



# SAVE

THE ETERNAL  
SOCIETY

a sourcebook for **chill**

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Character sheets are available at <http://GrowlingDoorGames.com/chill>

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# INTRODUCTION

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**SAVE: The Eternal Society** delves into the practical realities that the Society faces. It explores the three models for SAVE HQs: *Traditionalists*, *cells*, and *lost*.

*Traditionalist* HQs run the way the Society always has. They observe a chain of command and a hierarchical structure, wherein city HQs answer to regional ones, and regional ones to continental.

*Cells* follow Hayat Nejem's *Manifesto*, and take their cues from her. They fight the Unknown through guerilla tactics, maximizing advantages while minimizing risk of infiltration and infection.

*Lost* HQs went dark during the infiltration of 2000, and never reconnected. Many of them continued the fight against the Unknown, using whatever tactics had worked in the past. They operate with a great deal of freedom and flexibility, but they have extremely limited resources and intelligence.

This book examines all three types of SAVE arrangement, providing support for **Chill** groups who want to create an HQ of any of these models. It also provides an in-depth examination of the type of

person who becomes a SAVE, as well as what envoys can expect as they become more experienced — or when they want to retire.

**SAVE: The Eternal Society** also provides four new cases and 10 new creatures of the Unknown, perfect for **Chill** groups that want to see the enemy take the fight to the Society.

## ARTIFACTS

Throughout this book, you will see reports from SAVE's history. Some of them describe cases, some of them describe important events for the Society. These artifacts provide insight into the occurrences that shaped SAVE over the years, and give the reader a look at the Society's ongoing struggles. Taken together with the artifacts presented in **Chill Third Edition**, they provide greater context and information on the lives of Charles O'Boylan, Hayat Nejem, Virginia Chichester, Michael O'Boylan, and other luminaries of SAVE.



## WHY SAVE?

Why include SAVE in **Chill** at all? What does the Society bring to games? We use SAVE as the backdrop for the game for a number of reasons.

### SAVE PROVIDES CONTEXT

A game in which normal people came together to fight the Unknown without any kind of unifying organization is certainly possible, and can be a lot of fun. SAVE, however, allows characters to investigate cases without spending much time deciding how the characters come to know about the supernatural, decide it was dangerous, and choose to fight it.

In addition to context for the fight against the Unknown, SAVE provides history. SAVE envoys can be fresh-faced recruits, people who have lived their lives ignorant of the Unknown until the moment that shattered their illusions, but they can also be legacies, children or friends of SAVE envoys who have been involved with the organization for decades. We took this opportunity to flesh out the history of SAVE and to fill the gap between the second edition of **Chill** and the third because we want SAVE to feel like a living organization, with all of the difficulty and drama that entails.

### SAVE PROVIDES PERSPECTIVE

As dangerous as fighting the Unknown is for SAVE envoys, it's even worse for people who don't know what they're up against. SAVE cautions envoys not to rely overmuch on the specifics of past cases, because two creatures that look the same can be very different in terms of weakness or capability, but SAVE *has* those past cases to draw on. The Society can train envoys to see patterns, to recognize general truths about the Unknown, and perhaps most importantly, to remember that the Unknown doesn't always win. The creatures of darkness can be beaten back and humanity saved, if only for a while. For all the trials and tribulations that SAVE has endured, their methods work — even if one of the most important methods is to change approaches.

### SAVE PROVIDES CONFLICT

You can play **Chill** for years without ever exploring the larger history and workings of SAVE, but stories that involve the Society directly can be a lot of fun. SAVE envoys are human, and that means they're prone to moments of fear, temptation, and other human weakness. Delving into the Dublin Transfer List, the truth of the infiltration of 2000, or any of the other events in SAVE history that interest your group can be a great way to introduce a kind of “uber-plot” to your **Chill** stories. The comic at the beginning of this book, in fact, presents one such possibility.

## CHILL WITHOUT SAVE

Running **Chill** without the framing device of the Society in place means that your envoys don't have as much to draw on in terms of help and resources, and that the personalities and drives of those envoys are all that much more important. Mechanically, nothing has to change to run a SAVE-less game, but your group does need to consider a few questions.

### DO THEY HAVE ANY SUPPORT?

SAVE isn't the only group that hunts monsters, after all, and if the CM wants to design a different one then in effect your group is trading out one SAVE for another. That's perfectly reasonable. Just consider a few things. What is the group's history? How long have they been fighting the Unknown? What are their goals? SAVE wants to protect people, but other options exist. Who is the leadership? Are they telling the rank-and-file the truth about their activities?

### CAN CHARACTERS USE THE ART?


**Chill** assumes that people have been using disciplines of the Art for centuries before SAVE was founded. It's not unreasonable, then, for characters in a SAVE-less game to use these powers, but you'll need to think about the attitude they take towards them. Do the characters understand what the powers are? Can they control them? Do they assume the powers are magic or psychic in nature, or (especially for more subtle disciplines like Telepathic Empathy and Blessing) do they just “happen” without conscious thought?

### WHAT DOES THE WORLD KNOW?

**Chill** assumes that the world at large doesn't know about the supernatural. The Unknown preys on people fairly regularly, but is unverifiable in the cold light of day, so individual survivors' stories go unheard or disbelieved. This is part of what makes SAVE valuable; when people come to the Society with a traumatic experience that they cannot tell to anyone else, SAVE is there to listen and provide support. In a game without SAVE, does the general populace recognize the existence of the Unknown? Is it an open secret, something everyone knows about but does not discuss? If the characters work for a government agency, maybe part of their job is keeping that secret, which might force them to choose between providing support and comfort to survivors and preventing widespread exposure.

In the end, SAVE is important to **Chill**, but it's not indispensable. We use SAVE to showcase the best qualities of humanity, just as we use the Unknown to showcase the worst.






JEN, ARE WE ALL THAT'S LEFT?

NO, IT'S A BIG CITY, THERE ARE A FEW MORE.

BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO REACH THEM




WEREN'T YOU JUST ON A CASE, THOUGH, DOC?


NOT HERE. WE WERE DOING A FAVOR FOR JEAN IN CLEVELAND.




I'VE HAD NO CONTACT IN MONTHS. I'VE GOT ACTIVITY THAT LOOKS LIKE US, BUT IT DIDN'T GO THROUGH THE HQ.




YOU'D THINK THEY'D HAVE TOLD US IF THEY WERE SHUTTING DOWN.



WE'RE NOT THE MOST ACCESSIBLE OF PEOPLE, SOMETIMES.



YEAH, I HAVEN'T ACTUALLY HAD A CASE IN CHICAGO IN YEARS.



LET'S GO TOMORROW AND CHECK THE HQ. JUST TO MAKE SURE THERE'S NOT A REASON FOR US TO BE WORRIED.





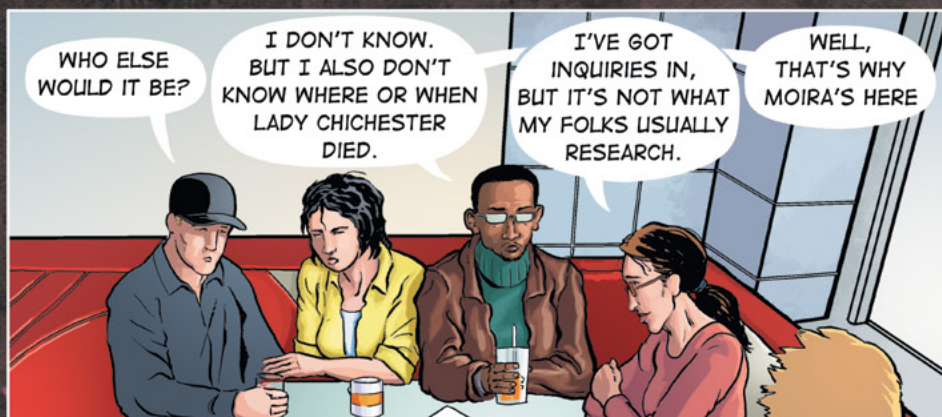
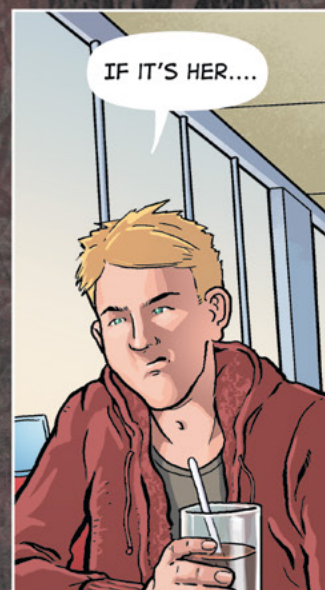
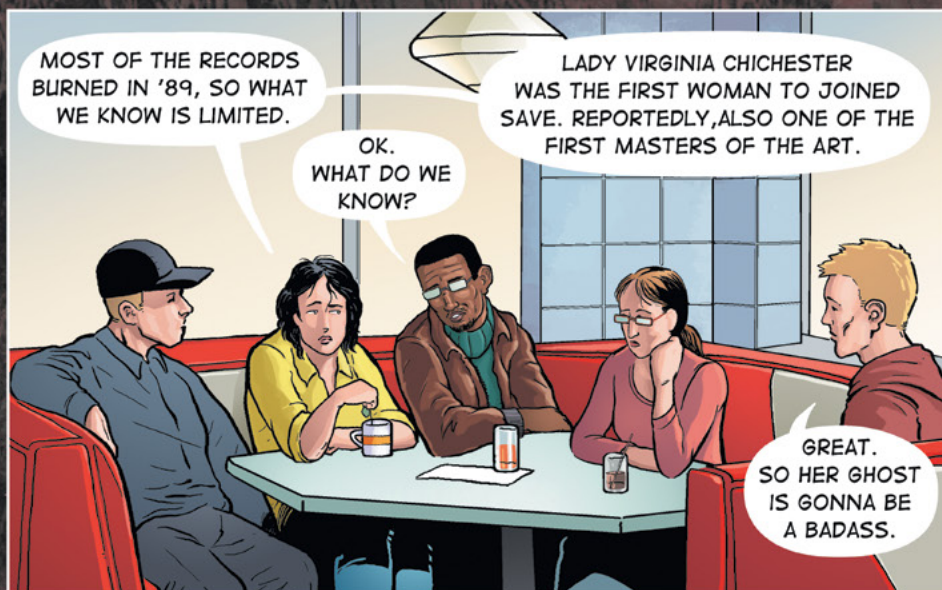








