi-reliable system for tracking firearm sales and ownership, and hampers international travel with a weapon. Unmarked firearms — that is, firearms without serial numbers, whether they were removed or not — are subject to confiscation and potential prosecution in nearly every region with formal gun control. Many nations, including the United States, consider such weapons contraband.

Austria, Australia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom possess some of the strictest firearms laws in the world. Spain, for example, requires six months membership and training with a shooting club before purchase, and in Germany, this increases to a full year. Australia doesn't accept self-defense as a reasonable justification for gun ownership and demands "proof of need" for every weapon purchased. Canada is no different and even restricts pepper spray. Many of these countries authorize their police to search vehicles and pedestrians for weapons. Some even conduct "surprise sweeps" of private homes to ensure gun collections are legal.

The United States, Switzerland, and a handful of other countries feature less rigid restrictions, and yet still pose a significant obstacle to heavily armed mission teams. For example, while virtually all male adults in Switzerland are members of the national military and trained to use firearms, only members of the standing army keep weapons in their homes. This amounts to perhaps 15% of the population — a far cry from popular opinion, which often places an assault rifle in every house.

In the United States, gun laws vary by state and by county. Federal law bans public possession of automatic weapons, though extremely limited licenses are available to private security agencies and professional collectors. Silencers are banned for all but clandestine government operatives, and only during approved missions. Rifle and shotgun barrels must remain 18 inches or longer. Mailing handguns and other concealable firearms is restricted to all but military officers, federal law enforcement agents, and licensed manufacturers and dealers.

Semi-automatic assault weapons, including the AK-47, AR-15, Beretta AR-70, FN FAL, Galil, M-16, Steyr Aug, Uzi, revolving shotguns and all variations thereof were banned from 1994 to 2004, as were many other semi-automatic firearms based on their features (e.g. folding and telescoping stocks, flash suppressors, weight, magazine capacity, etc.). These limitations have been upheld by many states since the federal law's expiration, including California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York.

Minors under the age of 18 cannot legally purchase rifles and shotguns in the U.S., and no on under the age of 21 can purchase handguns. Felons who have spent one or more years in jail, convicted substance abusers, dishonorably discharged soldiers, and anyone declared mentally incompetent are uniformly banned from all firearms purchases. Everyone must wait five days to legally buy any handgun, and in many states and counties, the waiting period is much longer. Also, licensed dealers must check with a national background check system before selling any firearm, and report any purchase of multiple firearms within a five-day period to the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF). Private sales must usually be handled through a licensed dealer.

Transportation of firearms is permitted in accordance with ownership laws, though the weapon must always be unloaded and stored in a vehicle trunk, or failing that, in a locked container other than the glove compartment. Firearms and all accessories and ammunition must be declared during any flight, and must be transported in checked baggage within locked, hard-sided cases. Aboard trains and other contract carriers, all firearms must be surrendered to the conductor or another approved official.

Operative: As you sit in your jail cell, awaiting trial, imprisonment, or execution, know that you die for a noble cause. As you have learned during your time with us, we can only exist in an environment of absolute secrecy. Your punishment, perhaps at the hands of some of those we strive to protect, is the ultimate price we all pay.

A suicide capsule has been provided for you. If it is unavailable, or you cannot find another means of denying the enemy, one of our undercover operatives will close your contract.

Your sacrifice will not be forgotten.

— The Agency

Substantial fines and jail time await those who violate U.S. gun control laws. Offending firearms, accessories, and ammunition are always confiscated, even when the state doesn't pursue prosecution. A few exceptions are made for weapons in existence before relevant laws were enacted, though controls are becoming fiercer by the year.

OTHER LEGAL CONCERNS

Operatives face many potential troubles with the law outside weapons restrictions. The most prevalent obstacles, of course, are evidence and eyewitnesses, either of which may link the team to the legal abuses that occur in the course of a mission. Operatives should strive to remain free of suspicion at all times. They must have believable reasons for every action they take and every place they go, and be able to rattle them off without hesitation. They must arrange their stances and movements to confuse onlookers and avoid cameras. Above all, they must evade capture, not because it leaves them vulnerable to injury but because it leaves them vulnerable to compromise.

When on a mission, an operative should never carry his real ID, nor should he wear any distinguishing clothing or accessories (unless, of course, they're necessary for the mission). Most operatives avoid distinctive marks as well; they rarely get tattoos and often have agency surgeons remove moles, scars, and other identifying characteristics. The most experienced and skillful of them adopt new habits and appearances for every mission, just in case they run into someone they met during a previous op.

In the real world, intelligence agencies rarely "take people off the books," removing their biographical and identification data from "the system." Most government employees, including operatives, are victims of relentless background checks and have files thicker than many career felons. Thus, leaving fingerprints and other identifying evidence behind in the field can be instantly damaging. It isn't always, as many police forces run their findings only through the known criminal banks, but there's always the chance of a backwater pioneer or meticulous detective with a hunch.

The best defense against law enforcement is to abide the law. Failing that, here are a few ways to evade the authorities.

- Wear a hat. It will help prevent your head hair from shedding into the scene. Do not take your hat off at the scene, as this increases the chance that hair will be left behind.

- Wear gloves. Latex is preferable but sometimes leaves fingerprints on objects held tightly. Also, latex gloves should be taken off over a sink or other area where the talcum powder inside them can easily be washed away.

- Wear synthetics that don't shed often. Also, make sure all your clothes are common in as many places as possible (and definitely in your mission area).

- Wear new or thoroughly cleansed shoes during every action, and destroy them afterward. Replace them with a different style and — if the action involved a crime — perhaps a different size as well.

- Avoid spilling your own blood at all costs. Blood is nearly impossible to remove; even industrial-grade cleaning agents leave traces behind.

- Keep track of every shot you fire. Remove all spent casings from the scene and get rid of the weapon as soon as possible, preferably through an agency asset that can melt it down. Never use a rare weapon or specialty ammunition, as either can be traced.

- Always provide an alternate motive that hides your true activities. Make a break-in or killing look like a robbery by taking some of the victim's belongings. Make an abduction appear like a kidnapping by leaving a bogus ransom note and, depending on the amount of time required to complete the mission, possibly following through with one or more dead-end phone calls to the victim's family or friends. Keep every motive simple and believable, as complex presentations are sometimes missed and or far-fetched scenarios raise additional questions.

- When an alternate motive isn't enough to throw the police off your tracks, frame someone else for the crime. If the goal is to distract the police long enough for your team to escape, this may be as simple as leaving evidence in the person's home or vehicle, or disguising a team member to look like the target. A more concrete connection is required for any permanent blame and must establish motive and opportunity. It may also involve planted blood or ballistics information, hair, fibers, fingerprints (which are notoriously difficult to transfer), or the use of a vehicle identical to one in the target's possession. Any serious attempt to frame someone must ensure that he doesn't have an alibi. This may require disconnecting his phone and computer so he can't speak with anyone at the time of the crime, or may even require his abduction.

- If possible, clean your vehicle and clothes after every encounter. Never wash your clothes with detergents, as all chemicals leave a trace that can be used to track you. Destroy and replace anything stained with blood or other fluids.

- Avoid hospitals. Minor injuries can often be treated at a safe house. For grievous wounds, the team should call upon a medical contact, preferably a private doctor who owes something to the team or the agency, or an underworld physician who regularly deals in discreet procedures.

- Never, ever return to the scene of a crime. It's arrogant and stupid. If someone *must* go, send an ally who wasn't involved in the first incident at the site, and just as importantly, has no direct link to you or the current mission.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE COMPROMISED

In the event that an operative or his team is compromised, everyone involved should immediately fall back to the nearest agency safe house. There are two types of safe houses — cover businesses, which are secure, well-equipped, and well-staffed, but may jeopardize the agency if the team is seen entering, and casual sites like rented apartments, hotel rooms, warehouses, and suburban homes. The latter are far less secure, since enhanced security threatens their anonymity. They are stocked only with common supplies and rarely contain agency personnel.

From a safe house, the team can contact the home office and apprise their handler of the situation. Usually, they will be pulled out and replaced with another team in the area. In remote areas where agency assets are scarce, this may not be possible, in which case the mission will either be scrapped or the team will have to regroup and get the job done. If the agency pursues the second option, it isn't likely to provide further support, as this would leave it open to scandal if conditions worsen.

Should the operatives be arrested, they face different challenges. Assuming the charges are serious and genuine, and the operatives haven't been identified or linked to their agency, the team's primary goal is escape. If the mission allows, they may be able to wait for bail and simply skip town, leaving their phantom cover identities to take the fall. In more pressing situations, the agency may activate an asset in law enforcement — if it has one locally — and arrange for the team's transfer for more serious crimes. This is messy, as it can lead to inter-departmental rivalry and inquiries targeting facets of agency operation the home office would rather leave untouched.

Rarely will the agency sanction action against a law enforcement agency. No team is worth the consequences. If the operatives are jailed without bail, they're usually on their own. The agency will provide lawyers for their defense, but since the operatives' true intentions and the scope of their activities probably can't be revealed, anything beyond a misdemeanor or minor felony may stick. Further, any trial process is bound to outlast the mission window, benching the operatives for the duration of the assignment.

TRAVEL CONCERNS

For security reasons, operatives usually travel via commercial routes, blending in as tourists, businesspeople, and other inconspicuous types. They contend with the usual issues, suffering through delays and cancellations due to weather, current events, and bad luck. They carry on pleasant conversations with fellow travelers, discussing things they've never done and lives they've never led. In every way, their movements about the globe tend to be positively mundane — save for the precautions they must take due to their profession and the looming danger that casts a shadow on everything they do.

Like everyone else, spies travel mostly by air. Ships and trains are too slow for anything but sightseeing missions (in which the point is to linger and observe), and cars don't provide the range necessary for impromptu transcontinental trips. Occasionally, missions begin with a covert insertion of some kind — a midnight zodiac run along a hostile coastline, a parachute drop into a remote jungle, or even a bumpy journey across a secure border inside a cargo container — but such excitement is rare, and reserved exclusively for target regions where travel using a cover identity is impossible.

In preparation for any journey, the agency slants the operatives' cover identities to blend favorably with the destination. Frequently, this involves more than making the team appear like a group of locals. The needs of the mission may call for outsiders, and this is where the agency's intelligence about the destination comes into play. Analysts observe political and military trends not only to react to budding crises but also to foresee potential conflicts when and if assets move into a given area. Sending a team of operatives into a region where their cover identities indicate support in a recently fallen dictator can get the entire team killed, or worse, captured and tortured for information or sport.

Operatives are generally provided information about potential biases and hostilities, and given tips for how to deal with them. They're also given details about possible health risks, social mores and taboos, law enforcement practices, underworld circuits, and more. Of course, they're expected to absorb as many of these details as they wish before setting out, as commercial travel offers little privacy for later perusal.

The average flight times to many hot spots across the globe can be found on Table 3.1: Approximate Direct Flight Travel Times *(see page 93)*. An operative should always plan ahead and work out any personal details about his cover identity that may be required during the trip. He should also secure his documents in a safe place on his person or in carry on luggage, or better yet, not bring them at all. The sharpest spies memorize everything anyway.

Also, an operative should routinely remove all emblems from his belongings. Not only does this reduce the risk that he might contradict his cover story, it also prevents embarrassing or explosive responses from locals, who might view cultural or religious paraphernalia as an insult or a threat. It also helps prevent unwanted questions and observations, however, benign, during moments when the operative's attention must be focused elsewhere.

Luggage should be as ordinary as possible. Rucksacks, aviation bags, and other military containers may lead to questions and unfortunate assumptions. When an operative places anything of importance in his luggage, he should also include a commonplace item to attract dubious airline employees and other thieves who might rifle through looking for something to steal.

Intelligence agencies prefer that their operatives refrain from smuggling dangerous or illegal contraband. Alternate avenues are generally provided for weapons, gadgets, and other questionable equipment, usually along with mass cargo shipments or through proprietary businesses. These items simply meet the team in their destination transport, or at a cache or safe house of Control's choosing. Even licensed firearm transport is frowned upon, as it leaves a paper trail and might alert authorities, intelligence agencies, and even enemies in the destination region. It also slows the team's progress through airport or depot security.

When an operative absolutely must carry a suspicious item on board any commercial vehicle, he must take precautions. In the old days, the agency or one of its allies might assign the operative's cover identity diplomatic credentials, in which case he could carry a pouch through customs with little to no hassle. Diplomatic pouches — or on occasion, briefcases — were usually about the size of a small backpack and could store up to three boxed handguns of average size or an equivalent volume of confidential documents or other objects. They were always locked and frequently handcuffed to the operative's wrist. Sadly, this tactic is now cliché and draws more attention than it's worth.

Instead, an operative's best bet when trying to slip something past security and customs is an old-fashioned hollow object, albeit one with some form of shielding to prevent X-ray discovery of its contents. In this case, the object should always be something bland, that no one would question as part of the operative's luggage. Knick-knacks and other curio gifts are poor choices, as they might attract conversation. Electronics are also bad, as they are naturally suspect in today's climate. Books can fall open (or raise suspicion when they don't). Metal objects work nicely — documents and narrow items can be slipped into golf clubs, for instance, and poison vials and pocket pistol parts can fill a shaving cream can. Operatives smuggling restricted items can also fly through smaller regional airports, where security is lax.

The agency typically books a hotel room in each mission theatre before the team's arrival, or arranges a place to stay with local assets. Several rooms are often requested to throw off surveillance teams, in which case the operatives are commonly sent to different accommodations altogether. Regardless, it's in the operatives' best interest to befriend those working at or near the team's lodging. This increases the chance that the team's belongings will remain safe, and that they'll learn of anyone paying the location undue attention.

While in the field, operatives should balance routine (to avoid attention) and deviations from it (to avoid surveillance). They should get used to their environment as quickly as possible and note discrepancies, such as people suddenly appearing or a store suddenly closing, and oddities, such as slow-moving vehicles and recurring "wrong number" calls. Any of these things can be a sign of enemy activity. Remembering faces and numbers is particularly helpful, as it allows the agency to pursue leads the operatives provide during their regular calls into the home office (which should occur at regular intervals, at least twice a day).

Fieldwork is delicate, especially abroad, where traditions and customs aren't always evident and a cultural *faux pas* can easily upset the entire mission. Operatives are routinely trained to avoid places of worship, for instance, as they're commonly hot spots of debate and confrontation, and sometimes recruiting centers for fundamentalist organizations. Also, team members should always dress to acclimate, not to accentuate, and keep conversation light and dispassionate.
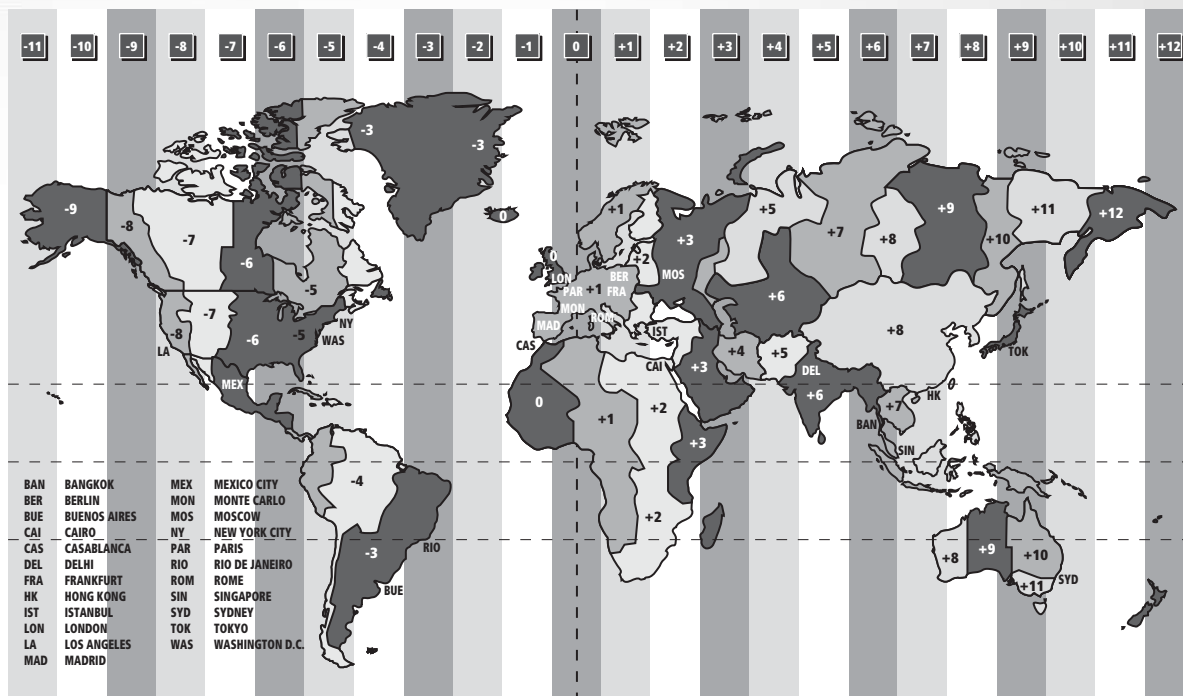
Operatives must remain calm, confident, and in control at all times. They should know what they want and where they're going, or at least put up a good front that they do. In the unfortunate event of a hostile confrontation, they should remain in charge of the situation yet appear submissive, avoiding eye contact and keeping their ears wide open for details about the aggressor. Humor is generally helpful in resolving such situations, though the operative must avoid touchy subjects, or any that may make the aggressor look foolish, as this may escalate things.

ESPIONAGE HOT SPOTS AROUND THE WORLD

Spies operate with many liberties in the U.S., U.K., Russia, Japan, parts of Africa and the Middle East, and most of Europe. Switzerland, once a bed of intrigue due to its central location and picturesque horizons, has fallen out of favor for the very reason it was once so pivotal — everyone went there. For a time, the country was under so much surveillance that it was suggested the average traveler gained files in five countries just getting off the plane.

TIME ZONE DIAGRAM

Time zone labels: -11 -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5 +6 +7 +8 +9 +10 +11 +12

City abbreviations:

BAN	BANGKOK	MEX	MEXICO CITY
BER	BERLIN	MON	MONTE CARLO
BUE	BUENOS AIRES	MOS	MOSCOW
CAI	CAIRO	NY	NEW YORK CITY
CAS	CASABLANCA	PAR	PARIS
DEL	DELHI	RIO	RIO DE JANEIRO
FRA	FRANKFURT	ROM	ROME
HK	HONG KONG	SIN	SINGAPORE
IST	ISTANBUL	SYD	SYDNEY
LON	LONDON	TOK	TOKYO
LA	LOS ANGELES	WAS	WASHINGTON D.C.
MAD	MADRID		

How To Use This Diagram: Cities listed on Table 3.1: Approximate Direct Flight Travel Times are shown on this map *(see below)*, along with the number of hours each is ahead or behind GMT standard. Add or subtract this number from GMT to find the region's local time.

Greenwich Mean Time (GMT): Also known as Zulu Time to aviators and military personnel, GMT is derived from the Prime Meridian in Greenwich, England. World Time Zones are established every 15 degrees east and west of the Prime Meridian, as illustrated above.

TABLE 3.1: APPROXIMATE DIRECT FLIGHT TRAVEL TIMES (IN HOURS)

	BAN	BER	BUE	CAI	CAS	DEL	FRA	HK	IST	LON	LA	MAD	MEX	MON	MOS	NY	PAR	RIO	ROM	SIN	SYD	TOK	WAS
Bangkok	—	9.5	19	8	12	3.5	10	2	8.5	11	15	11.5	17.5	10.5	8	15.5	10.5	18	10	1.5	8.5	5	16
Berlin	9.5	—	13.5	13.5	3	6.5	0.5	10	2	1	10.5	2	11	1	2	7	1	11.5	1.5	11	18	10	7.5
Buenos Aires	19	13.5	—	13.5	10.5	18	13	21	14	12.5	11	11.5	8.5	12.5	15	9.5	12.5	2	12.5	18	13.5	20.5	9.5
Cairo	8	13.5	13.5	—	4	5	3.5	9	1.5	4	14	4	14	3	3.5	10	3.5	11	2.5	9.5	16.5	11	10.5
Casablanca	12	3	10.5	4	—	9	2.5	12.5	3.5	2.5	11	1	10	2	5	6.5	2	8.5	2.5	13.5	20.5	13	7
Delhi	3.5	6.5	18	5	9	—	7	4.5	5	7.5	14.5	8	16.5	7	5	13.5	7.5	16	6.5	4.5	12	6.5	27
Frankfurt	10	0.5	13	3.5	2.5	7	—	10.5	2	0.5	10.5	1.5	11	1	2.5	7	0.5	11	1	11.5	18.5	10.5	7.5
Hong Kong	2	10	21	9	12.5	4.5	10.5	—	9	11	13	12	16	11	8	14.5	11	20	10.5	3	8.5	3.5	15
Istanbul	8.5	2	14	1.5	3.5	5	2	9	—	3	12.5	3	13	2	2	9	2.5	11.5	1.5	10	17	10	9.5
London	11	1	12.5	4	2.5	7.5	0.5	11	3	—	10	1.5	10	1	3	6.5	0.5	10.5	1.5	12.5	19.5	11	6.5
Los Angeles	15	10.5	11	14	11	14.5	10.5	13	12.5	10	—	10.5	3	11	11	4.5	10.5	11.5	11.5	16	13.5	10	4
Madrid	11.5	2	11.5	4	1	8	1.5	12	3	1.5	10.5	—	10	1	4	6.5	1	9	1.5	13	20	12	7
Mexico City	17.5	11	8.5	14	10	16.5	11	16	13	10	3	10	—	11	12	4	10.5	8.5	11.5	18.5	14.5	13	3.5
Monte Carlo	10.5	1	12.5	3	2	7	1	11	2	1	11	1	11	—	3	7	1	10	0.5	12	19	11	7.5
Moscow	8	2	15	3.5	5	5	2.5	8	2	3	11	4	12	3	—	8.5	3	13	2.5	9.5	16.5	8.5	9
New York	15.5	7	9.5	10	6.5	13.5	7	14.5	9	6.5	4.5	6.5	4	7	8.5	—	6.5	8.5	8	17.5	18	12.5	0.5
Paris	10.5	1	12.5	3.5	2	7.5	0.5	11	2.5	0.5	10.5	1	10.5	1	3	6.5	—	10.5	1	12	19	11	7
Rio	18	11.5	2	11	8.5	16	11	20	11.5	10.5	11.5	9	8.5	10	13	8.5	10.5	—	10.5	18	15.5	21	8.5
Rome	10	1.5	12.5	2.5	2.5	6.5	1	10.5	1.5	1.5	11.5	1.5	11.5	0.5	2.5	8	1	10.5	—	11.5	18.5	11	8
Singapore	1.5	11	18	9.5	13.5	4.5	11.5	3	10	12.5	16	13	18.5	12	9.5	17.5	12	18	11.5	—	7	6	17.5
Sydney	8.5	18	13.5	16.5	20.5	12	18.5	8.5	17	19.5	13.5	20	14.5	19	16.5	18	19	15.5	18.5	7	—	9	17.5
Tokyo	5	10	20.5	11	13	6.5	10.5	3.5	10	11	10	12	13	11	8.5	12.5	11	21	11	6	9	—	12.5
Washington D.C.	16	7.5	9.5	10.5	7	27	7.5	15	9.5	6.5	4	7	3.5	7.5	9	0.5	7	8.5	8	17.5	17.5	12.5	—

How To Use This Table: Find the city from which you are departing in the left column and cross-reference it with the city to which you are traveling. The resulting number is the approximate travel time between the cities by plane, in hours. These numbers represent standard airline travel (at an average of 550 MPH) and are rounded to the nearest half-hour.

Espionage hot spots change daily in these trying times, drafting behind shifting alliances and breeding chaos. As of this writing, Italy has endured recent spy antics involving the CIA, and England and Iraq are focal points in the anti-terror effort, with operatives from MI5 and other agencies tracking down leads in a series of bloody London bombings.

Of course, certain cities and regions will always be "in vogue." At the head of the world's only remaining super power, Washington D.C. is a perennial destination for spies of all flags. The many local embassies offer a base of operations and periodically a safe haven for foreign operatives — and act as an alluring target for their rivals. Trouble is always brewing between China and Taiwan, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is under constant surveillance by the U.S. and others.

SPY JARGON

The language of spies has developed over centuries as a blend of lingering code words, doubletalk, and private profanities. In many ways, it is a verbal record of the profession's exploits, wild successes, and bitter failures. For good or ill, it is theirs alone.

Abort: A noun referring to a failed mission.

Accommodation Address: An anonymous address used by cut-outs and go-betweens to receive messages.

Acorn: A person assisting during a mission.

ACOUSTIN: Intelligence gathered by audio surveillance. Also called ACINT.

Action Agent: An operative whose work involves violence, breaking and entering, and similarly dirty activities.

Active Measures: A Russian term for covert operations.

Active Opposition: Enemy counter-espionage operatives.

Additive: A cipher or code key.

Administratively Confidential: A U.S. term for information that isn't officially classified and yet could be embarrassing if released.

Agent Assessment: Reports on an operative's performance.

Agent-Bolvan: A Russian espionage term for a decoy operative that is now universal.

Agent Development: The effort to win over an operative through a variety of sources, including his friends, colleagues, and lovers.

Agent Disposal: The termination of an operative. Alternately referred to as "agent termination."

Agent in Place: An operative who offers his services to a foreign country or agency while remaining in his current position. Moles are agents in place.

Agent of Influence: An operative — commonly a politician, academic, journalist, editor, or other person with access to propaganda tools — who sways opinion rather than performing covert action. Alternately referred to as a "leakman."

Agent Provocateur: An operative who promotes his cause with riots, rebellion, mutiny, or similar uprisings.

Agitprop: An abbreviation for "agitation and propaganda."

Air Proprietary: An airline sponsored by an intelligence agency. Air America was the most famed air proprietary.

Alert Memo: An espionage tip.

Alimony: Compensation paid to a long-term undercover operative once his assignment is complete.

Alphabet Soup: The dizzying litany of acronyms in the espionage profession (e.g. CIA, KGB, DGSE, etc.).

All-Source Intelligence: Intelligence based on all available data.

Alternate Meet: A fallback meeting place and time that is used when a primary meeting is compromised.

Angel: Any spy of another agency.

Approach: An operative's introduction to another operative, a recruitment candidate, or an uninitiated civilian. The approach may be cold (without preparation), warm (with careful preparation), or hot (sudden, forced by circumstances).

Apparat(us): A spy network.

Aquarium: GRU term for its headquarters in Khodynke, Moscow, a nine-story building whose exterior is almost entirely glass. Many GRU officers also refer to the building as steklyashka ("piece of glass").

Archives: The KGB's term for its central file index.

Area Division: An intelligence agency division in charge of one or more geographic areas.

Artichoke: The use of drugs, hypnosis, or brainwashing to test the loyalty of one's operatives.

Asset: A resource belonging to an intelligence agency or operative.

Attaché: A military officer assigned to a foreign capital as a liaison and to gather data.

Aunt Minnies: Photographs taken by civilians and provided to an intelligence agency, so-called because the civilians' relatives are often visible in the shots.

Authentication: Any system used by operatives to identify each other.

Authorized Persons: Those with clearance to view classified information.

Babble Juice: Truth serum.

Babysitter: A bodyguard.

Back Channels: An intelligence agency's private radio system.

Backstop: To verify and support an operative's cover identity.

Bagman: An operative who pays spies in his employ or bribes those in authority.

Barium: A Russian term for false information provided to a suspected leak in order to prove or disprove his loyalty. Intelligence agencies track outbreaks of the information to determine where and how it was passed.

Betty Bureau: FBI term for a female who has worked for the agency for the majority of her career.

Bigot List: The names of people who know of a certain clandestine activity, and who must therefore be safeguarded, or prevented from speaking about the activity to outsiders.

Biographic Leverage: A CIA term for information useful to blackmail.

Bird Watcher: A British espionage term for a spy.

Black Bag: An informal term for a diplomatic pouch.

Black Bag Job: A mission involving bribery, burglary, or other criminal activities. The infamous Watergate break-in was a black bag job. Originally, this term referred to the smuggling of money using a diplomatic pouch.

Black Bag Operation: A CIA term for any mission involving bribery.

Black Box: Any classified gear. This term is frequently used in conjunction with spy plane upgrades.

Black Cabinet: A censorship unit with a country's postal service. Also known as a "black chamber," especially when it contains a cryptographic complement.

Black List: A counter-intelligence list of suspected and hostile collaborators, sympathizers, and others viewed as security threats.

Black Mind: A compliment paid to an operative who can see through deception.

Black Operation: A mission undertaken off the books (i.e. without official sanction).

Black Operator: A Soviet term for foreign operatives working for the KGB or GRU.

Black Propaganda: Propaganda that is inaccurately believed to come from a particular source.

Black-Flagged: A term referring to an operative who is to be interrogated and killed if captured.

Blind Date: A meeting with someone at a time and place of their choosing.

Blind Memoranda: Printed directives sent without letterhead, a file number, or other identifying marks. Blind memoranda is typically destroyed after it is read.

Blind Zone: An area immune to electronic surveillance.

Blowback: Fallout caused by false propaganda being taken as the truth.

Blown: Compromised (e.g. an operative whose true identity and allegiance have been discovered).

Blue-on-Blue: Friendly fire.

Bodywash: To provide a mundane explanation for an operative's death in order to sidestep suspicion. Alternately, to fake an operative's death so he may continue his work unfettered by friends, family, and colleagues.

Boehme Gear: A slang term for cryptology equipment.

Bogie: An unidentified operative or organization.

Bona Fides: An operative's credentials.

Bone Crushers: Assistants to the interrogators who questioned prisoners at the Lubyanka prison complex in Moscow.

Book Message: A change in operative policy.

Born Classified: A U.S. term for atomic energy information during the Cold War, which was automatically classified unless reason was provided to the contrary.

Box: To give a polygraph examination. The person taking the exam is "boxed."

Box, The: A slang term for MI5.

Boyeva Gruppa: A Russian term meaning "squad of thugs," which is used to refer to any team who kidnap, intimidate, or murder.

Branch Lines: A British espionage term for incidental contacts acquired during a mission.

Brick Agent: An FBI operative who works in a field office.

Briefing: A pre-mission meeting in which assigned operatives meet with their Control to learn their goals, parameters, and other information related to the op.

Broadway: An MI6 term for its headquarters from 1924 to 1966, a decrepit building located at No. 54 Broadway, opposite St. James Park and adjacent to Queen Anne's Gate in London. Its false front was that of a passport control office. Author John Le Carré immortalized this location as "The Circus" in his realistic spy novels.

Broken: Gone bad. This term is generally applied to an operative who has become a liability.

Brush Camera: A Cold War-era camera that could be used like a modern handheld photocopier, rapidly taking pictures as it passed over a document or object. A variation of this device was the "roll-over camera," which operated like a modern paint roller.

Brush Contact: A live drop in which the participants don't converse, but rather pass by each other just long enough to make the pass. Brush contacts are intended to look accidental. Alternately referred to as a "brush pass."

BUBRE: Burn Before Reading — a joke classification amongst career spies.

Bucket Job: An FBI term for a surveillance operation, derived from a World War II joke about the long hours of such operations requiring agents to bring their meals in buckets.

Bucket Squad: An FBI term for a team of agents assigned to a bucket squad.

Buck Slip: An internal intelligence agency memo.

Bug: An electronic device hidden in a location so operatives can observe or overhear what happens there.

Build-Up Material: Truthful information provided to an enemy to support a double agent's credibility. Alternately referred to as "feed material."

Bureau Special: An FBI term for a black operation.

Burn Bag: A parcel containing documents and items to be destroyed. Typically, a burn bag is totally incinerated in a furnace or a bonfire.

Burned: Sacrificed. A burned operative is alternately referred to as "discarded," "disavowed," or "severed."

Bury: To conceal someone or something, usually with substitution or by creating a cover identity or false front for it.

Burst Transmission: A radio message condensed to a momentary screech, which is broadcast quickly to avoid interception. Alternately referred to as "blipspeak."

Candidate Material: Weapons-grade uranium or plutonium.

Case Death: The unexplained failure of a mission, which sparks concern of a security leak.

Case Officer: An operative in charge of a network of operatives. The members of this network may or may not be aware of one another. A case officer is also commonly his own recruiter. Alternately referred to as the "principal" of his network.

Cauterization: The act of eliminating or removing to safety a compromised asset or operative.

Cell: The most basic — and commonly the most expendable — unit of operatives in the espionage arena.

Cellar, The: A Cold War Russian term for the Lubyanka execution center in Moscow.

Center, The: A Cold War Russian term for the Moscow headquarters of the KGB and MVD.

Century House: The actual name of MI6's headquarters from 1966 to 1993. Century House is adjacent to London's Lambeth North underground (subway) station.

Chase Car: A surveillance vehicle that tails its ward.

Chekist: Originally, a member of the Cheka Bolshevik-Soviet state security organization. Later, this became a Russian term for any member of a Soviet-Russian state security agency.

Chicken Feed: Accurate information leaked with disinformation through a double agent. Chicken feed is commonly useful but never essential to the enemy.

Chuzhoi: A Soviet espionage term — meaning "alien" in Russian — for an operative driven by reasons other than politics or ideology.

Cipher: A method of manipulating a message by substituting letters of the alphabet, rendering it unreadable without the proper key.

Ciphony: Technological audio scrambling of a phone message, which may be bypassed using cryptography or a dedicated decryption device.

Circuit Discipline: Precautions against radio and telephone surveillance.

Clandestine: Unseen or unheard.

Clandestine Mentality: A compliment paid to an operative who is good at deception.

Classified: Sensitive. This term is generally applied to information protected from exposure by a government. For example, many U.S. agencies utilize three main classifications, in order from lowest to highest: Confidential, Secret, and Top Secret. Russian agencies also use three, in the same order: Secret, Completely Secret, and Of Special Importance. NATO has its own classifications, the highest of which is Cosmic (though up to the 1950s, it was Metric). Frequently, a classification will include additional terms; for example, in the U.S., NOFORN translates as "Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals" and RD translates as "Restricted Data" always related to atomic energy. Thus, a document classified TOP SECRET NOFORN RD contains atomic information only meant for U.S. citizens with Top Secret clearance.

Classified Contract: An operation that involves classified information.

Clean: Never used and therefore likely unknown to enemies. This term is also used as a verb to describe the process of making a location secure or erasing evidence of an event (in the latter capacity, "pacify" is also used).

Cleaner: An operative who specializes in containing exposure and eliminating evidence left behind by other operatives. Because the methods of cleaners are often extreme and their presence indicates a certain degree of failure, other operatives avoid them.

Clear Text: Non-encrypted text. Alternately referred to as "plain text."

Clearance: Authority within an intelligence agency, granting privileged access to sensitive documents and information, commonly along with greater responsibility and control over agency assets.

Cleared Insider: A person with appropriate clearance who is involved in a classified operation.

Close a Contract: To complete an assassination mission.

Closed Area: A room, building, or region that an intelligence agency isolates for secret operations.

Co-Opted Agent: A national who assists a foreign intelligence agency. Alternately referred to as "co-opted worker."

Co-Option: Assisting, or taking control of, another agency or operative's mission or facilities.

Cobbler: A forger specializing in creating false documents such as passports, birth certificates, and other personal and government documents. Alternately referred to as "shoemaker."

Code: A method of manipulating a message by substituting words or phrases, rendering it unreadable without the proper key.

Codename: An operative's alias within his espionage circle, used to conceal his true identity. Alternately referred to as an operative's "handle."

Codress: A transmission in which the recipient address and the body of the message are encrypted.

Cold: The psychological terrain of an operative located in enemy territory.

Cold Approach: An attempt to recruit someone into an intelligence agency with no evidence that they might want to be a spy. Cold approaches are highly dangerous and therefore rarely considered. Alternately referred to as a "cold pitch."

Collection Agency: An organization that specializes in gathering intelligence.

Color-Coded Door: During the Cold War, an installation door painted in a color corresponding to the clearance required to enter.

COMINT: U.S. term for intelligence gathered through radio signal intercepts.

Commercial Division: An intelligence agency division in charge of one or more cover businesses.

Commercial Drop: A dead drop situated at a third-party business.

Company, The: A slang term for the CIA.

Completely Secret: The second-highest Russian security classification, applied to information that is potentially damaging to an entire ministry or branch of the government.

Compromise: To expose.

Confidential: The lowest U.S. security classification applied to any information reserved for those with the proper clearance. Confidential data would cause limited injury to national security if released (e.g. military force estimates, weapon specifications, and training routines).