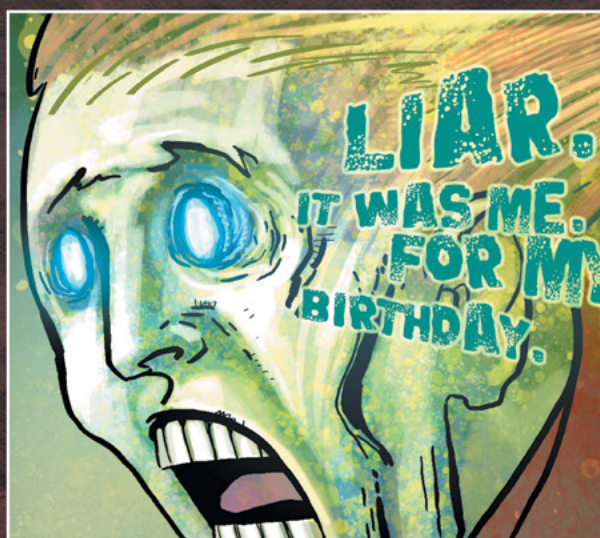
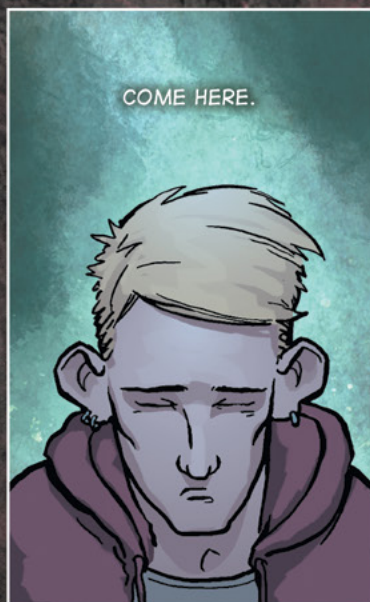
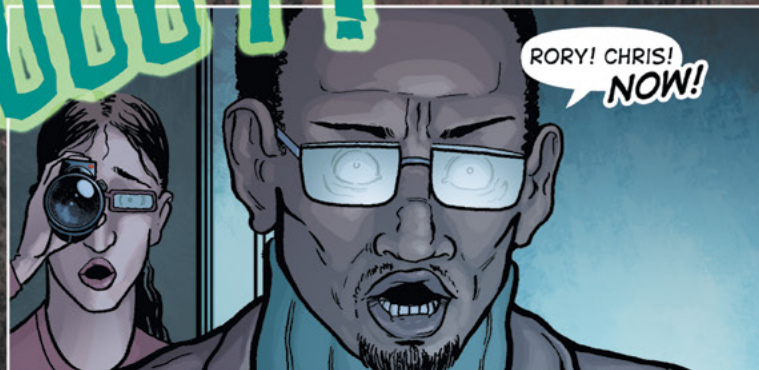








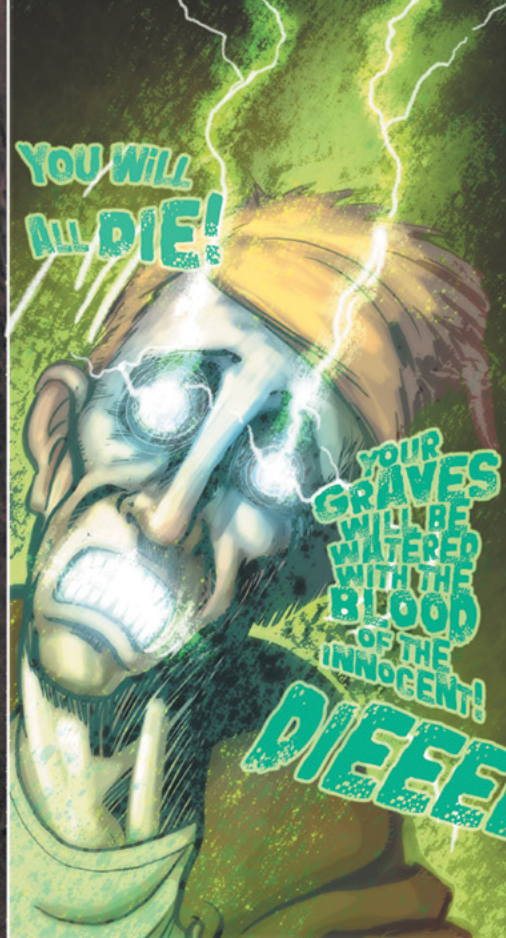








YOU'RE THE LIAR. YOU'RE NOT LADY CHICHESTER. YOU'RE NOT PART OF **SAVE**. YOU'RE THE TRESPASSER **GET OUT!**



**YOU WILL ALL DIE!**

**YOUR GRAVES WILL BE WATERED WITH THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT!**

**DIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE**



CHRIS? CHRIS! YOU OK?

SHE'S GONE. FELT HER GO.



a new day

HOW'S CHRIS?

HE'S FINE. HAD TO CANCEL HIS SHOW LAST NIGHT, HE'S PISSED ABOUT THAT.

AND MOIRA?

LEFT ON AN EARLY FLIGHT THIS MORNING.

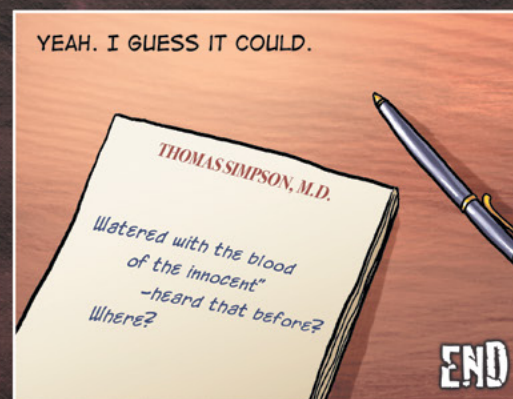
SO WHO WAS THE GHOST?

DON'T KNOW. MOIRA SAYS THE ORIGINAL PAINTING, AND MOST OF LADY CHICHESTER'S DIARIES AND RECORDS, BURNED IN '89. WE'LL PROBABLY NEVER KNOW WHO THAT REALLY WAS



I GUESS IT COULD HAVE BEEN A LOT WORSE.

**YOU WILL ALL DIE!**



YEAH. I GUESS IT COULD.

THOMAS SAMPSON, M.D.

Watered with the blood of the innocent  
-heard that before?  
Where?

**END**





# CHAPTER ONE: SAVE TODAY

The *Societas Argenti Viae Eternitata*, better known as SAVE, has been active since the 19th century. Other groups have come together to fight or investigate the Unknown, but SAVE has enjoyed the greatest success. Why?

**It might be because of its origins.** SAVE was born in the minds of very wealthy, privileged individuals in England. They approached their calling somewhat like explorers encountering a “new” continent — their expeditionary spirit was inspiring, but they failed to take into account that the new territory they were experiencing was already inhabited. Even so, the first SAVE envoys had money and

power, and were able to cover the losses that their ignorance engendered.

**It might be because of SAVE’s knowledge.** Despite the destruction of the archives in Dublin, and the more recent infiltration, SAVE has always been able to compile the information they’ve collected and use it to learn about the Unknown. This hasn’t always had the effect the Society wants, of course; the Unknown is corruptive, and too much knowledge of the creatures from beyond human understanding inevitably leads to a loss of humanity.

**It might be because SAVE is progressive.** True, individual members can be just as bigoted and pig-headed as anyone else — Lord Boulton’s first



response to the notion of a female SAVE envoy was to laugh. On the whole, though, SAVE has always been at least slightly ahead of the curve with regards to accepting people that society at large found disreputable or “other.” The Society has always understood, on some level, that the divisions humanity forces upon itself are illusory, and the Unknown does not care about them.

**In the end, though, SAVE succeeds because it must.** The Unknown succeeds when people are afraid, hateful, divided, and miserable. Most of all, it succeeds when people are apathetic. A creature of the Unknown can snatch away a single person, or a family, or a town, and let the rest of the world ignore what it does. SAVE refuses to ignore it. SAVE shines a light on the crimes of the Unknown, and responds to humanity’s cries for help with protection, healing, and compassion. SAVE succeeds because it is made up of people who are willing to help.

Since Hayat Nejem brought SAVE back from the brink, the organization has existed in an uneasy binary, caught between traditional practices and new methods that keep even other members at arm’s length. Both approaches are practiced, but the very nature of their different philosophies means that long-term coexistence is a fraught prospect. For now, they function as two aligned but largely separate groups sharing a single name and mission: SAVE.

## THE TRADITIONALISTS

El-Hashem calls them “the ivory tower” for their seeming disconnection from practical matters. Taking a more neutral stance, Nejem names them “the traditionalists” for their unabashed longing for SAVE’s golden days. They refer to themselves as simply “SAVE,” or “the Pyramid” after their hierarchical structure. This is SAVE as O’Boylan founded it, as it existed for one-hundred-and-fifty years before it came crashing down. A Syrian soldier may have resurrected SAVE, but the traditionalists are ready to overtake her and lead the way again.

The Pyramid covers all of Western and Central Europe, Australia, and North America on paper. Offices diligently keep abreast of the news to make sure no Unknown threats slip through the cracks. Even if they do miss something, an overseeing office is likely to catch it and warn them. Conversely, separate offices can go after the same threat and have a clash of jurisdictions. One office might argue that it caught the case first, while another claims geographic proximity to the event, and a third claims superior expertise handling this particular threat. The hierarchy is both a boon and a bane here, as overseeing offices

are quick to put an end to such bickering, even if efforts to boost end-of-year reports are often the underlying cause.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The traditionalists thrive where strong democracies and free markets go hand-in-hand: Europe, Australia, and North America. This political stability gives them an even footing that SAVE’s other branches can only dream of, while wealthy donors and investment funds grant them impressive monetary resources. More importantly, none of these places have seen sustained, systematic destruction in the last seventy years, meaning the artifacts and manuscripts that survived the 1989 attacks *still* survive in these HQs. The Alexandria Project (CHILL p. 132) travels to these HQs in an effort to digitize this wealth of information and distribute it to all European offices and beyond.

Traditionalist offices often have an “in” with local law enforcement, media, hospitals, and university professors. They don’t own anybody by any stretch of the imagination, but they have the benefit of long-standing relationships with people on the inside of these organizations. They know who to call if they need off-the-record medical assistance or an outside expert to look at a cursed statue. Conversely, many city councils and police forces have *someone* — either on an investigative team or simply filing papers — who discretely pushes the strange cases to the bottom of the pile while calling “a friend of a friend.” None of this is enough to avoid confrontations with the authorities entirely, but it gives envoys a bit of breathing space and a head start for staying in the clear.

The traditionalists’ greatest strength by far is playing the long game. Their centralized structure and global communications network lets them coordinate strikes and counter-strikes to full effect. Separate teams in Berlin, Ontario, and Sidney are sent on seemingly minor missions simultaneously; when the dust settles, the Zokur vampire lineage is no more. The Pyramid’s focus on the long-term, however, is also the their greatest weakness: they are slow to capitalize on unexpected opportunities or defend against sudden threats, as their resources are already tied up. Their centralized structure also remains vulnerable to infiltration and attacks from the Unknown, even after Dublin’s fall.

In addition, all six Masters of the Art hail from the SAVE of old. Some of their allegiances have shifted to Nejem, but they came up within the Pyramid and live in traditionalist cities. The Masters are largely either too idealistic or too focused on their Art to select pupils based on faction, but simple geography gives traditionalist envoys greater access to training with them and greater resources to send envoys to study.



05 June 1865

My Dearest Margaret,

I know we had both hoped that upon my arrival in Boston, I would receive news that all was as it should be, that Wallace Saltonstall had been located, and that I would be promptly sent back home to you. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Saltonstall's status is still listed as "missing, presumed dead," with little more than a handful of vague letters and a single eyewitness account of Saltonstall boarding a train to even give credence to this fanciful notion that he had abandoned his work with the Society prior to his disappearance. I asked for these documents immediately, of course, but the clerk from the Boston office has yet to produce them, claiming he "must have mislaid them."

Mislaid! Mislaid or simply stowed away in the midst of one of the piles upon piles of papers on the lad's desk seems more likely. When it comes to their recordkeeping, no one in the Boston office seems able to tell a pig's bladder from a leather glove, if you'll pardon my language, but I suppose that's to be expected from the Americans. Their library is barely serviceable and the filing system is simply abysmal. Henry would be driven to apoplexy by the mess! I shan't tell him if you don't, my darling.

I'm scheduled to speak with Saltonstall's wife — it feels unnecessarily cruel of the Bostonians to refer to her as his widow without certainty of his demise — early tomorrow morning. No one from SAVE felt it necessary to interview her beyond a handful of questions. Perhaps she can offer more insight as to his whereabouts and his circumstances. I may very well be shipboard and returning home before you receive this letter, my dearest Daisy. Think of me fondly and pray for my swift journey home.

Your dearest,

Virginia

P.S. Please do see that Wexford gets his daily runs or else he shall be vexatious beyond measure and will have to be confined to the kennels, which you know will only make him all the more cantankerous. Should the weather be fine enough, have Mr. Dursett take him out to the field to have a go at the quails.

28 June 1865

My Dearest Margaret,

Your letter reached me in Boston just in time to accompany me by train towards the American Midwest, and I have saved it until today, so I could savour it privately, a circumstance which I will illuminate for you momentarily. Your concern for my safety warms my heart as ever it does, but I am in no immediate danger at the present. In fact, the Americans' war seems to have come to its inevitable end, though I suspect its aftereffects will be felt for years to come. Everywhere I go, I see the hollow faces of young men who look as haunted as the steward's at that manor house near Summerhill. Do you remember, my Daisy? Like him, they see ghosts everywhere, but nothing so scientifically fascinating as those spectres catalogued within the Archives. I suspect the wretched vapours of the American dead shall linger for another envoy to commune with in days long hence.

The Boston office insisted I allow one of their envoys, a Mr. S. Kittrell, to accompany me, supposedly for the sake of my safety and propriety, but I think the true reason is that they do not entirely trust the Mother Office to share any information I gather from the scene. He is an insufferable boy, all of twenty but madly in love with himself. He speaks little, and when he does, it's nothing of consequence. His sad little beard looks to be crawling away from his mouth, not that I blame it, as he smokes a foul-smelling pipe and has a fondness for both onions and his own equally noxious opinions. Foulter still, he has expressed his general distaste for dogs, which you know I find contemptible. *Hic puer est stultissimus omnium!* I've had to sneak off to the dining car to read this letter in peace.



but my news! After weeks of tedious interviews and poring over Saltonstall's letters and journals, I finally have a lead. SAVING being what SAVING is, they had completely discounted Mrs. Saltonstall's description of her husband's odd behavior in the days leading up to his disappearance. Mrs. Saltonstall told me that her husband kept insisting he was off to catch the falling star he had seen in his dreams. Despite knowing that Saltonstall had, on multiple occasions, accurately predicted events through his dreams, the gentlemen at the Boston office dismissed Mrs. Saltonstall's claim out of hand.

Men so often ignore the possibility that a woman could speak with any sort of authority on a matter, even when that matter is her own husband. Had a member of the Boston SAVING office himself come up with the idea that Saltonstall was following a prophetic dream, they would all be on their way to Wisconsin with me now. But let a woman suggest it, and suddenly the idea is worthy of ridicule! Nevermind that the same phrase about the fallen star appears several times in the final pages of his envoy journal, as well as twice in the strange letters sent to the Boston office several weeks after his desertion.

Oh, my beautiful Daisy, can you guess what occurred in March of this same year, a mere handful of weeks before Saltonstall left Boston? The self same reason that I am traveling on this train with the pungent Mr. Kittrell to the American state of Wisconsin! Saltonstall's dreams have proven true yet again. Apparently several residents of Vernon County, Wisconsin, reported a bright object streaking across the sky, accompanied by a rumbling, and followed by a loud explosion like the firing of a rifle. Catch a falling star, indeed! I believe Saltonstall may have gone in search of the meteorite or other object falling from the sky, for reasons as yet unknown to me.

I will write to you as soon as I arrive in Viroqua, Wisconsin, provided I am not smothered to death by Kittrell's fumes!

Yours dearest.

03 July 1865

My Dearest Margaret,

I had intended to write to you that I had arrived safely and untouched by Kittrell's stench, which is true, but oh, the devastation I see before me. The same day I penned my last letter to you, a tornado touched down in Viroqua, Wisconsin, cutting a swath of death and destruction through Vernon County. Though I understand that this region is prone to such storms, its timing and precise location leave me questioning its relationship to Saltonstall's fallen star. Could two such phenomena happen in such close proximity of time and space? Kittrell is dubious and says a coincidence does not a pattern make, but I think the two must surely be related in some manner.

This tornado was, by all accounts, a remarkably violent one, with tendrils and eddies reaching out from the central funnel. A number of livestock were lost to the storm, some plucked from the ground and later flung still-living into trees to be speared. Rocks that weigh some 20 tons or more were lifted and dropped again, smashed against each other into dust and rubble. Few buildings remain, though those that do are strangely untouched, such as the boarding house in which I will be staying. Let's hope Kittrell's pipe smoke doesn't permeate the walls there, as the boarding house has only three rooms in total to let, and the two available are side by side.

I find myself wishing I had the talents of Mordecai Wickes and could project myself out of my body and look down upon Viroqua, or better still, the whole of Vernon County. Would the view from aloft grant better perspective? Perhaps then the pattern would become clear enough for even Kittrell to see it. Did Saltonstall see it in those dreams of his? Is that what lured him to this most peculiar place?

Indeed, Daisy, this small town has a strange air about it, a crackle that raises the delicate hairs on the back of my neck and leaves a taste of lightning in my mouth. I know this feeling. It runs through me when I focus my attention and make things move without touching them. When my hand brushes against the bark of a tree that had impaled a cow and a feather bed on its branches only five days before, I can sense something within it pulsing, dark and deep, like an abscess. Is this a hole left by Saltonstall's star, or was it this that pulled him to this place?



tion and make things move without touching them. When my hand brushes against the bark of a tree that had impaled a cow and a feather bed on its branches only five days before, I can sense something within it pulsing, dark and deep, like an abscess. Is this a hole left by Saltonstall's star, or was it this that pulled the meteorite from the heavens to crash into the dreary Wisconsin mud? Somehow I will find the answer, Daisy. I swear this to you.

Your dearest,  
Virginia

P.S. Is Wexford pining terribly for me? He can be a temperamental beast, but then, so can I.

07 July 1865

My Dearest Margaret,

I'm looking at a pile of dead birds and thinking of you. Isn't that romantic?

Well, it isn't, of course, but I'm wishing so very dearly that I had you by my side in this moment. No one is quite certain how these birds died. They didn't fly into window glass, as we sometimes see at the Archives or on the upper floor at home. They don't look diseased or infested by parasites. They are simply dead, Daisy, a pile of thirty or more of them, their tiny bodies piled up within the tidy circumference of one small circle. Today, it's birds, robins more specifically. Yesterday, it was grasshoppers. I never thought I should say this, darling girl, but when it comes to the piling up of small corpses, I far prefer grasshoppers to birds.

To think that I am here, what feels like half a world away from you, in this terrible place where people talk through their noses, with a terrible man who hates dogs and smells of old tobacco, because I once flung a teacup at an old man. I shall only say that this is one of those stunning rare times when I have sorely regretted that teacup!

Kittrell is fussing about with the bird corpses, my love, so I must bid thee farewell for now. Perhaps Mr. Stonchington will divine some meaning in their wee innards. Perhaps he's merely looking to enhance his aroma.

Your dearest,  
Virginia

P.S. I miss finding red hairs all over my skirts, yours long and curly and Wexford's short and wiry. What does this say about me, that I surround myself with so many rufous creatures whom I love so?

08 July 1865

My Dearest Margaret,

Kittrell's nihil ad rem fiddling with dead robins has done us no favours. I saw something in the wood late last evening, no larger than a man, but moving with such an ungainly stride. I cannot put Lord Strange's warnings from my mind, that when one stares too intently into the unknown, it will begin to stare back at you. Something about this place is wrong, so very wrong, yet I still cannot ascertain if the wrongness is being drawn in like a whirlpool or spewed forth like a fountain.

Saltonstall's letters were not born of fantasy. His sketches of clustering birds and twisted trees weren't mere doodles at all, nor were his statements metaphorical. His words and drawings were surely a product of a prescient dream. The shadow that lay across his path in sleep, the same night he learned of the fallen star, is in this place. My dreams needn't be prescient.

It is dark and wet across the doorstep of this paltry boarding house and stretching down the raw path



dreams needn't be prescient.

I see it, dark and vast, across the doorstep of this paltry boarding house and stretching down the raw path torn through the field bordering what was once the school. A few whitewashed boards and a sad, blue hair ribbon caught on a nail and waving in the wistering air seem a monument to so many lost things. Saltonstall, his meteor, students and their teachers, these weeks without you, and something within me that once viewed this darkness, this unknown, as a foe to battle, mysterious and frightening, but not beyond my wits.

Any woman could grow weary of it, Daisy, and I feel both wearier and warier the longer we stay. Even Kittrell is getting a touch of wildness to his eyes. I am still unsure of his purpose here, or why the Bostonians insisted he accompany me. I should ask him his opinion of Irish setters. His answer will either leave me in deathly fear over how gravely he has been changed by this place, or will put a pleasant bit of steel in my back to ready me for a row. Either would be a most welcome change from the low and gripping numbness pervading this town.

Perhaps I overstate the case. It could be that this is simply the feeling of life in the middle of America, but if that be so, then give me a creature to fight to kindle my blood again! I'll go a round with O'Boylan's mummy and black both its eyes!