Confidential Informant: Someone who secretly provides intelligence to an espionage agency or its operatives.

Confusion Agent: An operative sent to befuddle enemies rather than spy on them.

Conjecture Compromise: Suspicion of exposure.

Contingency Fund: A secret money collection used to fund black operations.

Contract Employee: A mercenary.

Control: An operative's superior, who may be encountered at the home office or in the field.

Controlled Foreign Agent/Asset: U.S. military term for a double agent.

Controlling Authority: An espionage term referring to the organization commanding a secret network.

Cook the Books: To slant an intelligence analysis to support a particular agenda.

Cookie Factory, The: A slang term for the CIA.

Corporation: KGB term for a communist party in another country.

Cossack: A Cold War Soviet Bloc term for a veteran STB operative.

Counter-Espionage: The practice of spying on spies, or preventing them from capturing sensitive information. Often used interchangeably with "counter-intelligence."

Counter-Intelligence: Protecting against assassination and sabotage. Often used interchangeably with "counter-espionage."

Counter-Intelligence Appraisal: A review of the chance that an operative or other intelligence agency asset might be in danger.

Counter-Intelligence Inspection: A review of security procedures.

Counter-Surveillance: The practice of detecting and avoiding enemy surveillance.

Counterspy: An operative assigned to conduct counter-espionage.

Country Team: The collective heads of an agency's operations in a foreign country. Alternately referred to as a "country desk."

Cousins: MI6's term for the CIA.

Cover Identity: A false biography created to conceal one's true identity, usually supported with forged documents. Alternately referred to as a "cover story."

Coverage: Surveillance.

DATA STREAM ON...
BALANCING MISSION INVENTORY
+ + ITEMS MISSING + +
PERSONAL ALLOTMENT:
CHAPTER 3
3 TRADECRAFT

Covert: Seen but not noticed.

Covert Action: A CIA term for covertly influencing a foreign country.

Crib: A cryptologic control word or phrase that's useful in decryption. For example, a decryption specialist might be reasonably certain that a foreign term for "enemy" is sprinkled through a piece of encrypted text and use those repeated instances as anchors in his decryption effort.

Cross Targeting: Cooperation between intelligence agencies to gather intelligence about a single topic.

Cryptology: The science of creating and breaking ciphers and codes. Likewise, "cryptography" deals exclusively with creating ciphers and codes, and "cryptanalysis" deals exclusively with breaking them. Messages written in cipher or code are often referred to as "cryptograms," while "cryptosecurity" deals with protecting ciphers and codes. The terms "cryptomaterial" and "cryptosystems" refer to all equipment used to either create or break ciphers or codes. Any location where cryptology is conducted is called a "cyptocenter" and the length of time a cipher or code remains in use is called a "cryptoperiod."

Cryptonym: A codename or an alias.

Custodian: A person guarding sensitive information.

Customer: Anyone with the proper clearance to read an intelligence report.

Cut-Out: An intermediary between an agency and its operatives, allowing them to communicate without knowing one another (thus preventing either from betraying the other). Many cut-outs work in embassies and other public offices, where frequent, discreet, and logical contact can be made. The Mossad's *bodlim* are a practical example of cut-outs.

D Notice: A formal British censorship request distributed to editors targeting information that may not be illegal, but certainly goes against the national interest. A D Notice always invokes the Official Secrets Act, a British law passed in 1889 to withhold information as "secret," as well as the subsequent 1911 act which allows for criminal prosecution of those publishing such information.

Danger Signal: A mark or action indicating exposure or surveillance.

Dangle: An operative who pretends to be interested in turning to another agency when in fact he's planning to set himself up as a double agent truly loyal to his current masters. Alternately, an operative unwittingly used as bait for reasons known only to his superiors.

Date Break: The point at which one cipher or code is replaced with another.

Dated: A term applied to information that is compromised.

Dead Drop: A discreet location where operatives hide items for allies to retrieve at a later time; also known as a "dead letter box."

Dead Drop Spike: A canister that may be pushed into the ground with one's foot, allowing an operative to quickly leave a drop with one firm step.

Debriefing: A post-mission interview in which all surviving operatives narrate their experiences in the field.

Deception Material: Lies.

Deep Cover: A long-term mission in which one or more operatives spend weeks, months, or even years out of contact from their allies and home office. Sleepers are usually considered to be in deep cover.

Defector: An operative who voluntarily sides with an enemy organization.

Defector-in-Place: An operative who voluntarily sides with an enemy organization, but remains in his current position so he can continue to gather intelligence for his new home office.

Demote Maximally: A KGB term for execution.

Deniable Person: Someone with whom an agency can deny association.

Derivative Classification: A classification applied to information not because it is sensitive but because related information is sensitive.

Designated Country: A U.S. term for any country considered to be a substantial threat. Any person holding a security clearance is required by law to report any contact with any person from a designated country. Since the end of the Cold War, the list of designated countries has been in constant flux.

Desk Man: An operative who doesn't conduct fieldwork.

Destruction Procedures: Approved methods for destroying documents.

Devised Facility: A business that doesn't actually exist.

Dirty: Treacherous. Alternately refers to an exposed operative.

Dirty Tricks: A CIA term collectively referring to black operations and covert action.

Disinformation: Doctored information intended to dupe someone, usually to injure his reputation.

Disposable: A term applied to anything that can be sacrificed to ensure mission success.

Distribution Codes: A list of those who may view classified material.

Doctor: A Russian espionage term for a police officer. Operatives who are arrested are said to have suffered an "illness" and those in jail are "in hospital."

Doorknocker: Security personnel who physically visit a person's family, friends, employers, and neighbors during a background check.

Double Agent: An operative working for two sides, but with allegiance to only one. Typically, double agents collect sensitive information, spread disinformation, and conduct sabotage to hinder the group they're working against.

Double Back: To reverse one's loyalties.

Double-Cross System: Initially a British espionage program for turning captured operatives and returning them to their former allegiances so they can act as double agents. Alternately referred to as the "Playback System."

Doubling: The process of turning an operative and then returning him to his former allegiance.

Down In Dixie: A Mossad term for Israel and other southern territories.

Downfield Blocking: One intelligence agency warning another that it intends to launch a mission in its territory.

Downgrade: To lower a document's classification.

Dry Cleaning: Detecting surveillance, losing a tail, or evading a surveillance team.

Dry Run: A mission rehearsal. This term also refers to a mission with no result.

Dubok: A Russian term for a dead drop.

Dummy: A fictitious operative or message.

Dummy Defector: A double agent posing as a defector.

E&E: Escape and evasion.

Ears Only: An informal classification applied to information too sensitive to be committed to paper.

ELINT: The American term for intelligence gathered through radar, computers, and other gear with a unique electromagnetic radiation signature.

Emanations Security: Measures taken to protect devices from electromagnetic surveillance such as TEMPEST technology.

Emergency Cryptosystem: A backup cipher or code.

Emily: An obscure espionage term for an operative who spies for emotional reasons, and is therefore easy and inexpensive to recruit and manipulate. The nickname is derived from a true case, in which a woman working at the U.S. State Department was gradually brought into the fold as a Soviet spy. Emily was overwhelmed with depression. Her mother was dying and she couldn't pay the medical bills. She was single and overwhelmed by life. One night at a Washington party, a man spilled a drink on her dress and she burst into tears. The man insisted that he take her home and have the dress cleaned, and for weeks thereafter, he stopped by to check in on her, offering her small gifts of money for her mother's care. The man never made advances on her, nor did he bring up her job; rather, he waited for her to bring up her work and expressed an interest when she did. By that time, Emily was so indebted to him that she gladly told him about everything she came in contact with at the office. By the time she realized he was a Soviet spy, she was too dependent upon his approval and money to turn away. She provided him information for 14 years and earned over $100,000 before she was captured.

Empty Vessel: A defector with nothing to offer.

Enciphered Code: A code concealed with a cipher. Alternately a message hidden with both a cipher and a code.

Encipher: To conceal a message using a cipher.

Encode: To conceal a message using a code.

Escape Chit: An emergency card used by downed spy plane pilots to communicate with the locals. The phrases written on an escape chit ask for food, shelter, and transportation to a predetermined safe haven, usually in exchange for a reward.

Espionage Notation: Written warnings placed on documents indicating their classified contents.

Exchange Commodity: Something other than money that's used to bribe a spy.

Exclusion Area: A location that's off limits to everyone without the proper clearance.

Executive Action: A CIA term for overthrowing a foreign leader. This term also refers to assassination, murder, or another criminal action taken with the approval and supervision of an intelligence agency.

Executive Order: An order from the U.S. President.

Exfiltration: Secretly departing an area or installation.

Eyes Only: An informal classification applied to information that may be read but should not be discussed (just in case someone's listening).

F-Entity: A CIA term for the FBI.

Fabricator: An operative used to pass false intelligence to another agency.

Facility Clearance: A license granting a private installation the right to view and produce classified information.

False Drop: A location where an operative pretends to leave messages, or where messages are left in spoof code.

False Flag: An assumed agency allegiance used to recruit someone who might be attracted to it.

False Front: A mundane disguise concealing something; also known as a "cover."

Family Jewels: The 700-page report ordered by CIA Director James Schesinger in the wake of the Watergate scandal to document the CIA's illegal or improper activities to date. The Family Jewels included information about Operations CHAOS, COINTELPRO, and MKULTRA *(see pages 34 and 37)*. It also named CIA plumbers and identified many Agency black bag jobs, incidents of mail tampering, and assassination plans. By 1973, the media caught wind of the Family Jewels and started to dig. Hearings and releases followed, airing much of the CIA's dirty laundry.

Farm, The: The CIA term for its training school, Camp Peary, located in Williamsburg, Virginia. This 10,000-acre installation doesn't officially exist and doesn't appear on any government-approved map.

Farm Boys: Operatives trained at The Farm.

Fence: A Russian term for a national border.

Ferret: To gather ELINT using satellites.

Ferret Search: A CIA term for a surprise internal security inspection.

Filbert Base: A dummy military facility.

Finished Intelligence: The final product of a mission after the analysts have combed it over and added their thoughts, and all sensitive information has been removed.

Firm, The: A British term for MI6. Alternately refers to the CIA.

Fix: A CIA term for compromise, blackmail, and misdirection.

Flap: Publicity, in particular a scandal.

Flap and Seals Man: A person specializing in mail tampering.

Flash Backstop: Cover identity documents that cannot stand up to serious scrutiny.

Flash Message: A CIA term for a high-priority message. A deputy director reads every flash message within seven minutes of its arrival at CIA headquarters.

Flash Roll: A wad of money, commonly counterfeit, used to lure new recruits.

Floater: Someone used for a single intelligence operation. Often, a floater's involvement is unwitting.

Floating Box: A surveillance method in which a team establishes a perimeter around the target and moves with him.

Flutter: To conduct an interview using a polygraph.

Friends: MI5's tongue-in-cheek term for MI6, with which the counter-intelligence agency has long taken issue.

Fumigate: To search an area for bugs.

Funkspiel: A German term, meaning "radio game," referring to impersonation over a radio channel.

Funny Paper: Counterfeit money.

Fusion: The process of compiling one finding from multiple pieces of intelligence.

Gamekeeper: A British espionage term for a handler or Control.

Gardening: A British espionage term referring to an activity that is expected to prompt an enemy to send a message in cipher or code, thus providing allies with more data to help crack the communication.

Ghoul: An operative assigned to conduct ghoul work.

Ghoul Work: Haunting graveyards to verify obituary notices, allowing for the creation of cover identities in the names of the long dead.

Go Over: To switch allegiance between organizations.

Go Private: To retire from The Great Game.

Go to Ground: To go into hiding, or to run.

Go to Surface: To come out of hiding.

Go-No-Go: Determining whether a mission proceeds as planned. "Go" indicates that it should, while "No-Go" indicates that it shouldn't.

Good Old Boy Circuit: The central clutch of experienced veterans in an intelligence agency.

Gray Propaganda: Propaganda without a recognized source.

Graymail: Sensitive intelligence a captured operative levers for his release, or a trial defendant threatens to reveal if he is further prosecuted.

Great Game, The: Intelligence work.

Green House: A brothel or other compromising location used to trap blackmail targets.

Grinder, The: The CIA term for the room in which its operatives interrogate defectors.

Ground Truth: Information gained by operatives sent directly to the source (e.g. information about an installation collected by a team of infiltrating operatives).

Handler: An operative's field supervisor, often working as an intermediary between Control and the agents.

Handwriting: A British term for an operative's individual style, which can sometimes be used to identify him from traces of his work.

Hang: To plant a surveillance device.

Hard Man: An experienced operative known to have killed in the line of duty.

Hard Returns: The yield of an espionage operation.

Hard Target: A country or territory that spies find hard to penetrate or compromise. Alternately referred to as a "denied area."

Hard-Wired: Bugged. Alternately referred to as "wired for sound" or "wired for sight."

Heavy Mob: A CIA term for a group of operatives specializing in violence.

Heavy Squad: An FBI term for a group of operatives specializing in violence.

Home Office: An agency's commanders and administration, or the physical headquarters they inhabit.

Honey Trap: An operation in which a target is seduced by a raven or swallow, and coerced to perform espionage. Alternately referred to as a "honey pot."

Host Country: A country that voluntarily permits espionage on its soil.

Hugger-Mugger: Secret or stealthy. Alternately referred to as "confused" or "disorderly."

HUMINT: Intelligence gathered directly from other people, usually during first-person interviews and interrogations.

Hunting Pack: A surveillance team.

Hush Puppy: A silenced, automatic pistol designed to be as used as quietly as possible. One shot is fired each time the trigger is pulled, but the shell casing is *not* ejected and a new round is *not* automatically chambered. The only sound produced by the gun is made by the hammer slapping against the firing pin.

Illegal: A spy who isn't protected by diplomatic immunity, and who may therefore be tried for espionage (i.e. most field agents). Alternately a spy who commits illegal acts as part of his activities. This is also a Soviet term for an intelligence officer passing himself off as a native while recruiting for his agency (in this capacity, the illegal might also be called "an artist on tour"). The Soviets called an illegal in intelligence officer a "chief illegal."

Illegal Net: A spy ring headed by an illegal.

Illegal Support Officer: A legal or other operative who helps to produce an illegal's cover identities.

Illness: KGB term for the exposure or arrest of an operative.

IMINT: Intelligence gathered using aerial and satellite photography, as well as infrared and radar sensors, lasers, and other electro-optics.

Immediate Agent: An operative who is too eager to provide results in exchange for compensation or moral gratification. Immediate agents are often easily spotted due to their rash behavior.

Immediate Message: A message with immediate national security implications.

Imprest Fund: A bank account that launders money for an operative.

Indicator: A sign on a secret message conveying the importance of its encrypted contents.

Industrial Espionage: Spy business conducted to improve or worsen a government or company production or profit.

Information Security: Measures taken to protect sensitive documents and data.

Institute, The: An Israeli term for Mossad.

Insulation: The perceived distance between two agency assets (e.g. an operative who never meets an ally is said to be "insulated from him").

Intelligence: Secret information gained about an enemy. Alternately, an organization that gathers such information, or the process used to obtain it. The term "espionage" is frequently used interchangeably with "intelligence," though they are quite different. Espionage encompasses many activities intended to strengthen one's cause or weaken that of another. Facets of espionage involve intelligence and vice-versa, but they are not synonymous.

Intelligence Annex: A document describing enemy strengths, commonly disseminated during a mission briefing.

Intelligence Appraisal: A document describing probable enemy reactions, commonly disseminated during a mission briefing.

Intelligence Appreciation: British term for an intelligence estimate (an assessment of a target group, situation, or region, along with recommended courses of action).

Intelligence Community: Collective of intelligence organizations and operatives.

Intelligence Requirement: A subject that demands attention. Controls, handlers, and controlling entities often pass intelligence requirements down to agencies and operatives as a "to do" list.

Intercept: The act or result of tapping an electronic signal.

Internal Attack: An insurgency.

Inventory: A list of classified documents and the people who have clearance to view them.

Invisible Ink: Writing fluids that can't be viewed until a certain catalyst — usually heat or chemicals — is applied.

Isolation: A CIA term for an agent's period of training at The Farm (e.g. "he's in isolation").

Jib, The: The CIA term for an inflatable dummy that its operatives used from the 1980s on to replace themselves when they fled a vehicle or location. This ruse is only useful if the enemy is observing from a distance. Alternately referred to as a "jack in the box."

Jock Strap Medals: A CIA operative's decorations, which are kept in a safe box at the agency's Langley headquarters until his retirement.

Joe: A slang term for a deep cover operative.

Key Symbol: An icon or idea around which propaganda is conceived.

L Pill: A suicide pill.

Lamplighter: British term for a spy, made popular in the fictional work of novelist John le Carré.

Land of the Dead: A Mossad term for the Arab states.

Leak: A breach in agency security, usually in the form of one or more moles.

Leakman: A journalist or newspaper editor who publishes material an intelligence agency wants to make public.

Legal: A spy who is protected by diplomatic immunity, and who may therefore *not* be tried for espionage. Such spies are commonly said to be "PNG'd" when caught — that is, they're declared *persona non grata* and asked to leave the country. Alternately a spy who refrains from illegal acts as part of his activities.

Legend: A cover identity. The part of a legend that the public sees is referred to as its "roof."

Letter Box: A cut-out to whom messages and packages are sent or given, and who then turns them over to other operatives per set criteria.

Liquidate: To murder; also, "neutralize," "sanction," or "terminate." An emphasis can be placed on the need for success by adding "with extreme prejudice."

Live Drop: A discreet location where operatives meet to pass information directly.

Live Letter Box: An uninvolved ally who transfers messages between spies.

Load: To leave something at a dead drop.

Lodgment: The first penetration of an intelligence agency.

Long Title: An operation's full name, without acronyms, abbreviations, or codes.

Main Enemy: A Soviet term for the United States.

Make: To recognize someone.

Make a Pass: To pass something to another person.

Manipulative Communications Cover: An effort to disguise covert signals as common radio traffic.

Manipulative Communications Deception: An effort to transmit misleading radio signals to confuse eavesdroppers.

Mark: To designate a document or piece of data classified.

Material: Information.

Measles: Assassination made to appear natural ("he died from measles").

MEDINT: Intelligence gathered about medical topics and from medical sources.

MIB: Man in Black — a general public use term for spies.

MICE: Money, Ideology, Compromise, Ego — the four basic motivations exploited to blackmail or entrap someone.

Mickey: An obscure espionage term for an operative who decides to offer his secrets to a foreign power, usually in the interest of self-destruction or monetary gain. Intelligence professionals hate working with Mickeys, as they are notoriously difficult to control and rarely offer anything of true value. The nickname is derived from a true case, that of a high-ranking CIA spy who photocopied sensitive files and fed them to the Soviets during the Cold War. Like many such opportunistic agents, Mickey was apolitical; unlike most of his ilk, he dutifully served both of his sponsors for twelve years before he died of a heart attack during an interrogation.

Microdot: A photograph reduced to microscopic size for easy concealment; visible only under a microscope or similar device.

Mighty Wurlitzer: Placing a bogus news story in the hopes that it will be picked up by international services.

Mikrat: A microdot bleached to look like clear plastic or cellophane, making it easier to conceal.

Minox: The brand name of the first spy cameras, developed in Latvia. Minox cameras were famous for their tiny size, sturdy construction, and unexpectedly high resolution. Eventually, Minox specifically developed espionage versions of its cameras, concealing them in matchboxes, gloves and other small, mundane items. The company even created a developing kit that allowed operatives to prepare their finished pictures in a compact tank, even in full daylight.

Mischief Incorporated: A derogatory espionage term collectively referring to MI5 and MI6.

Mission Support Site: A wilderness safe house, or rather safe point, that rarely includes a physical building.

Mole: A term invented by spy novelist John Le Carré that refers to an operative employed by one organization and reporting its secrets and actions to another. This operative may have once been loyal to his current organization and turned by the group to whom he reports.

Moonlight Extradition: An illegal extradition; also called a "Mexican extradition."

Moscow Rules: A British term for a complex sign and countersign system used by operatives to let each other know whether they're being followed. The signs changed constantly, but were always simple and mundane — strategically placed chalk marks, items left in one location or another, etc. When used effectively, the Moscow Rules could prevent an operative under surveillance from compromising any other operations in his organization.

Most Secret (MS): A British term roughly analogous to "Top Secret" in the U.S.

Motel Kit: A Cold War-era contact microphone and amplifier placed against a wall to listen in on happenings in the next room, so-called due to its most common application.

Mule: A courier.

Musician: A radio operator, whose transmitter is referred to as his "music box."

N-Entity: A CIA term for NSA.

Naked: A term applied to an operative without a cover identity or backup.

Name Trace: A computer search to learn a person's biographical and professional data, including his known aliases, credit rating, criminal and military records, work history, medical information, and more.

Nashi: A KGB term for one of its own operatives or collaborators. Also, Russian for "ours." During the late Cold War, Western agencies mangled this term as "nash," applying it to their own operatives and allies.

Need to Know: A person's right to view sensitive information, whether he has the proper clearance or not (e.g. "that's need to know").

Negative Intelligence: Intelligence that has been compromised.

Neighbor: What many agencies call other agencies controlled by the same government, or by a friendly government.

Nest: The residence of a raven or swallow, which is usually equipped with surveillance gear so visitors' indiscretions can be recorded for later use.

Network: A group of operatives who may or may not know each other, supervised by a common handler, or Control. Networks are commonly divided into anonymous cells and are frequently also called "rings."

Neutralize: An FBI term for ruining someone's political credibility.

Nick: An investigator, detective, or counter-intelligence operative.

Nightcrawler: A talent spotter who prowls bars and clubs.

Noise: The collateral attention an agent draws to himself or his mission. Noise is nearly always discouraged.

Non-Official Cover (NOC): CIA term for an illegal Case Officer's cover identity.

Notional: A fictional company owned by the CIA, or used by the FBI to lure subversives away from their true allegiances.

Notional Agent: A fictional operative, created to throw opponents off an agency's true spies. Alternately referred to as a "dummy."

NUCINT: Intelligence gathered about nuclear power, nuclear weapons, or any source of radioactive energy.

Nugget: British term for the bait used to lure a defector (e.g. money, sex, political asylum, etc.).

Null: A meaningless character or word inserted into an enciphered message to throw off decryption attempts.

Number Crunchers: A jovial term for NSA's decryption computers.

Numbered Document: A document that appears classified but contains no sensitive data. This term came about because governments are fond of numbering everything they get their hands on.

Nursemaid: Russian term for a security operative who accompanies delegations during foreign trips to prevent defection. In Russian, this term translates as "nyanki."

Of Special Importance: The highest Russian security classification, applied to information that is potentially damaging to the whole of the Federation.

One-Time Pad: A simple but cumbersome cipher system that is nearly impossible to decode because its combination of code and key is used only once.

Open Code: The use of arcane or esoteric terminology or inflection known to the recipient.

Operational Climate: The situational conditions that may help or hinder missions in a given region. These may range from the policies of local government to the attitudes of the local populace to the dispositions of allied and enemy agencies in the area.

Operational Expenses: Off-the-books funds used by operatives for field purchases, bribes, and other incidentals. Alternately referred to as "field expenses" or "unvouchered funds."

Originator: A source of intelligence.

OSINT: The 1980s term for intelligence gained from open (public) sources, especially news media outlets.

Out of the Cold: A term applied to an operative who comes out of hiding.

Outside Man: CIA term for an illegal operative.

Overclassification: Classifying documents too frequently and thus keeping vital information out of appropriate hands.

Overflight: A spy plane mission, commonly to collect PHOINT.

Oversight: A government's examination of an agency's covert activities.

Overt: Both seen and heard. Alternately, this term may be used as a noun to refer to an ally who is publicly known.

Padding: Extra words added to the beginning or end of a coded message to confuse those attempting to decrypt it.

Paper Mill: An operative who churns out a high volume of useless information.

Parol: Russian espionage term for a password.

Paroles: Key words or phrases used by operatives to identify each other.

Pattern Analysis: Collating data in search of patterns.

Pavement Artist: A term invented by spy novelist John Le Carré that refers to an operative assigned to an urban surveillance team or operation.

Peep: A photographer. This term also refers to a picture used for blackmail.

Person of Interest: An espionage fall guy.

Personnel Security: Measures taken to defend an agency against double agents and moles.

Philby: An obscure espionage term for an operative who spies for ideological reasons, and is therefore extremely stable and dependable. The nickname is derived from a true case, that of Harold "Kim" Philby, a long-term mole and the Cambridge Spy Ring's so-called "Third Man." Like many of his kind, Philby's political views were formed at an early age and guided his education and career choices. There is some debate about Philby's continued development as a communist following his formative educa-

tion — most believe he fervently supported the cause throughout his time as a spy, while a small number believe that beyond college, he acted on autopilot, his feelings intractable, "fossilized."

PHOTINT: Intelligence gathered with conventional photography, whether taken by operatives or spy satellites.

Pianist: Clandestine radio operator, whose radio is referred to as his "piano."

Picket Surveillance: A surveillance method that stakes out places the target is likely to visit. Alternately referred to as "chokepoint surveillance."

Pickle Factory: A slang term for the CIA.

Pig: Russian espionage term for a traitor.

Pillow Talk: Conversations between lovers in which classified information is revealed.

Pit, The: CIA term for the document destruction room at its headquarters in Langley, Virginia. Alternately used to refer to the CIA's crisis center.

Plausible Deniability: The ability to legally claim ignorance of an illegal or poorly received action or event.

Plumber: A burglar.

Plumbing: Burglary; also, the internal workings of an espionage agency or preparations in anticipation of a major operation.

Poacher: British espionage term for a spy in the field.

Pocket Litter: The minor items an operative carries to support his cover identity.

Producer: An intelligence agency, staff, or operative that collates gathered data into one presented record or report.

Product: Intelligence reports.

Proprietary Company: A company maintained by an intelligence agency to support its operations.

Provocation: An operation designed to incite self-destructive action. The Russian term for this is "provokatsiya."

Psyops: Psychological operations including brainwashing, propaganda, and emotional manipulation.

Pucker Factor: Knowing that something terrible is about to happen.

Punishment Weapon: A single- or double-shot firearm with a high caliber used by KGB assassins, and often disguised as a common item such as an umbrella or cigarette case. A punishment weapon is loaded with dum-dum or hollow point ammunition and fired into the back of the target's head. The expansive exit wound rips the target's face off, earning the weapon its name.

Puzzle Palace: The Pentagon Building in Arlington, Virginia. Alternately a U.S. term for NSA, which has also been called "Never Say Anything" or "No Such Agency."

Raven: A male operative specializing in seduction.

Reading In: Getting up to speed with an operation.

Recognition Signal: An action or series of actions taken during or leading up to a meeting to identify the operative and signify that he isn't being followed or watched (or so he believes).

Red, White, and Blue Work: Operations supporting the U.S. government and its agendas.

Reference Material: Documents on loan from one intelligence agency to another with the understanding that they won't become public knowledge.

Referentura: A Russian term for a room swept clean of surveillance devices where a conversation can be held in private.

Regrade: To reclassify a document, usually so that more people can view it.

Residency: A Cold War term for a spy cell in a foreign territory.

Resident Director: A Soviet term referring to a Control or handler who manages an operative network spanning an entire city or greater area. A resident director's network was also called a "residentura."

Risk Category: The danger inherent in a mission.

Roof: The part of an operative's cover identity he uses openly.

Roscoe: A handgun.

SAC: Special Agent in Charge — an FBI or other U.S. law enforcement operative in charge of his field office.

Safe House: A discreet location where operatives can gather without fear of notice or assault.

Salesman: Obscure espionage term for an operative.

Sanitize: To cleanse a location of all evidence of a given event, which may include theft and bribery or elimination of witnesses; also, to censor a document of incriminating information.

Scalp Hunter: An intelligence officer striving to convince foreign operatives to defect.

Secret: The second-highest U.S. security classification applied to information reserved for those with the proper clearance. Secret data would cause embarrassment or major injury to national security if released (e.g. most intelligence agency operations, key scientific research, major military plans, foreign policy documents). Also, the lowest Russian security classification, applied to information that is potentially damaging only to one operation, institution, or organization.

Series Check: The censorship of embarrassing details in a classified document.

Service, The: KGB term for itself.

Shadow: An operative assigned to follow or watch another operative; also frequently used as a general term for any spy.

Sheep-Dipped: A CIA term for military personnel and gear on loan to their agency, the true origin of which is disguised.

Shoe: A false passport or visa.

Shopped: A British espionage term referring to a person who's been assassinated or murdered.

Shopping List: The secrets an agency desires the most.

Shopworn Goods: Information provided by a defector that is so wildly out of date as to be largely useless.

Short Title: An operation's field use name, commonly incorporating acronyms, abbreviations, and codes.

Siblings: The CIA's term for the DIA.

SIGINT: The British term for intelligence gathered through signal intercepts.

Sign of Life Signal: A burst communication indicating than an operative is still alive and well.

Singleton: An operative who works alone.

Situation Report (SITREP): A brief "bullet" of important mission facts.

Skunk Works: U.S. espionage term for Lockheed Aircraft Corporation's design facility in Burbank, California, which produced the P-80 Shooting Star jet-propelled aircraft and F-117A stealth strike fighter, as well as the U-2, A-12 Oxcart, and SR-71 Blackbird spy planes. The term derives from the facility's proximity to a reeking chemical plant.

Sleeper: An operative who is assigned to an area, company, or government without specific instructions and left to wait for activation. Sleepers are typically activated by specific phrases or events, after which they follow a protocol set during their briefing. Some sleepers who are left inactive for too long grow attached to their surroundings, making them vulnerable or unreliable.

Slug: A radio transmission station.

Smudger: A photographer.

Smuggling: Broadcasting propaganda on a frequency adjacent to an enemy signal.

Snap Report: A mission overview provided in haste, before all relevant information is received and understood.

Snitch Jacketing: An FBI term referring to the process of convincing an enemy organization that one of their operatives has turned against them, thus forcing the operative to offer his services to the FBI in exchange for protection. Alternately referred to as "bad jacketing."

Soap: Sodium pentothal, which is often abbreviated as "so-pe."

Soft Target: A country or territory that spies find easy to penetrate or compromise.

Special Projects: A CIA term collectively referring to physically rough operations.

Special Tasks: A Russian term collectively referring to assassination, kidnapping, murder, and sabotage.

Specialist: A non-operative called upon for his expertise in a specific field (e.g. biochemistry, radio telemetry, etc.). In the real world, specialists only occasionally accompany operatives in the field.

Splashed: A term referring to a bodyguard whose ward has been assassinated.

Spoof Code: Letters jumbled in a nonsense pattern that can easily be mistaken as a cipher or code.

Spook: A spy.

Spy in the Sky: A spy satellite.

Spymaster: A Control or handler.

Station: An agency post in a foreign territory, usually in an embassy or other safe location.

Steganography: The process of concealing a message from view. Microdots and invisible ink are forms of steganography, as is doctoring an image or sound to hide a message, or another image or sound, within.

Step On: Quashing a radio or other signal (e.g. "they stepped on the signal").

Street Agent: An FBI operative who works in the field.

Stringer: A freelance operative. Stringers commonly work for money rather than out of loyalty. An operative who passes information along to an agency when he comes across it, but otherwise has nothing to do with the organization, is sometimes also called a stringer. Alternately referred to as an "independent."

Sublatent Image: An image or message hidden inside an image, visible once specific chemicals are applied.

Suit: A derogatory term for administrators who issue commands with no understanding of field action.

Swallow: A female operative specializing in seduction. Swallows were popular with many agencies, including the KGB.

Swarm: To flood an area with surveillance operatives.

Sweeper: A technician specially qualified to search a location for bugs.

Swim: To travel.

Take, The: Information gathered via espionage.

Talent Spotter: Someone who informs an intelligence officer about potential recruits. Talent spotters are frequently civilians with high-traffic jobs (e.g. bartenders, airline staff, etc.). Also referred to as an "access agent."

Tank, The: CIA term for the audio surveillance rooms in many of its station houses.

Target Study: An intelligence review of an individual, location, business, or other topic.

Task: To order an operative to do something (e.g. "he was tasked with watching the informant's movements").

Tea and Biscuit Company: A slang term for the CIA.

Technical Penetration: Successful electronic surveillance.

TELINT: Intelligence gathered by telemetry.

Textile Business: A slang term for the secret operations.

Threat Study: An intelligence review of an enemy.

Throughput Distribution: The transport of cover operations gear across borders, usually through a military supply network.

Throwaway: An expendable operative or cover identity.

Top Secret: The highest U.S. security classification applied to any information reserved for those with the proper clearance. Top Secret data would cause incredible injury to national security if released (e.g. primary cipher and code keys, black ops records, unique discoveries critical to national progress).

Toss: To search a target location.

Tradecraft: Espionage techniques.

Traveler: A mobile civilian who spies (e.g. a tourist, an international businessman, etc.).

Treff: A German word referring to a meeting between an operative and his handler or Control, usually to determine whether a potential recruit is to be inducted into the agency.

Trigger: A surveillance team's scouting operative.

Triple Agent: A double agent who has been brought back into the fold with his original allegiance; also, an operative working for three sides, but with allegiance to only one. Typically, triple agents collect sensitive information, spread disinformation, and conduct sabotage to hinder the group or groups they're working against. Also referred to as a "redoubled agent."

Turn: To convert a spy to one's cause using intimidation or persuasion.

Uncle: An agency's home office.

Underclassification: Classifying documents too infrequently and thus allowing sensitive information out into the wild.

Underground: Clandestine.

Urgency Designator: A code stressing the relative importance of information.

User Agency: An intelligence agency that acts upon information but gathers none itself.

V-Man (Vertrauens-Mann): A German word for an operative who can be trusted. Translated from the German, it means, "a man of our confidence" or "a confidential agent." Originally, this term applied operatives of the Org (see page 29).

Vet: To conduct a background check to confirm a person's suitability for clearance.

Viking: A Cold War Soviet Bloc term for a veteran GRU operative.

Vulnerability Paragraph: Part of a mission briefing that explains ways in which the mission might fail.

Walk-In: A person who walks into an agency off the street with an offer of secrets, or to act as an operative.

Walking Back the Cat: A U.S. espionage term for going back to the beginning of a mission or investigation to retrace events and actions.

Watcher: An operative assigned to a surveillance team or mission. This term originated with MI5 operatives, who would follow Soviet diplomats and other embassy staffers around London.

Wet Job: An operation in which blood is shed.

Wetwork: Assassination, derived from the Russian phrase referring to assassination: "to wet the ground." Russians call teams assigned to wetwork missions "wet squads." The sometimes used literal Russian translation of "wet work" is "Mokrie Dela."

White: Unclassified. Alternately refers to a non-operative.

Wilderness of Mirrors: The confusing landscape of the intelligence world, most likely coined by CIA head of counter-espionage, James Jesus Angleton.

Willie: An obscure espionage term for an operative that doesn't realize he's a spy. The nickname is derived from a true case. In 1952, at the height of McCarthyism, an anonymous "Patriotic American" wrote a letter to a newspaper condemning civil rights violations perpetrated by the State Department in pursuit of left-ists. The letter contained confidential information, confirming that the author ("Willie") had access to current State Department intelligence. The KGB identified Willie and one of its operatives — a reporter working at the paper — approached him with an offer to continue providing State Department materials for monthly "expense money." Willie agreed and unwittingly passed sensitive data long to the KGB for the duration of his career.

Wire: A bug tapping a phone line or on a person's body.

Work in Progress: Classified information as it passes through the hands of administrative assistants, transcribers, and other office workers.

Worst Casing: Predicting a mission's least favorable outcomes and how to respond to them.

Zombie: An operative whose true identity is listed as deceased so he can continue to work within the bounds of discreet deniability.

RECOMMENDED SOURCES

The information presented in this chapter is only a brief glimpse into the exotic and exciting realm of espionage, and much more can be said of the many themes and agencies making up *World on Fire*. Those seeking further information, or just a healthy dose of inspiration, might look up the following excellent sources.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains many new rules both generic and specific to *World on Fire*. Base classes, expert classes, and the introduction of master classes greatly expand character development and new campaign qualities, organization options, and the introduction of Allegiance rules broaden the GC's tool box. All three villainous Factions in the *World on Fire* setting receive comprehensive treatment, while the heroic Factions are intentionally being held off for specialized expansion in their own independent PDF releases. For details, visit **www.crafty-games.com**.

CAMPAIGN QUALITIES

Many of the following qualities possess the Scenes Only tag. These are transient conditions that last hours or days at most, and generally shouldn't be applied to entire missions or seasons.