Fiercely your dearest,

10 July 1865

My Dearest Margaret,

We have found Saltonstall, my love, or at the very least, his belongings. God help us all. Only by accident did we even uncover that it was Saltonstall who let the third room in this boarding house, when I overheard the proprietor remark to his wife over breakfast that the occupant of the third room was nearly at the end of the period for which he paid, and that if he didn't return soon, they would be forced to remove his belongings. Hearing this news, Kittrell and I identified ourselves to the proprietors as Saltonstall's colleagues, upon which point we were granted access to the room and Saltonstall's possessions therein.

Saltonstall has clearly been absent from the room for some time, but what he left behind is terrifying. The room is filled with drawings, strewn about the floor, covering the surfaces, and even tacked to the walls, which I must say does the wallpaper no great favour. Such images, Daisy! I can still see them behind my eyelids as I write to you, and I fear I will see them in my sleep tonight.

Some of the drawings I have seen before, for they resemble the birds and trees from the margins of Saltonstall's letters. Many show a great star plummeting from the heavens. Several depict a man, featureless and coloured all in with ink, to appear as a shadow cast by no one. The worst, dear Daisy, the very worst, are of a mouth, huge and gaping. Over the mouth, a whirling vortex holds animals, children, uprooted trees and buildings, and in the midst of it all, the star, all being sucked into this cavernous maw. The rest of the face is shadow, but the mouth is clearly depicted down to each gleaming tooth.

I am reminded of the myth of the creature Nidhoggr, gnawing at the roots of the great tree Yggdrasil and devouring the world from the inside out. What lies beneath Vernon County and opens its mouth to swallow us? I shall write again soon, if only to assure you I am as yet undevoured.

Your dearest,

Virginia

P.S. Give Wexford an extra bit of meat from the table tonight, for I very much wish for his companionship at the moment, though not nearly as much as I long for yours.



12 July 1865

Dearest Margaret,

Something is watching us. I feel its eyes on me constantly. It isn't the useless Kittrell, who thankfully shows little interest in my activities outside our investigation. Could it be Saltonstall, observing us from afar to gauge our purpose? Unnerving, certainly, but how much worse to think it is the shadowy face that holds the gaping maw?

Today, Kittrell and I walked a path of several miles, circling outward and outward from what was once the center of Viroqua, before the tornado ripped so much of it away. We both felt the discomfort that comes from close proximity to the unknown, or I assume we do, as Kittrell speaks very little. His scowl deepened, and his movements became more tense, his short words more terse. The disquiet felt strongest roughly three miles from town, in an open expanse of field marked with a deep furrow from the recent tornado. The damage ended abruptly in one spot, as though the tornado had hit a wall or, as Saltonstall's drawings suggested, had been sucked straight into the earth.

We found one well-polished shoe discarded in this same spot, but no footprints in the wet ground save ours. Kittrell believes the shoe was carried here by the tornado. I believe it belonged to Saltonstall. Kittrell won't place a wager on it, however, so I once again must question his purpose on this expedition.

Your dearest,

Virginia

16 July 1865

Dearest Margaret,

Please excuse the shakiness of my pen and any ink spatter that you may notice. What a day I have had! You will know how seriously I mean this, when I tell you that I have finally ascertained Kittrell's purpose here and that I am eternally grateful for it!

I shall begin at the beginning, for the purpose of record-keeping and because I need to tell someone who will believe me without going mad from the knowledge. Nearly eight years with the Society and I can honestly say I have never experienced something like this before. We found it, Daisy. We found the shadow man, the star-eater, the mouth of the vortex, and it is only through the combined efforts of Kittrell, Saltonstall, and myself that I survived. Yes, Saltonstall lives, which should have been a source of great relief, yet as Virgil put it, *graviora mentem*.

Kittrell and I spent much the last two days, from first light until dusk, examining the area where the tornado ended. I used my instruments to measure the qualities of the soil, which had a regular pattern of disturbance, similar to ripples in a pond. I also used my Art to reach beneath the dirt, feeling for something of purposeful human make or for the vile but strangely compelling touch of the unknown. Kittrell mostly smoked his pipe and watched me. I had him hold my instrument case while I worked.

By the end of the second day, I had found little of note, and feared that Kittrell and I must soon return to Boston empty handed. In that moment of despondency, the ground began to shiver with a deep vibration that set the grit in the topsoil dancing and swirling up into tiny eddies. Two things happened at once: 1) a man, dressed in fashionable but filthy clothing and wearing but one shoe (Kittrell would have owed me on that bet) rushed into my field of view, and 2) another form, also shaped like a man but inkly black and somehow flat, like a long shadow cast on a sunny day, rose up from the nexus point where the tornado's track ended.

Saltonstall cried out "beware the mouth!" and as he spoke this, the shadow man's mouth began to open. While the creature's size and shape otherwise remained unchanged, its maw opened wider and wider, spreading beyond the shadow man's face, then its entire head, until the mouth was like the whirling circle where a tornado kisses the cloud.



creature's size and shape otherwise remained unchanged, its maw opened wider and wider, spreading beyond the shadowman's face, then its entire head, until the mouth was like the whirling circle where a tornado kisses the cloud.

As this happened, I saw Kittrell stir beside me, and I reached out with all the force of my mind, will, and Art to grasp the shadow creature. Holding it was like trying to embrace a violent wind, and even from the physical distance of several feet, the creature slashed at my clothing and my skin. Kittrell's hands gripped my shoulders, the cuts on my arms and face closing as quickly as they opened, and Saltonstall began shouting instructions at us as he flung some sort of glittering sand in the shadowman's direction.

"Its skull!" Saltonstall said. "Crush its skull!"

Crush it? I could barely hold it in check, let alone damage any part of it. Kittrell released my shoulders, barreling towards the shadowman-turned-whirlwind. Dirt and rocks and small field creatures flew into the huge mouth before me, but Kittrell did not hesitate, not for one moment. With Saltonstall at my side to encourage me, still flinging his mysterious sand, I was able to hold the creature in place long enough for Kittrell to reach beyond its maw

and grip its head in his hands. The violent winds buffeted him, yet he stayed steady. They whipped at him, cutting his forearms down to the bone, but as I held the beast in its spot, Kittrell's hands came together with the force of an iron trap.

Suddenly, the wind was gone and the shadowman with it, nothing but inky pulp between Kittrell's hands as he fell to his knees in the wet soil. Saltonstall and I ran to his side, trying to staunch the flow of blood, but Kittrell's injuries were too great. We could do nothing but assure him that the creature was defeated as we watched his face go slack and his eyes close. He looked even younger, a crumpled and broken boy, as he fell to his side in a churned mess of blood, black ichor, sparkling sand, and mud.

I wept, Daisy. Saltonstall held my hand as I wept over that boy, regretting every hateful word I had written to you about him, for isn't that the nature of death? We so quickly forget the traits we loathed in a person, once he ceases to exist to perpetuate them. I was too exhausted from the effort of containing the creature to even ask Saltonstall about its origin or to question the purpose of the sand he had thrown at it.

We have booked passage on a train back to Boston, where we shall place Kittrell's belongings in the care of the Bostonians. I will use the time we travel to question Saltonstall and try to better understand what I experienced during my weeks in Wisconsin. I need to make sense of it somehow, Daisy, for myself and for Steve, and then I need to return home to you.

Your dearest,  
Virginia



## RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

The traditionalists adhere to Professor D.B. Kramer's theory — which is admittedly untested — that the Unknown becomes stronger as it becomes known. They try to recruit as few people as possible and when they do, it's often people who were in the know to begin with. Adult children and relatives or friends of existing envoys fall into this category, as it's near impossible to keep SAVE's work hidden, as well as people who survived an encounter with the Unknown. They also regularly recruit overly curious journalists or detectives. A talent in the Art is also greatly valued; since inadvertent use of the Art may draw the Unknown, the traditionalists make a point of seeking out would-be practitioners.

Traditionalists make no distinction with regards to gender, race, or sexuality. SAVE protects *all* of humanity; most envoys have little patience with co-workers who believe that some people are better than others. The one exception to this egalitarian approach is children. Entrenched in parts of the world where children have the luxury of innocence, the traditionalists balk at recruiting children, teenagers, and adolescents. Doing so is considered tantamount to recruiting child soldiers and the traditionalists seek to avoid it at all costs.

Joining SAVE is strictly voluntary. Traditionalist HQ recruits are free to leave any time, even if they already know too much. An envoy's work might well end in injury or death, after all, and SAVE doesn't believe it's entitled to force this on anyone. While Nejem's cells and lost HQs may have no qualms recruiting people who carry a personal grudge against the Unknown, the Pyramid takes more of an unwavering moral approach: SAVE is the great bastion shielding humanity from the darkness. Envoys who can't see the greater mission are hurried on toward retirement whenever possible, or else moved away from the field. The Unknown has enough leverage without tapping into darkness in the envoys themselves.

Traditionalists historically aren't picky when it comes to a recruit's skills. Low recruitment numbers don't allow it, frankly, and their centralized resources can bring envoys up to speed afterward. Several offices have specialized trainers on staff — usually older or injured envoys no longer able to do field work — who take on apprentices from all over Europe and North America. These trainers even run weeklong seminars alongside normal professional conferences, so a medical conference in Zürich might have an unofficial envoy-only show dealing with injuries inflicted by the Unknown.

Alternatively, some trainers travel to those envoys who simply cannot leave their home city: if Aachen is

short a medic, Berlin sends someone to fill in temporarily and train one of Aachen's envoys in first aid. This central training ensures traditional offices hold a similar range of skills: combat expertise, investigative prowess, a bit of medical knowledge, and knowledge of local Unknown threats.

Traditionalist recruits are also expected to take on responsibilities beyond their comfort zone when the office needs it. If the gun expert has the most free time, he is now in charge of keeping emergency rations topped off and making sure the bills get paid. Likewise, an occult expert with a remarkable memory is pressed to double as a medic because she can learn the human anatomy by heart.

## GRADUATING TO ACTIVE DUTY

The traditionalists prefer to keep a recruit off active duty until she's ready, a practice that hails back to the days when SAVE had resources and envoys to spare. This means training with mentors, reading books on the local Unknown, and even exams. The new envoy is assigned a field mentor once the office's senior envoy decides she's ready for active duty. The mentor is often someone she already has a bond with, like the person who brought her in or the envoy who oversaw her training. Other times it's simply whichever envoy best compliments the newcomer's skills, pairing a recruit too eager to blame everything on the Unknown with a skeptical scientist, or a pacifist with a battle-hardened veteran. All mentors take their job seriously, even if some outwardly adopt a gruff attitude.