By default, the *World on Fire* setting features only the Allegiance quality, though the GC may remove it if he likes, making Allegiance-specific character options available to anyone or only to specific character concepts. As always, he can also add other qualities presented here or in other *Spycraft* releases, further modifying the setting to his taste.

For more about campaign qualities, see page 405 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

Allegiance (Seasons Only: +0 XP): In a campaign featuring this quality, extra emphasis is placed on each character's loyalties. Every Faction has an Allegiance that represents its underlying credo and culture, and most — but not all — characters belonging to a Faction also possess its Allegiance. Those that don't are usually ambivalent employees (probably possessing the Neutral Allegiance), dissenters (likely with a different but not necessarily opposing Allegiance), or subversives (possessing an Allegiance that prompts them to undermine their declared superiors).

Duty and loyalty are only part of the Allegiance equation; other factors include the *esprit de corps* that develops between colleagues. For example, a Cold War campaign might feature only three Allegiances — East, West, and Neutral. At present, the *World on Fire* features ten Allegiances, including Neutral. Six are reserved for heroes — Banshee Net, Bloodvine Syndicate, Krypt, Nine Tiger Dynasty, Paradox, and Shadow Patriots — and will be fully explored in follow-up PDF releases. The other three are intended for villains — Eternals, Franchise, and Project: Pitfall — though allowing PCs to take these "nefarious" roles is a trivial undertaking.

In practice, Allegiance is a double-edged sword. It opens up character options not permitted to those of less dedication, including exclusive Origin options, classes, and feats, but it also leaves a character vulnerable to certain abilities and other options that only target those of particular, identical, or opposing Allegiance.

Allegiance is an intentionally open-ended system, allowing the GC and players to include new Allegiances of their own creation. Crafty Games will also be introducing new Factions and new Allegiances in print and PDF products, including the *Flags* series of online releases. For details, visit the Crafty Games home page (www.crafty-games.com).

For more information about Allegiance, see page 108.

Forged in Conflict (Scenes Only: +25 XP, 2 GC Action Dice): During a scene featuring this campaign quality, only direct conflict is likely to result in major success. Special characters may not spend action dice to boost unopposed skill check results. Further, unopposed skill checks may not be re-rolled by any means.

Hostile Wilds (+25 XP, 3 GC Action Dice): This campaign quality emphasizes the dangers of the natural world. Woods are darker, jungles thicker, and wastelands are more foreboding as every element of the landscape conspires against the characters. During a scene featuring this quality, each character's insight and synergy bonuses decrease to a maximum of +1 unless he's in an urban environment, possesses the Terrain "training" feat that covers the terrain he's in, or is on his home turf.

Lack of Trust (Scenes Only: +25 XP, 3 GC Action Dice): During a scene featuring this quality, few will accept anything without corroboration. Negotiations break down, threats fall on deaf ears, and social manipulations grind to a standstill. Each special character's Charisma modifier is set to –1.

Live Exercise (+0 XP, 1 GC Action Die): During a scene featuring this campaign quality, every situation is a training opportunity. When a special character is targeted with an opponent's attack or skill check, he may force the opponent to apply his lowest attribute modifier to the check in place of the standard attribute modifier. Each special character may use this ability a number of times per scene equal to his starting action dice.

Money Talks (Scenes Only: +0 XP, 2 GC Action Dice): This campaign quality highlights and enhances the power of the dollar. During a scene featuring this campaign quality, the Charisma score of the special character possessing the highest Wealth statistic is considered to be 4 higher than standard.

Private (Scenes Only: +0 XP, 1 GC Action Die): During a scene featuring this campaign quality, all involved parties are "insiders" who understand the major players and forces at work in the world. In the *World on Fire,* this would mean that everyone involved is a spy or part of one of the shadow communities within which spies do their dirty business. In another setting, it might indicate that the action takes place in an isolated location, like a near-future corporate arcology, a far-future space station, or an Old West frontier town.

In a private scene, all Reputation and Net Worth penalties due to "incident," "noise," or anonymity exposure decrease to 1/2 standard (rounded down). This quality and its effect are canceled if the *public* quality enters play.

Public (Scenes Only: +0 XP, 2 GC Action Dice): During a scene featuring this campaign quality, many people who may witness the action are outsiders, oblivious to the conflicts of the setting. In the *World on Fire,* this would mean that the action takes place in an area with large numbers of bystanders, such as a crowded metropolitan plaza, a televised event, or another place where the affairs of spies might spill into the world of the uninitiated. In different settings, it might indicate that the action takes place in a natively dangerous environment for the characters, like a near-future streetscape, a far-future transport hub, or an Old West train station.

In a public scene, Reputation and Net Worth penalties due to "incident," "noise," and anonymity exposure may *not* be decreased through any means, including character abilities and other game effects. This quality and its effect are canceled if the *private* quality enters play.

Walking on Eggshells (+0 XP, 1 GC Action Die): During a scene featuring this quality, political tensions are heightened and any mistake could lead to irreparable damage to the characters and their Factions. Each time a special character loses any amount of Reputation or Net Worth due to exposure, he also loses 1 action die.

ALLEGIANCE

In a campaign featuring the *Allegiance* quality, every character must choose an Allegiance during character creation. A character's Allegiance must be one available in the current setting. In *World on Fire*, the available Allegiances are to the nine most prominent Factions in the world, six of which are heroic and three of which are villainous. A character may also choose the Neutral Allegiance, becoming a mercenary or other type of freelancer in the setting.

Banshee Net (Heroic): These anarchist hackers have united to get the world's information superhighway back on the proper track, out of the hands of the military-industrial complex run by the Franchise and back in the hands of the people. The Banshees' most common allies are the Krypt and the Shadow Patriots, groups they worked with during the late Cold War, and their most common enemy by far is Project: Pitfall, which hunts them with relentless vendetta and has recently "appropriated" much of their personnel *(see page 44)*.

Bloodvine Syndicate (Heroic): This loose collection of organized crime families runs much of the global underworld, dominating most black market channels and many other illegal enterprises. In any other setting, the Syndicate would justifiably be villainized, but in the *World on Fire,* where crime and punishment are being redefined daily, everyone looking for the freedom to command their own lives — on either side of the law — must stand up and be counted. The Syndicate has no common allies but regularly works with all the other heroic Factions (after all, it has far less influence within the world's espionage community than, say, the Shadow Patriots). It has many enemies, however, among the available Factions and elsewhere.

Eternals (Villainous): Once poised as the foremost power brokers on the planet, the Eternals have lost touch with the modern age, withdrawing from the forefront of world affairs. They continue to "dabble," however, indulging their penchant for world building through their closest allies, the Krypt, which they effectively created as a private operations arm. The Eternals are doggedly pursued by their age-old rivals, the Paradox Society, and actively seek to upset the plots of the Franchise, which they consider a familial mess to be dealt with internally.

Franchise (Villainous): Yerik Kolesnikov's little experiment has finally come into its own, wreaking global havoc and changing the face of history as it blossoms into something even its creator never expected. New projects are springing up all the time, including seven brand new criminal organizations in the Alliance of Evil Geniuses. This makes Allegiance to the organization a virtually limitless license for GC and player invention. Campaigns can center on the characters as henchmen of a brand new organization of the GC's design or even leaders of their own villainous empire. The Franchise is in everyone's target reticles at the moment, making its list of allies a very short list indeed.

Krypt (Heroic): This secret branch of former Soviet intelligence continues to patrol the European espionage theatre and frequently expands its operations worldwide, especially in light of current upheaval. Sadly, it is beleaguered, lingering in the wake of a bitter turf war between the Eternals and the Nine Tiger Dynasty, and perforated by Franchise cells care of its former director, Yerik Kolesnikov. Krypt operatives strive diligently to bring down the Franchise and Project: Pitfall, and still regularly call upon their Cold War allies, the Shadow Patriots and the unpredictable subversives of the Banshee Net.

Nine Tiger Dynasty (Heroic): Zhang Khan's armies continue their quest to prepare a proper empire for their fledgling queens, the twin inheritors of the spirit of the Ninth Immortal. Their most recent, and rather shocking, expansion took them deep into the territories of the Russian Federation, sparking a brush war that continues in patches long after the official cease fire. As might be expected, the Eternals and the Krypt have taken offense at this invasion of their homeland and covert battles are still going strong between the Factions. As a mastermind of the first order during the Cold War, Zhang Khan has made few friends, providing characters with this Allegiance few natural allies.

Paradox (Heroic): Formed to contend with the threat posed by the meddling Eternals, the Paradox Society has since expanded its operations to thwarting villainous organizations of all stripes. It is currently focused on interrupting the Franchise Timetable, hoping to prevent what it sees as a potentially *final* world war (and being one of the few groups to have successfully penetrated the sprawling, decentralized criminal organization, its fears may be justified). Paradox members have taken steps to forge alliances with the Shadow Patriots, the Bloodvine Syndicate, the Banshee Net, and others, but especially in the first case unfortunate events may have permanently ruined those efforts *(see page 56)*.

Project: Pitfall (Villainous): As the world's response to 9/11, the Mouthwash Confession, and other terrorist acts, Pitfall was granted the most sweeping, autonomous license ever afforded a "law enforcement" entity. Despite draconian tactics stripping away long-cherished civil rights, the agency has earned a high approval rating from its great successes and the apparent peace following its inception. Recent events are threatening to chip away that good will, however, and Pitfall now finds itself the center of a baleful tempest of political and media arguments. The outcome of this furor is as unpredictable as this "Franchise" that appears to be behind most if not all the bad headlines to date. Pitfall has few friends, but its list of targets is long and growing.

Shadow Patriots (Heroic): The first, best hope of the Cold War endured its own fair share of turmoil following the collapse of the Soviet Union, but many of its champion operatives refuse to give up the fight. They combat the Franchise, Project: Pitfall, the Eternals, and any others who threaten the peace they shed so much blood to secure in their prime, and rally any and all who are prepared to place themselves on the line for victory. The agents of the Krypt and the Banshee Net are among their fiercest allies.

FACTION VS. ALLEGIANCE

A character's Faction is the group to which he *belongs*, but not necessarily the group to which he *prescribes* (that's his Allegiance). This distinction allows for characters whose mindsets don't entirely sync up with those of their superiors, as well as full-blown subversives like double agents and moles.
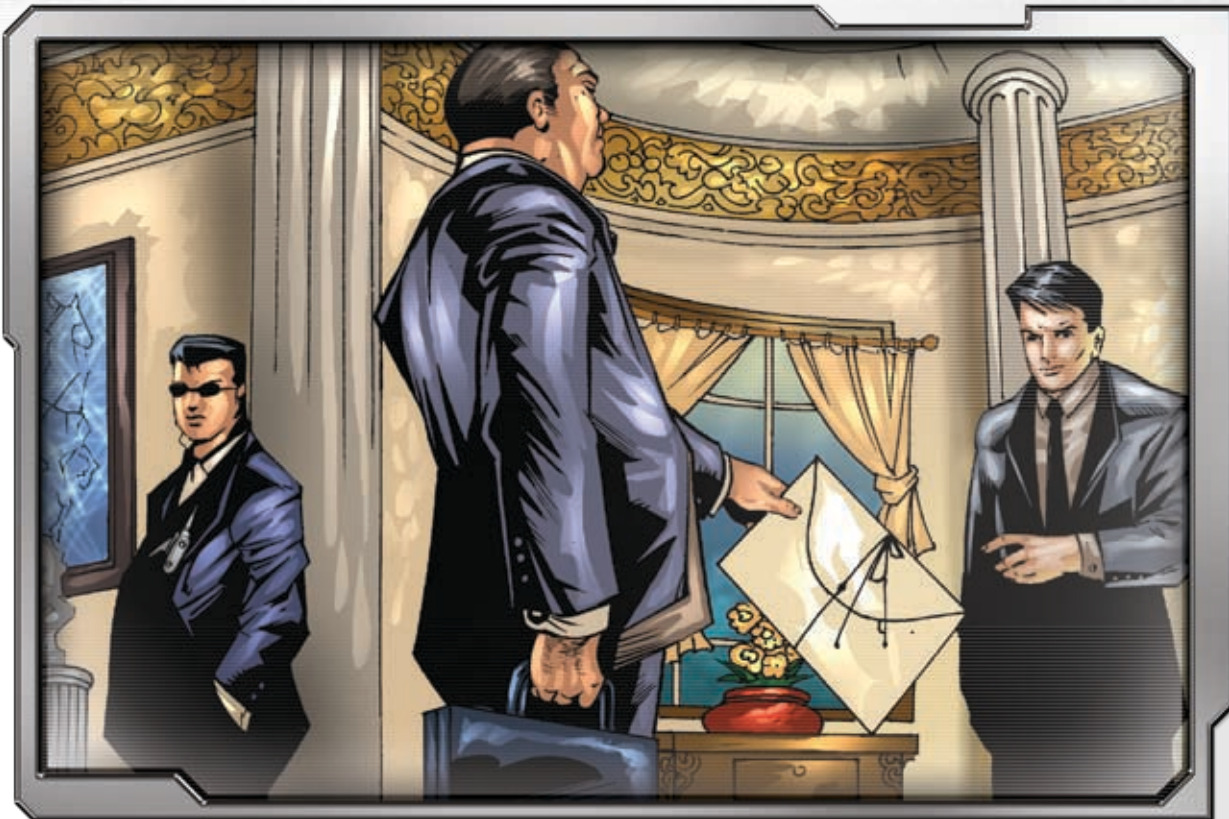
A character may choose any Faction and any Allegiance, though he may only have one of each at any time. The Game Control must approve every character's chosen Allegiance, however, as he might want everyone to work for and support the same Faction, or have another strategy. He may wish to avoid (or encourage!) the complication of multiple loyalties in his game.

A character belonging to a Faction gains benefits and suffers drawbacks as described on page 389 of the *Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, while* a character with an Allegiance other than Neutral gains access to various otherwise restricted character options. The latter may also leave the character vulnerable to various abilities and other effects.

Belonging to a Faction does *not* imply associated Allegiance benefits, or vice-versa. A character belonging to the Shadow Patriot Faction and possessing the Banshee Net Allegiance may *not,* for instance, gain levels in the Majestic master class. Likewise, the same character may *not* benefit from the Banshee Net organization package.

Freelance characters deserve special attention. A Freelance character has no Faction but may choose any Allegiance. This does *not* represent loyalty or duty. Rather, it may indicate shared beliefs or values, or a past relationship. The latter is especially useful if the character chooses Allegiance-only character options which he might have gained during his time with the group. Once again, the details are left to the player to define and the GC to approve.

Special Note: Even a character possessing the Flawless Identity feat may still possess only one Allegiance. A character's alternate and cover identities may claim loyalty to any organization, but a character's true Allegiance is where his heart lies, and dedication of that magnitude cannot be shared or easily shifted.

ALLEGIANCE OBJECTIVES

Unless a character is on a personal mission, his objectives are generally those of his Faction. Characters of each Allegiance may receive *additional* objectives, generally in secondary mission briefings or through similarly discreet means. Allegiance objectives may or may not align with those built into the main mission structure, but unless the GC wishes to introduce inter-party conflict, he should make sure none of the Allegiance objectives directly contradict each other or the mission's primary objectives.

Allegiance objectives grant XP rewards just like standard mission objectives. When an Allegiance objective is accomplished, each character possessing the appropriate Allegiance gains 100% of its XP reward and each character possessing the Neutral Allegiance gains 50% of its XP reward (rounded down). Thus, even characters lacking dedication to a specific Faction are motivated to help their teammates achieve their goals.

It isn't necessary to provide private objectives for characters of every Allegiance in every mission. It's probably enough to cover half of them during each outing, and to vary the Allegiances that receive private objectives from mission to mission.

GLEANING ALLEGIANCE

Some NPCs wear their Faction choice on their sleeves (sometimes literally, in the case of many uniformed organizations). Allegiance, however, is often far more difficult to determine. Mechanically, guessing another character's Allegiance may involve any of the following options.

• Accurately guessing a character's Allegiance requires a successful Sense Motive/Detect Lie check.

- Forcing a character to reveal his Allegiance requires a successful Intimidate/Coercion check. Alternately, obtaining a Victory Advantage in an interrogation Conflict can yield the same result.

- The *cold read* ability may be used to determine a character's Allegiance. This consumes 3 questions, though the target may spend 1 action die to cancel the ability use, in which case the questions are considered to be unasked.

CHANGING ALLEGIANCE

At any time, for his own reasons, a character may forsake his current Allegiance, replacing it with Neutral or the Allegiance of another Faction. He immediately suffers the following effects.

- The character gains no Reputation or Net Worth for the duration of the current mission. If the character makes his choice between missions, he gains no Reputation or Net Worth for the duration of his next mission. This penalty is ignored if the character changes his Allegiance as a result of a Rival Approach event (which may now target either a character's Faction or Allegiance, or both).

- The character gains only 1/2 his standard XP reward for the current mission (rounded down). If the character makes his choice between missions, he gains only 1/2 his standard XP reward for his next mission. This penalty is ignored if the character changes his Allegiance as a result of a Rival Approach event (which may now target either a character's Faction or Allegiance, or both).

A character may voluntarily switch Allegiances once, *and only once.* Thereafter, he must retain his new Allegiance for the duration of his career.

TALENTS

For more about Talents, see page 18 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

Ambitious: You're determined to make the most of your life, regardless of who gets in the way.

- +1 to any 1 attribute.

- When you or any of your teammates makes a skill check with the Project Investment tag, the time and cost are calculated as if the DC were 5 lower (minimum 15).

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with action die results. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Charismatic: Your natural charm is formidable and unforgettable.

- +2 Charisma, −2 to highest attribute other than Charisma.

- Your Charisma increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 7 and 14.

- Choose 2 skills with Charisma as a key attribute. Your maximum rank in each of these skills increases to your Career Level +5. This benefit is *not* cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank.

- Once per scene, you may speak to one of your teammates for 1 minute to grant him a +1 morale bonus with all saving throws until the end of the current scene.

Corn-Fed: You're as big as an ox... and just as tough. Fortunately, your youthful ruggedness seems to appeal to people.

- +2 Strength, −2 Wisdom.

- Once per session, you may improve the disposition of any 1 NPC by 1 grade without a skill check.

- Your Size becomes Large (1×1). Your Reach remains 1 square.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Fortitude saves. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Creative: You dabble in *many* different subjects.

- +2 Intelligence, −2 Dexterity.

- You gain 1 additional Interest at Career Levels 0, 2, 6, 10, 14, and 18.

- Once per session, you may request a hint from the GC for which the GC gains no action dice. If the GC refuses, you gain 1 bonus action die.

- Choose 1 skill. This is always a class skill for you. You may choose 1 additional skill to gain this benefit at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Determined: You're an unstoppable force of nature.

- +2 Wisdom, −2 Intelligence.

- You may retry a skill check without suffering any penalties listed in its Retry entry a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

- Once per session, you may request a hint from the GC for which the GC gains no action dice. If the GC refuses, you gain 1 bonus action die.

- You gain 1 additional wound point at Career Level 1, and 1 additional wound point at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Dexterous: You've always had sharp reflexes.

- +2 Dexterity, −2 to highest attribute other than Dexterity.

- Your Dexterity increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 7 and 14.

- Choose 2 skills with Dexterity as a key attribute. Your maximum rank in each of these skills increases to your Career Level +5. This benefit is *not* cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank.

- When making a skill check, you may ignore all penalties imposed by the Hands On tag.

Eccentric: If you were poor, they'd call you crazy.

- +2 Intelligence, −2 Charisma.

- You gain 1 additional Interest at Career Levels 0, 2, 6, 10, 14, and 18.

- Each of your teammates who can see or hear you benefits from your Interests as if they possessed them.

- Your gain a +1 bonus to Wealth. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 5, 10, 15, and 20.

Eternal: You know many of the past's intimate secrets, and guide the future as well.
Requirements: Eternals Allegiance.

- +1 Constitution.

- You gain 1 acquaintance-grade contact. This contact improves by 1 grade at Career Levels 6, 12, and 18.

- You gain 1 additional skill focus, or 1 forte for any 1 skill focus you possess.

- You gain 2 additional vitality points at Career Level 1, and 1 additional vitality point at each Career Level thereafter.

TABLE 4.1: ORIGIN BENEFITS

Origin Option	Attributes/Feat	Benefits
Talents		
Ambitious	+1 to any	Reduced project investment time/cost, action die bonus
Charismatic	+2 Cha, –2 to other highest	Charisma bonus, skill rank bonuses, pep talk
Corn-Fed	+2 Str, –2 Wis	Charm, Large, Fortitude save bonus
Creative	+2 I-nt, –2 Dex	Extra Interests, free hint, extra class skills
Determined	+2 Wis, –2 Int	Retry without penalty, free hint, extra wound points
Dexterous	+2 Dex, –2 to other highest	Dexterity bonus, skill rank bonuses, Hands On immunity
Eccentric	+2 Int, –2 Cha	Extra Interests, lend Interests, Wealth Bonus
Eternal*	+1 Con	Extra contact, extra skill focus or forte, extra vitality points
Franchise*	—	Free Bribe check (minimum Bribe value), free Caliber IV legal immunity pick, improved Taunt
Hardy	+2 Con, –2 to other highest	Constitution bonus, skill rank bonuses, reduced attribute damage
Intelligent	+2 Int, –2 to other highest	Intelligence bonus, skill rank bonuses, dual Ready actions
Lithe	+2 Dex, –2 Wis	Defense bonus +1, Speed bonus, extra vitality points
Ominous	+2 to lowest, –2 to highest	Always considered armed, enemy stress damage with miss, enemy hesitation
Pitfall*	+1 Wis	Skill check bonus (surprise), bonus threat range (Investigation)
Savvy	+2 Wis, –2 Str	Knowledge check bonus, action die bonus
Shifty	+2 Dex, –2 Cha	Charm, class skill (Sense Motive), improved Feint
Single-Minded	+2 Con, –2 Int	Armor-piercing (2), extra forte, bonus threat range (Resolve)
Sleek	+2 Str, –2 Con	Armor-piercing (2), class skill (Sneak), Reflex save bonus
Striking	+2 Cha, –2 Con	Charm, free Bribe check (minimum Bribe value), improved Diversion
Strong	+2 Str, –2 to other highest	Strength bonus, skill rank bonuses, *natural attack* (squeeze II)
Vigorous	+2 Con, –2 Str	Defense bonus +1, Speed bonus, improved Tire
Wise	+2 Wis, –2 to other highest	Wisdom bonus, skill rank bonuses, free hint
Zealous	+2 Cha, –2 Dex	Initiative check bonus, Will save bonus
Specialties		
Bodyguard	Dueling Basics	Provide cover, Notice/Resolve bonus
Champion*	Any Basic Combat Feat	Str or Cha boost, Reputation bonus, damage bonus vs. special characters
Collector	Pack Rat	Int or Wis boost, extra Interests, paired Profession and Analysis skills
Commando	Tactical Advantage	Int or Dex boost, reduced overland travel time, paired Tactics and Sneak skills
Double Agent	Divided Loyalties	Extra contact, free Caliber II cover identity, Bluff/Bureaucracy bonus
Elite*	Any Faction feat	Faction charm, Reputation bonus, extra action die
Enforcer*	Glint of Madness	Terrify, extra contact, paired Profession and Intimidate skills
Gunslinger	Gunslinger's Eye	Extra proficiency (Handgun), free Caliber II handgun, improved Cover Fire
Gymnast	Equilibrium Basics	Str or Dex boost, Speed bonus, paired Profession and Acrobatics skills
Hero*	Rising Star	Dramatic prowess, perfect helper, maximum skill rank bonus
Killer	Ambush Basics	Extra contact, extra weapon forte, Ready action damage bonus
Master	Martial Arts	Defense bonus +1, extra proficiency (Unarmed), Disarm attack bonus
Prodigy	Unlocked Potential	Class skill (any 2), bonus skill points
Racer	Daredevil	Extra contact (racing circuit), chase bonus, paired Profession and Drive skills
Spy	Flawless Identity	Free Resources Request checks, paired Notice and Bluff skills
Survivor	Guts	Defense bonus +2, extra vitality points
Tracker	Tracking Basics	Con or Wis boost, reduced overland travel time, paired Search and Survival skills
Trainer	Attention to Detail	Improved cooperation check, maximum skill rank bonus
Trooper	Any Terrain Feat	*Camouflaged*, free Caliber II armor, Survival/Tactics bonus
Unknown	Faceless	Extra Interests, free Caliber II smuggling Resource, Blend/Streetwise bonus

* These Origin options are available only to those with the appropriate Allegiance *(see page 107)*.

Franchise: You belong to the secretive terrorist network behind many of today's greatest villains.
Requirements: Franchise Allegiance.

- Once per session, you may make a Bribe check at the minimum Bribe value without paying its cost.

- Your mission gear includes 1 additional Caliber IV legal immunity Tradecraft pick.

- When you take a Taunt action, you may target 1 additional opponent. You roll only once for the Taunt action, while each opponent rolls to resist separately. The number of opponents you may target with a Taunt action increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Hardy: You've never taken a sick day in your life.

- +2 Constitution, −2 to highest attribute other than Constitution.

- Your Constitution increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 7 and 14.

- Choose 2 skills with Constitution as a key attribute. Your maximum rank in each of these skills increases to your Career Level +5. This benefit is *not* cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank.

- Each time you suffer attribute damage, the attribute damage suffered decreases by 1 (minimum 1).

Intelligent: You've always been bright.

- +2 Intelligence, −2 to highest attribute other than Intelligence.

- Your Intelligence increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 7 and 14.

- Choose 2 skills with Intelligence as a key attribute. Your maximum rank in each of these skills increases to your Career Level +5. This benefit is *not* cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank.

- You may take 2 Ready actions at the same time as 1 full action. After the first of the 2 triggers occurs, the other Ready action is lost.

Lithe: Few people lay a finger on you, and none of them keep their grip for long.

- +2 Dexterity, −2 Wisdom.

- Your base Defense increases by 1.

- Your Speed increases by 5 ft.

- You gain 2 additional vitality points at Career Level 1, and 1 additional vitality point at each Career Level thereafter.

Ominous: You creep people out, man.

- +2 to lowest attribute, −2 to highest attribute (in both cases, your choice in the case of a tie).

- You are always considered armed with a deadly weapon when making an Intimidate check or initiating a Stand Off.

- Each time an opponent attacks you and misses, he suffers 1 point of stress damage.

- Each time an opponent declares an attack targeting you, his Initiative Count decreases by 1 *before* he makes his attack (his attack takes place during the following Initiative Count). This Initiative Count penalty increases by an additional 1 at Career levels 6, 12, and 18.

Pitfall: You're a devoted member of the elite counter-terrorist task force Project: Pitfall. *Requirement:* Project: Pitfall Allegiance.

- +1 Wisdom.

- You gain a +1 bonus with skill checks made to determine surprise. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

- Your threat range with Investigation checks increases by 1. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 5, 10, 15, and 20.

Savvy: You always have a plan — or at least you seem to!

- +2 Wisdom, −2 Strength.

- You gain a +1 bonus with Knowledge checks. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with action die results. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Shifty: Around you, your teammates are always waiting for the other shoe to drop.

- +2 Dexterity, −2 Charisma.

- Once per session, you may improve the disposition of any 1 NPC by 1 grade without a skill check.

- Sense Motive is always a class skill for you. Further, your result cap with this skill increases by 5 (maximum 60).

- When you take a Feint action, you may target 1 additional opponent. You roll only once for all Feint actions, while each opponent rolls to resist separately. The number of opponents you may target with a Feint action increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Single-Minded: Once you put your mind to something, it's as good as done.

- +2 Constitution, −2 Intelligence.

- Your melee, unarmed, and non-explosive hurled attacks gain the *armor-piercing* (2) quality.

- You gain 1 forte for any 1 weapon proficiency or skill focus you possess.

- Your threat range with Resolve checks increases by 1. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 5, 10, 15, and 20.
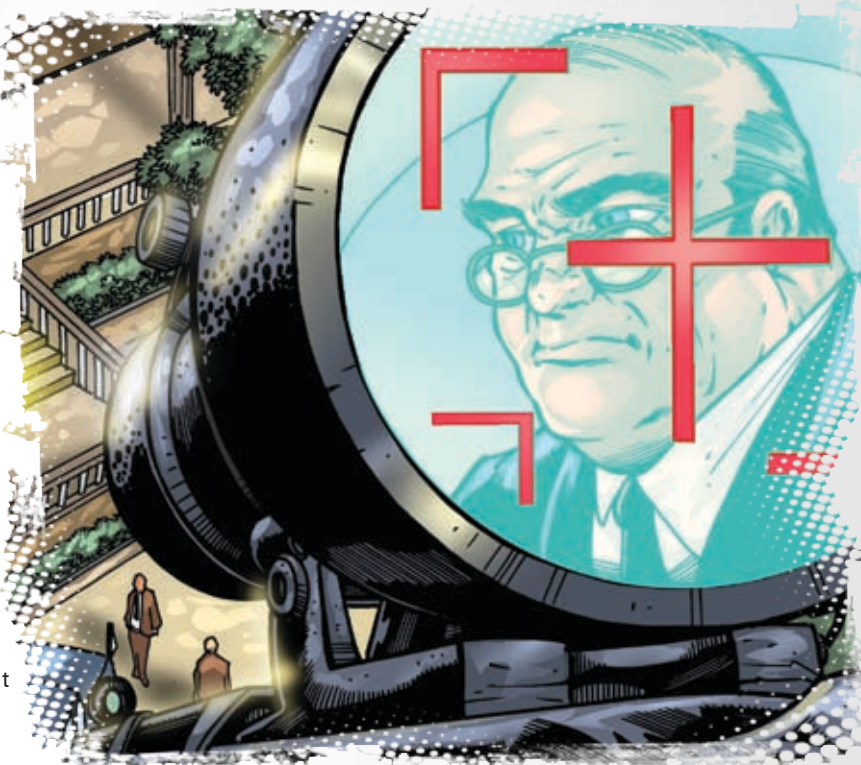
Sleek: Compact and efficient, your body is a well-oiled machine.

- +2 Strength, −2 Constitution.

- Your melee, unarmed, and non-explosive hurled attacks gain the *armor-piercing* (2) quality.

- Sneak is always a class skill for you. Further, your result cap with this skill increases by 5 (maximum 60).

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Reflex saves. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Striking: Your looks can stop traffic.

- +2 Charisma, −2 Constitution.

- Once per session, you may improve the disposition of any 1 NPC by 1 grade without a skill check.

- Once per session, you may make a Bribe check at the minimum Bribe value without paying its cost.

- When you take a Diversion action, you may target 1 additional opponent. You roll only once for all Diversion actions, while each opponent rolls to resist separately. The number of opponents you may target with a Diversion action increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Strong: Every time one of your friends moves into a new apartment, you have to leave your phone off the hook.

- +2 Strength, −2 to highest attribute other than Strength.

- Your Strength increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 7 and 14.
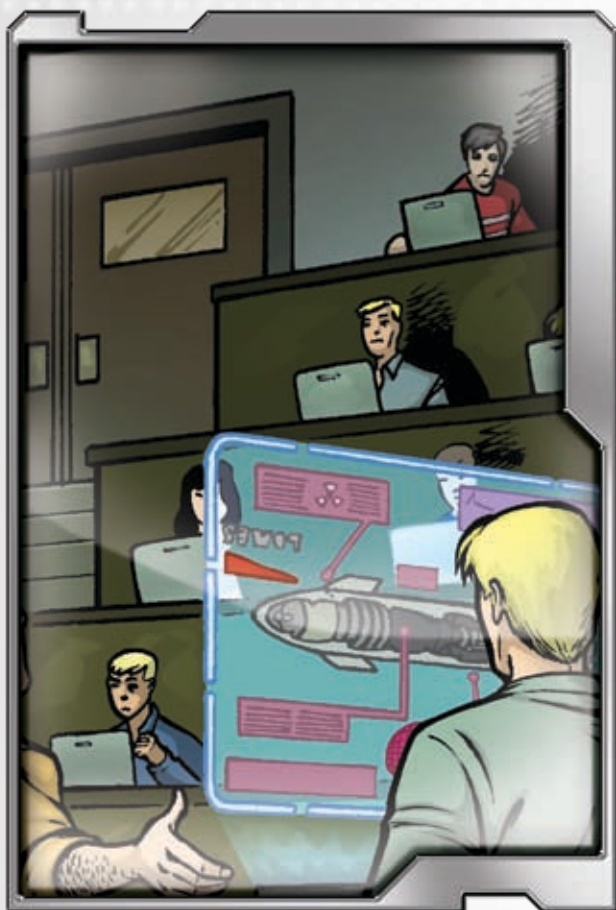
- Choose 2 skills with Strength as a key attribute. Your maximum rank in each of these skills increases to your Career Level +5. This benefit is *not* cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank.

- You gain the *natural attack* (squeeze II) NPC quality. If you already possess a squeeze natural attack, its grade increases by 1.

Vigorous: You are a limitless bundle of energy.

- +2 Constitution, −2 Strength.

- Your base Defense increases by 1.

- Your Speed increases by 5 ft.

- When you take a Tire action, you may target 1 additional opponent. You roll only once for all Tire actions, while each opponent rolls to resist separately. The number of opponents you may target with a Tire action increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Wise: You always act with great care and deliberation.

- +2 Wisdom, −2 to highest attribute other than Wisdom.

- Your Wisdom increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 7 and 14.

- Choose 2 skills with Wisdom as a key attribute. Your maximum rank in each of these skills increases to your Career Level

+5. This benefit is *not* cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank.

- Once per session, you may request a hint from the GC for which the GC gains no action dice. If the GC refuses, you gain 1 bonus action die.

Zealous: Your devotion is undeniable.

- +2 Charisma, −2 Dexterity.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Initiative checks. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Will saves. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

SPECIALTIES

For more about Specialties, see page 21 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

Bodyguard: You're a professional guardian, trained to be alert and to sacrifice yourself if necessary to save your charge.

- Bonus Feat: Dueling Basics.

- Each of your adjacent teammates and allies is considered to benefit from 1/2 personal cover. If an attack hits this cover, the attack instead hits you.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Notice and Resolve checks. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Champion: You're a modern-day knight, fiercely dedicated to your calling.
Requirements: Talent requiring non-Neutral Allegiance.

- Bonus Feat: Any Basic Combat feat.

- Your Strength or Charisma increases by 1 (whichever is lower; your choice in the case of a tie). This bonus is applied after any attribute modifiers from your Talent.

- Your Reputation increases by 2 at Career Level 1, and by an additional 2 at each Career Level thereafter.

- Each time you successfully inflict lethal damage on a special character, you may inflict 1 additional point of lethal damage. This bonus damage increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Collector: You like stuff and neat piles, in that order.

- Bonus Feat: Pack Rat.

- Your Intelligence or Wisdom increases by 1 (whichever is lower; your choice in the case of a tie). This bonus is applied after any attribute modifiers from your Talent.

- You gain 1 additional Interest at Career Levels 0, 2, 6, 10, 14, and 18.

- Each time you gain 1 or more ranks in the Profession skill, you also gain an equal number of ranks in the Analysis skill. This may not increase your Analysis skill beyond its maximum rank.

Commando: You have military-grade training in low-intensity warfare and a knack for subtlety in battle.

- Bonus Feat: Tactical Advantage.

- Your Dexterity or Intelligence increases by 1 (whichever is lower; your choice in the case of a tie). This bonus is applied after any attribute modifiers from your Talent.

- Once per session, you may decrease the overland travel time of any 1 trip to 3/4 standard (rounded down).

- Each time you gain 1 or more ranks in the Tactics skill, you also gain an equal number of ranks in the Sneak skill. This may not increase your Sneak skill beyond its maximum rank.

Double Agent: You're an experienced deep-cover operative and can worm your way into any organization.

- Bonus Feat: Divided Loyalties.

- You gain 1 acquaintance-grade contact. This contact improves by 1 grade at Career Levels 6, 12, and 18.

- Your mission gear includes 1 additional Caliber II cover identity Tradecraft pick.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Bluff and Bureaucracy checks. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Elite: You represent the best of the best in your line of work.
Requirements: Talent requiring non-Neutral Allegiance.

- Bonus Feat: Any feat with your chosen Allegiance as a prerequisite and requiring a Career Level of 3 or less.

- Once per session, you may improve the disposition of any 1 NPC who shares your Allegiance by 1 grade without a skill check.

- Your Reputation increases by 2 at Career Level 1, and by an additional 2 at each Career Level thereafter.

- You gain 1 additional action die at the start of each session.

Enforcer: You maintain order with the judicious application of force and terror.
Requirements: Talent requiring non-Neutral Allegiance.

- Bonus Feat: Glint of Madness.

- Each time an opponent must make a Will save due to stress damage you inflict, the save's DC increases by 3.

- You gain 1 acquaintance-grade contact. This contact improves by 1 grade at Career Levels 6, 12, and 18.

- Each time you gain 1 or more ranks in the Profession skill, you also gain an equal number of ranks in the Intimidate skill. This may not increase your Intimidate skill beyond its maximum rank.

Gunslinger: The Way of the Gun is your own personal religion.

- Bonus Feat: Gunslinger's Eye.

- You gain the Handgun weapon proficiency.

- Your mission gear includes 1 additional Caliber II handgun Weapon pick.

- When you take a Cover Fire action, you may target 1 additional opponent. Each additional target increases the number of shots required by 1. Each opponent rolls to resist separately. The number of opponents you may target with a Cover Fire action increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Gymnast: As a competition-level athlete, you can perform amazing physical stunts.

- Bonus Feat: Equilibrium Basics.

- Your Strength or Dexterity increases by 1 (whichever is lower; your choice in the case of a tie). This bonus is applied after any attribute modifiers from your Talent.

- Your Speed increases by 5 ft.

- Each time you gain 1 or more ranks in the Profession skill, you also gain an equal number of ranks in the Acrobatics skill. This may not increase your Acrobatics skill beyond its maximum rank.

Hero: Your devotion to a single cause gives you the strength to do great things.
Requirements: Talent requiring non-Neutral Allegiance.

- Bonus Feat: Rising Star.

- You gain a +1 bonus with all attack and skill checks you make during dramatic scenes.

- You automatically succeed with all cooperative checks made in which you're the helper, assuming the leader shares your Allegiance and you possess at least 4 ranks in the skill being used.

- Choose 1 skill. Your maximum rank in this skill increases to your Career Level +4. This benefit is not cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank. You may choose 1 additional (different) skill to gain this benefit at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Killer: Your ruthlessness and discretion are respected and feared the world across.

- Bonus Feat: Ambush Basics.

- You gain 1 acquaintance-grade contact. This contact improves by 1 grade at Career Levels 6, 12, and 18.

- You gain 1 forte for 1 weapon proficiency you possess.

- You gain a +1 bonus to damage with Standard Attacks made as part of a Ready action. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Master: You're a skilled hand-to-hand combatant, able to dominate lesser fighters.

- Bonus Feat: Martial Arts.

- Your base Defense increases by 1.

- You gain the Unarmed weapon proficiency.

- You gain a +1 bonus with attack checks made as part of a Disarm action. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 5, 10, 15, and 20.
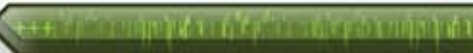
Prodigy: You have a tremendous gift.

- Bonus Feat: Unlocked Potential.

- Choose 2 skills. These are always class skills for you. Further, your result cap with each of these skills increases by 5 (maximum 60).

- You gain 4 additional skill points at Career Level 1, and 1 additional skill point for each Career Level gained thereafter.

Racer: You're a professional speedster with countless victories on the track — and off of it.

- Bonus Feat: Daredevil.

- You gain "racing circuit" as an acquaintance-grade vehicular contact. This contact improves by 1 grade at Career Levels 5, 10, and 15.

- You gain a +2 insight bonus with all opposed checks made as part of a chase Conflict. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 6, 12, and 18.

- Each time you gain 1 or more ranks in the Profession skill, you also gain an equal number of ranks in the Drive skill. This may not increase your Drive skill beyond its maximum rank.

Spy: You're a career operative, as persuasive and shrewd as they come.

- Bonus Feat: Flawless Identity.

- Twice per session, you may make 1 Resources Request check of any type without spending any action dice.

- Each time you gain 1 or more ranks in the Notice skill, you also gain an equal number of ranks in the Bluff skill. This may not increase your Bluff skill beyond its maximum rank.

Survivor: Your determination is equal to all threats and opponents.

- Bonus Feat: Guts.

- Your base Defense increases by 2.

- You gain 2 additional vitality points at Career Level 1, and 1 additional vitality point at each Career Level thereafter.

Tracker: You're a capable outdoorsman and excel at the hunt.

- Bonus Feat: Tracking Basics.

- Your Constitution or Wisdom increases by 1 (whichever is lower; your choice in the case of a tie). This bonus is applied after any attribute modifiers from your Talent.

TABLE 4.2: PURCHASING SKILLS - NEW CLASSES

Skill	Fix	Mar	Aces	Edge	Frwd	High	Medc	Mole	Ninj	Prov	Sabo	Spin	Sknt	Tror	Cntrn	Golth	Menac
Acrobatics		X	X	X					X				X				
Analysis	X				X		X				X				X		
Athletics		X	X	X	X		X		X		X				X		
Blend								X	X	X						X	
Bluff	X			X			X		X		X	X		X			X
Bureaucracy	X						X	X			X	X					X
Computers				X								X			X		
Cultures*	X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X			
Drive*	X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X		
Electronics			X		X						X						
Falsify	X							X	X	X	X	X		X			X
Impress	X	X			X			X				X	X				X
Intimidate		X		X				X				X		X			X
Investigation	X						X		X		X	X			X		
Manipulate	X							X				X				X	
Mechanics			X									X		X	X		
Medicine		X					X										
Networking	X			X	X			X				X	X			X	X
Notice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Profession*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Resolve		X					X		X					X	X	X	
Science*							X				X	X		X			
Search	X		X		X			X		X	X				X		
Security				X					X		X	X		X	X		
Sense Motive	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X		X			X		
Sleight of Hand				X		X	X		X		X			X			
Sneak		X			X				X		X			X			X
Streetwise	X			X	X			X		X		X	X			X	
Survival				X	X		X		X					X			
Tactics			X		X				X						X		

*   These are focus skills.

- Once per session, you may decrease the overland travel time of any 1 trip to 3/4 standard (rounded down).

- Each time you gain 1 or more ranks in the Search skill, you also gain an equal number of ranks in the Survival skill. This may not increase your Survival skill beyond its maximum rank.

  Trainer: You bring out the best in others.

- Bonus Feat: Attention to Detail.

- Each time you make a successful cooperation check as a helper, you may grant the check's leader a morale bonus equal to your ranks in the skill divided by 5 (rounded down, minimum +1). If you choose to do so, you do *not* also grant the leader your standard synergy bonus.

- Choose 1 skill. Your maximum rank in this skill increases to your Career Level +4. This benefit is *not* cumulative with any other effect that increases your maximum rank. You may choose 1 additional (different) skill to gain this benefit at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

  Trooper: You've trudged through some of the most exotic places on Earth.

- Bonus Feat: Any Terrain Feat.

- You gain the *camouflaged* NPC quality for 1 terrain type. You may re-choose this terrain type each time you gain a Career Level (though you still only gain this benefit in 1 terrain type).

- Your mission gear includes 1 additional Caliber II armor Security pick.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Survival and Tactics checks. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

  Unknown: You're a mystery to everyone but yourself.

- Bonus Feat: Faceless.

- You gain 1 additional Interest at Career Levels 0, 2, 6, 10, 14, and 18.

- Your mission gear includes 1 additional Caliber II smuggling Resource pick.

- You gain a +1 insight bonus with Blend and Streetwise checks. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at Career Levels 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

CLASSES

The base and expert classes in this book open up new options for the *cross-class* ability *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 40, as well as forthcoming classes)*.

- *Fixer: The hookup; let's deal I; slick; magnetism.*

- *Martial Artist: Martial Arts; life of discipline; bonus feat; improved Reach (+5 ft.).*

Further, the new ploys introduced in this volume — *backhand, great sweep, quake strike, and take it* — may be gained through any *ploy* ability, including that of the Brawler *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 66)*.

Finally, a character may gain levels in **only** 1 master class unless an ability or other game effect specifically allows him more.

For more about classes, see page 26 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

BASE CLASSES

Fixer (Fix): The Fixer is the master of the deal, a skilled negotiator who can obtain anything at any time, with only a *few* strings attached...

Martial Artist (Mar): The Martial Artist is a devotee of archaic weapons and empty-handed fighting styles, elevating unarmed combat to high art.

EXPERT CLASSES

Ace (Aces): The Ace is an expert specialist with a few favored vehicles, mastering their use in ways no one else can achieve.

Edgemaster (Edge): The Edgemaster is an intense melee weapon specialist who lives to school people who would bring guns to what's very clearly a knife fight.

Forward (Frwd): The Forward is a cutting-edge commando. He often partners with snipers for astounding battlefield results and dominates with the next generation of combat drones.

High Roller (High): The High Roller is a suave jet-setter possessed of uncanny luck and unmatched style.

Medic (Medc): The Medic is the angel of the battlefield, able to patch up any injury and see his teammates back through even the most lethal action.

Mole (Mole): The Mole is an infiltrator whose specialty is ruining enemy organizations — from the inside.

Ninja (Ninj): The Ninja is a master of shadow warfare possessing skills for physical infiltration and silent violence that border on the supernatural.

Provocateur (Prov): The Provocateur burrows into his enemies' hearts and minds, laying bare their most sensitive secrets.

Saboteur (Sabo): The Saboteur is a talented covert explosives artist. His enemies rarely know what hit them.

Spin Doctor (Spin): The Spin Doctor is intimately connected to the media, controlling public awareness and opinion to damn his enemies and conceal his team's activities.

Street Knight (Sknt): The Street Knight is part adrenaline junkie and part action hero, a vehicular crusader with the skills to make a difference in any urban mission.

Terrorist (Tror): The Terrorist strives to shake up the status quo, forcing everyone to commit to a side lest they get swept aside in the action.

MASTER CLASSES

Centurion (Cntrn): The Centurion is the best of Pitfall's elite operations teams, an elite enforcer of the One World Doctrine.

Goliath (Golth): The Goliath is empowered by ancient lore, an unstoppable warrior dedicated to furthering the Eternals' private machinations.

Menace (Menac): The Menace is a top threat to world stability, an eclectic mix of criminal genius and creative mayhem.

FIXER

With a ready smile and a firm handshake, the Fixer a master of the social labyrinth. He's the ultimate negotiator, trafficking in goods, influence, and raw power. The Fixer brings a sense of destiny to his team, ensuring that they always see the best part of any deal.

Attributes: Charisma and Intelligence are the Fixer's two most important attributes, granting him the personality and intellect necessary to swim with the shrewdest of sharks.

Vitality: 1d8 + Con modifier per level.

Starting Weapon Proficiencies: 2.

CLASS SKILLS

The Fixer's class skills are Analysis, Bluff, Bureaucracy, Cultures, Drive, Falsify, Impress, Investigation, Manipulate, Networking, Notice, Profession, Search, Sense Motive, and Streetwise.

Skill Points at Level 1: (8 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Self-Promoter: When you succeed, you make sure *everyone* knows about it. At the end of each mission, your Reputation or Net Worth reward and that of each of your teammates increases by 1 or $50,000, respectively.

Additionally, when you suffer an error with a skill check possessing the Disposition tag, the GC or an opposing character must spend 1 additional action die to activate it as a critical failure.

CLASS ABILITIES

The Hookup: You pride yourself on getting what people want, when and how they want it. At Level 1, each time you fail a Networking or Streetwise check and don't suffer an error, you still succeed as long as the check DC (or your opponent's check result) is equal to or less than your class level + 20. If more than 1 grade of success is possible, you achieve only the lowest possible positive result.

If you gain this ability from two or more classes, your relevant class levels are added together before you add 20 to determine the DC against which you automatically succeed.

Let's Deal I: At Level 2, instead of making an opposed Bureaucracy check, you may set your result to 1 higher than that of your opponent. This cannot result in an error or threat. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

Let's Deal II: At Level 11, you may use this ability with opposed Bureaucracy and Impress checks.

Let's Deal III: At Level 19, you may use this ability with opposed Bureaucracy, Impress, and Sense Motive checks.

Slick: At Levels 3, 7, 11, 15, and 19, you gain 2 additional acquaintance-grade contacts or 1 Style feat.

Magnetism: Your personal presence and private connections grant you options unavailable to others. At Levels 4, 8, 12, 16 and 20, you may choose 1 of the following abilities. Each of these abilities may only be chosen once.

- *Backup I:* You maintain contact with diverse friends who can help out in a pinch. At Level 5, once per session, you may call upon a friend to assist you. This friend's disposition toward you is Supportive. He shows up 1d6 hours after he's summoned and helps with 1 task that may be completed by the end of the current scene. The friend is a Tier I NPC of any type, chosen when you summon him. He possesses a Grade VIII skill of your choice, as well as 1 Caliber I gear pick of your choice. This item leaves with the friend at the end of the current scene.

Level	**BAB**	**Fort**	**Ref**	**Will**	**Def**	**Init**	**Wealth**	**Gear**	**Abilities**
1	+0	+0	+1	+2	+1	+0	2	1R, 1T	The hookup, *self-promoter*
2	+1	+0	+2	+3	+1	+0	3	2R, 1T	Let's deal I
3	+1	+1	+2	+3	+2	+1	3	2R, 1T	Slick
4	+2	+1	+2	+4	+2	+1	4	2R, 1T, 1S	Magnetism
5	+2	+1	+3	+4	+3	+1	4	2R, 2T, 1S	Allure +1
6	+3	+2	+3	+5	+4	+2	5	3R, 2T, 1S	Stockpile 1/mission
7	+3	+2	+4	+5	+4	+2	5	3R, 2T, 1S	Slick
8	+4	+2	+4	+6	+5	+2	6	3R, 2T, 1S, 1W	Magnetism
9	+4	+3	+4	+6	+5	+3	6	3R, 2T, 2S, 1W	Allure +2, fast talk 1/session
10	+5	+3	+5	+7	+6	+3	7	3R, 3T, 2S, 1W	Filthy rich I
11	+5	+3	+5	+7	+7	+3	7	3R, 3T, 2S, 1W	Slick, let's deal II
12	+6	+4	+6	+8	+7	+4	8	4R, 3T, 2S, 1W	Stockpile 2/mission, magnetism
13	+6	+4	+6	+8	+8	+4	8	4R, 3T, 2S, 1W, 1V	Allure +3
14	+7	+4	+6	+9	+8	+4	9	4R, 3T, 2S, 2W, 1V	Nobody's fool
15	+7	+5	+7	+9	+9	+5	9	4R, 3T, 2S, 2W, 1V	Slick, fast talk 2/session
16	+8	+5	+7	+10	+10	+5	10	4R, 3T, 3S, 2W, 1V	Magnetism
17	+8	+5	+8	+10	+10	+5	10	4R, 4T, 3S, 2W, 1V	Allure +4
18	+9	+6	+8	+11	+11	+6	11	5R, 4T, 3S, 2W, 1V	Stockpile 3/mission
19	+9	+6	+8	+11	+11	+6	11	5R, 4T, 3S, 2W, 1V	Slick, let's deal III
20	+10	+6	+9	+12	+12	+6	12	5R, 4T, 3S, 2W, 2V	Filthy rich II, magnetism

TABLE 4.3: THE FIXER

- *Bulletproof Reputation:* When you or one of your teammates loses Reputation or Net Worth due to exposure, the amount lost decreases by 1 or $50,000, respectively. You may use this ability a number of times per mission equal to your starting action dice, but only once per loss.

- *Favor for a Favor:* You may use your connections to elicit assistance from someone within an organization who is otherwise resistant to bribery. When you make a Bureaucracy/Bribe check, you may bribe honorable characters without penalty. The skill check results and costs are determined as standard, except that the bribe money is not paid to the target but rather used to assist him in a way that he finds morally acceptable. You may use this ability a number of times per mission equal to your starting action dice.

- *Honey Trap:* Before Strategies are chosen during each Conflict round of a seduction, you may force your opponent to choose a different Strategy than he chose during the last round. This ability may not be used if the target has no other option available to him. When you use this ability, you must also choose a different Strategy than you chose during the last round.

- *Pull:* You may choose Resource gear picks as if the mission's Caliber were 1 higher. If the mission is Caliber V, you may instead gain 1 additional Caliber I Resource gear pick.

- *Procure (city):* You maintain a number of back channels through which you can quickly acquire gear. These channels may exist within your Faction, Freelance network, another organization, or a street market. During the Intel Phase of each mission, you may hold an additional 2 Reserve gear picks and/or Common Items (even if your Wisdom modifier is +0 or lower). Further, the delivery time for each Reserve gear pick decreases to 1/2 standard (rounded up). Finally, you may make Request checks as if the mission's Caliber were 1 higher (maximum Caliber IV).

- *Racket:* Choose 1 Fixer class skill to become your "racket." You gain a synergy bonus with Knowledge checks relevant to your racket equal to 1/2 your ranks in the chosen skill (rounded down). Further, the starting disposition toward you of all NPCs with 8 or more ranks in this skill automatically improves by 1 grade.

Allure: Your personal charisma is undeniable. At Levels 5, 9, 13, and 17, your Charisma score increases by 1.

Stockpile: At Level 6, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Gear feat of your choice until the end of the current mission.

At Levels 12 and 18, you may use this ability 1 additional time per mission.

Fast Talk: You could sell ice to an Eskimo. At Level 9, once per session, you may target 1 special NPC or 1 standard NPC squad and spend a number of rounds equal to the target's Career Level speaking with them. This ability possesses the Hearing and Language tags. At the end of this period, the target's disposition toward you increases by 3 grades until the end of the scene. If the target is a special NPC, he may make a Will save (DC 15 + your class level + your Charisma modifier), and with success, he ignores this effect. This ability may surpass the standard maximum disposition shift of 2 grades per mission.

FIXER

The disposition of the NPC or squad immediately returns to normal if you or any of your teammates make hostile or threatening actions toward them (e.g. drawing or raising a weapon). Thereafter, you may not use this ability to target the same NPC or squad for the duration of the current scene.

At Level 15, you may use this ability 1 additional time per session.

Filthy Rich I: You have deep pockets — and don't mind spreading the wealth. At Level 10, at the start of each mission, your Wealth and that of each of your teammates increases by 2 until the end of the current mission. This ability may not increase any single character's Wealth by more than 6, no many how many *filthy rich* abilities are involved. Further, these additional points may not be liquidated for Spending Cash, nor may they be retained in any fashion beyond the end of the current mission.

Filthy Rich II: At Level 20, this ability's Wealth bonus increases by an additional 2 (for a total bonus of 4), with the same restrictions.

Nobody's Fool: You're a master manipulator who can exploit the machinations of others. At Level 14, when an opponent targets you with an Impress, Intimidate, or Manipulate check, his threat range decreases by 2. Further, the check becomes passive. Finally, if the check fails, you may choose the reaction your opponent sees, if any (this reaction need not be accurate). You may use this ability even when you're unaware of the skill check.

MARTIAL ARTIST

The Martial Artist hones his body and mind into a deadly weapon. Deriving his power as much from spiritual focus as physical conditioning, he transcends ordinary expectations of human ability.

Attributes: The Martial Artist benefits from a balanced array of attributes, as he can put any of them to good use at any time.

Vitality: 1d12 + Con modifier per level.

Starting Weapon Proficiencies: 6.

CLASS SKILLS

The Martial Artist's class skills are Acrobatics, Athletics, Impress, Intimidate, Medicine, Notice, Resolve, Sense Motive, and Sneak.

Skill Points at Level 1: (4 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Unyielding: You can withstand tremendous physical punishment. Once per combat, you may take 1 full action to spend and roll 1 or more action dice, immediately recovering a number of combined vitality and wound points equal to the total result. These action dice explode as normal. You may take this action even when you're *helpless* or *dying*.

CLASS ABILITIES

Martial Arts: At Level 1, you gain the Martial Arts feat, waiving all prerequisites.

Life of Discipline: You're devoted to a deeper, more spiritual understanding of combat. At Levels 2, 11, and 19, you may choose 1 of the following abilities.

- *Discipline of the Body:* Your intense martial discipline grants you extraordinary control over your body. The lower of your Strength or Constitution scores increases by 1 (if they're tied, you choose which to increase). Further, you gain a +1 insight bonus with Fortitude saves. Finally, you may spend 1 action die to hold your breath for an additional number of minutes equal to your Constitution modifier while performing actions, or for an equal number of hours while remaining still.

- *Discipline of the Mind:* Your studies into the nature of the mind have unlocked inner powers. The lower of your Dexterity or Intelligence scores increases by 1 (if they're tied, you choose which to increase). Further, you gain a +1 insight bonus with Reflex saves. Finally, you may spend 1 action die to ignore the fatigued condition or reduce the exhausted condition to *fatigued* until the next time you receive damage.

- *Discipline of the Spirit:* Your contemplation of the spirit strengthens your resolve. The lower of your Wisdom or Charisma scores increases by 1 (if they're tied, you choose which to increase). Further, you gain a +1 insight bonus with Will saves. Finally, when an adjacent character scores a threat, you may spend 1 action die to activate their critical success.

Bonus Feat: At Levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19, you gain 1 additional Melee or Unarmed Combat feat.

Improved Reach: You may strike opponents with rapid lunges or punch and kick loose objects toward them. At Levels 4, 12, and 20, your Reach with melee and unarmed attacks increases by 5 ft.

Ploy: At Levels 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18, you may choose 1 of the following abilities. Each of these abilities may be chosen only once.

TABLE 4.4: THE MARTIAL ARTIST

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+2	+1	0	—	Martial Arts, *unyielding*
2	+2	+2	+2	+2	+3	+1	0	1W	Life of discipline
3	+3	+2	+2	+2	+3	+2	1	1W	Bonus feat
4	+4	+2	+2	+2	+4	+2	1	1W, 1S	Improved reach (+5 ft.)
5	+5	+3	+3	+3	+5	+3	1	1W, 1S	Bonus feat
6	+6	+3	+3	+3	+6	+4	2	1W, 1S	Ploy
7	+7	+4	+4	+4	+6	+4	2	2W, 1S	Bonus feat
8	+8	+4	+4	+4	+7	+5	2	2W, 1S	Wuxia I
9	+9	+4	+4	+4	+8	+5	3	2W, 1S, 1R	Bonus feat, ploy
10	+10	+5	+5	+5	+9	+6	3	2W, 1S, 1R	Master's touch I
11	+11	+5	+5	+5	+9	+7	3	2W, 1S, 1R	Bonus feat, life of discipline
12	+12	+6	+6	+6	+10	+7	4	2W, 2S, 1R	Improved reach (+10 ft.), ploy
13	+13	+6	+6	+6	+11	+8	4	2W, 2S, 1R	Bonus feat
14	+14	+6	+6	+6	+12	+8	4	3W, 2S, 1R	Finishing move 1/scene
15	+15	+7	+7	+7	+12	+9	5	3W, 2S, 1R	Bonus feat, ploy
16	+16	+7	+7	+7	+13	+10	5	3W, 2S, 1R	Wuxia II
17	+17	+8	+8	+8	+14	+10	5	3W, 2S, 2R	Bonus feat
18	+18	+8	+8	+8	+15	+11	6	3W, 2S, 2R	Ploy
19	+19	+8	+8	+8	+15	+11	6	3W, 3S, 2R	Bonus feat, life of discipline
20	+20	+9	+9	+9	+16	+12	6	3W, 3S, 2R	Improved reach (+15 ft.), master's touch II

- *Backhand:* Each time you make a successful unarmed attack, you may choose to inflict subdual damage. If you do so, you also gain a +4 morale bonus with all Intimidate checks targeting the same opponent for 1 minute.

- *Beat Down:* Each time you make a successful unarmed or melee attack, the target suffers 1 point of stress damage in addition to any other damage inflicted by the attack.

- *Great Sweep:* You gain a +4 synergy bonus with any skill check made as part of a Bull Rush or Trip action.

- *Provoke:* You gain a +4 synergy bonus with any skill check made as part of a Taunt or Trick action.

- *Quake Strike:* As a full action, you may take 1 Trip action targeting all adjacent opponents. You roll once for this action, while each opponent rolls to resist separately. If you suffer a critical failure or any opponent scores a critical success, you automatically become *sprawled*.

- *Smack Down:* When you make a Standard Unarmed Attack without applying any tricks, your attack gains the *takedown* quality.

- *Stare Down:* When you render an opponent *unconscious* or *dead*, you may take a Threaten action against another opponent within CQB range as a free action, even if you have not yet injured that character.

- *Still Standing:* You gain a +8 bonus with Fortitude saves made to remain standing after being hit by an attack with the *takedown* quality. Additionally, you gain a +4 bonus with skill checks made to resist Bull Rush and Trip actions.

- *Strut:* After scoring a threat or critical hit with an unarmed or melee attack, you may spend your next half action posturing, at which point you gain 1 bonus action die (without the accompanying XP bonus). If not used by the end of the current combat, this action die is lost.

- *Take It:* You gain 2 points of subdual resistance against all melee, hurled, and unarmed attacks. This resistance is applied after damage reduction and can reduce the effects of bruising.

Wuxia I: At Level 8, your horizontal and vertical Acrobatics/Jump check results are no longer limited by your height. Further, the distance you travel when making a Jump check increases by 50% (rounded up).

Wuxia II: At Level 16, the distance you travel when making a Jump check increases by an additional 50% (for a total increase of 100%). Further, you are considered to weigh only 1 lb. when determining if a surface or object can support your weight.

MARTIAL ARTIST

Master's Touch I: At Level 10, you may add 1 additional trick from any melee or unarmed "Basics" or "Moves" feat to one of your actions (for a total of 2 tricks from any of these feats). You may use this ability to add an unarmed feat trick to a melee attack or vice versa. Further, you may ignore all requirements for the weapon type used when applying these tricks.

Master's Touch II: At Level 20, you may add 2 additional tricks from any melee or unarmed "Basics" or "Moves" feat to one of your actions (for a total of 3 tricks from any of these feats).

Finishing Move: At Level 14, once per scene, when one of your attacks decreases a target's wound points, or when a standard NPC fails a Damage save prompted by one of your attacks, you may instead choose to decrease 1 of your target's attributes of your choice to exactly 1. At the end of the current scene, the target heals 1/2 of all Attribute damage inflicted by this ability (rounded up); the rest of the damage heals as standard.

EXPERT
ACE

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +3 or higher.

Drive: 6+ ranks.

Feats: Favored Gear (any vehicle).

The Ace is a dominating force with a handful of vehicles to which he's dedicated much of his career. In combat or in competition, on land, in the air, or across the sea, the Ace is his team's best ticket into trouble — and back out of it.

Attributes: As a top vehicle specialist, the Ace favors Dexterity over all other attributes.

Vitality: 1d12 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Ace's class skills are Acrobatics, Athletics, Drive, Electronics, Mechanics, Notice, Profession, Search, and Tactics.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Evasive Action: You have a superbly honed survival instinct. Each time you spend 1 action die to increase your Defense, you roll 2 dice to determine how long the bonus lasts.

CLASS ABILITIES

Born to Run: You can make a vehicle dance through incoming fire. At Level 1, when your vehicle's Acceleration and/or Turning Ratings are higher than those of an attacker's vehicle, you may increase your vehicle's Defense by your full Power Rating, rather than the difference between your Power Rating and that of the attacker.

Signature Vehicles: At Level 2, you gain the Signature Gear feat for each vehicle you possess through the Favored Gear feat.

Racing Riot: At Level 3, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Chase feat until the end of the current mission.

At Level 7, you may use this ability up to twice per mission.

A Good Landing: At Level 4, when a vehicle you're driving crashes, the damage inflicted by the crash decreases by 2 points per die (minimum 1 point of damage per die).

Ironsides I: At Level 4, the threat range of each attack targeting a vehicle you're operating decreases by 1 (minimum 20). Further, the maximum number of dice that may be spent to activate a critical hit upon a vehicle you're operating decreases to 3.

Ironsides II: At Level 8, the threat range of each attack targeting a vehicle you're operating decreases by an additional 1 (minimum 20). Further, the maximum number of dice that may be spent to activate a critical hit upon a vehicle you're operating decreases to 2.

Slick Moves: Your mastery of your favorite vehicles is unmatched. At Level 5, once per session, while operating a vehicle you possess through the Favored Gear feat, you may make a Maneuver check with a DC up to 50 without making a skill check. Alternately, while operating a vehicle you possess through the Favored Gear feat during a chase Conflict, you may choose the "That's Impossible!" Strategy.

At Level 9, you may use this ability up to twice per session.

Push the Envelope: At Level 6, before Strategies are chosen during each Conflict round of a chase, you may force your opponent to choose a different Strategy than he chose during the last round. This ability may not be used if your opponent has no other option available to him. When you use this ability, you must *also* choose a different Strategy than you chose during the last round.

Trademark Vehicles: At Level 7, you gain the Trademark Gear feat for each vehicle you possess through the Favored Gear feat.

Top Gun: At Level 8, each time you make a Maneuver check while operating a vehicle you possess through the Favored Gear feat, you may roll twice, keeping the result you prefer.

Ace of Aces: You have built a reputation for solid performance, never making a mistake when it counts. At Level 10, once per round, when making a Damage save for a vehicle you're operating or an attack check with any vehicular weapon, you may roll twice, keeping the result you prefer.

TABLE 4.5: THE ACE

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+1	+1	+2	+0	+0	+1	0	1V, 1G	Born to run, *evasive action*
2	+2	+2	+3	+0	+1	+1	0	2V, 1G	Signature vehicles
3	+3	+2	+3	+1	+1	+2	1	2V, 1G	Racing riot (1 feat)
4	+4	+2	+4	+1	+2	+2	1	2V, 1G, 1S	A good landing, ironsides I
5	+5	+3	+4	+1	+2	+3	1	2V, 2G, 1S	Slick moves 1/session
6	+6	+3	+5	+2	+2	+4	2	3V, 2G, 1S	Push the envelope
7	+7	+4	+5	+2	+3	+4	2	3V, 2G, 1S	Racing riot (2 feats), trademark vehicles
8	+8	+4	+6	+2	+3	+5	2	3V, 2G, 1S, 1W	Ironsides II, top gun
9	+9	+4	+6	+3	+4	+5	3	3V, 2G, 2S, 1W	Slick moves 2/session
10	+10	+5	+7	+3	+4	+6	3	3V, 3G, 2S, 1W	Ace of aces

EDGEMASTER

EXPERT

REQUIREMENTS

Charisma: 13+.

Feats: Battering Blows, Dueling Basics.

The Edgemaster wields melee weapons as if they were extensions of his body. His prowess with them is phenomenal, as deadly as it is beautiful.

Attributes: Edgemasters require great Strength or Dexterity, depending on their choice of weapons. Some thrive upon the admiration of their opponents and audiences, which also demands a high Charisma score.

Vitality: 1d12 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Edgemaster's class skills are Acrobatics, Athletics, Bluff, Cultures, Intimidate, Notice, Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, and Survival.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Swordplay: Once per round as a free action during your Initiative Count, you may spend 1 action die to make a final attack with a readied melee weapon.

CLASS ABILITIES

Carve: At Level 1, each time you succeed with an Anticipate, Disarm, Diversion, Feint, Taunt, or Tire action against an adjacent opponent while armed with a melee weapon, you may also inflict an amount of lethal damage upon that opponent equal to your Charisma modifier.

Display of Arms I: At Level 2, while armed with a melee weapon, you may substitute your Sleight of Hand ranks for Impress ranks when making an Impress/Perform check. Further, you need not damage an opponent before taking a Threaten action while armed with a melee weapon.

Display of Arms II: At Level 7, while armed with a melee weapon, you may substitute your Sleight of Hand ranks for Resolve ranks when taking a Tire action. Further, when applying the Cheap Shot trick to a melee attack, your attack check penalty decreases to –2.

1,000 Blades: At Level 3, once per scene as a free action, you may gain 1 temporary Melee Combat "Basics" or "Moves" feat until the end of the current scene.

At Level 7, you may use this ability up to twice per scene.

Study the Stance: At Level 4, you and each of your teammates who can see or hear you gain a synergy bonus from your Sense Motive skill with all checks made to resist Feint, Grapple, Taunt, and Trip actions.

Swagger I: At Level 4, each time one of your melee attacks renders an opponent *unconscious* or *dead,* you may spend your next half action posturing (e.g. holding your axe menacingly overhead, flicking the blood from your blade, etc.). When you do so, you gain 1 bonus d4 action die. If any of these bonus action dice remain at the end of the current combat, you must discard all but 1 of them.

Swagger II: At Level 8, each action die gained from this ability becomes a d6 and you must discard all but 2 of those remaining at the end of the current combat.

Blade Dance I: At Level 5, you gain a +1 morale bonus with all skill checks targeting an opponent you have successfully damaged with a melee attack during the current combat.

Blade Dance II: At Level 9, this bonus increases to +2.

Deadly Blow: At Level 6, you may spend 1 full action to prepare a deadly blow. If your first action during the following round is a melee Standard Attack, your opponent is considered *vulnerable,* your weapon's threat range increases by 4, and the weapon automatically inflicts its maximum possible damage (though sneak attack damage, action dice, and other variable bonuses must still be rolled). You may not take any move actions after preparing a deadly blow or these benefits are lost.

Master's Touch I: At Level 8, you may add 1 additional trick from any melee or unarmed "Basics" or "Moves" feat to one of your actions (for a total of 2 tricks from any of these feats). You may use this ability to add an unarmed feat trick to a melee attack or vice versa. Further, you may ignore all requirements for the weapon type used when applying these tricks..

Effortless Cut: At Level 10, once per round when making a melee attack, you may roll twice, keeping the result you prefer.

TABLE 4.6: THE EDGEMASTER

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+1	+1	+2	+0	+1	+1	1	—	Carve, *swordplay*
2	+2	+2	+3	+0	+1	+1	2	1W	Display of arms I
3	+3	+2	+3	+1	+2	+2	2	1W	1,000 blades (1 feat)
4	+4	+2	+4	+1	+2	+2	2	1W, 1G	Study the stance, swagger I
5	+5	+3	+4	+1	+3	+3	3	1W, 1G	Blade dance I
6	+6	+3	+5	+2	+4	+4	3	1W, 1G	Deadly blow
7	+7	+4	+5	+2	+4	+4	4	2W, 1G	1,000 blades (2 feats), display of arms II
8	+8	+4	+6	+2	+5	+5	4	2W, 1G	Master's touch I, swagger II
9	+9	+4	+6	+3	+5	+5	4	2W, 1G, 1S	Blade dance II
10	+10	+5	+7	+3	+6	+6	5	2W, 1G, 1S	Effortless cut

EXPERT
FORWARD

REQUIREMENTS

Weapon Proficiency:
Indirect.

Feats: Observer,
Simulator Jockey.

The 21st century incarnation of the commando, the Forward combines the diverse battlefield roles of the reconnaissance expert, drone pilot, electronic warfare specialist, and infiltrator. While he probably isn't his team's heaviest hitter, he provides expert guidance to those who serve as the pointed end of the spear, ensuring that every carefully calculated attack strikes true.

Attributes: With the wide array of demands weighing on the Forward, it's not surprising that he needs to be fit in both body and mind. A balanced array of attributes helps the Forward cope with any situation that might arise.

Vitality: 1d8 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Forward's class skills are Analysis, Athletics, Computers, Cultures, Drive, Electronics, Networking, Notice, Profession, Search, Security, Sneak, Streetwise, Survival, and Tactics.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Drone Devil: When you spend an action die to increase the Defense of a drone you're operating, the result also increases the drone's Damage save bonus for 1 full round.

CLASS ABILITIES

Spotter I: At Level 1, you may spend 1 full action designating a target to which you have line of sight (personally or through a drone). Thereafter, one teammate of your choice who can hear you gains a +1 bonus with his next ranged attack check against the chosen target until the start of your Initiative Count during the following round. Further, the threat range of the chosen teammate's attack increases by 1 and the attack's range increment increases by 50% (rounded down).

Spotter II: At Level 5, the bonus to the chosen teammate's ranged attack check increases to +2 and his range increment increases by an additional 50% (for a total increase of 100%).

Spotter III: At Level 9, the bonus to the chosen teammate's ranged attack check increases to +3 and his threat range increases by an additional 1 (for a total increase of 2).

Cache I: You routinely prepare secret stashes of critical items you might need if a mission goes awry. At Level 4, you gain an additional Wealth statistic: "Cache." This statistic has a base value of 1 and you may assign Wealth points to it as standard. Your Cache is made up of a number of gear picks as shown on Table 4.2 Possessions *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 212)*. Like Possessions, all Cache items are chosen before the start of each mission, and you lose access to any that are not chosen at this time. Also, Cache items may only be adjusted between missions. Unlike Possessions, your Cache may only include any combination of cover identities, kits, currency ($250 × Caliber), and up to 1 non-heavy Weapon pick. Further, you do not have access to your Cache at the start of a mission; instead, once per session, if you are free to travel, you may spend 1d4 hours to visit the Cache and retrieve some or all of its items.