A ready envoy is physically fit and capable of dealing with threats. The specifics are different for everyone: while combat is often the inevitable outcome of a confrontation (as traditionalists are disinclined to leave the Unknown standing), cleverness and stealth go a long way if those play better to the envoy's strengths. Basic investigative skills are also par for the course, whether interviewing witnesses or breaking and entering. Talent in the Art is highly valued; an envoy already in the field can be pulled out for additional training if she suddenly shows an aptitude.

A new traditionalist envoy learns about common threats in her area, and is taught that the Unknown is *always* bad. The Unknown might take on a human face or speak in a child's voice, but it is nothing short of evil and an envoy *must* know this lest she fail at a crucial moment. Above all, she learns to keep the Unknown a secret in order to avoid strengthening it; this means learning how to lie, conceal, and twist the truth, which unfortunately puts a strain on any non-SAVE relationships she has. Among those who fight, however, most traditionalist recruits feel



empowered by the tools SAVE gives them, fighting back against the monsters they've long sensed lurking in the dark.

An envoy who doesn't pass her field exams is offered a position as support staff. Some offices delegate non-fieldwork to older or injured envoys, which creates breathing space for the office as a whole. For example, having a medic on hand, or someone to parse the local news for any sign of the Unknown, or even a dedicated expert maintaining office security are all great assets to the understaffed Pyramid. The traditionalists realize the whole of an office is greater than the sum of its parts and these envoys are as valued as any field agent. A few wealthier offices even pay their support staff, who often put in longer hours than investigators and struggle to combine their duties with a day job. That said, it's a relatively rare circumstance; most of SAVE's funds still go to weapons, vehicles, medical supplies, burner phones, and the occasional small bribe of local law enforcement and media.

## CASE MANAGEMENT

While every continent has a slightly different approach, the traditionalists broadly adhere to a pyramid hierarchy. The National HQ divides their country into regions, with large city offices taking precedence and some regional responsibility. Smaller, more rural offices (or even neighborhood offices) are satellites of the larger hub, and rely on them for resource allocation and direction.

Local traditionalist offices handle low-ranking threats on their own, but anything else is (or at least should be) sent up the chain for evaluation. The Pyramid is usually quick to send the case back with advice and valuable information, but the delay still grates on independent-minded office managers. Occasionally an overseeing office sends an envoy to strengthen the local field team. It's a testament to the unity of the traditionalists that these unrequested additions go over with little resistance — most of the time. Local offices are encouraged to admit when they're in over their heads rather than risk the Unknown gaining the upper hand. Sometimes though, a request for help or a simple review gets stuck in bureaucratic limbo, leading to unnecessary and costly delays. Local office managers sometimes label a threat as "low and sending recon" to preempt delays, when in fact they believe the threat to be more immediate than kicking it up the chain allows.

The traditionalists prefer to send envoys out in groups of three people or more, though two will do in a pinch. The fate of the Hollywood office in South Carolina remains entrenched in the traditionalists' memory. When three Unknown threats

## TRADITIONALISTS IN PLAY

The traditionalist method of pairing a new recruit with a mentor or sending back-up to reinforce an existing team is a great way of getting characters with different levels of experience together. The case evaluation by higher offices is perfect for advancing the plot, stalling to add suspense, or giving the characters new information. The Chill Master should use this to add to the players' enjoyment of the game: envoys can get frustrated by how the Pyramid handles things, but players should never be.

rose simultaneously at Halloween in 1989, the office manager made the choice to split up the team: a decision that resulted in casualties that crippled the office for years and instilled the entire Pyramid with a renewed sense of caution. For that reason, going solo is discouraged, but not against the rules — sometimes it's hard to staff proper groups, as the Unknown has a nasty habit of springing up in several places at once.

## THE LAWS OF MORALITY

Fighting the Unknown doesn't always mesh with the laws of society, and the traditionalists accept this. They are adamant, however, that all actions are within the tenets of basic humanity — not in the least to avoid envoys becoming blasé about the difference between doing wrong in order to do right, and just plain doing wrong. An envoy who steals in the line of duty is sent back later to pay for what she took. Breaking and entering a house in the course of an investigation is fine, but taking an item belonging to the occupants is not. Reparations for hurting people, physically or otherwise, can be made anonymously (as SAVE has no intention of letting an envoy go to jail over shoplifting), but traditional offices are adamant they be made *one way or another*.

An envoy who becomes too cavalier about right and wrong is subject to a psych evaluation for mental trauma, careful examination to rule out influence by the Unknown, and finally placement under a mentor. This mentor re-educates her on the point of *saving people*, and is within his rights to place an envoy on desk duty if she doesn't get it. Other punishments, such as reducing an envoy's rank, giving her extra (and boring) duties, or cutting salaries for those rare paid envoys, are also commonplace.

An envoy killing a human — usually in a case of mistaken identity — is a rare occurrence, and it is always met with horror. Envoys are trained as agents, not soldiers; they are not equipped to handle the guilt that comes with taking a person's life. The Pyramid always responds the same way: a psychological evaluation, immediate restriction to desk duty until



further notice, and extensive counseling. This isn't punishment; it's a way to prevent the envoy from accidentally doing more harm while she struggles with her emotions.

SAVE also launches a separate investigation in the case of "accidental" deaths to determine the envoy's fault. Did she know her actions would end in death? Did she explore all other options? Were there mitigating circumstances? Depending on the answers, the envoy is either reinstated to duty or handed over to the mundane authorities to face justice. The Pyramid leaves it up to the envoy to make reparations to the victim's family once she is cleared to return to duty — nothing can bring back a loved one, though, so any effort to lessen the loss must come from her own conscience.

Because the traditionalists explicitly place morality above the letter of the law, they have no problem breaking said laws to save an envoy who has been falsely accused. If an envoy is caught on tape killing a man but SAVE knows it was an Unknown creature in disguise, they go above and beyond to get her off the hook — legally if they can manage it, or through jail break if necessary.

### JACK RYDER

Eighteen years ago, an envoy named Jack Ryder killed four members of the Thorpe family in Provo near Lake Utah: a grandfather, father, one son, and one daughter. Ryder claimed the Unknown had corrupted the family for generations to create a mortal lineage of servants that will precipitate the fall of man. SAVE investigated the claim after taking Ryder in custody, but found no evidence of the family's wrongdoings; Director Pym had Ryder quietly transferred to Nord. Ryder slit his wrists on October 31st this year, despite nearly two decades of relatively peaceful incarceration, and painted strange symbols in blood on the walls of his cell. Pym led an investigation after the incident, and uncovered that the Thorpe son's girlfriend was pregnant at the time of the murders. This child came of age on this Halloween; Pym now wonders if perhaps Ryder was onto something. Pym is assembling a team to — *discretely* — investigate one of SAVE's darkest histories.

### ROGUE ENVOYS

Working for SAVE is stressful. It requires dealing with monsters, lying to friends, skirting (or breaking) the law, and yet remaining true to humanity. Little wonder then that an envoy can break under pressure. In the worst case she becomes cavalier about killing, resorting to it as the quick or easy option. The Pyramid has no room for murderers though, and the envoy is sure to face judgment when they find out.

A murderous envoy who can be relied on to still obscure SAVE is handed over to the authorities to face trial. If she threatens to reveal the organization, the problem is kicked up the chain of command. The traditionalists' first recourse is to silence the envoy — either through blackmail, use of artifacts, or the Art — and then let the police handle her. The envoy is sent to Nord if silencing her also fails.

Sometimes an envoy wants to continue the fight, just not within the Pyramid. Her commanding officer reviews her file; she is free to go if she is in good standing. Reparations are still demanded if the envoy broke SAVE's moral code, but the battle against the Unknown precludes forcing a rogue envoy to do anything in all but the most grievous cases. An envoy might also strike out alone because she feels constrained by the Pyramid's methods and priorities, or simply because she had a falling-out with her supervisor. In these cases, SAVE puts on a show of "no hard feelings," and her old officer offers to exchange numbers and keep in touch — after all, a *rogue* envoy is preferable to a *lost* one.



%%Connection successful. Welcome User ?%\$a9)!+.<<DATA CORRUPTED>>  
%%User Hayat has entered chat on Monday Dec 31 2012 @ 04:50:17 GMT  
%%User Yaphet has set security to PRIVATE  
<Hayat> I'm in Istanbul. Boarding for Paris in an hour. Can you brief me?  
<Yaphet> Anything in particular you want to know?  
<Hayat> Tell me about the other Directors. Know thy enemy, right?  
<Yaphet> First thing you need to know is they're not your enemy. They're unenthusiastic about your quick rise to power, but they're on the same side.  
<Hayat> You sound like El-Hasham, but point taken. Tell me about them.  
<Yaphet> That is a great compliment. Let's go over them by continent. David Shen oversees Asia. He's either ex military or current military; no one really knows. Rank of Colonel. Like you, he's an outsider who stepped into a vacuum when SAVE needed it. Unlike you, he has the support of his government in Beijing. That last bit has people worried. You might find common ground with him on issues of training and structure, and he'll try to pull you his way. Don't let him – the more you go to Shen, the less the others will trust you.  
<Hayat> El-Hasham met him some decade and a half ago. Didn't like him.  
<Yaphet> El-Hasham is an excellent judge of character. On to Australia then? Katherine Barnard. Kiki to her friends, and you're not one of them. She's a cowboy. Does things her own way, does not take instructions well (or at all). Expect her to come at you hard. Hit back to show you're no fool, but not too hard. She's friends with Castiglione and that one's the key to your endeavor.  
<Hayat> Monica Castiglione of Rome?  
<Yaphet> Indeed. Monica runs Europe. She's also the closest thing the Pyramid has to a world leader. Europe has deeper pockets than most of the others combined, and she's the only one who can rein in Barnard. Castiglione will be polite, pleasant even, but don't mistake that for approval.  
<Hayat> Gotcha. Anything I can do to win her over? Should I compliment the Italian cuisine?  
<Yaphet> You can try not to be snarky with her. More importantly though, emphasize any common ground you have. Castiglione wants this alliance to work, you just have to give her an excuse. She's a feminist, so you being a girl helps too.  
<Hayat> I'm not a girl. I'm a woman.  
<Yaphet> See, that attitude will go a long way. On to Gordon Pym of North America. He'll be your hardest sell. Pym is old school. If you can't convince him, focus on Barnard and Castiglione – they vote as a triumvirate nine times out of ten.  
<Hayat> El-Hasham is old SAVE. Any chance they know each other?  
<Yaphet> Not in person, I think, but I'm sure they've heard of each other. Maybe call the old man and ask him for a story of Pym's exploits?  
<Hayat> Will do. What can you tell me about South Am?  
<Yaphet> Dr. Rad Paolo Gonzalez. Built SAVE from the ground up, like you, and adopted a cell structure naturally, again like you. Either you'll get along swimmingly, or you'll be worst enemies. He doesn't like Castiglione, Barnard, and Pym, so you might have an opening there.  
<Hayat> So I need to make friends with the "triumvirate," but also alienate them to win over South America, while simultaneously playing on Asia's desire for a military structure but not so much that I put off Europe?  
<Yaphet> Summed up: yes. Here is my question to you: what do you want out of this meeting?  
<Hayat> I want allies against the Unknown.  
<Yaphet> So do they, but the devil is in the details. Do you want to set up direct communications? Share intel? Funds? Run joint missions?  
<Hayat> I'll take what I can get.  
<Yaphet> Wrong attitude. These people are in a class of their own when it comes to negotiations. You need to have a detailed game plan, or you'll come out on their terms. Fortunately for you, Istanbul to Paris is almost four hours, so you have time to work on it. Good luck, Hayat.  
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**[[Transcript]]**

**Meeting of Continental Directors**

**Attending:** Katherine Barnard, Monica Castiglione, Gordon Pym

**Date:** Dec 31st 2012

**Transcript:** Benito D'Antoni

**Castiglione:** Thank you both for coming. I thought we might align our goals before the meeting.

**Barnard:** Sure thing. But does your aide really need to keep a transcript?

**Castiglione:** I feel it helps to document everything.

**Pym:** Like Nixon.

**[Silence]**

**Pym:** Let the record show that I withdraw that comment and Ms. Castiglione is nothing like Nixon. Now, Monica, you were going to say?