Cache II: At Level 7, your Cache statistic increases by 1. Further, you may also include a single Vehicle pick and/or Security pick as part of your Cache.

Bonus Feat: At Levels 3 and 7, you gain 1 additional Ranged Combat or Terrain feat.

Armor Use I: You're at home in armor. At Level 4, you gain a +1 bonus to Defense while wearing armor. Further, your armor check penalty decreases by 1 (minimum 0). Finally, you gain 1 piece of Caliber I armor at no cost as part of your mission gear during the Intel Phase of each mission.

Armor Use II: At Level 8, your Defense bonus while wearing armor increases to +2 and your additional piece of armor may be chosen from Calibers I or II.

Poise: At Levels 4 and 8, your lowest attribute rises by 1.

TABLE 4.7: THE FORWARD

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+1	+2	+1	+0	+0	+2	0	1E	*Drone devil,* spotter +1
2	+2	+3	+2	+0	+1	+3	0	1E	Cache I
3	+3	+3	+2	+1	+1	+4	1	1E, 1V	Bonus feat
4	+4	+4	+2	+1	+2	+5	1	1E, 1V	Armor use I, poise
5	+5	+4	+3	+1	+2	+5	1	2E, 1V	Spotter +2
6	+6	+5	+3	+2	+2	+6	2	2E, 1V, 1S	"That's not right!" 1/session
7	+7	+5	+4	+2	+3	+7	2	2E, 1V, 1S	Bonus feat, cache II
8	+8	+6	+4	+2	+3	+8	2	2E, 2V, 1S	Armor use II, poise
9	+9	+6	+4	+3	+4	+9	3	2E, 2V, 1S	Spotter +3
10	+10	+7	+5	+3	+4	+10	3	3E, 2V, 1S	Call down the thunder

"That's Not Right!": You can get your drones to perform stunts that would turn your hair white if you were onboard. At Level 6, once per session while operating a drone, you may make a Maneuver check with a DC up to 50 without making a skill check. Alternately, during a chase Conflict while operating a drone, you may choose the "That's Impossible!" Strategy.

Call Down the Thunder: At Level 10, at the start of each mission, you gain a number of Caliber IV guided/indirect strike Resources equal to your starting action dice. Further, when you request an "immediate" guided/indirect strike, the attack check may benefit from your *spotter* ability.

EXPERT
HIGH ROLLER

REQUIREMENTS

Streetwise: 4+ ranks.

Feats: The Dice are Hot, Fortunate.

The High Roller is the archetypical playboy adventurer, his life a series of glamorous highlights and down-to-the-wire escapes. A master at both, the High Roller combines animal magnetism with uncanny luck, slipping into and out of extreme situations with a grace that few can match.

Attributes: While Charisma stands out as the High Roller's most favored attribute, his inherent flexibility demands a unique attribute spread of his own design.

Vitality: 1d10 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The High Roller's class skills are Bluff, Bureaucracy, Cultures, Drive, Impress, Investigation, Networking, Notice, Profession, Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, and Streetwise.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Jacks or Better: You and each adjacent teammate may re-roll each action die that results in a 1. This does *not* affect the second and subsequent rolls made with an action die that explodes.

CLASS ABILITIES

High Life: At Level 1 and for each class level gained thereafter, you gain 1 additional skill point that must be spent to purchase ranks in the Cultures or Impress skills. Further, your Lifestyle increases by 2.

More Than Luck: At Level 2, once per roll, you may spend 1 action die to re-roll (ignoring the original roll as if it had never taken place). You may use this ability even if the initial roll results in an error, but you must declare its use *before* the critical failure is activated. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

At Level 7, the action die spent to use this ability is also rolled and its result is applied to the re-roll.

Bonus Feat: At Levels 3 and 7, you gain 1 additional Chase or Gear feat.

Panache: At Level 4, your Chase, Gear, and Style feats count as Chance feats when determining the effects of any ability, prerequisite, or requirement based on the number of Chance feats you possess.

Poise: At Levels 4 and 8, your lowest attribute increases by 1.

Smooth Operator: You're tremendously versatile, able to blend into any social situation. At Level 5, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Style feat of your choice until the end of the current mission.

At Level 9, you may use this ability 1 additional time per mission.

Allure: Your charm is undeniable. At Level 6, your Charisma score increases by 2.

Charmed Life: At Level 8, the error ranges of all your rolls decrease by 2 (minimum 1). Further, no more than 2 action dice may ever be spent to activate one of your critical failures.

Nobody Does It Better: At Level 10, you may choose to re-roll any action die, though you must keep the second result even if it is lower. If you possess an ability that allows you to roll 2 dice when spending 1, you must re-roll both dice together when using this ability.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	+2	+1	2	—	High life, *jacks or better*
2	+1	+0	+2	+2	+3	+1	3	1T	More than luck
3	+2	+1	+2	+2	+3	+2	3	1T	Bonus feat
4	+3	+1	+2	+2	+4	+2	4	1T, 1G	Panache, poise
5	+3	+1	+3	+3	+5	+3	4	1T, 1G	Smooth operator (1 feat)
6	+4	+2	+3	+3	+6	+4	5	1T, 1G	Allure +2
7	+5	+2	+4	+4	+6	+4	5	2T, 1G	Bonus feat, more than luck
8	+6	+2	+4	+4	+7	+5	6	2T, 1G	Charmed life, poise
9	+6	+3	+4	+4	+8	+5	6	2T, 1G, 1W	Smooth operator (2 feats)
10	+7	+3	+5	+5	+9	+6	7	2T, 1G, 1W	Nobody does it better

TABLE 4.8: THE HIGH ROLLER

EXPERT
MEDIC

REQUIREMENTS

Medicine: 4+ ranks.

Feats: Bandage, Survivalist.

A trained healer and virtual miracle worker in the line of fire, the Medic can mean the difference between limping home to victory and not coming back at all.

Attributes: Wisdom is the Medic's most important attribute, supporting his ability to patch up injuries in the field. Intelligence is also useful, aiding his other medical actions and providing skill points for his various other activities.

Vitality: 1d10 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Medic's class skills are Analysis, Athletics, Cultures, Drive, Medicine, Notice, Profession, Resolve, Science, Search, Sense Motive, and Survival.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Angel in White: Each time you or an adjacent teammate spends an action die to regain vitality or wound points, the number of points recovered is doubled.

CLASS ABILITIES

Search and Rescue: You take medical care into the field, bringing aid where it's needed most. At Level 1, your Survivalist feat also applies to Medicine checks. Further, you gain the Advanced Skill Mastery (Survivalist) feat.

At Level 5, you gain the Grand Skill Mastery (Survivalist) feat. At Level 9, you gain the Perfect Skill Mastery (Survivalist) feat.

"Stay with Me!": At Level 2, when you fail a Medicine check that may be re-tried, you may spend 1 half action to try another approach. As long as the check DC is equal to or less than your class level + 20, the new approach is automatically successful. If more than 1 grade of success is possible, you achieve only the lowest possible positive result. You may use this ability even if your initial check results in an error, but you must declare its use *before* the critical failure is activated. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

If you gain this ability from two or more classes, your relevant class levels are added together to determine the ability's overall effectiveness.

At Level 7, this ability also applies to Science (Pharmacology) checks.

Patch Up I: At Level 3, you may increase your error range by 1 to decrease the time required to make any Medicine/First Aid check to 5 full actions, or any Medicine/Treatment check to 3 minutes.

Patch Up II: At Level 7, you may increase your error range by 2 to decrease the time required to make any Medicine/First Aid check to 2 full actions, or any Medicine/Treatment check to 1 minute.

Resuscitation: At Level 4, once per scene, you may revive a recently killed character. The target character must be between −10 and −25 wounds, and must have died within a number of rounds equal to his Constitution score when you begin. You must tend to the character for 1 minute. At the end of that time the character is restored to 0 wounds but must consult the Table of Ouch *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 332)* with a result of 1d20 + double the number of negative wounds he suffered.

Vehicle Familiarity I: Your medical expertise carries over to getting to the scene — and bringing your ward home alive. At Level 4, at the start of each mission, you may choose 1 specific vehicle or mount to be considered *familiar*. If the vehicle or mount is part of your mission gear, you must have previously operated it for a minimum number of hours equal to twice the highest Caliber of the vehicle or mount, or any vehicle weapon or gadget installed. If the vehicle or mount is part of your Lifestyle or chosen with the Favored Gear feat, this time requirement is waived.

You may be *familiar* with only 1 specific vehicle or mount at a time. The chosen conveyance gains a +1 bonus to Defense and Damage saves, and you gain the same bonus with Initiative and Maneuver checks made using it, as well as Electronics, Mechanics, and Medicine checks made to repair or heal it, as appropriate.

TABLE 4.9: THE MEDIC

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+1	+0	+2	+0	+0	2	1S, 1R	Angel in white, search and rescue (Advanced)
2	+1	+2	+0	+3	+1	+0	3	2S, 1R	"Stay with me!" (Medicine)
3	+2	+2	+1	+3	+1	+1	3	2S, 1R	Patch up I
4	+3	+2	+1	+4	+2	+1	4	2S, 1R, 1V	Resuscitation 1/scene, vehicle familiarity I
5	+3	+3	+1	+4	+2	+1	4	2S, 2R, 1V	Search and rescue (Grand)
6	+4	+3	+2	+5	+2	+2	5	3S, 2R, 1V	Improved Refresh
7	+5	+4	+2	+5	+3	+2	5	3S, 2R, 1V	"Stay with me!" (Pharmacology), Patch up II
8	+6	+4	+2	+6	+3	+2	6	3S, 2R, 1V, 1G	Medical marvel, vehicle familiarity II
9	+6	+4	+3	+6	+4	+3	6	3S, 2R, 2V, 1G	Search and rescue (Perfect)
10	+7	+5	+3	+7	+4	+3	7	3S, 3R, 2V, 1G	Just a scratch 1/scene

Vehicle Familiarity II: At Level 8, this bonus increases to +2 and the time required to become *familiar* with any vehicle or mount decreases to 1/2 standard (rounded down).

Improved Refresh: At level 6, a number of times per scene equal to your starting action dice, you or an adjacent ally of your choice may take a Refresh action as if each of you has spent a d10 action die without spending an action die.

Medical Marvel: At Level 8, you may target each character with a Medicine/First Aid check up to 4 times per scene.

Just a Scratch: At Level 10, once per scene, you may spend 1 minute tending to a character who has suffered a critical injury during the current scene. At the end of the current scene, the healing time of 1 critical injury of your choice decreases by 1 mission and the same injury's Surgery Check DC decreases by 10. If this decreases the injury's healing time to 0 missions, the injury heals at the end of the current scene. The chosen injury must have occurred during the current scene.

EXPERT

MOLE

REQUIREMENTS

Intelligence: 13+.

Skill: Bureaucracy 6+ ranks.

Feats: Superior Documentation.

The Mole is a social chameleon, displaying the proper mannerisms and opinions to blend in with any crowd. Once inside, he sows seeds of doubt, poisoning the group and leaving it to rot. As a master infiltrator, the Mole recreates himself for every mission, becoming the perfect consultant, the man his opponents always think they need, even if they don't realize it.

Attributes: The Mole relies upon Wisdom and Charisma to spin and navigate his intricate webs of betrayal.

Vitality: 1d8 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Mole's class skills are Blend, Bluff, Bureaucracy, Cultures, Falsify, Impress, Investigation, Manipulate, Networking, Notice, Profession, Security, Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, and Streetwise.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Johnny on the Spot: As a free action, you may gain 1 Interest or Profession skill focus until the end of the current mission. You may use this ability a number of times per mission equal to your starting action dice.

CLASS ABILITIES

Deep Cover I: You take extra precautions every time you go undercover. At Level 1, the Power Rating of each cover identity you create or request increases by 1 (maximum 10).

Deep Cover II: At Level 5, the Power Rating of each cover identity you create or request increases by an additional 1 (for a total increase of 2, maximum 10).

Deep Cover III: At Level 9, the Power Rating of each cover identity you create for a teammate, or that a teammate requests, increases by 1 (maximum 10).

Smooth Talker: At Level 2, when you fail a Bureaucracy check that may be re-tried, you may spend 1 half action to smooth over your mistake. As long as the check DC is equal to or less than your class level + 20, your new approach is automatically successful. If more than 1 grade of success is possible, you achieve only the lowest possible positive result. You may use this ability even if your initial check results in an error, but you must declare its use *before* the critical failure is activated. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

If you gain this ability from two or more classes, your relevant class levels are added together to determine the ability's overall effectiveness.

At Level 7, this ability also applies to Networking checks.

Learning Curve: At Level 3, you gain a pool of 6 skill points. After 1 hour of study, you may spend 1 of these points on any skill with Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma as a key attribute. All skills are considered class skills when spending these points. The maximum skill rank you may gain in a skill with these points is equal to your class level. At the end of each session, you may return some or all of these points to your pool. All of these

TABLE 4.10: THE MOLE

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+1	+1	+2	+2	+1	1	—	Deep cover I, *Johnny on the spot*
2	+1	+2	+2	+3	+3	+1	2	1T	Smooth talker (Bureaucracy)
3	+1	+2	+2	+3	+3	+2	2	1T	Learning curve (6 points)
4	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	+2	2	1T, 1R	Cache I, discourage (2 turning points)
5	+2	+3	+3	+4	+5	+3	3	1T, 1R	Deep cover II, learning curve (9 points)
6	+3	+3	+3	+5	+6	+4	3	1T, 1R	Encroach
7	+3	+4	+4	+5	+6	+4	4	2T, 1R	Learning curve (12 points), smooth talker (Networking)
8	+4	+4	+4	+6	+7	+5	4	2T, 1R	Cache II, discourage (4 turning points)
9	+4	+4	+4	+6	+8	+5	4	2T, 1R, 1G	Deep cover III, learning curve (15 points)
10	+5	+5	+5	+7	+9	+6	5	2T, 1R, 1G	Compromised! 1/session

points are automatically returned to your pool at the end of each mission. Finally, these skill ranks may *never* be used to qualify for feats or expert classes.

At Levels 5, 7, and 9, the number of skill points in your pool increases by 3.

Cache I: You routinely prepare secret stashes of critical items you might need if a mission goes awry. At Level 4, you gain an additional Wealth statistic: "Cache." This statistic has a base value of 1 and you may assign Wealth points to it as standard. Your Cache is made up of a number of gear picks as shown on Table 4.2 Possessions *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 212)*. Like Possessions, all Cache items are chosen before the start of each mission, and you lose access to any that are not chosen at this time. Also, Cache items may only be adjusted between missions. Unlike Possessions, your Cache may only include any combination of cover identities, kits, currency ($250 × Caliber), and up to 1 non-heavy Weapon pick. Further, you do not have access to your Cache at the start of a mission; instead, once per session, if you are free to travel, you may spend 1d4 hours to visit the Cache and retrieve some or all of its items.

Cache II: At Level 8, your Cache statistic increases by 1. Further, you may also include a single Vehicle pick and/or Security pick as part of your Cache.

Discourage: At Level 4, once per mission, you may target up to 2 turning points in a single organization's History, negating the corresponding morale bonuses for the duration of the current mission. Per the GC's discretion, you may need to know the nature of a turning point in order to target it. An organization may be subject to only 1 character's *discourage* ability at any time.

At Level 8, you may negate the morale bonuses of up to 4 turning points in the same organization's history for the duration of the current mission.

Encroach: Your infiltration approaches are uniquely effective. At Level 6, before Strategies are chosen during each Conflict round of an infiltration, you may force your opponent to choose a different Strategy than he chose during the last round. This ability may not be used if your opponent has no other option available to him. When you use this ability, you must *also* choose a different Strategy than you chose during the last round.

Compromised!: You can systematically dismantle a target's security apparatus. At Level 10, once per session, you may target 1 location, decreasing the Power Ratings of all security devices within the location by 2 (minimum 0), as well as the squad size of all standard NPCs at the location by 2 (minimum 1). Further, you may impose or remove the *subtle* or *violent* campaign qualities if they're in play. These effects last for the duration of the current scene.

EXPERT

NINJA

REQUIREMENTS

Dexterity: 13+.

Feats: Burglar, Steel Rain.

Whether descended from an ancient clan of shadow warriors or simply pursuing the disciplines of stealth and deception, the modern Ninja is a marvel of physical infiltration and silent violence.

Attributes: The Ninja thrives on physical challenge, making Dexterity and Strength his most important attributes. Wisdom is complementary, improving his alertness and reaction to danger.

Vitality: 1d8 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Ninja's class skills are Acrobatics, Athletics, Blend, Drive, Falsify, Notice, Profession, Resolve, Search, Security, Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, Sneak, Survival, and Tactics.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Backstab: You rarely engage a foe in open combat, preferring to strike decisively against the unwary. Your base attack bonus is considered to be equal to your Career Level when you make a hurled, melee, or unarmed attack against a *flat-footed* opponent.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+0	+2	+1	+2	+2	0	1S	*Backstab,* like a shadow (Advanced)
2	+1	+0	+3	+2	+3	+3	0	1S	Ambusher
3	+1	+1	+3	+2	+3	+4	1	1S, 1G	Ki sense I (Notice)
4	+2	+1	+4	+2	+4	+5	1	1S, 1G	Deadly ground (1 feat), sneak attack +1d6
5	+2	+1	+4	+3	+5	+5	1	2S, 1G	Like a shadow (Grand)
6	+3	+2	+5	+3	+6	+6	2	2S, 1G, 1T	Deft +2
7	+3	+2	+5	+4	+6	+7	2	2S, 1G, 1T	Ki sense II (Sense Motive), ninjutsu
8	+4	+2	+6	+4	+7	+8	2	2S, 2G, 1T	Deadly ground (2 feats), sneak attack +2d6
9	+4	+3	+6	+4	+8	+9	3	2S, 2G, 1T	Like a shadow (Perfect)
10	+5	+3	+7	+5	+9	+10	3	3S, 2G, 1T	Ghost walk

TABLE 4.11: THE NINJA

CLASS ABILITIES

Like a Shadow: You're a master at stealthy intrusion. At Level 1, your Burglar feat also applies to Athletics checks. Further, you gain the Advanced Skill Mastery (Burglar) feat.

At Level 5, you gain the Grand Skill Mastery (Burglar) feat.

At Level 9, you gain the Perfect Skill Mastery (Burglar) feat.

Ambusher: At Level 2, neither your attacks nor those of your teammates within CQB Range of you cause an opponent to cease being *flat-footed*.

Ki Sense I: You can sense nearby foes with precision, even in total darkness. At Level 3, your Notice checks targeting any living being within CQB Range ignore the effects of cover, line of sight, and the Vision tag.

Ki Sense II: At Level 7, your Sense Motive checks targeting any living being within CQB Range ignore the effects of cover, line of sight, and the Vision tag.

Deadly Ground: At Level 4, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Terrain feat of your choice until the end of the current mission.

At Level 8, you may use this ability up to twice per mission.

Sneak Attack: At Level 4, you may inflict 1 die of sneak attack damage with any successful attack.

At Level 8, you may inflict 1 additional die of sneak attack damage with any successful attack.

Deft: At Level 6, your Dexterity score increases by 2.

Ninjutsu: At Level 7, your Melee Combat, Advanced Skill, and Terrain feats count as Covert feats when determining the effects of any ability, prerequisite, or requirement based on the number of Covert feats you possess.

Ghost Walk: At Level 10, when you're *hidden* from all opponents and observers, you may, as a free action, become incorporeal *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 224).* You may use this ability for a total number of rounds per session equal to the number of Covert feats you possess.

EXPERT

PROVOCATEUR

REQUIREMENTS

Science Focus: Pharmacology.

Feats: Silver Tongue, World Traveler.

A social saboteur, the Provocateur vanishes into a community and launches calculated attacks against its collective morale. He can batter the confidence of nations or personalize a campaign of soul-crushing harassment against a single key individual. In both cases, the Provocateur offers his team ways to defeat its enemies without firing a single shot.

Attributes: The Provocateur does his best work inside the minds of his enemies, where Wisdom and Charisma have the greatest effect.

Vitality: 1d8 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Provocateur's class skills are Blend, Bluff, Bureaucracy, Cultures, Drive, Falsify, Intimidate, Investigation, Manipulate, Notice, Profession, Science, Search, Sense Motive and Streetwise.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Abrasive: You get under people's skin. Once per round, you may spend 1 action die to take a Pummel or Taunt action as a free action.

CLASS ABILITIES

Dangerous Liaison: You seem so innocent… until you strike. At Level 1, your World Traveler feat also applies to Manipulate checks. Further, you gain the Advanced Skill Mastery (World Traveler) feat.

At Level 9, you gain the Perfect Skill Mastery (World Traveler) feat.

TABLE 4.12: THE PROVOCATEUR

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1	+2	1	1T	*Abrasive,* dangerous liaison (Advanced)
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1	+3	2	1T	Undermine
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	+2	+4	2	1T, 1R	Sneak attack +1d6
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	+2	+5	2	1T, 1R	Allure +1, sidetrack (2 Goals)
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	+3	+5	3	2T, 1R	Dangerous liaison (Grand)
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	+4	+6	3	2T, 1R, 1W	Alone in the dark
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	+4	+7	4	2T, 1R, 1W	Sneak attack +2d6, Venomous Dialogue
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	+5	+8	4	2T, 2R, 1W	Sidetrack (4 Goals), under the skin
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	+5	+9	4	2T, 2R, 1W	Dangerous liaison (Perfect)
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	+6	+10	5	3T, 2R, 1W	Mind games 1/mission

Undermine: At Level 2, you gain the Undermine feat.

Sneak Attack: At Level 3, you may inflict 1 die of sneak attack damage with any successful attack.

At Level 7, you may inflict 1 additional die of sneak attack damage with any successful attack.

Allure: At Level 4, your Charisma score increases by 1.

Sidetrack: At Level 4, once per mission, you may target up to 2 Goals belonging to a single organization, negating the corresponding bonus action dice for the duration of the current mission. Per the GC's discretion, you may need to know the nature of a Goal in order to target it. An organization may be subject to only 1 character's *sidetrack* ability at any time.

At Level 8, you may negate the bonus action dice of up to 4 Goals belonging to the same organization for the duration of the current mission.

Alone in the Dark: A mind is a terrible thing to lay waste. At Level 6, before Strategies are chosen during each Conflict round of a brainwashing, you may force your opponent to choose a different Strategy than he chose during the last round. This ability may not be used if your opponent has no other option available to him. When you use this ability, you must *also* choose a different Strategy than you chose during the last round.

Venomous Dialogue: At Level 7, you gain the Venomous Dialogue feat.

Under the Skin: At Level 8, each time you make a Manipulate check, you may roll twice, keeping the result you prefer.

Mind Games: At Level 10, once per mission, you may choose to harass 1 character whose location has been known to you for at least 2 continuous hours. The target is *drained* of 2 levels and cannot recover while you maintain this ability. In order to maintain this ability, you must know the target's location for at least 12 hours out of every day and dedicate 4 hours of your own time to the process (this time may be divided into 1-hr. increments). You may target only 1 character with this ability at any time, and multiple uses of this ability have no additional effect.

SABOTEUR

REQUIREMENTS

Sneak: 4+ ranks.

Feats: Attention to Detail, Explosive Basics

Somewhere between urban myth and political nightmare, the Saboteur is a deadly infiltrator of devastating effectiveness. He brings the latest demolitions to any team, specializing in everything from the simplest homemade devices to exotic binary compounds.

Attributes: In order to perform his careful preparations and complex capers, the Saboteur requires a delicate balance of Intelligence and Dexterity.

Vitality: 1d10 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Saboteur's class skills are Analysis, Athletics, Drive, Electronics, Falsify, Mechanics, Notice, Profession, Science, Security, Sleight of Hand, and Sneak.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Anti-Tampering: The error ranges of all Notice, Search, and Security checks targeting explosive devices you've set increase by 1/2 your class level (rounded up).

CLASS ABILITIES

Gremlin: At Level 1, you make all Sabotage checks as active checks. Further, you gain the Trap Master feat.

Ghost for Hire: At Level 2, your Sneak skill grants a synergy bonus to your Profession/Accomplishment checks and your Profession skill grants a synergy bonus to your Sneak/Hide checks.

TABLE 4.13: THE SABOTEUR

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+2	+1	+0	+0	+1	1	1S, 1W	*Anti-tampering*, gremlin
2	+1	+3	+2	+0	+1	+1	2	2S, 1W	Ghost for hire
3	+2	+3	+2	+1	+1	+2	2	2S, 1W	Chain reaction I
4	+3	+4	+2	+1	+2	+2	2	2S, 1W, 1G	Cookbook, Ghost Mastery
5	+3	+4	+3	+1	+2	+3	3	2S, 2W, 1G	"If you see me running…"
6	+4	+5	+3	+2	+2	+4	3	3S, 2W, 1G	Blowout 1/session
7	+5	+5	+4	+2	+3	+4	4	3S, 2W, 1G	Chain reaction II, SWAT (1 feat)
8	+6	+6	+4	+2	+3	+5	4	3S, 2W, 1G, 1T	Ghost Supremacy, rock steady
9	+6	+6	+4	+2	+4	+5	4	3S, 2W, 2G, 1T	"…Try to keep up!"
10	+7	+7	+5	+3	+4	+6	5	3S, 3W, 2G, 1T	Catastrophic blast

Chain Reaction I: Your explosives are carefully placed or supported with secondary charges — at no extra cost — and prevent any chance of escape. At Level 3, when a character's *evasion* ability or other effect decreases the damage from an explosive you've set to less than 1/2 standard, the ability or effect is negated.

Chain Reaction II: At Level 7, when a character makes a successful Reflex save to decrease the damage from an explosive you've set, the damage decreases to 3/4 standard instead of 1/2 standard.

Cookbook: At Level 4, during the Intel Phase, you and each of your teammates may choose explosive charges, grenades, mines, and raw explosives with any type of gear pick.

Ghost Mastery: At Level 4, you gain the Ghost Mastery feat.

"If You See Me Running...": At Level 5, when you fail any check to create or disarm an explosive, you may take 1 Standard Move away from the explosive before the consequences of failure are resolved.

Blowout: At Level 6, once per session when setting an explosive, you may double either its damage or its blast increment. If this explosive remains in place at the end of the current mission, it is automatically disabled or deconstructed. You may apply this ability to only one set explosive at any time.

SWAT: At Level 7, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Covert feat of your choice until the end of the current mission.

Ghost Supremacy: At Level 8, you gain the Ghost Supremacy feat.

Rock Steady: At Level 8, each time you make a Science (Chemistry) check or an attack check to set an explosive, you may roll twice, keeping the result you prefer.

"...Try to Keep Up!": At Level 9, you and each of your teammates within your line of sight gains a +5 bonus with saves made to decrease blast damage.

Catastrophic Blast: At Level 10, you may spend action dice to increase the damage of explosives you've set. Further, the result required for you to score a Triumph with a Science (Chemistry) check, or an attack check made to set an explosive, decreases by 10.

EXPERT
SPIN DOCTOR

REQUIREMENTS

Bluff: 6+ ranks.

Feats: Actor,
any 1 Style feat.

The Spin Doctor is a modern day magician, causing disastrous mishaps to disappear from the public eye and pulling rabbits out of a hat on the evening news. Behind closed doors he is a superior information broker with a keen eye for critical details.

Attributes: Mental attributes are most useful to the Spin Doctor, who needs to be clever, canny, and persuasive.

Vitality: 1d8 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Spin Doctor's class skills are Bluff, Bureaucracy, Computers, Cultures, Falsify, Impress, Intimidate, Investigation, Manipulate, Networking, Notice, Profession, Security, Sense Motive, and Streetwise.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CORE ABILITY

Bread and Circuses: Each time you target a crowd with a skill check, the crowd is considered to be 2 categories smaller (minimum size 10–25).

CLASS ABILITIES

Public Relations: You're a master at controlling public opinion and managing information flow. At Level 1, your Actor feat also applies to Investigation checks. Further, you gain the Advanced Skill Mastery (Actor) feat.

At Level 5, you gain the Grand Skill Mastery (Actor) feat.

At Level 9, you gain the Perfect Skill Mastery (Actor) feat.

TABLE 4.14: THE SPIN DOCTOR

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	+0	+2	2	—	*Bread and circuses*, public relations (Advanced)
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	+1	+3	3	1R	Smooth talker (Bureaucracy)
3	+1	+3	+1	+3	+1	+4	3	1R	Cover up 1/session
4	+2	+4	+1	+4	+2	+5	4	1R, 1T	Breaking news, image is everything (1 statistic)
5	+2	+4	+1	+4	+2	+5	4	1R, 1T	Public relations (Grand)
6	+3	+5	+2	+5	+2	+6	5	1R, 1T	In the know
7	+3	+5	+2	+5	+3	+7	5	2R, 1T	Cover up 2/session, smooth talker (Networking)
8	+4	+6	+2	+6	+3	+8	6	2R, 1T	Image is everything (2 statistics), smear campaign
9	+4	+6	+3	+6	+4	+9	6	2R, 1T, 1E	Public relations (Perfect)
10	+5	+7	+3	+7	+4	+10	7	2R, 1T, 1E	Propaganda

Smooth Talker: At Level 2, when you fail a Bureaucracy check that may be re-tried, you may spend 1 half action to smooth over your mistake. As long as the check DC is equal to or less than your class level + 20, your new approach is automatically successful. If more than 1 grade of success is possible, you achieve only the lowest possible positive result. You may use this ability even if your initial check results in an error, but you must declare its use *before* the critical failure is activated. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

If you gain this ability from two or more classes, your relevant class levels are added together to determine the ability's overall effectiveness.

At Level 7, this ability also applies to Networking checks.

Cover-Up (city): At Level 3, you may suppress information that might reveal your activities or those of your allies or Faction. Once per session, you may choose to cover up 1 event that occurs during the session (e.g. a kidnapping, a murder, or a political maneuver). You must spend 4 hours getting in touch with your supporters, after which the DCs of all Analysis, Investigation, Search, and Request checks made to collect information about the event are increased by an amount equal to your class level.

If you gain this ability from two or more classes, your relevant class levels are added together to determine this ability's overall effectiveness.

At Level 7, you may use this ability up to twice per mission.

Breaking News: You're always tapped into news as it happens. At Level 4, the time required for you to make any Investigation check targeting an event or action that took place in the last 24 hours decreases to 1/2 standard (rounded down). Further, when you take 10 with one of these checks, the required time is *not* doubled.

Image is Everything: At Level 4, once per mission, you may target 1 statistic belonging to 1 organization, increasing or decreasing it by 1 (minimum 1, maximum 10). This effect lasts for the duration of the current mission, though you may reverse it earlier. An organization may be subject to only 1 character's *image is everything* ability at any time.

At Level 8, you may increase or decrease up to 2 statistics belonging to the same organization for the duration of the current mission.

In the Know: At Level 6, your Bureaucracy, Falsify, Impress, Intimidate, and Networking checks gain a synergy bonus from your Investigation skill.

Smear Campaign (city): At Level 8, once per mission, you may disparage 1 person or organization. For the duration of the current mission, the disposition of each character whose initial disposition toward the target is Friendly or better worsens by 1 grade, and the disposition of each other character toward the target worsens by 2 grades. A target may be subject to only 1 *smear campaign* at any time.

Propaganda (city): At Level 10, once per session, you may promote or undercut 1 person. For the duration of the current session, the target gains your choice of a +4 gear bonus or a –4 gear penalty with all Charisma-based checks. Further, you may activate the target's critical successes and failures with these checks even when you aren't present, and the cost of doing so decreases by 1 action die (minimum 0).

EXPERT

STREET KNIGHT

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +3 or higher.

Feats: One Hand on the Wheel, Speed Demon.

Few heroes are as iconic as the lone rider. The Street Knight ushers this image into the modern day in the form of a skilled vehicle operator — or a mounted rider — with his own special brand of close-quarters mayhem.

Attributes: The Street Knight thrives on Dexterity but also takes advantage of Strength to refine his melee weapon focus. He also finds Charisma helpful when showing off.

Vitality: 1d12 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Street Knight's class skills are Acrobatics, Drive, Impress, Mechanics, Networking, Notice, Profession, Streetwise, and Survival.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

TABLE 4.15: THE STREET KNIGHT

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	+2	+0	1	1V	Born to be wild (Advanced), *in the dust*
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	+3	+0	2	1V	Full tilt ×2
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	+3	+1	2	1V, 1R	Cleave Basics
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	+4	+1	2	1V, 1R	Highway star, radical stunt 1/session
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	+5	+1	3	2V, 1R	Born to be wild (Grand)
6	+6	+2	+5	+2	+6	+2	3	2V, 1R, 1W	Power swerve
7	+7	+2	+5	+2	+6	+2	4	2V, 1R, 1W	Cleave Mastery, full tilt ×3
8	+8	+2	+6	+2	+7	+2	4	2V, 2R, 1W	Racing riot (1 feat), radical stunt 2/session
9	+9	+3	+6	+3	+8	+3	4	2V, 2R, 1W	Born to be wild (Perfect)
10	+10	+3	+7	+3	+9	+3	5	3V, 2R, 1W	Own the road

CORE ABILITY

In the Dust: You may add your base Defense bonus to the Defense of any personal vehicle you're operating.

CLASS ABILITIES

Born to be Wild: You're at your best when the pavement is a blur beneath you! At Level 1, your Speed Demon feat also applies to Acrobatics checks. Further, you gain the Advanced Skill Mastery (Speed Demon) feat.

At Level 5, you gain the Grand Skill Mastery (Speed Demon) feat.

At Level 9, you gain the Perfect Skill Mastery (Speed Demon) feat.

Full Tilt I: At Level 2, once per round when you're in or on a vehicle or riding a mount that has moved at least 30 ft. since your last Initiative Count and you make a successful melee attack against an opponent who is not in or on the same vehicle or mount, your damage is doubled. Further, you may make melee attacks against opponents separated from you by a Lead of 1 during chases.

Full Tilt II: At Level 7, once per round when you're in or on a vehicle or riding a mount that has moved at least 30 ft. since your last Initiative Count and you make a successful melee attack against an opponent who is not in or on the same vehicle or mount, your damage is tripled. This replaces the bonus granted by the *full tilt I* ability. Further, you may make melee attacks against opponents separated from you by a Lead of up to 2 during chases.

Cleave Basics: At Level 3, you gain the Cleave Basics feat.

Highway Star: At Level 4, your Melee Combat, Basic Skill, and Advanced Skill feats count as Chase feats when determining the effects of any ability, prerequisite, or requirement based on the number of Chase feats you possess.

Radical Stunt: You can force your ride to utterly defy physics. At Level 4, once per session when operating a personal vehicle or mount, you may make a Maneuver check with a DC up to 50 without making a skill check. Alternately, during a chase Conflict, you may choose the "That's Impossible!" Strategy.

At Level 8, you may use this ability up to twice per session.

Power Swerve: At Level 6, while operating a personal vehicle or mount, you may automatically succeed with a Maneuver check to avoid an obstacle or crisis during a chase. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Chase feats you possess.

Cleave Mastery: At Level 7, you gain the Cleave Mastery feat.

Racing Riot: At Level 8, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Chase feat until the end of the current mission.

Own the Road: At Level 10, when an opponent scores a threat with a Maneuver check or an attack check targeting a vehicle or mount you're operating, you may prevent him from spending action dice to activate it as a critical success or critical hit. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Chase feats you possess. Further, you may make melee attacks against opponents separated from you by a Lead of 3 during chases.

EXPERT

TERRORIST

REQUIREMENTS

Wisdom: 13+.

Feats: Hard Core, Safe House.

The terrorist embodies the dark side of dedication, exhibiting a willingness to employ extreme and sometimes lethal tactics to reshape society. He opens up dubious avenues for his team, and often takes missions into dark, uncomfortable territory.

Attributes: Deriving his power mainly from sheer force of will, the Terrorist must command Wisdom above all other attributes. Depending on his role in a larger organization, he may also need to focus on Dexterity, Intelligence, or Charisma.