**Castiglione:** I think we would do well to bring Ms. Nejem into the fold. It would help consolidate our presence in the Middle East, and we can't risk her going to Gonzalez or, worse, Shen. Perhaps we can offer monetary assistance.

**Barnard:** Yes, throw money at a problem. That always helps. Look, I am all for a stronger presence in the Middle East — maybe it'll get Shen off my back — but I don't think money's gonna help. And to be honest, I don't like her methods. She's too young, and this hands-off, decentralized thing—

**Pym:** I agree with Katherine on Ms. Nejem's age, but I see the merit in her approach. Neither of you were here for it, but SAVE tried centralization, and it did not help.

**Barnard:** Swinging wildly in the opposite direction isn't the answer either.

**Pym:** Colonel Shen, Dr. Gonzalez, and Dr. Suwamba all run a decentralized structure. If you want to make that the issue, you'll split the organization in half.

**Barnard:** I still think that—

**Castiglione:** He has a point, Kiki. Let's not make this about her methods. She has a strong following and she gets results. You yourself have raised issues with Shen; if we support Nejem, we can counter some of that.

**Pym:** Ms. Nejem's mentor, El-Hasham, has always been a strong proponent of moving Asia's HQ to the Middle East. Of course that's impossible at this time, but supporting Ms. Nejem gives us options for the future.

**Barnard:** Fine. Money then. Who's gonna pick up the tab?

**Castiglione:** You.

**Barnard:** Oh nice.

**Castiglione:** You were right in your earlier assessment that money doesn't solve everything. Shorter lines of communications, promises of backup — these things go a long way too. Europe is best positioned to render those.

**Barnard:** So you play, I pay. What's Gordon's task?

**Pym:** I will establish contact with El-Hasham. He has a formidable reputation. Perhaps he can help keep our newest ally in check, if Ms. Nejem indeed becomes such. She clearly benefits from his guidance.

**Castiglione:** We are agreed then: money, assistance, win the girl over.

**[[End Transcript]]**



**[[Transcript]]**

**Phone record 12/31/2012 6:28 am, transcribed by envoy Kesare Blasco**

**Shen:** Thank you for taking my call.

**Gonzalez:** I have no reason not to. You wanted to talk about the meeting?

**Shen:** Yes. You know Castiglione will try to draw Nejem into the western fold. Add another subsidiary to the Pyramid.

**Gonzalez:** You don't like that?

**Shen:** Do you?

**Gonzalez:** True. I suppose it's a more immediate problem for you though, given your history with El-Hasham.

**Shen:** Until the Middle East quiets down, which might be never, the Pyramid won't give Hasham that HQ he wants. My objections to the European hegemony are more philosophical.

**Gonzalez:** You don't like the way Castiglione runs things?

**Shen:** The Europeans and Americans come in, do as they please, and leave us to clean up the mess. We've always been second-rank territories to them.

**Gonzalez:** True again. So what do you propose? My resources are limited.

**Shen:** I can offer Nejem the money and backup she needs. I just need someone to side with me.

**Gonzalez:** I can do that. Down with neocolonialism then. I will see you at the meeting.

**[[End Transcript]]**

**[[Transcript]]**

**Meeting of Continental Directors**

**Attending:** Katherine Barnard, Monica Castiglione, Dr. Rad Paolo Gonzales, Hayet Nejem, Gordon Pym, Col. David Shen, Dr. Yaphet Suwamba

**Date:** Dec 31st 2012

**Transcript:** Benito D'Antoni

**Castiglione:** Thank you all for coming. You especially, Ms. Nejem. I hope your flight went well?

**Nejem:** Can we get to— [Pause] Yes, my flight went well. Paris is lovely. I've never been here before.

**Castiglione:** You should see Rome. It's the most marvelous city in the world.

**Gonzalez:** And perfect for a new world headquarters, Monica?

**Castiglione:** Actually, yes it is. But we can discuss that at a later time. Shall we get to the topic at hand?

**Nejem:** [Impatient] Yes. Please.

**Castiglione:** I think I speak for all of us, Ms. Nejem, when I congratulate you on a job well done. We were wondering, though, what your plans for the future are.

**Nejem:** I plan to kick more Unknown ass. I thought that was self-explanatory.

**Pym:** I think what Director Castiglione means is if you are open to joining us.

**Nejem:** I did. My organization is SAVE. So is yours.

**Pym:** Ah. Monica?

**Nejem:** I appreciate the efforts at diplomacy, but I have a war to get back to. Could we skip the niceties?



**Castiglione:** Katherine?

**Barnard:** Look, we think you've done well. Impossible job, great results. But we're a little worried that it's a lot to take on and you're untested.

**Nejem:** [Interrupting] Untest—

**Barnard:** [Continuing to speak] So we want to know what your plans are, if you'll need help, what kind of help, and what assurances we have that you won't screw this up.

**Nejem:** Untest—

**Suwamba:** Ms. Nejem, I think if you take a moment to consider the meaning behind their words, you'll realize it's a good offer.

**[Silence]**

**Nejem:** Alright. My plan, as far as it concerns SAVE, is to kick the hell out of the Unknown. I plan to put out more manuscripts to help others do the same, outlining how to set up an organization and maximize resources.

**Shen:** You have my full support there. Our methods, in fact, are quite similar. More practical, less academic. I applaud what you're doing.

**Castiglione:** I'm sure you do.

**Shen:** Given our proximity in location and methods, I believe we could be natural allies.

**Castiglione:** We are all natural allies.

**Gonzalez:** Let the man finish, Monica.

**Castiglione:** You did not just—

**Pym:** Shall we get back to the broader discussion? Regardless of methods, Director Castiglione is right that we are all allies. Colonel Shen may be closer geographically, but academics has served us well so far. We have an extensive collection of knowledge that would help any office.

**Nejem:** True. El-Hasham frequently tells of your battle against the Loveland Frog, and how you found the answer scribbled in the margins of an old book.

**Pym:** Does he now?

**Nejem:** Oh yes, certainly. And you are right: disseminating knowledge would be of great help. I am working on a network hub, where all envoys can share—

**Castiglione:** We have yet to determine if it's safe to store information on the Internet.

**Suwamba:** Yet to determine. Which also means we don't know that it's not. I see the value of a digital network.

**Castiglione:** Europe won't support a digital network.

**Shen:** Then what will you support?

**Castiglione:** We can contribute financially. Train envoys in the Art.

**Gonzalez:** Like you do for South America?

**Barnard:** Our money pays for a major training facility and an administrative hub on the African continent. We would happily provide the same in South America.

**Suwamba:** I can attest to the truth of that. Look, my friends, I share your objections to the power balance of this relationship—

**Castiglione:** You do? We all get an equal vote here.

**Suwamba:** On paper, perhaps. Yet whenever we discuss a new world headquarters, all options — Paris, Geneva, Rome, New York — are in Europe or North America. Why not Cape Town? Cartagena? Seoul?



**Castiglione:** Let's discuss this after our guest leaves.

**Gonzalez:** No, let's discuss it now. You want to invite her into the organization, and I agree that would be best, but then she deserves to know what she is joining. The issues raised are fair.

**Nejem:** Stop it! All of you! Do you even hear yourselves? You act like this is the boardroom of a multi-corp. We're fighting for the future of humanity, and you're bickering about—

I. Don't. Care. We're all in this together. Now here's what I want and need: financial aid, a training facility for the gifted, and shared intel. Shared missions are an option too, but we'll work out the particulars case by case. Are you guys in or out?

**[Silence]**

**Shen:** The Asian branch can run shared missions with you, given that it's our territorial jurisdiction, as well as provide financial aid.

**Castiglione:** We can provide financial aid too, as well as a training facility. As Katherine said, we do the same for Africa already. As for shared intel—

**Pym:** Perhaps we can compromise there. A digital hub could certainly contain information on how to kill creatures. After all, a vampire can't decide to grow immune to stakes. We'll leave unsaid how we recognize them and how we run our missions, lest the Unknown learns to guard against us. Is that agreeable?

**Nejem:** Yes, it is. And in return for your help?

**Castiglione:** We merely ask that you follow the basic tenets of our organization: fight the Unknown, protect humanity, keep it a secret.

**Nejem:** Done. That wasn't so hard.

**Suwamba:** Actually...we still need to draw up the details.

**Castiglione:** Indeed. After lunch?

**Nejem:** There is something else I want to discuss before we break. The Indalo.

**Castiglione:** The old symbol?

**Nejem:** Yes. El-Hasham believes language holds power. It's slightly academic, but he thinks abandoning the old symbols for SAVE and the Art may have contributed to its fall. I have his paper right here.

**[Rustling sounds]**

**Nejem:** More importantly, by adopting a single language of symbols, we show that SAVE transcends cultural barriers. We are more than the representatives of a continent, we are the line between humanity and the Unknown. We are ALL united.

**Pym:** Well spoken. Ms. Nejem makes the motion to re-adopt the Indalo, as well as the symbols for the Art. I second. All in favor?

**Suwamba:** As a "legacy" myself, of course I vote in favor.

**Shen:** With so much to divide us, it's good to be reminded of the greater cause. In favor.

**Barnard:** I do like rainbows. In favor.

**Castiglione:** Ancient symbols hold power. I vote in favor.

**Gonzalez:** Your mentor's research is very well done. In favor.

**Pym:** In favor. The motion passes. Congratulations, Ms. Nejem, you have successfully navigated your first global SAVE meeting.