Vitality: 1d10 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Terrorist's class skills are Bluff, Cultures, Drive, Falsify, Intimidate, Mechanics, Notice, Resolve, Science, Security, Sleight of Hand, and Sneak.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

TABLE 4.16: THE TERRORIST

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+1	+0	+2	+1	+0	1	1W, 1T	*Fanaticism*, instrument of terror I
2	+1	+2	+0	+3	+1	+0	2	2W, 1T	Sneak attack +1d6
3	+2	+2	+1	+3	+2	+1	2	2W, 1T	Perceptive +1
4	+3	+2	+1	+4	+2	+1	2	2W, 1T, 1G	Bonus feat, by any means
5	+3	+3	+1	+4	+3	+1	3	2W, 2T, 1G	Instrument of terror II
6	+4	+3	+2	+5	+4	+2	3	3W, 2T, 1G	Hysteria I (shaken II)
7	+5	+4	+2	+5	+4	+2	4	3W, 2T, 1G	Perceptive +2, sneak attack +2d6
8	+6	+4	+2	+6	+5	+2	4	3W, 2T, 1G, 1R	Bonus feat, crusade 1/session
9	+6	+4	+3	+6	+5	+3	4	3W, 2T, 2G, 1R	Instrument of terror III
10	+7	+5	+3	+7	+6	+3	5	3W, 3T, 2G, 1R	Hysteria II (shaken IV)

CORE ABILITY

Fanaticism: Each time you spend 1 action die to boost a Will save, you roll and add the results of 2 dice. Further, when you make a successful Will save, each of your teammates and allies with line of sight to you gains a +2 morale bonus with all Will saves made to resist effects from the same source for the duration of the current scene.

CLASS ABILITIES

Instrument of Terror I: At Level 1, once per mission, you may choose 1 of your Possessions or 1 piece of your mission gear, gaining a bonus equal to your Wisdom modifier with all attack and skill checks made using it. Further, the DCs of all saves prompted by the item increase by the same amount. These effects last for the duration of the current mission.

Instrument of Terror II: At Level 5, once per mission, you may use one of the following abilities.

- Choose 1 of your Possessions or 1 piece of your mission gear that inflicts lethal damage, increasing its damage by your Wisdom modifier.

- Choose 1 of your Possessions or 1 piece of your mission gear that inflicts attribute damage, increasing its damage by 1/2 your Wisdom modifier (rounded up).

- Choose 1 of your Possessions or 1 piece of your mission gear that doesn't typically inflict damage. Thereafter, while you have the item readied, you may make Threaten actions against opponents able to see and hear you, even if they are beyond CQB Range or have not been damaged by you. With success, you inflict an additional amount of stress damage equal to your Wisdom modifier. These effects last for the duration of the current mission.

Instrument of Terror III: At Level 9, once per mission, you may choose 1 of your Possessions or 1 piece of your mission gear, increasing the threat ranges of all attack and skill checks made using it, as well as skill checks made to modify or repair it, by your Wisdom modifier.

Sneak Attack: At Level 2, you may inflict 1 die of sneak attack damage with any successful attack.

At Level 7, you may inflict 1 additional die of sneak attack damage with any successful attack.

Perceptive: At Levels 3 and 7, your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Bonus Feat: At Levels 4 and 8, you gain 1 additional Gear or Tradecraft feat.

By Any Means: You favor a small array of personal tactics. At Level 4, you may choose any 1 skill. Your error range with this skill decreases by 2 (minimum 1). Further, when you take 10 with this skill, the time required is *not* doubled. Finally, if you choose a cross-class skill, it becomes a Terrorist class skill for you.

Hysteria I: You stage massive spectacles that disrupt society and can bring entire nations to their knees. At Level 6, once per mission, you may make an Intimidate (Wis) check targeting an area as described on Table 2.32: Canvass Area Checks, applying the same time requirement, DC, error range, and cost *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 136)*. With success, each standard character within the target area except your teammates, allies, and any who share your Allegiance suffer the *shaken II* condition until the end of the current mission. Each special character other than your teammates, allies, and any who share your Allegiance must make a Will save (DC 10 + your Wisdom modifier + your class level) or suffer the *shaken II* condition.

Hysteria II: At Level 10, each affected character suffers the *shaken IV* condition instead of the *shaken II* condition.

Crusade: Your tireless dedication makes you eager to test yourself against opponents of your cause. At Level 8, once per session, instead of making an opposed skill check with any Terrorist class skill, you may set your result to 1 higher than that of your opponent. This cannot result in an error or threat.

MASTER
CENTURION

REQUIREMENTS

Allegiance: Project:Pitfall or Career Level: 15+.

Base Attack Bonus: +6 or higher.

Investigation: 4+ ranks.

Tactics: 4+ ranks.

Feats: Nemesis Basics and 1 Basic Combat feat.

It was inevitable that Stephen Century's most trusted field agents would take to calling themselves "Centurions." These tech-savvy warriors and front-line investigators relentlessly advance Pitfall's mandate for global security, waging a bitter war against the many terrorist threats of the modern field. Their reputation as an incorruptible force for justice has earned them the support of leaders and civilians alike and affords them more latitude than most other law enforcement agents.

Attributes: The Centurion is trained to outthink and outfight his opponents, making Intelligence and Dexterity his prime attributes.

Vitality: 1d8 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Centurion's class skills are Analysis, Athletics, Computers, Drive, Investigation, Notice, Profession, Resolve, Search, Security, Sense Motive, and Tactics.

Continuity: At Level 1, choose 3 skills that are class skills for any of your other classes. These become Centurion class skills for you.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CLASS ABILITIES

Police Action I (city): You can direct law enforcement to help drive your opponents into the open. At Level 1, once per scene as a full action, you may apply the *public* campaign quality until the end of the current scene.

Police Action II: At Level 4, the error ranges of your attack and skill checks decrease by 4 (minimum 0) when you target an opponent who has taken any action that would cause a loss of Reputation or Net Worth during the current scene due to exposure (even if the opponent did not actually lose Reputation or Net Worth due to the action).

Flawless Search: You're rarely fooled. At Level 1, each time you fail an Analysis or Search check and don't suffer an error, you still succeed as long as the check DC (or your opponent's check result) is equal to or less than your class level + 20. If several grades of success are possible, you achieve only the lowest possible positive result.

If you gain this ability from two or more classes, your relevant class levels are added together before you add 20 to determine the DC against which you automatically succeed.

Tao of War: At Level 2, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may choose 1 Terrain feat you possess. Each of your teammates may gain the chosen feat as a temporary feat until the end of the current mission. For this purpose, all Allegiance prerequisites are waived and each of the chosen feat's numerical prerequisites — such as career level, base attack bonus, and skill ranks — decrease by your class level.

Judge and Jury: At Level 3, the benefits of your "Nemesis" Terrain feats also apply to any character who has taken any action during the current mission that would cause a loss of Reputation or Net Worth due to exposure, even if the character did not actually lose Reputation or Net Worth due to the action.

Deadly Ground: At Level 4, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Terrain feat of your choice until the end of the current mission.

Stalwart Heart: You're impervious to the claims of your quarry. At Level 5, no character who has taken any action during the current mission that would cause a loss of Reputation or Net Worth due to exposure can target you with Charisma-based skill checks, even if the character did not actually lose Reputation or Net Worth due to the action.

TABLE 4.17: THE CENTURION

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+1	+2	0	1W	Police action I, flawless search
2	+2	+0	+0	+3	+1	+3	0	1W	Tao of war
3	+3	+1	+1	+3	+2	+4	1	1W 1R	Judge and jury
4	+4	+1	+1	+4	+2	+5	1	1W, 1R	Police action II, deadly ground (1 feat)
5	+5	+1	+1	+4	+3	+5	1	2W, 1R	Stalwart heart

GOLIATH

MASTER

REQUIREMENTS

Allegiance: Eternals or Career Level: 15+.

Interests: The Eternals.

Base Attack Bonus: +6 or higher.

Resolve: 4+ ranks.

Science: 4+ ranks.

Feats: Great Fortitude.

When the Eternals strike, they strike decisively, employing some of the most relentless agents in the world. These so-called "Goliaths" are honed and hardened by decades of service, becoming extremely lethal and impossibly resilient.

Attributes: The Goliath must exhibit tremendous discretion and patience, easily making Wisdom and Constitution his most important attributes.

Vitality: 1d12 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Goliath's class skills are Blend, Manipulate, Networking, Notice, Resolve, and Streetwise.

Continuity: At Level 1, choose 3 skills that are class skills for any of your other classes. These become Goliath class skills for you.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS ABILITIES

Brilliant: At Levels 1 and 4, your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Invulnerable: At Level 1, you gain a number of points of acid, bang, cold, electrical, explosive, fire, flash, heat, laser, and vacuum resistance equal to twice your class level.

Training Regimen: At Level 2, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may choose 1 Basic Combat feat you possess. Each of your teammates may gain the chosen feat as a temporary feat until the end of the current mission. For this purpose, all Allegiance prerequisites are waived and each of the chosen feat's numerical prerequisites — such as career level, base attack bonus, and skill ranks — decrease by your class level.

Armor Use II: You're at home in armor. At Level 3, you gain a +2 bonus to Defense while wearing armor. Further, your armor check penalty decreases by 1 (minimum 0). Finally, you gain 1 piece of Caliber I or II armor at no cost as part of your mission gear during the Intel Phase of each mission.

Art of War: At Level 4, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Basic Combat feat of your choice until the end of the current mission.

Unstoppable: At level 5, you may never gain the *baffled, bleeding, dazed, drained, fatigued, frightened, nauseated, shaken I,* or *sickened* conditions.

MENACE

MASTER

REQUIREMENTS

Allegiance: Franchise or Career Level: 15+.

Intimidate: 10+ ranks.

Networking: 4+ ranks.

Science: 4+ ranks.

Feats: Safe House.

With vast criminal armies at their disposal and ambitions of world domination rumbling through their deranged minds, Franchise Menaces stride across the espionage field like self-appointed demi-gods, though commonly only for a short time. None outside Zhang Khan have managed to acquire a long-term foothold, and all who do become targets of non-stop campaigns by the "terrorist" forces of the Banshee Net, Krypt, Majestics, and others.

Attributes: Every Menace brings his own strengths and weaknesses to the table, and each learns to capitalize upon his own attribute set.

Vitality: 1d10 + Con modifier per level.

CLASS SKILLS

The Menace's class skills are Bluff, Bureaucracy, Falsify, Impress, Intimidate, Networking, Notice, Resolve, and Sneak.

Continuity: At Level 1, choose 3 skills that are class skills for any of your other classes. These become Menace class skills for you.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

TABLE 4.18: THE GOLIATH

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	+2	+0	2	—	Brilliant +1, invulnerable
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	+3	+0	3	1W	Training regimen
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	+3	+1	3	1W	Armor use II
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	+4	+1	4	1W, 1R	Art of war (1 feat), brilliant +2
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	+5	+1	4	1W, 1R	Unstoppable

CLASS ABILITIES

Endless Pawns: At Level 1, you may call upon each of your contacts' consultants and specialists up to twice per mission. Further, you do not have to spend Reputation or Net Worth to replace your consultants or specialists when they are killed *(see page 153)*.

Excellence: At Levels 1 and 4, your highest attribute score increases by 1.

Knights and Rooks: At Level 2, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may choose 1 Tradecraft feat you possess. Each of your teammates may gain the chosen feat as a temporary feat until the end of the current mission. For this purpose, all Allegiance prerequisites are waived and each of the chosen feat's numerical prerequisites — such as career level, base attack bonus, and skill ranks — decrease by your class level.

Bishop's Twist: At Level 3, once per scene, you may spend both uses of a consultant or specialist you have not yet called upon during this mission and make a Networking/Contact check to gain the benefit of any consultant or specialist of your choice of equal grade. You may use this ability a maximum number of times per mission equal to your starting action dice.

Black Hat: At Level 4, once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may gain 1 temporary Tradecraft feat of your choice until the end of the current mission.

Black King: At Level 5, as a full action, you may spend 1 consultant or specialist use to gain 1 bonus action die. The type of die gained is determined by the contact grade spent: 1d4 for an acquaintance, 1d6 for an associate, 1d8 for a confederate, or 1d10 for a partner.

BASIC COMBAT FEATS

For more about Basic Combat feats, see page 172 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

ADRENALINE RUSH

When the chips are down and your blood is spilled, you always find a way to make a difference.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +6 or higher.

Benefit: Your maximum vitality points are increased by the number of Basic Combat feats you possess. Further, you may take the Refresh action even while *unconscious* or *dying*. Finally, when you possess less than your maximum wound points during combat, you may spend 1 action die to gain a +3 morale bonus to your Strength and Dexterity scores until the next time you suffer damage, recover from damage, or until the current combat ends, whichever comes first.

HONING THE EDGE

Your mastery extends to all forms of combat. Many complex combat maneuvers are second nature to you.

Prerequisites: 1 other Basic, Melee, Ranged *and* Unarmed Combat feat.

Benefit: The number of feats you possess in *each* of the Basic, Melee, Ranged and Unarmed Combat trees is considered 1 higher when determining the effect of any ability, prerequisite, or requirement based on the number of Combat feats you possess.

Further, when you spend 1 or more action dice to gain the benefits of a Basic, Melee, Ranged or Unarmed Combat feat, the number of action dice you must spend decreases by 1 (minimum 0). You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

IT'S DOWN TO US

You like your fights to be up close and personal.

Benefit: Once per scene, you may spend 1 action die and choose 1 opponent within CQB Range. Every insight, morale, and synergy bonus gained by you and every insight, morale, and synergy bonus gained by your chosen opponent decrease to +0. This effect lasts until the end of the current scene, until one of you is *unconscious* or *dead*, or until one or each of you loses line of sight to the other for 1 minute or more, whichever comes first.

THE LONG VIEW

You've learned the virtues of patience and decisiveness.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (Eternals), Career Level 3+.

Benefit: You gain an additional 5 vitality points. Further, when taking the Tire action, your error range does *not* increase by 1, and if the action is successful, you inflict an additional 1d4 subdual damage. Finally, you may cancel your Ready actions without making a Reflex save.

MANO A MANO

You're at your absolute best in one-on-one situations.

Prerequisite: It's Down to Us.

Benefit: After you make an attack against an opponent within CQB Range — whether the attack is successful or not — you may spend 1 action die to enter into a private duel with your target. Each of you gains a +6 morale bonus to Defense against attacks made by characters not engaged in the duel. Further, neither of you may attack anyone outside the duel — you may only attack one another. The duel lasts until the end of the current scene, until one of you is *unconscious* or *dead*, or until one or both of you loses line of sight to the other for 1 minute or more, whichever comes first.

TABLE 4.19: THE MENACE

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Def	Init	Wealth	Gear	Abilities
1	+0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+0	2	1T	Endless pawns, excellence
2	+1	+2	+2	+2	+1	+0	3	1T	Knights and rooks
3	+2	+2	+2	+2	+2	+1	3	1T, 1G	Bishop's twist 1/scene
4	+3	+2	+2	+2	+2	+1	4	1T, 1G	Black hat (1 feat), excellence
5	+3	+3	+3	+3	+3	+1	4	1T, 1G	Black king

NEW FEAT TRAINING OPTIONS

The feat training Resource can be used to gain many of the new feats introduced in this book.

Caliber I: Always Prepared.
Caliber II: Extra Incentive, Guile, Man and Machine, Sex Appeal.
Caliber III: Battlefield Trickery, Fist Basics, It's Down to Us.
Caliber IV: Any Melee "Basics" feat, Bravado, Footwork Basics, Nemesis Basics, Precision Practice, Survival Instinct.
Caliber V: Any Unarmed or Melee "Moves" feat, Adrenaline Rush, Best Under Pressure, Experience Counts, Heroic Act.

SANDS OF TIME

So many years have passed since you were truly human.
Prerequisites: Allegiance (Eternals), Career Level 6+.
Benefit: You stopped aging at an time of your choosing up to 1,000 years ago. Until killed, you appear to be an age of your choosing up to your actual age. This age must be chosen when you gain this feat. If your actual current age falls into the "middle age" or older category, you gain all positive aging modifiers from the "middle age," "old," and "venerable" categories, but none of the negative ones *(see Table 1.17: Aging Effects on page 61 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook).*

Further, you gain 3 attribute points that you may apply to your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores in any combination.

SOLDIER'S DUTY

Your duty extends slightly beyond death.
Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Adrenaline Rush.
Benefits: Your maximum wound points are increased by 1/2 the number of Basic Combat feats you possess (rounded down).

Further, when *dying,* you may spend 1 action die to become *fatigued* instead of *unconscious.* During each round that you're *fatigued* due to this ability, the only actions you may take are either 1 final attack or 1 non-attack half action. You remain *fatigued* in this fashion until you stabilize or reach –10 wound points. In the latter case, you become *exhausted* for 1 round before you truly die. Once again, during this round, the only actions you may take are either 1 final attack or 1 non-attack half action.

Finally, if you lose a Stand Off and your opponent chooses to decrease your wound points to –1, his wound points drop to –1 as well. The GC must make your opponent aware of this ability before the opponent makes his decision.

TACTICAL SUPERIORITY

People who think they have you outnumbered are in for a rude surprise.
Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +9 or higher, Tactical Advantage.
Benefit: You and each of your teammates count as if you were exactly 3 characters when determining numerical advantage. This benefit supercedes the benefit from Tactical Advantage. Further, once per combat, you may spend 1 action die to negate the effects of 1 non-Seasons Only campaign quality until the end of the combat.

SURVIVAL INSTINCT

You didn't last this long without learning to trust your instincts.
Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +6 or higher.
Benefit: When making a saving throw, you may apply your base attack bonus in place of your standard base save bonus. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Basic Combat feats you possess.

WORLD WITHOUT END

Though you fade away on occasion, there will never come a time when you don't persist. For you, there is no end to this world.
Prerequisites: Allegiance (Eternals), Career Level 9+.
Benefit: Your Reputation or Net Worth cost to be restored to life by the *revolving door* campaign quality decreases to 100/$5,000,000. Further, your life may be restored even after your body is *destroyed* and even if you die during a dramatic scene.

MELEE COMBAT FEATS

For more about Melee Combat feats, see page 176 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

AXE MOVES

Your powerful swings tear through most defenses to leave the enemy dazed.
Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Edged), base attack bonus +3 or higher.
Benefit: You gain the following tricks.
Axe Drag (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using an axe against an adjacent opponent, you may inflict only 1 point of lethal damage, exchange locations with the target, and force the opponent to make a succesful Reflex save (DC 10 + your Strength modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess) or become *prone.*
Overhand Chop (Trick): As a full action, you may make a Standard Attack using an axe against an adjacent opponent who has not moved since your Initiative Count during the last round. The target is considered *vulnerable* during this attack.
Sunder (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using an axe, you may inflict the weapon's damage and choose 1 piece of gear on the target's person to make a Damage save against the same damage.

AXE SUPREMACY

Your axe attacks dominate the field of battle.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Axe Basics, Axe Moves.

Benefit: You may use any axe as a hurled weapon with a range increment of 10 ft. and a maximum range of 4 increments. Further, you're considered proficient with an axe used in this way even if you don't possess the Hurled proficiency. Finally, you gain the following tricks.

Cleave in Twain (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using an axe against a standard character possessing a lower Strength score than yours, you may instantly kill the target.

Dark Justice (Trick): As a full action, you may make a Standard Attack with an axe. If the damage inflicted exceeds the target's Constitution score, he must also consult the Table of Ouch *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 332).*

CLUB MOVES

It's kind of ugly what you can do with a club.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Blunt), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Drum Beat (Trick): When you take a Press action and use the bonus half action to make a Standard Attack with a club, your Initiative Count decreases by 10 instead of 20.

Rhino Lift (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a club while on foot, you may increase your damage by the number of 5 ft. squares you've moved during the current round.

Ugly Stick (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a club, you may force your opponent to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Constitution modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, he suffers 1 point of Charisma damage in addition to the attack's standard damage. This may not decrease the target's Charisma score to less than 1/2 his standard (rounded down). At the end of the current scene, the target heals 1/2 of all Charisma damage inflicted by this trick (rounded up); the rest of the damage heals as standard.

CLUB SUPREMACY

Your club attacks are shockwaves of lethal power.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Club Basics, Club Moves.

Benefit: While you hold a readied club, the weapon gains the *guard* (+1) quality. If it already possesses the *guard* quality, the quality increases by an additional +1. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Brained (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a club, you may inflict your standard damage + 4 and the target must make Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Strength modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). WIth failure, he is sent *reeling.*

Earth Shaker (Trick): While armed with a club, you may make a full-action Trip attempt, targeting all opponents in a 10-ft. cone to whom you possess line of sight. You roll only once for all Trip actions, while each opponent rolls to resist separately.

FENCING MOVES

You make swords *dance.*

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Edged), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Foot Stab (Trick): While armed with a 1-handed sword possessing the *finesse* quality, you may take a Cheap Shot action targeting an opponent's Speed. With success, the opponent also becomes *sprawled* and his Initiative Count decreases by the number of Melee Combat feats you possess (maximum 10).

Stop Thrust (Trick): When you take a Total Defense action while armed with a 1-handed sword possessing the *finesse* quality, you may force each opponent who moves into a square adjacent to you to make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Dexterity modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, the opponent automatically suffers your standard damage with the weapon. This effect lasts until the start of your Initiative Count during the round after you take the Total Defense action.

Mark of Shame (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack against a special character when you're using a 1-handed sword possessing the *finesse* quality, you may inflict only 1 point of lethal damage to gain 1 bonus action die. If not used by the end of the current combat, this action die is lost.

FENCING SUPREMACY

The grace and speed of your attacks is staggering.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Fencing Basics, Fencing Moves.

Benefit: Your threat range with all melee weapons possessing the *finesse* quality increases by 1. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Heart Stopper (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a 1-handed sword possessing the *finesse* quality against a standard character possessing a lower Dexterity score than yours, you may instantly kill the target.

Slash Fountain (Trick): You may apply the Burst trick when attacking with a 1-handed sword possessing the *finesse* quality.

FLAIL MOVES

When you spin up, people think they're seeing double.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Exotic (Blunt)), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following action and tricks.

Shifting Grip (Incidental Action): As a half action, you may shift your grip on a readied flail. Thereafter, the weapon operates like a pair of light clubs or a garrote, at your discretion. This effect lasts until the end of the current combat or until you use this action again to shift back, whichever comes first.

Endless Strikes (Trick): When you take a Press action and use the bonus half action to make a Standard Attack with a flail, your Initiative Count decreases by 10 instead of 20.

Whirling Wall (Trick): When you take a Total Defense action while armed with a flail, you may force each opponent who moves into a square adjacent to you to make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Dexterity modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, the opponent's movement ends in the last square entered before the triggering square. This effect lasts until the start of your Initiative Count during the round after you take the Total Defense action.

FLAIL SUPREMACY

You might just be as good as Bruce.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Flail Basics, Flail Moves.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus with all Initiative checks. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Crushing Arc (Trick): When making a Standard Attack using a flail, but before the attack roll is made, you may increase your standard damage with the weapon by the number of Melee Combat feats you possess. If the attack misses, however, you become *flat-footed.*

Rolling Thunder (Trick): After a successful Standard Attack using a flail, you may gain a +4 bonus with all attack checks made using the same weapon against the same target. If you do so, you also suffer a –2 penalty to Defense. These modifiers last until you hit the same opponent again, attack a different opponent, are hit by any attack, or until the end of the current combat, whichever comes first.

GARROTE MOVES

You can turn a simple cord into a dominating all-purpose combat tool.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Blunt), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Loop and Bind (Trick): When you take a melee Disarm action using a garrote and your attack check succeeds by 4 or more, you may immediately take a Trip action against the same target as a free action.

Choke (Grapple Trick): When armed with a garrote, you may use a grapple benefit to inflict your standard unarmed damage and force your opponent to make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Wisdom modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, your opponent suffers 1 point of Strength damage. This may not decrease the target's Strength score to less than 1/2 standard (rounded down). At the end of the current scene, the target heals 1/2 of all Strength damage inflicted by this trick (rounded up); the rest of the damage heals as standard.

Seeing Stars (Grapple Trick): When you're armed with a garrote and score a threat or critical success with an Athletics check made as part of a grapple, you may use 1 grapple benefit to inflict your standard unarmed damage and leave your opponent *stunned* for 1 full round.

GARROTE SUPREMACY

In close or at range, your mastery of the garrote is unchallenged.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Garrote Basics, Garrote Moves.

Benefit: If you're armed with a garrote, you do not become *vulnerable* when engaged in a grapple. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Engulfing Web (Trick): When you take a Total Defense action while armed with a garrote, you may force each opponent who moves into a square adjacent to you to make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Wisdom modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, the opponent drops all held items, including weapons. This effect lasts until the start of your Initiative Count during the round after you take the Total Defense action.

Neck Breaker (Grapple Trick): When you're armed with a garrote and have held an opponent in a grapple for 3 consecutive full rounds, you may target him with a Coup de Grace action as a free action once per round that you continue to hold him.

GREAT SWORD MOVES

Your powerful cuts destroy lesser foes.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Exotic (Edged)), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Blade Wall (Trick): When you take a Total Defense action while armed with a 2-handed sword, you may force each opponent who moves into a square adjacent to you to make a Will save (DC 10 + your Strength modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, the opponent's movement ends in the last square entered before the triggering square. This effect lasts until the start of your Initiative Count during the round after you take the Total Defense action.

Great Slash (Trick): As a half action, you may use a 2-handed sword to make a Strafe attack targeting up to 3 adjacent opponents.

Ogre Slayer (Trick): With a successful Bull Rush action while holding a readied 2-handed sword, you may also inflict your standard damage with the weapon, applying the *armor-piercing (4)* quality to the sword damage.

GREAT SWORD SUPREMACY

Your heavy blade acrobatics are astounding.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Great Sword Basics, Great Sword Moves.

Benefit: Your Strength score increases by 1. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Spiral Cut (Trick): As a full action, you may make a Standard Attack using a 2-handed sword without choosing a target. At the beginning of your Initiative Count during the following round, your attack check result is compared to the Defense of *all* characters within 10 ft. to whom you possess line of sight. Each character hit suffers your standard damage with the weapon.

Skewer (Trick): When you make a successful Standard Attack with a 2-handed sword against an adjacent opponent and the damage exceeds the target's Constitution score, you may prevent the target from leaving his current square by any means until you make another attack with the same weapon or until you're no longer adjacent to him, whichever comes first.

HAMMER MOVES

Your devastating hammer blows knock enemies senseless.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Blunt), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Bell Ringer (Trick): As a full action, you may make a Standard Attack with a hammer against an adjacent opponent who has not moved since your Initiative Count during the last round. You suffer a –2 penalty with this attack check but if you hit, you inflict triple your standard damage with the weapon.

Bone Crusher (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a hammer, you may force your opponent to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Constitution modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, he suffers 1 point of Constitution damage in addition to your standard damage with the weapon. This may not decrease the target's Constitution score to less than 1/2 standard (rounded down). At the end of the current scene, the target heals 1/2 of all Constitution damage inflicted by this trick (rounded up); the rest of the damage heals as standard.

Wrecker (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack against an object using a hammer, you may inflict double your standard damage with the weapon.

HAMMER SUPREMACY

Your hammer blows inspire fear and destruction.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Hammer Basics, Hammer Moves.

Benefit: Your Constitution score increases by 1. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Dread Smash (Trick): As a full action, you may make a Standard Attack with a hammer. With a hit, your opponent must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + your Strength modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess) or become *frightened* of you.

Splatter (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a hammer against a standard character with a lower Constitution score than yours, you may instantly kill the target.

KNIFE MOVES

Dirty street fighting is always on deck when you're in play.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Edged), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Above the Eyes (Trick): While armed with a knife, you may take a Cheap Shot action targeting an opponent's Wisdom score. With success, the opponent also becomes *blinded* for a number of rounds equal to the number of Melee combat feats you possess or until he takes a full action to wipe his face, whichever comes first.

Flick the Bull (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a knife, you may inflict only 1 point of lethal damage to force the target to make a Will save (DC 10 + your Charisma modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, he becomes *enraged* for 1d6+1 rounds.

Gash (Trick): When making a Standard Attack with a knife, you may accept a –2 penalty with your attack check to grant the *bleed* quality to the attack.

KNIFE SUPREMACY

Your knife fighting style is a combination of rapid lethal stabs and incredible dicing action.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Knife Basics, Knife Moves.

Benefit: When you hit with a knife attack, you inflict 1 die of sneak attack damage. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Blade Flurry (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a knife, you may grant your target a cumulative +2 bonus to Defense against every melee attack you make for the duration of the current round in order to make another Standard Attack against that opponent using a knife. You may use this trick any number of times per round.

Shank! (Trick): Once per round, you may make a Standard Attack using a knife. The target is considered *vulnerable* during this attack.

POLEARM MOVES

Your polearm sweeps and defensive spins are so graceful that the weapon seems like an extension of your body.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Exotic (Edged)), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following action and tricks.

Controlled Grip (Incidental Action): As a half action, you may shift your grip on a readied polearm. Thereafter, the weapon operates like a long staff. This effect lasts until the end of the current combat or until you use this action again to shift back, whichever comes first.

Drag Down (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a polearm, you may force your opponent to make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Wisdom modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, you may move him into any unoccupied square adjacent to him, after which he becomes *sprawled.*

Spinning Shield (Trick): When you take a Total Defense action while holding a readied polearm, you may gain a number of points of damage reduction against hurled attacks equal to the number of Melee Combat feats you possess.

POLEARM SUPREMACY

Your polearm attacks crush bodies and spirits alike.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Polearm Basics, Polearm Moves.

Benefit: You may move into an unoccupied adjacent square each time you're hit with a melee or unarmed attack, even if your stance would typically prevent you from doing so. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Gut Thrust (Trick): You may accept a –4 penalty with a full action attack check using a polearm. If the damage inflicted exceeds the target's Constitution score, he becomes *sickened* until the end of the combat. If the attack misses, however, you become *flat-footed.*

Skull Crack (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a polearm against a standard character with a lower Wisdom score than yours, you may instantly kill the target.

SPEAR MOVES

You've learned to use a spear to debilitate a foe by degrees.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Exotic (Edged)), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Wide Grip (Incidental Action): As a half action, you may shift your grip on a readied spear. Thereafter, the weapon operates like a quarterstaff. This effect lasts until the end of the current combat or until you use this action again to shift back, whichever comes first.

Hamstring (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a spear, you may force your opponent to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Dexterity modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, he suffers 1 point of Dexterity damage in addition to your standard damage with the weapon. This may not decrease the target's Dexterity score to less than 1/2 standard (rounded down). At the end of the current scene, the target heals 1/2 of all Dexterity damage inflicted by this trick (rounded up); the rest of the damage heals as standard.

Piercing Lance (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a spear that exceeds the target's Defense by 4 or more, you may cause the target to gain the *bleeding* condition for a number of rounds equal to the number of Melee combat feats you possess.

SPEAR SUPREMACY

When you use a spear to draw a line around you, those who cross suffer.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Spear Basics, Spear Moves.

Benefit: Your Reach increases by 5 ft. when you attack with a spear. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Guardian's Circle (Trick): When you take a Total Defense action while holding a readied spear, you may gain a number of points of damage reduction against melee and unarmed attacks equal to the number of Melee Combat feats you possess.

Run Through (Trick): You may accept a –4 penalty with a full action attack check using a spear. If the damage inflicted exceeds the target's Constitution score, he becomes *nauseated* for 1d6 rounds. If the attack misses, however, you become *flat-footed.*

STAFF MASTERY

With a staff in hand, you become the center of a spinning ball of concussive force.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Exotic (Blunt)), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Lever (Trick): You may make a Trip action using a staff against an opponent up to 10 ft. away. With success, you may also move the target into any square adjacent to you.

Turning Wheel (Trick): As a half action, you may make 2 Standard Attacks with a staff, suffering a –2 penalty with each attack check and inflicting 1 fewer point of damage per die rolled (minimum 1 damage per die).

Wall of Branches (Trick): When you take a Total Defense action while armed with a staff, you may force each opponent who moves into a square adjacent to you to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Strength modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, the opponent's movement ends in the last square entered before the triggering square. This effect lasts until the start of your Initiative Count during the round after you take the Total Defense action.

STAFF SUPREMACY

Your precision control with a staff allows you to target sensitive areas, striking past a target's typical defenses.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Staff Basics, Staff Moves.

Benefit: While holding a readied staff, you gain a +3 gear bonus with Acrobatics checks and Reflex saves. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Nerve Jab (Trick): With a successful Cheap Shot action using a staff, the target also becomes *sickened* for a number of rounds equal to the number of Melee combat feats you possess.

Knock-Knock (Trick): You may accept a –4 penalty with a full action attack check using a staff. If the damage inflicted exceeds the target's Constitution score, he becomes *baffled* until the end of the combat. If the attack misses, however, you become *flat-footed.*

SWORD MOVES

Sword training is often straightforward, as evidenced by these powerful moves.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Edged), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Bury the Blade (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a 1-handed sword without the *finesse* quality that exceeds the target's Defense by 4 or more, you may apply the *keen* (8) quality to your damage.

Flat Slap (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a 1-handed sword without the *finesse* quality, you may inflict only 1 point of lethal damage to force the target to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Wisdom modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, he becomes *stunned* for 1 full round.

No Defense Slash (Trick): When making a Standard Attack with a 1-handed sword without the *finesse* quality, you may deny your target all bonuses to Defense from the Fight Defensively and Total Defense actions. Further, if the attack succeeds, you may prevent the target from responding to the attack with any tricks requiring him to be using the Total Defense action.

SWORD SUPREMACY

Your blade is swift enough to double as your shield.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Sword Basics, Sword Moves.

Benefit: Your Wisdom score increases by 1. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Arrow Cutter (Trick): When you take the Fight Defensively action while holding a readied 1-handed sword without the *finesse* quality, you may gain a bonus to your Defense against hurled attacks equal to the number of Melee Combat feats you possess. If one of these attacks hits you, however, you become *flat-footed.*

Rending Slash (Trick): You may accept a –4 penalty with a full action attack check using a sword without the *finesse* quality. If the damage inflicted exceeds the target's Constitution score and he is not already *fatigued* or *exhausted*, he becomes *fatigued* until the end of the combat. If the attack misses, however, you become *flat-footed.*

WHIP MOVES

Opponents sting for days after an encounter with you — assuming, of course, they walk away at all.

Prerequisites: Weapon proficiency (Exotic (Blunt)), base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Disarming Attack (Trick): When you score a threat or critical hit during a Standard Attack with a whip, you may immediately make a Disarm attack against the target as a free action using the same attack roll.

Lash (Trick): With a successful Standard Attack using a whip, you may force your opponent to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your Dexterity modifier + the number of Melee Combat feats you possess). With failure, he suffers 1 point of Wisdom damage in addition to your standard damage with the weapon. This may not decrease the target's Wisdom score to less than 1/2 standard (rounded down). At the end of the current scene, the target heals 1/2 of all Wisdom damage inflicted by this trick (rounded up); the rest of the damage heals as standard.

Wrap-Around (Trick): When you make a Standard Attack with a whip against a target benefiting from less than total cover, you may decrease your target's cover by 1/4. If you do so, your target may not benefit from a shield, either.

WHIP SUPREMACY

You're a cyclone dynamo with a whip in hand.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Whip Basics, Whip Moves.

Benefit: While holding a readied whip, you may move or toggle the controls of objects located up to 10 ft. away, applying your Strength and Dexterity to these actions as standard. Further, you gain the following tricks.

Rattlesnake (Trick): As a full action, you may make a Standard Attack using a whip without choosing a target. Your attack check result is compared to the Defense of *all* characters within a 15 ft. cone to whom you possess line of sight. Each character hit suffers 1/2 your standard damage with the weapon (rounded up).

Thrash (Trick): While armed with a whip, you may take a Cheap Shot action targeting an opponent's Dexterity. With success, the opponent also becomes *drunk* for a number of rounds equal to the number of Melee Combat feats you possess.

RANGED COMBAT FEATS

For more about Ranged Combat feats, see page 180 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

DRAW A BEAD

Given a moment, you can pull off some amazing shots.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +6 or higher, Bullseye.

Benefit: When you have taken both an Aim and a Brace action targeting an opponent, your ranged attacks against that opponent gain 1 die of sneak attack damage. Further, when you take a Press action under these circumstances and use the bonus half action to make a ranged Standard Attack against the opponent, your Initiative Count decreases by 10 instead of 20.

MAGIC BULLET

You pack a lot of tricks into your weapons.

Benefit: Each time you gain 1 load of ammunition for a ranged weapon, you also gain 1 Caliber I miniature Common Item or miniature gear pick gadget which must use the ammunition as a housing. If a chosen gadget mechanism has multiple uses, it instead converts that many rounds of ammunition into single use gadgets with the same effect.

TARGET IN THE WELL

You're deadly when you have a chance to set up properly.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Draw a Bead.

Benefit: While your weapon is braced, you gain the following tricks.

Fair Warning (Trick): With a successful ranged Standard Attack, you may forgo inflicting damage to force your target to make a Will save (DC 10 + your Dexterity modifier + the number of Ranged Combat feats you possess). With failure, the target gains the *shaken I* condition. This may not cause an opponent to gain the *shaken IV* or *drained* conditions.

Headshot (Trick): With a successful aimed ranged Standard Attack against a standard character, the target dies.

UNDER THE GUN

You have no patience for lucky breaks.

Prerequisites: Contempt.

Benefit: Once per round, when an opponent within your line of sight rolls an action die, you may make a final attack with a readied firearm against that character as a free action. Your attack occurs immediately after the target's current check resolves. You may use this ability a number of times per combat equal to your starting action dice.

UNARMED COMBAT FEATS

For more about Unarmed Combat feats, see page 183 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

FIST BASICS

You've practiced many open hand techniques and can strike with unexpected precision and power.

Benefit: Your error range does not increase when you use the Cheap Shot trick as part of an unarmed attack. Further, you gain the following stance and trick.

Crushing Stance (Stance): While in this stance, your unarmed Standard Attacks inflict additional damage equal to 1/2 your target's dodge bonus (rounded up). Further, you may not take move actions other than your 5 ft. bonus step.

Knife Hand (Trick): When making an unarmed Standard Attack, you may apply the Cheap Shot trick even if it has already been used against the same target during the current scene. You must choose a Cheap Shot penalty that the target has not yet suffered during the current scene, however.

FIST MOVES

It's not unfair to call your hands deadly weapons.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Back-Fist (Trick): Once per round while fighting defensively, when you're hit by a melee or unarmed attack, you may immediately make an unarmed Standard Attack against the attacker. The amount of damage inflicted by this attack cannot exceed the amount of damage inflicted by the attack that triggered it.

Integrate the Breath (Trick): Before you take an Anticipate action, you may apply this trick. If the Anticipate action succeeds, you also gain DR 2/— against all melee and unarmed attacks made by your target for 1 full round. If the Anticipate action fails, however, you become *flat-footed*.

Spinning Back-Fist (Trick): Before you make an unarmed Standard Attack, you may increase the attack's Reach by 5 ft. If the attack misses, however, you become *flat-footed*.

FIST SUPREMACY

The old masters taught you well.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Fist Basics, Fist Moves.

Benefit: Each time you make an unarmed attack against a *vulnerable* opponent, your threat range increases by 1 and the attack gains the *takedown* quality. Further, you gain the following tricks.

1,000 Hands (Trick): As a full action, you may make an unarmed Standard Attack. With a hit, you inflict your standard unarmed damage once, plus 1 additional time for every 3 by which your attack result beats the target's Defense. You may *not* activate this attack as a critical hit. Also, if the attack misses, you become *flat-footed*.

Violent Fist (Trick): Before you make an unarmed Standard Attack, you may apply the *takedown* and *keen* (X) qualities, where X is equal to the damage inflicted. If the attack misses, however, you become *flat-footed*.

FOOTWORK BASICS

You're light on your feet and use that speed to brutally harass foes.

Benefit: Your Speed increases by 5 ft. Further, you gain the following stance and trick.

Undefeated Stance (Stance): At the end of each round during which you're in this stance and aren't hit by at least 1 attack, you recover 1 point of vitality. The maximum amount of vitality you may recover in a single scene due to this stance is equal to twice your career level.

Heel Stomp (Trick): When taking a Kick action, you may accept a −2 penalty with your attack check. With a hit, the target's speed decreases by 10 ft. for 1 full round and his Initiative Count decreases by 2.

Diving Hawk (Trick): Once per round when benefiting from a Total Defense action, you may make an Acrobatics/Jump check toward any opponent immediately after someone makes a ranged attack against you. If you are adjacent to the opponent at the end of this movement, you may take a Kick action against him as a free action.

Hook Kick (Trick): With a successful Trip action, you also move into the opponent's square and are considered to have taken a successful grapple action against that opponent.

FOOTWORK SUPREMACY

You don't just dance around foes — you dance *on* them!

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +12 or higher, Footwork Basics, Footwork Moves.

FOOTWORK MOVES

Your footwork makes you a versatile and unpredictable opponent at close range.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3 or higher.

Benefit: You gain the following tricks.

Checking Step (Trick): With a successful Kick action targeting an adjacent opponent, you may also use your attack check result as your Defense against the next melee or unarmed attack your target makes against you. This benefit is lost at the end of the current combat.

Benefit: Your maximum rank in the Acrobatics and Athletics skills increases to your Career Level + 6. This bonus does *not* stack with any other ability that increases your maximum ranks in these skills. Further, you gain the following grapple benefit and trick.

Pop Goes the Weasel (Grapple Benefit): During a grapple against a standard character, if your Athletics check exceeds that of your opponent by 4 or more, your opponent dies.

Triple Kick (Trick): You may apply the Burst trick when taking a Kick action.

CHANCE FEATS

In *World on Fire,* characters wishing to master The Edge do so primarily through this feat tree. This phenomenon tends to manifest more palpably for those who recognize and embrace it, and for this reason, certain feats in this section require a character first possess an Interest in "The Edge" before choosing them.

For more about Chance feats, see page 189 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

BRAVADO

You might be getting by on luck... Yeah, maybe it's just luck.

Benefit: When any action die rolled by you or any teammate within your line of sight results in a natural 5, you may cause the die to explode. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Chance feats you possess.

CURSED BASICS

Around you, being a loser *hurts.*

Prerequisites: Interest (The Edge).

Benefit: When an opponent fails a skill check targeting you or one of your teammates, the opponent may not spend action dice to boost skill checks of the same type for the duration of the current scene.

Special: Once you possess this feat, you may not gain the Momentum Basics feat by any means.

CURSED MASTERY

It's probably just coincidence, but when your enemies hit a losing streak, it hits them back.

Prerequisites: Career Level 6+, Cursed Basics.

Benefit: When an opponent fails a skill check targeting you or one of your teammates, the opponent loses all insight bonuses until the end of the scene or until he succeeds with a skill check of the same type against you or one of your teammates, whichever comes first. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

CURSED SUPREMACY

To match karma against you is to leap into a death spiral.

Prerequisites: Black Cat, Cursed Mastery.

Benefits: Your highest attribute increases by 1. Further, when an opponent suffers an error with a skill check targeting you or one of your teammates and no one activates it as a critical error, you may spend 1 action die to force the opponent to make a Will save (DC 10 + your Charisma modifier + the number of Chance feats you possess). With failure, the opponent gains the *shaken II* condition.

HEROIC ACT

Once you get on a roll, you're hard to stop.

Benefit: When you spend and roll 3 or more action dice to boost the result of a single attack check or opposed skill check and that check is successful, you gain your choice of the following: a +1 morale bonus with all saves, a +1 morale bonus with all opposed skill checks, a +1 morale bonus with all attack checks, a +1 morale bonus to Defense, or DR 1/—. You may only possess one of each of these benefits at any time. All benefits offered by this ability last until the end of the current scene.

MOMENTUM BASICS

Once you have somebody's number, they *always* go down.

Prerequisites: Interest (The Edge).

Benefit: Each time you hit an opponent, you gain the *armor-piercing* (2) quality with all subsequent attacks against the same opponent for the duration of the current combat. Each time you miss any opponent, however, you lose all *armor-piercing* benefits from this feat.

Special: Once you possess this feat, you may not gain the Cursed Basics feat by any means.

MOMENTUM MASTERY

Once you get on a roll, your confidence carries you through.

Prerequisites: Momentum Basics.

Benefit: When you make a successful opposed skill check against a special character, your key attribute for the check increases by 2. This effect lasts until you fail an opposed check or until the end of the current scene, whichever comes first. Only one attribute may benefit from this feat at any time. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

MOMENTUM SUPREMACY

The weight of your victorious destiny is overwhelming, turning enemies' attacks back against them.

Prerequisites: Fortunate, Momentum Mastery.

Benefit: Your highest attribute increases by 1. Further, each time you score a threat with an attack check or an opposed skill check against an opponent but choose not to activate it, you may spend 1 action die to force the opponent to make a Will save (DC 10 + your Strength modifier + the number of Chance feats you possess). If the opponent fails this save, the next time he inflicts any type of damage upon you, he suffers the full damage instead. This effect lasts until the end of the current scene.

CHASE FEATS

For more about Chase feats, see page 191 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

EAT MY DUST

You play rough when you drive.

Prerequisites: Daredevil.

Benefit: "The Acceleration Rating of any vehicle you are currently operating increases by 1. Further, during a chase, when you inflict stress damage on an opponent, you may choose to instead inflict an equal amount of lethal damage. Finally, at the beginning of each chase, if your vehicle's Acceleration exceeds that of all opposing vehicles, you gain 1 bonus action die. If not used by the end of the current chase, this action die is lost.

MAN AND MACHINE

Your knack with machines is just spooky.

Benefit: You are considered to possess 1 additional Gear feat for the purposes of any ability, prerequisite, or requirement that is based on the number of Gear feats you possess. Further, when you must spend 1 or more action dice to gain the benefits of a Chase or Gear feat, the number of action dice you must spend decreases by 1 (minimum 0). You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

THE NEXT LEVEL

Your skill behind the wheel elevates the whole field of play.

Prerequisites: Eat My Dust.

Benefit: Each vehicle you operate gains the *redundant systems* (occupant) quality and a +1 gear bonus to Turning. Further, during a chase, when you win the opposed Maneuver check by 4 or more and your vehicle's Turning Rating is greater than that of your opponent's vehicle, you may spend 1 Advantage to force your opponent to make a Reflex save (DC 10 + your Dexterity modifier + the number of Chase feats you possess). With failure, he becomes *baffled* for 1 Conflict round (or 1 full round, if this is the last round of the chase).

STYLE & SUBSTANCE

You don't just make it look easy. For you, it *is* easy.

Prerequisites: Professional Driver — Closed Course.

Benefit: During a standard scene, when you're operating a moving vehicle or mount, you may spend 1 action die to substitute your ranks in the skill used to control the vehicle in place of your standard ranks with any 1 other skill. This effect lasts for 1 skill check. You may use this ability a number of times per mission equal to the number of Chase feats you possess.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

You have a knack for using or avoiding crowds.

Prerequisites: Style and Substance.

Benefit: Once per chase, you may spend 1 action die to add or remove the *public* or *private* campaign qualities until the end of the chase. Further, the number of action dice required for you to activate a critical hit with an attack made during a chase decreases by 1 (minimum 1).

TEST PILOT

You've been out on the ragged edge of vehicle design, and there you've seen wonders!

Prerequisites: 5+ vehicle focuses, Daredevil.

Benefit: When you operate a vehicle, you ignore the effects of the *trained only* and *unforgiving* qualities. Further, while operating a vehicle possessing one of these qualities, the result required for you to score a Triumph with Maneuver checks made using the vehicle decreases by 5. Also, each time you score a Triumph with a vehicle possessing one of these qualities, you gain 1 Reputation or $50,000 Net Worth. Finally, when operating a vehicle without the appropriate proficiency, your untrained penalty decreases to 1/2 standard (rounded down).

GEAR FEATS

For more about Gear feats, see page 196 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

ALWAYS PREPARED

You're like some kind of grown-up Boy Scout.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 15+.

Benefit: You may hold any number of mission Common Items in reserve. Further, the number of mission gear picks you may hold in reserve increases by 2.

EAR TO THE GROUND

You make it your business to be well informed.

Prerequisites: Favored Gear (Tradecraft).

Benefit: Each time you request a dossier, you may also request 1 hint from the GC at any time during the current session. The GC gains no action dice for this hint, but if he refuses to give you a hint, you gain 1 bonus action die.

RE-SUPPLY

You have an "in" with your suppliers.

Prerequisites: Career Level 6+, any 2 other Gear feats.

Benefit (city): Once per mission, you may spend 1 hour and 1 Reputation or $50,000 Net Worth to replace all of your team's gear that has been lost, stolen, expended, or destroyed since the Intel Phase. Use of this ability does *not* replace gear items that have been fenced or given away.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

You've picked up a few shortcuts along the way.

Prerequisites: Career Level 15+.

Benefit: Once per session, you may spend your largest action die and 1 Reserve gear pick to use 1 of your feat or class abilities that may only be used a limited number of times per session. This use does not count against the number of times you may typically use the ability.

ADVANCED SKILL FEATS

For more about Advanced Skill feats, see page 199 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

EXPERIENCE COUNTS

You've been doing this for a while and it shows.

Prerequisites: Career Level 12+.

Benefit: You may stack any 2 insight bonuses *or* 2 synergy bonuses you gain when making a skill check (but not both). Further, your maximum combined bonus of the chosen type increases to +8.

FLEETING VICTORY

You can be downright hostile when you lose.

Prerequisites: Career Level 6+, any 1 Basic Skill feat.

Benefit: When you make an opposed check using a skill covered by one of your Basic Skill feats and your opponent scores a threat or critical success against you, you may spend 1 action die to force the target to discard 1 action die or suffer the effects of a successful Cheap Shot trick (if the target is an NPC, the GC discards this die). You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Advanced Skill feats you possess.

PRECISION PRACTICE

You continue to refine your skills long after you move on to new things.

Prerequisites: Career Level 6+.

Benefit: Choose 1 base class in which you possess 5 or more levels. You may use your career level in place of your class level when determining the effects of abilities granted by the chosen class.

RISING STAR

Your meteoric rise seems to some like destiny.

Prerequisites: Career Level 1 only (when the feat is chosen).

Benefits: You may begin choosing from expert classes at Career Level 4 and master classes at Career Level 9, though you must still meet all other requirements before doing so. Further, the first time you suffer exposure during a mission, the Reputation or Net Worth penalty decreases by 2 or $100,000 (minimum 0 or $0), as appropriate.

STYLE FEATS

For more about Style feats, see page 201 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

EXTRA INCENTIVE

You keep your contacts very happy and that keeps them around when you need them.

Benefit: You may make a Networking/Contact check to summon a consultant or specialist you have already employed during the current mission by spending an amount of money based on the grade of the consultant or specialist: the mission's Threat Level × $100 for an acquaintance, × $150 for an associate, × $200 for a confederate, or × $250 for a partner grade consultant or specialist. You may use this ability a number of times per mission equal to the number of Style feats you possess, though only once targeting each specific consultant or specialist.

SEX APPEAL

You've got it goin' on!

Benefit: You're considered to possess 1 additional Tradecraft feat for the purposes of any ability, prerequisite, or requirement that is based on the number of Tradecraft feats you possess. Further, when you must spend 1 or more action dice to gain the benefits of a Style or Tradecraft feat, the number of action dice you must spend decreases by 1 (minimum 0). You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

WINNING SMILE

Your spontaneity often leaves people gasping.

Prerequisite: Charisma 15+, Sex Appeal.

Benefit: As a half action, you may force an adjacent character to make a Will save (DC 10 + your Charisma modifier + the number of Style feats you possess). With failure, the target becomes *dazed* until attacked or for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier, whichever comes first. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Style feats you possess.

TERRAIN FEATS

For more about Terrain feats, see page 206 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

BATTLEFIELD TRICKERY

Your strategic mind draws enemies into lethal traps.

Prerequisites: Security 3+ ranks.

Benefit: At the end of a surprise round gained with a successful quick Tactics/Ambush check, you may choose a number of opponents up to the number of Terrain feats you possess. Each of those opponents suffers 1 Cheap Shot trick effect of your choice.

THE EXTRA MILE

You go to extreme lengths to make sure everyone comes back alive.

Prerequisites: Profession 12+ ranks, Resolve 12+ ranks, Tactics 12+ ranks.

Benefit: Once per mission, during a standard scene as a free action, you may spend 4 action dice to target a teammate who has died during the current scene. If you are in possession of the teammate's body at the end of the scene, it is discovered that the teammate is seriously injured rather than actually dead. The teammate's wound points are set to 0, he must discard all his remaining action dice, he must roll 2d20+35 on the Table of Ouch *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 332)*, and both his and your Reputation or Net Worth rewards for the current mission decrease to 1/2 standard (rounded down).

GUILE

Your quick thinking keeps you at the top of everyone's game.

Benefit: You're considered to possess 1 additional Covert feat for the purposes of any ability, prerequisite, or requirement that is based on the number of Covert feats you possess. Further, when you must spend 1 or more action dice to gain the benefits of a Covert or Terrain feat, the number of action dice you must spend decreases by 1 (minimum 0). You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to your starting action dice.

NEMESIS BASICS

You carefully study all your enemies for weaknesses.

Benefit: Choose 1 Allegiance other than Neutral. When a character possessing the chosen Allegiance targets you with an attack or skill check, his threat range decreases by 1 (minimum 20). Further, you gain a +2 morale bonus with skill checks targeting characters you know to possess the chosen Allegiance. Finally, you may spend 1 minute and 1 action die to study a character within line of sight, forcing him to make a Will save (DC 10 + your Wisdom modifier + the number of Terrain feats you possess). If the target possesses the chosen Allegiance and fails this save, you confirm his Allegiance. You may target each character with this ability only once per session.

Special: You may select this feat more than once, choosing a new Allegiance other than Neutral each time it is taken.

NEMESIS MASTERY

You train to defeat your foes on every battlefield.

Prerequisite: Career Level 3+, Nemesis Basics.

Benefit: Your threat range with each opposed check targeting a character you know to possess an Allegiance chosen as part of your Nemesis Basics feat increases by 1. Further, after making an Initiative check during any combat, you may set your Initiative Count to 1 higher than the highest Initiative Count of any character you know to possess one of these Allegiances. In the event that two or more opponents simultaneously use this ability, their Initiative Counts become equal.

NEMESIS SUPREMACY

Your dedicated research has yielded some of your enemies' most guarded vulnerabilities.

Prerequisite: Career Level 6+, Nemesis Mastery.

Benefit: The time required for you to study a character with your Nemesis Basics feat decreases to 1 full action. Further, once per round as a free action, you may make 1 final attack against any character you know to possess an Allegiance you chose as part of your Nemesis Basics feat.

ONE WORLD DOCTRINE

By the time somebody gets on *your* list, nobody really wants them taken alive.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (Project: Pitfall), Career Level 3+.

Benefit: You gain 1 additional final attack every round as a free action. This attack may only target opponents who have taken actions that would cause a loss Reputation or Net Worth due to "incident," "noise," or anonymity exposure during the current mission, even if the character did not actually lose Reputation or Net Worth.
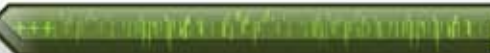
TASK FORCE TACTICS

No one can hide forever.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (Project: Pitfall), Career Level 6+.

Benefit: Once per Dramatic Conflict round when you're the Predator and the Lead is 5 or more, you may spend 1 action die to decrease the Lead by 1. You must use this ability before Strategies are chosen for the round. You may use this ability a number of times per scene equal to the number of Terrain Feats you possess.

UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY

You take advantage of an opponent's every hesitation and insecurity.

Prerequisites: At least 2 other terrain feats.

Benefit: You may choose to replace any insight bonus you gain from a Terrain feat with an equal morale bonus. Further, once per session, you may spend 1 action die to add the *hostile wilds* campaign quality to 1 standard scene.

UNITED WE PUNISH

More governments support your actions than nearly any effort in history.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (Project: Pitfall), Career Level 9+.

Benefit: Once per mission, you may request 1 legal assistance Resource pick with a Power Rating of 9 without spending an action die or making a Request check. The desired pick becomes available in 1d4 × 10 minutes.

TRADECRAFT FEATS

For more about Tradecraft feats, see page 208 of the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook.

BEFORE YOUR DEMISE...

You can monologue with the best of them.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (The Franchise), Career Level 3+.

Benefit: Once per scene, when you force an opposing special character into a terminal situation or win a Stand Off with an opposed special character, you may spend 1 action die and forgo killing him while you gloat. You gain 1 temporary feat of your choice from any tree until the end of the current scene, but your target escapes, gaining a Lead of 4 or 1 full mile of distance before you realize he's missing.

Further, each time you gain the Revelation Advantage as part of a Dramatic Conflict, you gain 1 additional action die (for a total of 2 action dice each time the Advantage is chosen).

BEST UNDER PRESSURE

When things look tough, you always rise to the occasion.

Benefit: When making an attack or skill check, you may choose a discretion, gear, insight, morale, or synergy penalty from which you're suffering and negate it, gaining an equal bonus of the same type and value instead. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Tradecraft feats you possess.

BUG MASTERY

Your bugs possess features most specialists only dream of.

Prerequisite: Electronics 9+ ranks, Bug Basics.

Benefit: You gain 1 bug as a Possession. This bug's Caliber may not exceed 1/3 your career level (rounded up, maximum Caliber V). Further, each time you gain a bug, you also gain 1 Caliber I gadget mechanism which must use the chosen bug as its housing. Finally, you gain a +2 gear bonus with Sneak/Stash Item checks made to conceal bugs.

BUG SUPREMACY

Your bugs are at the technological bleeding edge, featuring mobility and powerful onboard guidance systems.

Prerequisite: Electronics 15+ ranks, Bug Mastery.

Benefit: When choosing mission gear, you may select bugs as if the mission's Caliber were at least IV. Further, your bugs may contain up to 1 additional gadget mechanism or may be instructed to act independently as trained animals with an Intelligence of 1, up to 3 "trained" NPC qualities of your choice, a base speed of 10 ft., and 2 Grade III skills. Changing from direct control to autonomous control requires 1 free action and may be transmitted to the bug by voice command or a coded radio signal. Finally, you gain a +4 gear bonus with Sleight of Hand/Stash Item checks and Sneak/Stash Item checks made to conceal bugs.

CHANGE OF PLANS

You are quick to adapt circumstances to your advantage.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (The Franchise), Career Level 6+.

Benefit: Once per mission as a free action, you may apply or remove any combination of the *paranoid, thriller,* and *violent* campaign qualities. This effect lasts until the end of the current scene.

COMMENDATION

You're on your superiors' short lists — for promotion!

Benefit: You may undertake Crossroads Subplots as if your Career Level were 2 higher, and as if you had accomplished 2 additional standard Subplots. Further, each time you gain an XP reward for earning 1 action die, each of your teammates gains an additional 25 XP at the end of the current mission. This may not increase a teammate's total XP bonuses from action dice above the standard limit of 25 × his Career Level per mission.

DIABOLICAL GENIUS

Even chance doesn't foil your vile plans.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (The Franchise), Career Level 9+.

Benefit: Your highest attribute rises by 1. Further, when you or one of your teammates is the target of an opponent's check that is boosted by 1 or more action dice, you may spend the same number of action dice to negate the boost.

DIVIDED LOYALTIES

You play a dangerous game, serving two masters.

Prerequisites: Allegiance (any).

Benefit: You gain 1 additional Allegiance. Further, you may gain feats with either Allegiance as a prerequisite and may gain levels in up to 2 master classes as long as each of them requires a different Allegiance. Finally, if a character learns your Allegiance against your will, you may spend 1 action die to choose which of your Allegiances he discovers; otherwise he discovers both.

FRIENDS IN POWER

You can sometimes pull strings to get amazing mission perks.

Prerequisites: Career Level 15+, Old School.

Benefit (city): Once per mission, you may request 1 gear item that may typically be obtained only by spending Reputation or Net Worth at a reduced cost. The item's cost decreases by 1 Reputation or $50,000 Net Worth per Tradecraft feat you possess (minimum 1/2 its standard cost, rounded up), and it takes 2d12 hours to arrive.

OFF THE CUFF

You're a consummate professional, able to adapt to any circumstance.

Prerequisites: Agent Level 3+, Best Under Pressure.

Benefit: During a standard scene, you may spend 1 action die to substitute your ranks in Profession for any other skill for 1 check. You may use this ability a number of times per mission equal to the number of Tradecraft feats you possess.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT

You know when to risk your greatest advantages to take an opponent by surprise.

Benefit: As a full action, you may spend your 2 largest action dice to allow you or one of your teammates who can hear you to use 1 feat or class ability 1 additional time during the current scene. This ability must be one that may only be used a number of times per session equal to the owner's starting action dice. This use does not count against the number of times you or the team-mate may typically use the chosen ability. You may use this ability a number of times per session equal to the number of Tradecraft feats you possess.

QUICK THINKING

You do your best thinking when you're outmatched.

Prerequisites: Career Level 6+, Off the Cuff.

Benefit: During a dramatic scene, you may take 1 full action and spend 2 action dice to target an opponent within your line of sight whose Career Level or Threat Level exceeds your Career Level. The chosen character must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + your Intelligence modifier + the number of Tradecraft feats you possess) or become *drained* of 1 level until the end of the current scene. Each character may be targeted with this ability only once per mission. You may use this ability a number of times per mission equal to the number of Tradecraft feats you possess.

RISKY MANEUVER

Your crack team is reserved for the toughest assignments.

Prerequisites: Career Level 9+, Commendation.

Benefit: Once per mission during the Intel Phase, you may increase the mission's Threat Level by 3. Each player character's Career Level is considered 1 higher when determining the mission's XP rewards. Each mission may be targeted with this ability only once, no matter how many characters possess the ability.

ORGANIZATIONS

The organizations in *World on Fire* feature several new options *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 389, for information about organizations)*.

TURNING POINTS

Honor: The organization prides itself on an exacting code of ethics to be upheld not only when it's convenient, but always. *Supported Skill Check:* Sense Motive/Detect Lie.

SITES

Archives: The organization keeps a collection of books, A/V materials, or other sources of information. *Gear/Request Check:* Work Group (Investigation) requests. *Gear Category:* Resources.

Black Market: The organization has many connections to the world's underground trading community. *Gear/Request Check:* Smuggling requests. *Gear Category:* Resources.

Bureau: The organization's home office specializes in multi-faceted projects. *Gear/Request Check:* Work Group (Complex Task) requests. *Gear Category:* Resources.

Counterfeiter Ring: The organization employs expert forgers. *Gear/Request Check:* Cover identity requests. *Gear Category:* Tradecraft.

Liaisons: The organization employs a number of highly trained PR specialists. *Gear/Request Check:* Work Group (Impress) requests. *Gear Category:* Resources.

Morgue: The organization has fresh meat after every mission. *Gear/Request Check:* Body requests. *Gear Category:* Resources.

Secret Base: The organization keeps "defensive" launch sites around the world — just in case. *Gear/Request Check:* Guided/indirect strike requests. *Gear Category:* Resources.

WORLD ON FIRE FACTIONS

As discussed in the Allegiance section, *World on Fire* currently features nine Factions, six of which are heroic in nature and three of which are villainous — at least, as they're presented in the default world material in Chapters 1 and 2. Of course, it's a trivial enterprise to turn the tables, presenting any of the typically villainous Factions as the "good guys" and using their goals as the basis for mission objectives. A team of Project: Pitfall characters, for instance, could hunt the renegade Banshees, former Majestics, Krypt cells, and others as "terrorists plaguing society." Likewise, the characters might take control of Franchise operations and become part of the Great Machine running the world.

As discussed in this chapter's introduction, only the villainous Factions and Allegiances are covered in this book. Each of the six heroic Factions and its corresponding Allegiance will be featured in its own PDF release available through www.crafty-games.com and its electronic partners. These releases will also feature complete backstory, additional goals, and a greater view of the *World on Fire* for setting enthusiasts. Thus, GCs and players can pick up the releases for the groups they like and leave the rest, tuning the *World on Fire* to their specific tastes.
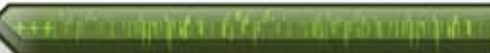
TABLE 4.20: REPUTATION IN THE WORLD ON FIRE

Faction/Condition	Reputation Gain/Loss
Eternals	
Objective (distract)	+1*
Triumph (Cultures or Science)	+2
Exposure (any anonymity)	–1**
Two or more Request checks made during a mission	–2
Franchise	
Objective (evade)	+1*
Triumph (unarmed attack or Tactics)	+2
Exposure (any "noise")	–1**
Two or more special character opponents remain alive and free of capture at the end of a mission	–2
Project: Pitfall	
Objective (capture)	+1*
Triumph (ranged attack or Investigation)	+2
Exposure (any honor code)	–1**
Any amount of property damage exceeding 1 city block in scope caused by player character team during a mission	–2

* Each Faction has its own priority mission objectives. This modifier is applied to characters possessing the appropriate Allegiance each time the team completes an objective of the listed type *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 431).*

** Each Faction has its own "pet peeves" among common forms of exposure. This penalty is applied to characters possessing the appropriate Allegiance *in addition to* the standard penalty for this exposure trigger *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 436).*

Each Faction is presented as a full organization offering a variety of benefits as described under "Organizations" on page 389 of the *Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook,* and each also includes a list of Reputation effects, which fall into two categories.

• A character's current Reputation at any time signifies his relative standing in his Faction. Each faction has its own ways its members can get ahead or fall behind and particular actions it praises or condemns — these being ways a character belonging to the organization can gain or lose Reputation. These triggers are listed on Table 4.20: Reputation in the World on Fire *(see above).* A character may not gain more than 3 Reputation from these triggers in any given mission. Also, losses from these triggers may inflict additional exposure penalties for characters of each Faction *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 435).*

• As seen in the *Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook,* a character may spend Reputation to gain particularly spectacular effects. Spent Reputation does **not** refresh: the character must complete missions to gain more. This represents the character burning bridges and running roughshod over others within his organization to get the job done. It's dirty, but it's fast and effective.

A Faction's organization and Reputation rules are **only** available to characters belonging to the appropriate Faction. Again, Allegiance does *not* confer these benefits, but rather offers exclusive character options described earlier in this chapter.

ETERNALS

Goals: 3 (Counter, Redemption, Secrecy)
History: 3 (Accomplishment, Allies, Triumphant)
Image: 8 (mysterious goals, secretive methods, mysterious leaders, secretive members, mysterious sites)

Sites: 5 (Advanced Lab, Archives, Cloning Lab, Law Offices, Secret Base)
Tools: 7 (E–III, G–V, R–V, S–V, T–IV, V–III, W–IV)

SPENDING REPUTATION

Alchemical Bond (5 Reputation): Eternals possess technology so peculiar that it's sometimes described as magic. You may spend 5 Reputation and 1 half action to touch and "tag" 1 character. If the target is trying to avoid being touched, a successful melee touch attack is required. A character cannot realize he's tagged through any means. While a character is tagged, you may sense his exact direction and distance at all times. Each tag wears off at the end of the current mission.

Servant Crew (10 Reputation): Eternals operate through vast networks of subordinates, always remaining at a safe distance. You may spend 10 Reputation and 1 hour to gain the aid of up to 6 Tier II Gatekeepers or Tomorrows *(see page 156).* Per the GC's discretion, these NPCs help you in any non-combat endeavor for which they're skilled and equipped until the end of the current scene, or until one of them fails a Damage save or Morale check, or suffers a critical injury, at which point all of the NPCs leave. If these standard NPCs make any skill check that requires a kit while helping you, they're assumed to possess 1 appropriate grade II kit.

Perfect Moment (25 Reputation): Eternals are often able to engineer perfect, critical moments. Once per scene, you may spend 25 Reputation to forgo rolling any 1 attack or skill check. You are instead considered to have rolled a natural 20.

Augment Serum (50 Reputation): Eternals can use their alchemy to literally reshape the human form. Once per scene, you may spend 50 Reputation and 1 full action to reveal that you possess 1 vial of Eternal augment serum. Consuming it grants +3 to each attribute until the end of the current scene.

FRANCHISE

Goals: 3 (Destruction, Genocide, Secrecy)

History: 2 (Accomplishment, Growth)

Image: 8 (mysterious goals, mysterious methods, mysterious leaders, secretive members, secretive sites)

Sites: 8 (Advanced Garage, Advanced Lab, Counterfeiter Ring, Hot Lab, Liaisons, Military Depot, Prison, Secret Base)

Tools: 9 (E–IV, G–V, R–V, S–V, T–IV, V–IV, W–V)

SPENDING REPUTATION

Mental Assault (5 Reputation): Franchise operatives are relentlessly focused. You may spend 5 Reputation to complete an entire brainwashing Conflict in the time typically required for 1 Conflict round (4 hours or 2 days) or an entire interrogation Conflict in 30 minutes, regardless of the number of rounds either activity actually requires.

Minion Crew (10 Reputation): Franchise operatives are often assigned their own squads of loyal minions. You may spend 10 Reputation and 1 hour to gain the aid of up to 6 Tier II Antibodies or GIGOs *(see page 157)*. Per the GC's discretion, these NPCs help you in any non-combat endeavor for which they're skilled and equipped until the end of the current scene, or until one of them fails a Damage save or Morale check, or suffers a critical injury, at which point all of the NPCs leave. If these standard NPCs make any skill check that requires a kit while helping you, they're assumed to possess 1 appropriate grade II kit.

WMD (25 Reputation): Franchise operatives are not known for subtlety. Once per mission, you may spend 25 Reputation to gain custody of 1 weapon with a tangible prospect of wiping out all life in a region of your choosing, up to 100 miles across. This weapon requires 1 hour to place and an additional 6d10 minutes to detonate or otherwise unleash. The GC determines the exact nature and operation of the device.

Criminal Mastermind (50 Reputation): Franchise operatives plan every mission down to the smallest detail, and it usually takes the heroes until at least the final reel to figure out how to beat them. During the Intel Phase, you may spend 50 Reputation to increase your starting action dice by 1 and prevent opposing characters from spending action dice to activate critical successes with attack or skill checks targeting you, your teammates, or your minions during a standard scene. This effect lasts for the duration of the current mission.

PROJECT: PITFALL

Goals: 3 (Counter, Terrorism, Visionaries)

History: 3 (Growth, Respected, Victory)

Image: 7 (renowned goals, renowned methods, renowned leaders, secretive members, on record sites)

Sites: 6 (Firing Range, Law Offices, Media Studio, Prison, Records Office, Satellite Network)

Tools: 7 (E–V, G–III, R–V, S–III, T–IV, V–IV, W–V)

SPENDING REPUTATION

Collateral Damage (5 Reputation): Pitfall operatives are rarely obliged to answer for violence — at least until the property damage bill comes due. Once per scene, you may spend 5 Reputation to ignore all exposure penalties resulting from a single combat.

Tactical Crews (10 Points): Pitfall operatives command elite units trained by the finest militaries in the world. You may spend 10 Reputation and 1 hour to gain the aid of up to 6 Tier II

Frighteners or Silencers *(see page 158)*. Per the GC's discretion, these NPCs help you in any non-combat endeavor for which they're skilled and equipped until the end of the current scene, or until one of them fails a Damage save or Morale check, or suffers a critical injury, at which point all of the NPCs leave. If these standard NPCs make any skill check that requires a kit while helping you, they're assumed to possess 1 appropriate grade II kit.

Summary Judgment (25 Reputation): Pitfall operatives endorse justice that is swift, though sometimes uncertain. Once per session, you may spend 25 Reputation and 1 day to put to death any 1 character in government custody. If the target is a special character, the process requires an additional 1d4 days, but the character is publicly transferred to a known Pitfall security facility until his execution.

Cry Havoc (50 Reputation): Pitfall operatives can unleash truly massive forces when threatened or certain of a crucial seizure. You may spend 50 Reputation and 1 day to call in a Pitfall task force of Silencers numbering 10 × your career level. For every 10 Silencers, the task force carries 1 Caliber IV heavy weapon of your choice. You retain military command authority over the task force until the end of the following scene.

CONTACTS

Contacts are a highly flexible tool allowing characters to gain certain abilities and skills they don't normally gain themselves. Because they're *so* flexible, however, a little additional explanation is warranted.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Each player character begins play with 1 focus in the Networking skill, which he may use to establish an acquaintance-grade contact. Each time the character gains an additional focus for his Networking skill from any source (e.g. increasing his Networking skill ranks, acquiring feats or class abilities, etc.), he may **either** introduce a new acquaintance-grade contact **or** improve his relationship with one of his exiting contacts by one grade (to a maximum of partner).

Each time a character gains a new contact (e.g. from an Origin option, a feat or class ability, etc.), it establishes a new contact of the indicated grade. Because a player may choose the order in which benefits are gained when creating a character or rising in level, the free Networking skill focus a character initially receives may be used to improve the relationship with a contact provided by the character's Origin options. Further, when a character gains a new contact and a new Networking focus at the same time, he may immediately apply the new focus to improving his relationship with the new contact.