**[[End Transcript]]**



## THE STATE OF THE WORLD

The traditionalists were once the only incarnation of SAVE. Now they vie with Nejem's cell structure, as well as third parties such as the Hidden Eye (CHILL p. 90). The Pyramid claims to have no ill-will, going out of its way to welcome Nejem to meetings with Continental Directors and offering to share resources, even if the loss of stature does sting. They hope cooperation aids their fight against the Unknown, or — in a worst case scenario — allows them to prevent fall-out damage and sweep up surviving agents. The Pyramid is determined to regain its lost ground in the end, but for now they keep their eye on the prize: fighting the Unknown.

## AFRICA

Continental Director Dr. Yaphet Suwamba is the child of two SAVE envoys, but he is openly supportive of Hayat Nejem. In his eyes, she is clearly the right leader for the new age. The African offices and even the nominal Continental Headquarters are drifting away from the traditionalists.

## ASIA

The traditionalists have long since lost their grasp on Asia, but the continent hasn't joined Nejem's structure either. Continental Director Colonel David Shen gets his funding from Beijing, creating a hybrid between SAVE and the Chinese government that is certainly not in keeping with the traditionalists. Shen is also at risk of alienating Nejem, despite his early endorsement of her.

## AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA

Continental Director Katherine Barnard holds Australia firmly on the traditionalists' side, but her personal charisma and independent leadership may yet give rise to a new organization entirely. Her tentative friendship with Castiglione has kept her in check so far. If Barnard does branch off, Oceania is likely to rise as a modernized and Australia-centric version of the traditionalist model.

## EUROPE

The traditionalists dominate Europe. Europe's centralized structure, both in the EU and NATO, works well with the traditionalist approach. Continental Director Monica Castiglione makes active overtures to other organizations fighting the Unknown, to build alliances or — preferably — fold them into SAVE proper. SAVE's influence in Europe is such that Castiglione even directs a small lobby group in Brussels. This entrenchment in Europe's government could prove a weak spot in the future, as more European citizens grow disenchanted with Brussels' monolith.

Castiglione is working with Nejem to tip Europe's political scales in favor of the Free Syrian Army and against al-Assad, who Nejem believes to be connected to the Unknown. Castiglione has also directed her own agents to Syria to aid Nejem — and investigate her claim — while providing refuge for injured Syrian agents. Both leaders try to shelter the Syrian people from the fallout, but the rapidly escalating war is making that an impossible task.

## NORTH AMERICA

North America is at a turning point between the traditionalists and Nejem's structure. Continental Director Gordon Pym is a traditionalist by heart — right down to his archaic Continental Headquarters — but he is also a practical man, and Nejem's approach seems better suited to the time. The war in the Middle East has limited Nejem's access to North America, while SAVE's European offices hold close ties to their North American brethren. North America remains in the Pyramid — for now — even as Nejem's internet presence wins offices over one by one.

## SOUTH AMERICA

Continental Director in name only, Dr. Rad Paolo Gonzalez did for South America what Nejem did for SAVE as a whole: pulling it up from the ashes and adopting a cell structure. It's no wonder that he's a natural ally to Nejem, rejecting overtures from traditionalists trying to re-take the organization. Dr. Gonzalez clearly remembers the "golden days," when the Euro-centric hierarchy demanded more from South America than it gave back, and he is not eager to return to them.



SOCIETAS ARGENTI  
VIAE ETERNITATA



UNITED STATES  
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

FROM THE DESK OF THE CONTINENTAL DIRECTOR

Directory Notes, partial  
INTERNAL USE ONLY

Africa

- Continental HQ: Cairo, Egypt. Director: Dr. Yaphet Suwamba. Not really ours anymore.
- Nile Valley, Egypt (Pyramid of Horus). Director: Habiba Naser. Training facility for Arts. Ask Nejem to pick up some of the costs, since we train her people too.
- Arusha, Tanzania. Director: Saaïda Ngasa. Paper hub between us, cells, and rogue parties. Same regarding costs -- we do the paperwork for Nejem's people.

Asia

- Continental HQ: Hong Kong. Director: Col. David Shen. Avoid, strange alliance with Beijing.
- Mumbai, India. Director: Nihar Banerjee. Proposes splitting off a West Asian domain. Might be useful to curb Shen.
- Tokyo, Japan. Director: Kase Haru. Former Continental HQ. Consider replacing Shen with Haru.

Australia/Oceania

- Continental HQ: Sydney, Australia. Director: Katherine Barnard. The only overstaffed SAVE office in the world, lord knows how Barnard does it.
- Canberra, Australia. Director: Nelson Whiltham. Worries that Barnard is a liability; threatening to join Nejem if we don't support him as Continental Director. Discuss with Castiglione.
- Darwin, Australia. Director: Bruce Dierbeck. Better choice than Whiltham if we replace Barnard. Discuss with Castiglione.
- Perth, Australia. Director: Dr. Ezekiel Harlan. Needs more staff and resources.
- Manila, Philippines. Director: Trista Rojas. Close to Shen. Discuss with Barnard.
- Christchurch, New Zealand. Director: Rua Eketone. Office in disrepair, swarmed with creatures. Needs more funds.

Europe

- Continental HQ: Rome, Italy. Director: Monica Castiglione. Mystery novel stuff: ties with the Vatican, burner phones, and twelve unidentified "apostles."
- Alexandria. Promising but risky. See how it goes.
- Brussels, Belgium. Director: Kate McGall. Bureaucrats. Too close to the EU.
- Dresden, Germany. Director: Dietrich Lobe. Hate to say it, but German Efficiency at its finest.
- Paris, France (defunct World HQ). Director: Caro Mounelle. Pushing to reinstate as WHQ.
- St. Petersburg, Russia. Director: Mark Bazarov. Ex-KGB, at odds with Castiglione.
- Geneva, Switzerland. Director: Sarah Gisler. Neutral meeting ground and great funding. Pushing for Geneva as new WHQ -- with Castiglione rooting for Rome, that makes three in Europe.
- Cardiff, UK. Merged with the London office, but I suspect rogue activity. Ask Castiglione to investigate.
- Exeter, UK. Director: Simon Dalton. Founded on the heels of Dracula. Dalton is the world's leading vampire expert. They also have a bad Hounds of Baskerville problem.
- London, UK. Director: Mark Shaw. Great when they get into action, but slow to respond.

North America

- Continental HQ: New York NY, US. Director: Gordon Pym. Handsome, very funny. Not too clever though.
- Milwaukee WI, US. Director: Mike Allen. Took over as regional HQ when Chicago fell in 2014.
- Angwin CA, US. Director: Natalie Krebs. Oversees Starkweather Mental Hospital and Blackmoor Retirement Homes.
- San Francisco/Oakland/San Jose CA, US. Current Director: Destanny Rosh. Rotating offices. Seems to work for 'em.
- Ganstrom's Creek ME, US (The Den). Director: Dr. Kim Anders. Leading facility on lycanthropy. Anders is better for my job than Echevarria.
- Las Vegas NV, US. Director: Kendra Brown. High turnover, but great place to train in the Art.
- Buffalo NY, US. Director: Zita Dareg. Cursed city causes bad luck. Messes with the Art too. Find funds for detailed investigation.
- Knoxville TN, US. Director: Anewasa Lee. Set up with the local Cherokee. Lee is an expert on Native American legends.
- Crowne Royale VI, US. Director: Tom Mainsville. Not really an office, but grants some rest to teetering envoys.
- Edmonton AB, Canada. Director: Zain Abbot. SNAFU: hundred cursed artifacts sold before we knew.
- Mexico City, Mexico. Director: Christina Echevarria. Second office in North America. Echevarria is gunning for job of Continental Director. Underfunded and overextended.

South America

- Continental HQ: Brasilia, Brazil. Director: Dr. Rad Paolo Gonzales. Independent, but fair ally.
- Buenos Aires, Argentina. Director: Luiza Muniz. Oldest office in South America and still one of ours despite pressure from Gonzales. Discuss setting Muniz up as Continental Director with Barnard and Castiglione.
- São Paulo, Chile. Director: Cidro Guzman. Largest city in the Americas hosting three offices: ours, Gonzales's, and Nejem's.
- Lima, Peru. Director: Annissa Fierro. The (in)famous Fierro family. Still one of ours, I believe.



## NOTABLE OFFICES

The Pyramid has offices all over the world, most covering a specific region for any and all threats that arise within. Some offices serve special functions, however, and sit outside the traditionalist hierarchy.

### “ALEXANDRIA,” EUROPE

Alexandria is both physical and virtual: a library run from a bunker as well as a digitizing project run from a motorcade of mini-vans. Alexandria’s four envoys travel across Europe to digitize every scrap of information SAVE has on the Unknown, from scanning ancient manuscripts to rendering artifacts in 3D. They store that information in their own underground hub and distribute it to field offices on highly encrypted data drives without wireless compatibility. Alexandria is currently in its beta phase, as SAVE is keen on the intel it provides but also wary of information leaks. If Alexandria proves secure, it would rival SAVEpoint (p. 110).

### AUSTIN, TEXAS, US

Austin is one of the oldest and proudest offices in the United States, but it has forgotten its history — a mistake that’s crippling it today. The office was founded by a group called the Watchmen to deal with the “Servant Girl Annihilator” killer in 1884. The Watchmen never caught the creature, though they erected Austin’s Moonlight Towers to keep it at bay. The current SAVE office, however, has lost the files they inherited from the Watchmen. SAVE doesn’t know anything about the Servant Girl Annihilator other than it seems to be a cyclical killer, or how the Moon Towers operate.

Conzuela Corazon, a former Texas Ranger with a passion for guns, runs the sizable Austin office. Corazon has figured out that the Servant Girl Annihilator is set to strike again this year, and repairing the lost Towers is a priority for her. She doesn’t want to alarm the rest of her agents by revealing how little she knows though. She’s assembling a secret team to retrieve the Watchmen’s knowledge, even if other agents have begun to realize that *something* is up.

### BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

The Brussels office is home to only two agents, Kate McGall and her aide Otto Deren, both of whom failed their field exams. Their excellent people and negotiating skills saw them positioned in Brussels to lobby the European Parliament on behalf of SAVE. The Brussels office tries to get special dispensations and funds granted to SAVE projects while keeping the Unknown under wraps and masking SAVE as a private security company specialized in “unique

threats” to keep its actual purpose off the radar. McGall is instructed to call the Ghent office if an Unknown threat rises in Brussels.

### NORD, GREENLAND

This secret facility holds envoys whose crimes, skills, and intentions make them too dangerous for regular law enforcement, as well as those civilians who have been too corrupted by the Unknown. The facility’s primary function is containment, but resident psychiatrist Jyrvid Alderson and his staff are determined to heal their patients and eventually rehabilitate them. Nord has excellent security and its remote location — a few days inland from the namesake city — combined with Greenland’s freezing temperature make escape all but impossible.