All contacts provide one **and only one** benefit of their current grade, as well as one **and only one** benefit from each lower grade. This rule applies even if the contact is initially gained at a grade higher than acquaintance (e.g. the associate-grade contacts gained through the various "Contacts" style feats).

Example: Lt. Foley has just reached Career Level 3 and chooses the Military Contacts feat. He also increases his ranks in the Networking skill to 4, gaining 1 additional Networking focus. His new feat provides him with 1 associate-grade contact and he applies his new Networking focus to the contact, bringing the
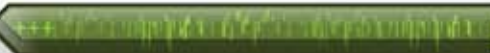
contact into play as a confederate-grade contact. He the gets to choose a single acquaintance-grade benefit, a single associate-grade benefit, and a single confederate-grade benefit that this new contact may provide.

With his GC's approval, Lt. Foley's player introduces "Colonel Graham", a contact who was one of the character's unit commanders before he joined the Agency. Lt. Foley's Ex-CO has had hunches about upcoming trouble that have saved Foley's hide in the past. He's also pulled strings to advance Foley's career, and continues to do so from afar. Finally, Graham controls a number of military advisors he can assign to aide his friends' operations. Based on these ideas, Lt. Foley's player chooses the following benefits that Colonel Graham can provide.

Acquaintance: Specialist (*evasion I*). After successfully contacting Graham, Lt. Foley may apply the benefits of the *evasion I* class ability to a single Reflex Save he makes during the same scene *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 37)*. In this case, the specialist need *not* be present for the ability to be used — the character is the one assumed to be using the ability.

Associate: Consultant (Profession). After successfully contacting Graham, Lt. Foley may call upon one of Graham's consultants to make one Profession check on his behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the

More Uses for Consultants section *(see opposite)*. The consultant possesses a Profession skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 12.

Confederate: Specialist (*synchronized*). After successfully contacting Graham, Lt. Foley may call upon one of Graham's specialists to support Foley's team with the *synchronized* ability once during the same scene *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 37)*. So long as Foley or one of his teammates can hear or see the specialist, the specialist may support Foley or one teammate of Foley's choice by increasing their threat range with all skill checks by 2 and increasing their Initiative Count by 5 for 1 full round. The specialist may not perform any non-free actions during a round in which he supports another character, and each character may only benefit from 1 *synchronized* ability at any time.

NOTABLE NPC CONTACTS

With GC approval, notable NPCs in a setting may be introduced as contacts. These figures are almost always special characters and often have higher Career or Threat Levels then the player characters (at least initially). All 4 of any notable NPC's contact benefits are defined when they're introduced, firmly establishing their character and flavor from the outset. As a character's relationship with a notable NPC contact improves, he may *only* gain these pre-determined benefits and no others.

Some or all of a notable NPC's contact benefits may be designated "solo," indicating that the contact personally provides the benefit, performing skill checks as a consultant or directly supporting the character's team as a specialist.

ABUSING CONTACTS

Some contacts, especially notable NPC contacts, are highly capable of looking out for themselves, and players may be tempted to lure such a contact into a dangerous situation, trusting that the contact will dispense with the opposition in the course of defending himself. This does not engender good will among a character's contacts, however, and no matter how careful a character is about covering his tracks, the news always eventually gets around to the rest of his network.

Solely at the GC's discretion, when any contact — notable or otherwise — is asked to perform skill checks or use abilities beyond those prescribed by the contact rules and the summoning character's options, or is otherwise abused, the summoning character suffers exposure for betraying an assigned teammate (−2/−$100,000). If the contact is forced into combat and suffers any damage whatsoever as a result of the player character's machinations, the summoning player suffers exposure as if he had attacked an assigned teammate (−4/−$200,000). The GC may not invoke these penalties if the abuse or injury occurs as a result of events outside the player character's control (e.g. as a result of a mission-scripted event or an event triggered with GC action dice).

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN.
YOU WILL SEND FLOWERS.

If a consultant or specialist is killed, the summoning character loses access to that contact benefit until he pays his Career Level × 1 Reputation or his Career Level × $50,000 Net Worth to replace the consultant or specialist. This penalty may only be paid at the end of a mission after all awards have been determined. The replacement consultant or specialist provides the exact same benefit as his predecessor when called upon.

If a contact is killed, the summoning character loses access to *all* benefits provided by the contact until the character pays his Career Level × 1 Reputation or his Career Level × $50,000 Net Worth to replace the contact. This penalty may only be paid at the end of a mission after all awards have been determined. The replacement contact provides the exact same benefits as his predecessor when called upon.

If two or more players have a shared contact who is killed, or whose consultant or specialist is killed *(see the Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook, page 459)*, the contact, consultant, or specialist is immediately replaced with an equivalent character, but the character who made the fatal request loses access to the new character or the appropriate contact benefit until paying the penalty described earlier in this section.

MORE USES FOR CONSULTANTS

In addition to making 1 skill check with his chosen skill, a consultant may also make up to 3 Knowledge checks related to the chosen skill using his full skill bonus. Further, in lieu of making a single check with his skill, a consultant may make all checks requiring the skill that are part of a single Complex Task,

CONTACT THEMES

When a player character establishes a new contact, he may choose a general theme for that contact. This theme does not expressly limit the benefits the contact may provide, but should be used as a guideline for the matters about which it would be thematically appropriate to approach the contact. While this is an open-ended option (much like a character's Interests), there are several broad themes that can trigger additional game effects. These themes are mentioned in the "Contacts" Style feats, but a current list of themes and the feats which introduce additional effects follows.

Contact Theme	Associated Feat
Academic	Academic Contacts
Business	White Collar Contacts
Computer	High-Tech Contacts
Con Artist	Grifter Contacts
Criminal	Criminal Contacts
Documentary	Research Contacts
Entertainment	Media Contacts
Exotic	Local Contacts
Government	Government Contacts
Grifter	Grifter Contacts
Journalist	Research Contacts
Law Enforcement	Police Contacts
Legal	Government Contacts
Librarian	Research Contacts
Media	Media Contacts
Mercenary	Military Contacts
Military	Military Contacts
Scholastic	Academic Contacts
Security	Police Contacts
Street	Street Contacts
Technology	High-Tech Contacts
Tradesman	Blue Collar Contacts
Traveling	Local Contacts
Vehicular	Blue Collar Contacts
Wilderness	Wilderness Contacts

Dramatic Conflict, or combat. However, the summoning character must pay any and all costs associated with the consultant's checks, including cash and action die requirements.

The summoning player and his teammates may make cooperative checks to assist the consultant and may use feats, class abilities, and other benefits to improve these requested skill checks as if the consultant were one of their teammates. The summoning player character may also spend action dice to boost the results of the consultant's checks as if he we making the checks himself. Further, because consultants are often called in to make checks that the summoning character (or even his entire team) are incapable of accomplishing, the GC may *also* spend action dice to boost the result of the roll to avoid situations where a failed check may disrupt the flow of play.

CREATING SPECIALISTS

Specialists provide player characters with access to an enormous array of class abilities that they might otherwise not be able to use. With hundreds of class abilities in print and more on the way, determining *how* the specialist's assistance actually affects the summoning player and his teammates is very important. The contacts described in the next section provide several specific examples of how class abilities are converted into specialist benefits, but the GC should also consider the following guidelines.

• In general, a class ability may only benefit the summoning character for a single saving throw, a single Complex Task, a single combat, a single Dramatic Conflict, or a single check made outside a Complex Task, Dramatic Conflict, or combat.

• In general, when a class ability requires the character to spend time performing it, the specialist spends the required time.

• When an ability may only be used during the Intel phase, the specialist may only be summoned during the Intel phase. The benefits granted may last until the end of the current mission, however, as noted in the ability description.

• When an ability does not immediately come into play, it must be brought into play, activated, or used during the same scene in which the Networking check is made.

• When an ability has a cash or action die cost, the summoning character must pay that cost.

• When an ability possesses the (city) restriction, the character must be located in a city to summon the specialist.

• When a class ability grants a feat of the character's choice, the character must name 1 specific feat that the specialist provides every time he is summoned. Each feat gained from a specialist becomes a temporary feat for the duration of the scene in which the specialist is summoned. The character may only employ the feat's benefits for a single saving throw, a single Complex Task, a single combat, a single Dramatic Conflict, or a single check made outside a Complex Task, Dramatic Conflict, or combat. The character loses the temporary feat immediately after he uses it or is no longer able to use it, whichever comes first.

SPECIALISTS AND MASTER CLASS ABILITIES

Per page 458 of the *Spycraft 2.0 Rulebook,* specialists grant characters access to base and expert class abilities beyond their level choices. With the introduction of master classes, these rules are expanded.

Acquaintance-Grade Options: No master class abilities.
Associate-Grade Options: No master class abilities.
Confederate-Grade Options: Master class Level 1 only.
Partner-Grade Options: Master class Levels 1–3.

FACTION NPCS

Each *World on Fire* Faction fields its own unique NPCs which may come into play as contacts, to support abilities, and to flesh out the GC's missions. Villainous Faction NPCs follow, while heroic NPCs will be included in each follow-up PDF release.

ETERNAL PERSONNEL

Gatekeepers: The Eternals have entirely too many secrets not to arrange for special guardians for their vaults and dwellings, including the heavily protected Vault Cites. These guardians are often sent out into the field to discourage inquires into their master's affairs. Gatekeepers only become aware of each other's names when they're assigned together, but they're often cut from the same cloth, possessed of unshakeable loyalty to the Eternal's designs and often benefitting from special conditioning or even special enhancements derived from their masters' bizarre science.

Gatekeepers (Standard NPCs — 73 XP): Init II; Atk VII; Def VII; Resilience V; Damage Save: VI; Competence: IV; Skills: Intimidate V; Wealth: I; Weapons: Long knife (dmg 1d6+4 lethal, error 1, threat 19–20, SZ/Hand D/1h, qualities: AP (1), BLD), Benneli Super M1 Practical semi-automatic shotgun with slug ammunition (dmg 2d12 lethal, error 1–2, threat 19–20, ammo 8S40, recoil 19, range 35 ft., SZ/Hand S/2h, qualities: IMP, TKD, UPG (ported barrel)); Gear: Trench coat; Vehicle: Classic muscle car (SZ L (2×3), Occ 1+3, A/T 5/4, MPH 55/125, Def/Save 9/+9, Comp 20/+1, Cargo 200 lbs., Rng/Fuel 4/gas, qualities: HOT); Qualities: *Class ability* (*red herrings*), *superior ability* (Str 16, Dex 14), *talented* (Ominous), *tough* (2 additional saves).

Tomorrows: While often brilliant, and blessed with decades or even centuries to carry out their experiments, the Eternals rarely work entirely alone. Tomorrows are gifted scientists pulled from the world of academia with the promise of access to secrets undreamed of by modern science. They enter a world of freak science that takes over entire cities, exploring the most latent untapped powers of humanity and even tinkering with life itself in advanced cloning facilities. It's not surprising, then, that these chosen few revel in the weird sciences that come to dominate their lives.

Tomorrows (Standard NPCs — 76 XP): Init IV; Atk II; Def II; Resilience I; Damage Save: II; Competence: IV; Skills: Intimidate V, Science (Super-Science) VIII, Tactics VII; Wealth: VI; Weapons: None; Gear: Analysis kit II; Vehicle: None; Qualities: *Class ability* (*elbow grease*, *small steps* (*professional recognition*)), *feat* (False Start, Scholar), *superior ability* (Int 18, Wis 14).

ETERNAL CONTACTS

Lord Zen (Reliable Criminal, Fix 10): What little is known about this master criminal is that he's been the Khan's close ally since early in the warlord's illustrious career. Rumor has it Zen was an intelligence operative who betrayed several of his fellow Eternals to Khan in return for a guaranteed lifetime position of power within the Nine Tiger Dynasty. Zen's knowledge of the black market is unsurpassed and he possesses sufficient blackmail material to force nearly any Chinese officer to assist him in procuring needed gear, making him one of the most connected men in Southeast Asia.

Acquaintance: Consultant (Manipulate). After successfully contacting Lord Zen, a character may call upon one of black marketeer's consultants to make one Manipulate check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. The consultant possesses a Manipulate skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 8.

Associate: Solo consultant (Streetwise). After successfully contacting Lord Zen, a character may call upon the black marketeer himself to make one Streetwise check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155).* Zen possesses a Manipulate skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 12.

Confederate: Specialist *(procure).* After successfully contacting Lord Zen during the Intel phase, a character may hold an additional 2 gear picks and/or Common Items in reserve. Further, once during the current mission when the summoning character is located in a city, he may make a Request check in 1/2 the standard time and as if the mission's Caliber were 1 higher (maximum Caliber IV).

Partner: Specialist *(filthy rich I).* After successfully contacting Lord Zen, a character may increase his Wealth and that of each of his team-mates by 2 until the end of the current scene. No single character's Wealth may increase by more than 6 by any combination of *filthy rich* abilities. Further, these additional points may not be liquidated for Spending Cash, nor may they be retained in any fashion beyond the end of the current scene.

Wei-Yung (Eternal Celebrity, Fac 4/Schm 7): One of the hottest movie directors to come out of the latest Hong Kong action epic surge is Wei-Yung, a former businessman whose enterprises are shrouded in mystery. In truth, Wei-Yung is an Eternal with his fingers in a great many criminal pies. His current movie-making business, for instance, is a cover for a hitman service. People hire him to see someone dead and he writes a matching character into one of his scripts. Mercenaries across the world know to watch his films for their hit lists and collect their fees out of the film's "marketing budget."

Acquaintance: Specialist *(quick change).* After successfully contacting Wei-Yung, a character gains coaching and props from one of the movie producer's specialists. Twice during the same scene, the character may make a Sneak/Hide or Falsify/Disguise check that would ordinarily require 2d4 minutes or less as a free action, ignoring any kit requirements.

Associate: Solo specialist *(calculating).* After successfully contacting Wei-Yung, a character may collude with the movie-maker, refining his current plans. Once per check, the character may replace the value of the single lowest action die he rolls to boost that check with his Intelligence modifier. The character may gain this benefit for a single saving throw, all steps of a Complex Task, all checks made as part of one Dramatic Conflict, one combat, or for one check made outside a Complex Task, Dramatic Conflict, or combat.

Confederate: Solo consultant (Impress). After successfully contacting Wei-Yung, a character may call upon the movie producer himself to make one Impress check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155).* Wei-Yung possesses an Impress skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 16.

Partner: Specialist *(master plan).* After successfully contacting Wei-Yung, a character gains a number of bonus d4 action dice equal to the character's Intelligence modifier once during the same scene. These dice are lost unless they're spent by the end of the current scene.

FRANCHISE PERSONNEL

Antibodies: In every major city in the world, there reside discrete professionals whose business is killing off those who learn too much. Their contracts are anonymous, their handlers an unknown source of email, and their payments are always prompt and comprehensive for services rendered. When a portion of the Great Machine is injured, these men and women are summoned, with the same mindless efficiency of any white blood cell drawn to the presence of an infectious intruder.

Antibody (Standard NPCs — 68 XP): Init V; Atk VII; Def III; Resilience II; Damage Save: V; Competence: II; Skills: Athletics IV, Bluff II, Investigation IV, Sneak, IV; Wealth: III; Weapons: Garrote (dmg 1d6+2 lethal, error 1–3, threat 19–20, SZ/Hand F/2h, qualities: NKL), FN Ultra-Ratio Commando II bolt-action rifle (dmg 4d4+2 lethal, error 1, threat 19–20, ammo 10S50, recoil 10, range 200 ft., SZ/Hand S/2h, qualities: ACC, UPG (2× telescopic sight, bipod, CLS, MAC (–2)); Gear: Dossier (PR 8); Vehicle: Airboat (SZ L (2×2, draft N/A), Occ 1+3, A/T 2/2, MPH 45/80, Def/Save 9/+9, Comp 17/+0, Cargo 150 lbs., Rng/Fuel 5/gas, qualities: ENV (swamp), OPN (no cover)), jeep (SZ L (2×3), Occ 1+3, A/T 4/4, MPH 60/100, Def/Save 9/+7, Comp 17/+0, Cargo 800 lbs., Rng/Fuel 5/gas, qualities: DEP, OPN (1/2 cover), ORD), or sport pick-up truck (SZ 2×3), Occ 1+1, A/T 6/5, MPH 70/155, Def/Save 9/+7, Comp 25/+1, Cargo 900 lbs., Rng/Fuel 4/gas, qualities: HOT); Qualities: *feat* (Garrote Basics, Sharpshooter Basics, Tactical Advantage), *steadfast,* superior attribute (Str 14, Dex 12), *treacherous.*

GIGO: The Great Machine has countless cells of mid-level analysts who process information and pass it on to others with no understanding of its relevance or importance. These functionaries are like the Franchise body's nervous system, responding to stimulus and converting it to data without any actual thought. Yerik's notes, and by extension most of those collected by the Shadow Patriots, refer to these minions as "garbage in, garbage out specialists" after a somewhat derogatory description of poor computer programming.

GIGO (Standard NPCs — 48 XP): Init III; Atk II; Def IV; Resilience IV; Damage Save: II; Competence: V; Skills: Analysis VI, Computers IV, Science (any 1 focus) V; Wealth: III; Weapons: Berretta 93R service pistol (dmg 1d10+1 lethal, error 1–3, threat 20, ammo 20M3, recoil 10, range 25 ft., SZ D/1h, qualities: CLS, NFM (S/B)); Gear: Analyis kit II, laptop (PR 3); Vehicle: Mid-sized sedan (SZ L (2×3), Occ 1+3, A/T 5/3, MPH 65/110, Def/Save 9/+8, Comp 20/+1, Cargo 200 lbs., Rng/Fuel 7/gas); Qualities: *Feat* (Examiner, Research Contacts, Scholar), *steadfast, superior attribute* (Int 13).

FRANCHISE CONTACTS

Jason Hellman (Shifty Playboy, Whl 14/Sol 4): This unstable dilettante was one of Dr. Kholera's most loyal field operatives, but branched out on his own after the mastermind's defeat in the Baltic Sea. Using information stolen from the mastermind, Hellman recovered one of the few remaining Godspike control cylinders and now hopes to use it to establish his own criminal empire. He is known to have attempted to sell the device at the Murder Lottery auction but wasn't able to secure a buyer before the operation was shut down. Hellman was most recently seen in Prague, where he met with the leader of the Alliance of Evil Geniuses about a position in the new organization.

Acquaintance: Solo consultant (Manipulate). After successfully contacting Hellman, a character may call upon the dilettante himself to make one Manipulate check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. Hellman possesses a Manipulate skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 8.

Associate: Specialist (*armor use II*). After successfully contacting Hellman, a character may gain coaching and armor from one of the dilettante's specialists. Until the end of the scene, the character gains 1 Caliber II piece of armor, as well as a +2 bonus to Defense while wearing that armor.

Confederate: Solo Consultant (Drive). After successfully contacting Hellman, a character may call upon the dilettante himself to make one Drive check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. Hellman possesses an Drive skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 16.

Partner: Specialist (*manual adjustment II*). After successfully contacting Hellman, a character who has failed a Mechanics or Electronics check that can be retried may call upon one of the dilettante's specialists to spend 1 half action giving a target device a whack. As long as the check DC is equal to or less than the Mission Threat Level + 20, the whack reverses the failure. If several grades of success are possible, this achieves the lowest possible positive result. The specialist may perform this action even if the character's initial result was an error. The specialist departs immediately after assisting the character.

Strik-9 (Agile Test Subject, Mar 7/Rptr 7): Mortally injured during an operation on the cliffs of the Serengeti, this killer for hire resurfaced months later with a bizarre condition that literally turns his blood into one of the most virulent poisons on the planet. Today, Strik-9 operates independently, as a freelance lieutenant in many known criminal organizations. Until recently, he worked under the genocidal criminal mastermind, Dr. Kholera. Since, he has branched out with Jason Hellman to form a new organization.

Acquaintance: Consultant (Intimidate). After successfully contacting Strik-9, a character may call upon one of the mercenary's consultants to make one Intimidate check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. The consultant possesses an Intimidate skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 8.

Associate: Solo consultant (Intimidate). After successfully contacting Strik-9, a character may call upon the mercenary himself to make one Intimidate check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. Strik-9 possesses an Intimidate skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 12.

Confederate: Specialist (*Wolf Pack Mastery*). After successfully contacting Strik-9, a character may gain combat training from one of the mercenary's specialists. The character gains Wolf Pack Mastery as a temporary feat until the end of the current scene, even if he doesn't meet its prerequisites. The character may only employ the feat's benefits in a single combat, a single Dramatic

Conflict, or for a single check made outside a combat or Dramatic Conflict, and loses the temporary feat immediately after he uses it or is no longer able to use it, whichever comes first.

Partner: Specialist (*cutting edge*). After successfully contacting Strik-9 during the Intel Phase, a character may choose 1 Gadget pick as if the mission's Caliber were 1 higher (maximum Caliber V). If the Mission is Caliber V, the character instead gain 1 additional Caliber I gadget pick.

PITFALL PERSONNEL

Frighteners: Pitfall's public face is carefully managed by a crack squad of corporate spin doctors, media pundits, and professional pollsters. These opinion-makers and public relations specialists sanitize and spruce up the aftermath of Pitfall's field operations so the public always — or at least usually — sees the horrifying terrorist strike *before* the clean, entertaining Pitfall retribution.

Frighteners (Standard NPCs — 79 XP): Init IV; Atk II; Def II; Resilience IV; Damage Save: II; Competence: II; Skills: Bureaucracy VI, Falsify V, Impress IV, Intimidate VII; Wealth: IX; Weapons: None; Gear: Cell phone, portable television; Vehicle: Limousine (SZ H (2×5), Occ 1+11, A/T 2/2, MPH 55/100, Def/Save 8/+8, Comp 22/+1, Cargo 250 lbs., Rng/Fuel 5/gas, qualities: LUX); Qualities: *Class ability* (*cover up*, *smear campaign*), *feat* (Media Contacts), superior attribute (Wis 14, Cha 16)

Silencers: Pitfall's off-camera counter-terrorism squads are every bit as ruthless and savage as the criminals they apprehend. "Apprehend" is their nice way of saying "shoot dead and prop up the corpses for the cameras."

Silencers (Standard NPCs — 70 XP): Init IX; Atk IX; Def IV; Resilience III; Damage Save: V; Competence: IV; Skills: Sneak VI, Tactics V; Wealth: II; Weapons: Survival knife (dmg 1d6+1 lethal, error 1, threat 19–20, SZ/Hand D/1h, qualities: AP (1), BLD), .45 ACP H&K UMP heavy SMG (dmg 1d12 lethal, error 1–2, threat 19–20, ammo 25M5, recoil 8, range 30 ft., SZ/Hand T/2h, qualities: CLS, CMP, TKD), 3 concussion grenades (dmg 8d4 explosive, error 1–4, range 15 ft. × 4, SZ/Hand F/1h); Gear: Tactical jacket (DR 4/9, DP −4, ACP −2, Notice/Check DC 10); Vehicle: Full-sized van (L (2×4), Occ 1+1, A/T 2/3, MPH 55/90, Def/Save 9/+8, Comp 17/+0, Cargo 3,000 lbs., Rng/Fuel 6/gas); Qualities: *Feat* (CQB Basics, Tac-Squad Supremacy, Wolf Pack Basics), *minion*, *superior attribute* (Dex 14), *syncronized*.

PITFALL CONTACTS

Madeline Sax (Witty Suit, Adv 8/Spin 10): As Pitfall's publicist, Madeline Sax is paid to make extreme actions and indiscriminate arrests look heroic and benevolent. In an amusing twist of irony, she was conscripted into this position from a formerly high-profile, high-paying position with a Hollywood PR agency — so high-profile, in fact, that the average blockbuster movie-goer was already familiar with her when he opted into the organization.

Sax is a masterful spin doctor, able to make *anybody* look good, from bad boy actors to gun-toting "peacekeepers." She's constantly looking for new opportunities to show off Pitfall's victories and she can often be found on the talk show and news magazine circuits, eagerly displaying photos of the latest band of dangerous terrorists Pitfall has apprehended.

Per her contract, while she's in front of the camera, Sax is charming, quick-witted, friendly, and vivacious. Off-camera, she quickly sheds her polished corporate image, becoming the vindictive, unpredictable tyrant her underlings know and fear. Woe betide any at Project: Pitfall who get in the way of her public image campaign; so long as she's with the company, saving the world will always be secondary to looking good in the process.

Acquaintance: Consultant (Impress). After successfully contacting Sax, a character may call upon one of the spin doctor's consultants to make one Impress check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. The consultant possesses an Impress skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 8.

Associate: Specialist (*smooth talker*). After successfully contacting Sax, a character may ask one of the spin doctor's specialists to linger in the area potentially until the end of the current scene. When the summoning character fails a Bureaucracy check that can be re-tried, the specialist spends 1 half action to smooth over the mistake. As long as the check DC is equal to or less than the Mission Threat Level + 20, this new approach is automatically successful. If several grades of success are possible, this achieves the lowest possible positive result. The specialist may perform this action even if the character's initial result was an error. The specialist departs immediately after assisting the character.

Confederate: Solo specialist (*cover up*). After successfully contacting Sax, the character may call upon the spin doctor herself to personally take charge of suppressing information that might reveal the character's activities or those of his allies or Faction. Thsi information must relate to 1 event of the character's choice that occurred during current scene (e.g. a kidnapping, a murder, a political maneuver, etc.). Sax spends 4 hours getting in touch with her supporters, after which the DCs of all Analysis, Investigation, Search, and Request checks made to collect information about the event increase by an amount equal to the Mission Threat Level + 4 (maximum 10).

Partner: Specialist (*breaking news*). After successfully contacting Sax, a character may call upon one of her specialists to assist his research. The time required for the character to make a single Investigation check during the current scene targeting an event or action that took place within the last 24 hours decreases to 1/2 standard (rounded down). Further, if the character takes 10 with this check, the required time is *not* doubled.

General Cornelius Fitch (Grizzled Recruit, Ptm 10/Sol 4): Fitch is Project: Pitfall's military commander, assigned by U.S. President George Winter to oversee tactical operations but answering only to a U.N. discretionary committee. He brings the experience of four wars to the table and treats every terrorist action as an invasion, every hostile as an enemy of the state. Like many peers of his generation, Fitch sees everything in black and white, which is perhaps the biggest reason he clashes so fiercely and frequently with Madeline Sax.

Acquaintance: Consultant (Tactics). After successfully contacting Fitch, a character may call upon one of the General's consultants to make one Tactics check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. The consultant possesses an Tactics skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 8.

Associate: Specialist (*armor use II*). After successfully contacting Fitch, a character may call upon one of the General's specialists to provide him with coaching and armor. Until the end of the scene, the character gains 1 Caliber II piece of armor and a +2 bonus to Defense while wearing that armor.

Confederate: Solo Consultant (Tactics). After successfully contacting Fitch, a character may call upon the General himself to make one Tactics check on the character's behalf during the same scene, or to use any of the alternate consultant options described in the More Uses for Consultants section *(see page 155)*. Fitch possesses a Tactics skill bonus equal to the mission's Threat Level + 16.

Partner: Specialist (*improved fortune*). After successfully contacting Fitch, a character may increase his starting action dice, as well as those of each of his teammates by 1 for the duration of the current scene. No character's starting action dice may be increased by more than 3 by any combination of *improved fortune* abilities. Because this contact ability can only be requested after a session has begun, it does *not* provide characters with actual additional action dice which may be spent; rather, its value is in increasing the team's starting action dice to affect their abilities and other effects which are controlled by a character's starting number of action dice.

THE OPEN GAME LICENSE

THE OPEN GAME CONTENT

SPYCRAFT™
ROLEPLAYING GAME

CHARACTER NAME

FIRST CLASS/LEVEL

TALENT

CODE NAME

SECOND CLASS/LEVEL

SPECIALTY

PLAYER NAME

THIRD CLASS/LEVEL

BASE SPEED

ATTRIBUTES

ATTRIBUTE NAME	ATTRIBUTE SCORE	MODIFIER	TEMP SCORE	TEMP MODIFIER
STR				
DEX				
CON				
INT				
WIS				
CHA				

	TOTAL	CURRENT
VITALITY		
WOUNDS		

	THRESHOLD	CURRENT
SUBDUAL DAMAGE		
STRESS DAMAGE		

DEFENSE = 10+ [ ] + [ ] + [ ] + [ ] - [ ]
TOTAL / CLASS / DEX / SIZE / MISC / ARMOR

INITIATIVE [ ] = [ ] + [ ] + [ ]
TOTAL / CLASS / DEX / MISC

KNOWLEDGE CHECK BONUS [ ] = [ ] + [ ] + [ ]
TOTAL / CAREER LEVEL / INT MOD / MISC

REQUEST CHECK BONUS [ ] = [ ] + [ ] + [ ]
TOTAL / CAREER LEVEL / CHA MOD / MISC

GEAR CHECK BONUS [ ] = [ ] + [ ] + [ ]
TOTAL / CAREER LEVEL / WIS MOD / MISC

ACTION DICE [ ] [ ] [ ]
TOTAL / DIE TYPE / SPENT

SAVING THROWS

	TOTAL BONUS		BASE SAVE		ATTRIBUTE MOD		MISC MOD
FORTITUDE		=		+		+	
REFLEX		=		+		+	
WILL		=		+		+	

BASE ATTACKS

	TOTAL BONUS		BASE ATTACK		ATTRIBUTE MOD		MISC MOD
UNARMED		=		+		+	
MELEE		=		+		+	
RANGED		=		+		+	

PRIMARY WEAPON	ATK	RECOIL	DMG	E/T	RANGE	SZ/HAND	WEIGHT	QUALITIES
AMMO TYPE	AMMO SPECIAL	SHOTS	AMMO TYPE	AMMO SPECIAL	SHOTS

SECONDARY WEAPON	ATK	RECOIL	DMG	E/T	RANGE	SZ/HAND	WEIGHT	QUALITIES
AMMO TYPE	AMMO SPECIAL	SHOTS	AMMO TYPE	AMMO SPECIAL	SHOTS

ARMOR AND PROTECTIVE GEAR	DR	RESIST	DEFENSE PENALTY	ACP	SPEED PENALTY	NOTICE/ SEARCH DC	WEIGHT	SPECIAL

SKILLS

MAX RANKS [ ]

CLASS SKILL	SKILL NAME	KEY ATTRIBUTES	RESULT CAP	SKILL BONUS	RANKS	ATTRIBUTE MOD	MISC MOD	ERROR RANGE	THREAT RANGE
☐	ACROBATICS	STR/DEX	___ /___	=		/			
☐	ANALYSIS	INT/WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	ATHLETICS	STR/CON	___ /___	=		/			
☐	BLEND	DEX/CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	BLUFF	CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	BUREAUCRACY	CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	COMPUTERS	INT	___ /___	=		/			
☐	CULTURES ■	INT	___ /___	=		/			
☐	DRIVE ■	DEX	___ /___	=		/			
☐	ELECTRONICS	INT/WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	FALSIFY	INT/WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	IMPRESS	CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	INTIMIDATE	STR/WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	INVESTIGATION	WIS/CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	MANIPULATE	WIS/CHA	___ /___	=		/			

CLASS SKILL	SKILL NAME	KEY ATTRIBUTES	RESULT CAP	SKILL BONUS	RANKS	ATTRIBUTE MOD	MISC MOD	ERROR RANGE	THREAT RANGE
☐	MECHANICS	INT/WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	MEDICINE	INT/WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	NETWORKING	WIS/CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	NOTICE	WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	PROFESSION ■	CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	RESOLVE	CON/WIS	___ /___	=		/			
☐	SCIENCE ■	INT	___ /___	=		/			
☐	SEARCH	INT	___ /___	=		/			
☐	SECURITY	INT	___ /___	=		/			
☐	SENSE MOTIVE	WIS/CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	SLEIGHT OF HAND	DEX	___ /___	=		/			
☐	SNEAK	DEX/CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	STREETWISE	WIS/CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	SURVIVAL	WIS/CHA	___ /___	=		/			
☐	TACTICS	WIS/CHA	___ /___	=		/			

■ THIS IS A FOCUS SKILL.

FOCUSES AND FORTES

CULTURES

KNOWN	FORTE	FOCUS
☐	☐	CENTRAL AMERICA
☐	☐	EASTERN ASIA (INCL. CHINA)
☐	☐	EASTERN EUROPE (INCL. RUSSIA)
☐	☐	NORTH AFRICA
☐	☐	NORTHERN AMERICA (INCL. GREENLAND)
☐	☐	OCEANIA (INCL. AUSTRALIA)
☐	☐	SOUTH AMERICA
☐	☐	SOUTHERN AFRICA
☐	☐	SOUTHERN ASIA (INCL. SOUTHEAST ASIA)
☐	☐	WESTERN ASIA (INCL. THE MIDDLE EAST)
☐	☐	WESTERN EUROPE

DRIVE

KNOWN	FORTE	FOCUS
☐	☐	PERSONAL GROUND VEHICLES
☐	☐	STANDARD GROUND VEHICLES
☐	☐	HEAVY GROUND VEHICLES
☐	☐	MOUNTS AND ANIMAL-DRAWN VEHICLES
☐	☐	PERSONAL AIRCRAFT
☐	☐	PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT
☐	☐	SERVICE AIRCRAFT
☐	☐	ROTARY-WING AIRCRAFT
☐	☐	PERSONAL WATERCRAFT
☐	☐	STANDARD WATERCRAFT
☐	☐	SHIPS
☐	☐	SUBMARINES

PROFESSION

KNOWN	FORTE	FOCUS
☐	☐	_____
☐	☐	_____
☐	☐	_____
☐	☐	_____
☐	☐	_____

SCIENCE

KNOWN	FORTE	FOCUS
☐	☐	CHEMISTRY
☐	☐	ECONOMY
☐	☐	ENGINEERING
☐	☐	FABRICATION
☐	☐	GENETICS
☐	☐	MATHEMATICS
☐	☐	PHARMACOLOGY
☐	☐	PROGRAMMING
☐	☐	SUPER-SCIENCE

CONDITIONS

FACTION/FREELANCE _____

GENDER _____ AGE _____ HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____ EYES _____ HAIR _____

CAMPAIGN _____ CAMPAIGN QUALITIES _____

XP GAINED _____ XP NEEDED _____ REPUTATION / NET WORTH _____

INTERESTS _____

SUBPLOTS

	COMPLETED		COMPLETED
	☐		☐
	☐		☐
	☐		☐

CONTACTS

CONTACT #1

NAME	
ACQUAINTANCE	
ASSOCIATE	
CONFEDERATE	
PARTNER	

CONTACT #2

NAME	
ACQUAINTANCE	
ASSOCIATE	
CONFEDERATE	
PARTNER	

CONTACT #3

NAME	
ACQUAINTANCE	
ASSOCIATE	
CONFEDERATE	
PARTNER	

MISSION GEAR

GEAR PICKS	RESERVE PICKS	RESERVE COMMON ITEMS

CARRYING CAPACITY

LIGHT LOAD	MEDIUM LOAD	HEAVY LOAD	EXTREME LOAD	OVERLOADED

LIFT OVER HEAD	LIFT OFF GROUND	PUSH OR DRAG
Equals max heavy load	Equals 2x max heavy load	Equals 5x max heavy load

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PROFICIENCIES

PROFICIENT	FORTE		PROFICIENT	FORTE	
☐	☐	UNARMED	☐	☐	HURLED
☐	☐	BLUNT	☐	☐	EXOTIC (HURLED)
☐	☐	EXOTIC (BLUNT)	☐	☐	INDIRECT FIRE
☐	☐	EDGED	☐	☐	RIFLE
☐	☐	EXOTIC (EDGED)	☐	☐	SHOTGUN
☐	☐	EXPLOSIVES	☐	☐	SUBMACHINE GUN
☐	☐	GUIDED	☐	☐	TACTICAL
☐	☐	HANDGUN	☐	☐	VEHICLE WEAPON

CLASS ABILITIES

NAME	EFFECT

FEAT ABILITIES

NAME	EFFECT

WEALTH

TOTAL	LIFESTYLE	SPENDING CASH	POSSESSIONS

SPENDING CASH	APPEARANCE MOD

LIFESTYLE

POSSESSIONS

VEHICLE		SIZE	OCC	A/T	MPH

DEF/SAVE	CARGO	RNG/FUEL	QUALITIES

VEHICLE WEAPON	ATK	DMG	E/T	RANGE	SZ/HAND	BLAST

AMMO TYPE	AMMO SPECIAL	SHOTS	AMMO TYPE	AMMO SPECIAL	SHOTS