### “TEAM MAX,” NORTH AMERICA

Maxime Urra leads this team of bikers, truckers, and racecar aficionados through North America to combat moving Unknown threats that would otherwise slip through the territories between offices. Team Max is also happy to lend a hand to any office that invites them. The team consists of six women (two of them trans) by fluke rather than design, but the “Maximites” are used to female voices being taken seriously. They have little patience for patriarchal attitudes.

### TWIN CITIES, MINNESOTA USA

The Twin Cities office is a conundrum for SAVE. The area is a hotspot of Unknown activity and people talented in the Art, which make the local office both necessary and valuable. Unfortunately, the local office is also a wild card. The Twin Cities office went rogue in 2000. While senior envoy Stephen Allen wants to return to the Pyramid, he needs to know it’s safe first. The office remains an independent subsidiary of the traditionalists until then.

The Twin Cities’ main office is located in Marquette Plaza, which once housed the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank. The building has extensive underground chambers and vaults that give SAVE all the space and security it needs. Local envoys also meet in pagan shops and bookstores, where they hope to uncover other Art users — Stephen Allen himself was recruited at a Wiccan meeting.

Gordon Pym recently sent Professor Templeton to investigate any correlation between the Unknown and the Art in the Twin Cities. Recluse office manager Don Kaiser offered Templeton a desk at the Plaza, but the traditionalist scholar has (politely) refused and is running his operation out of his hotel room.



## THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

The Pyramid still doesn't know who — if anyone — betrayed them in the burning of Dublin in 1989. This ignorance, coupled with the seemingly unchanging nature of their organization, makes the Pyramid vulnerable to another attack. However, the traditionalists are not quite as blind to the danger as Nejem believes them to be.

In Australia, Director Barnard hopes to ward off attacks by hyper-personalizing the Pyramid. She knows all of her envoys personally, as well as their immediate family and close friends. If any of them become compromised, Barnard reasons that she'll see it and nip the problem in the bud. Given her people skills and talent at ferreting out the Unknown, she might be right. Barnard's approach has no fail-safe if she herself becomes corrupted though, a fact that the other directors keep in mind even if she does not.

Director Castiglione in Europe has cut her organization in twelve mini-Pyramids, each overseen by a different apostle and completely separate from the others. If one falls, Europe's SAVE still stands. This unfortunately also lessens Europe's ability to coordinate attacks on the Unknown to full effect. Of the traditionalist leaders, Gordon Pym, Director of North America, has made the fewest immediate changes. Like his office in New York, Pym's SAVE is largely unchanged since the fall. He ekes out a long-term solution though, represented in project UR. He has sequestered the most vulnerable offices in his territory until then.

November 2nd, 1989

Today is not a good day. It began when Sarah came to see me in my office. She's a good girl, but she has an awful tendency to attract the Unknown. This is not an exaggeration on my part; others have noticed it too. We suspect she is cursed, or (unconsciously) tapping into a part of the Art that summons the dark. She is one of my most loyal aides though, and expresses a feeling of safety whenever she enters the estate as the Unknown cannot enter here. So when she told me, this morning, that she no longer felt safe, I took notice.

I asked Mr. Feltman to look into it, believing that an incorporeal creature had attached itself to Sarah. He went above and beyond, as usual, inspecting not only Sarah but speaking to the other archive staff as well; unfortunately, he discovered a trend. Bess Cavish, our newest recruit, thought she'd seen the shadows move from the corner of her eye during morning tea. She attributed it to fatigue and did not report it. Feltman admonished her of course; with enemies like ours, everything suspicious must be reported. Unfortunately it's not only the young ladies showing a lack of judgment; Bren MacAteer had a dream in which the stained glass window in the library bled. He too, did not report this for it was, and I quote: "just a dream."

Feltman says no other envoys have experienced anything untoward, and I believe him at his word, but three is enough. In fact, it's too many. I have requested additional security personnel and funds from London. Until they arrive, Feltman will oversee stricter protocols and I personally instructed the staff to report anything untoward, no matter how imprecise.

November 3rd, 1989

A day has passed since my message to London and they are still reviewing the matter. I don't believe they grasp the immediate nature of the situation. I realize the recent expedition to Antarctica has been devouring everyone's attention (and, I fear, money), but I should think the world headquarters warrants care too. David tells me not to be upset with them, reassuring me that the estate is formidably defended and the Unknown would be foolish to attack. He believes we can withstand them even without additional help. "Quality over quantity," he called it. David, much as I love him, is a Briton and a fool in this matter. He never saw the Russians, throwing body after body into the war. Sometimes numbers do matter, as the people of Berlin can attest.

Meanwhile Sarah is getting worse. She hasn't said anything, but she's wearing the knitted sweater her sister sent for Christmas last year. We all have different gifts, us humans and especially us envoys, and Sarah gets chilly long before she registers the Unknown on a conscious level. With that in mind, I ordered the first stage of the archive's evacuation. I daren't send out the tier one books without a security escort, but Dr. Kearney and his staff did an excellent job packing up the tier two books and getting them ready for shipment. Dr. Kearney assures me that most of the tier three books and all of the tier four books are replaceable (albeit with some effort) so those will remain here. The library is a sorry sight, with books piled high on tables and shelves half-empty. The task of getting everything back in order will be daunting, but I certainly hope we get the chance to tackle it.



November 4th, 1989

The dead visited me last night. This is my "gift." Dr. Razeer, my old mentor, tried to teach me how to ward them off, but it never took. I suspect justice is at work here, or perhaps basic psychology, as I certainly deserve to be haunted. I knew the Führer was a madman leading us to our doom. I knew the Jews weren't coming back, and had heard the rumours of black smoke sending souls to heaven by the thousands. The Russians were coming, though, leaving scorched earth and corpses in their wake. Should I hope the Brits or Americans would beat them to it? Wait and pray that my mother, sisters, and younger brother would survive the Cossacks? No. I donned a uniform I despised in order to keep my family safe, and now they visit me: the ghosts of soldiers I killed in combat, the families gone to the camps while I fought on the wrong side of humanity. They always come when torment awaits me, rightly feasting on my anguish and despair.

David was also up all night, but for more productive reasons I'm glad to say. He has devised a plan to smuggle out some of the tier one materials. He's long suspected that Sarah's appeal to the Unknown is because she carries it with her. I myself am not entirely convinced and would never voice such a horrible thing to Sarah, but David is the expert. He thinks that, given a sufficient distraction, Sarah could use this to sneak out under the Unknown's nose, as "she smells like them." I hope my wonderful David is as smart as I believe, for this is a big gamble to bank on. We have no other plans though and the dead are already here, so we're going ahead.

I instructed the team to get the library tidied up and place the books apart a bit, so it doesn't look like anything is missing. To enhance this visual, they also placed the tier two books back. Dr. Kearney was very understanding about the double work, but I daresay his staff did not appreciate it. Meanwhile the tier one books have gone into the cellar. I will render the most essential documents in code (as they're for above her clearance level) for

Sarah to carry, should it come to that. In what should have been good news, I got through to London. They assure me they've assembled a team and will be here in twenty-four hours.

I don't think we have that long.

November 4th, 1989, evening

We are under attack.

The estate is a cacophony of screams and howls. I don't know how they got inside. If you are reading this, know that they tripped no alarms. Either they are more clever than I ever imagined, or someone on the inside aided them. They have overrun the estate, breaking through the ground-floor windows and tearing down the doors like paper. Some creatures stand out: a great black wolf, a serpent made of smoke, an impossibly thin man with elongated limbs, impish creatures carrying knives made of human bone. Beyond that, it's a moving mass of shadows and horror. Those of us who survived the initial onslaught have taken up weapons and fallen back to more defensible positions.

I've sent Sarah off with her package. It's less than I wished for, yet more than I expected to get done. I hope it is enough. I will remain in the upper library in an effort to keep the Unknown away from the cellar. As for the distraction Sarah needs: judging by the screams, I suspect the Unknown is providing that on its own. I implored David to leave too, but he refused. As for me, I must stay. During the War I made the wrong choice for the right reasons. Today I make amends: I stand with ~~SAVE~~, for humanity.

Random quote: So Long and Thanks For All the Fish!

COMMAND:

Welcome, \$NULL.

You have 5 unread messages since your last visit.

11/05/1989 09:24, from Dirk Wheatley

=Arrived at Dublin site. Using BBS access from Trinity.

=Fire still raging. Trying to direct the fire fighters

=without them entering the premises (who knows what they'd

=find). Several survivors at site; we're speaking to them

=now. Will focus on handling matters first, will update

=tomorrow same time.

You have 7 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?

11/06/1989, 08:56 from Dirk Wheatley

=Dr. Geistmann himself has not been in touch, nor has his

=personal staff. I fear they were all killed in the attack or

=fire. Some of the other envoys working at the HQ escaped the

=attack though, and we are currently interviewing them. In a

=shimmer of good news, head archivist Dr. Kearney is amongst

=those who survived. He has requested command of the

=investigation, which I have refused for now.

=

=One of the survivors, Leslie Feeney, helped compile a list of

=all envoys on the premises when the attack happened. He gave us

=a visual account of what happened (which I have asked him to

=put in writing) and we are combing the surrounding area for

=survivors and bodies. He told us that Dr. Geistmann had the

=staff pack and then unpack several of the books in the days

=leading to the attack, which warrants further investigation.

You have 6 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?



11/07/1989, 22:32 from Dirk Wheatley

=Apologies for the late report. Busy day.  
=The heat finally died down enough for us to secure the  
=mansion. The upper floor is in ashes, as is most of  
=the ground floor. Bodies, burnt and dismembered, lie  
=everywhere. A few are clearly from "elsewhere," but I fear  
=most are ours. Identifying them will require time, if it's  
=possible at all. Feeney's visual account claimed twenty  
=dead and I am tentatively agreeing.

=

=We found the last pages of Dr. Geistmann's journal lodged  
=in a capsule in the pneumatic tubes. I don't know if Dr.  
=Geistmann found a way to trap it on purpose, or if this  
=was merely a very fortuitous accident. Either way, we now  
=have a recount of Dublin's last days. It would seem Dr.  
=Geistmann saw the attack coming and asked for back-up from  
=us. Will you please investigate who handled that request?  
=They were neglectfully slow in their response. At least  
=the mystery of packing and unpacking the library books was  
=solved (I'll fill you in later).

=

=Dr. Geistmann mentioned storing the "tier one" books  
=(I assume that's an archival classification) in the  
=basement, so our next goal is clearing enough rubble to  
=grant us entry. I'm not sure what to do after that. The  
=Dublin office has been whittled down so badly that even  
=the surviving envoys can't tell me who's next in command.

=

=The journal also reveals that Dr. Geistmann sent an envoy  
=named Sarah off with command documents. Checking against  
=envoy Feeney's list, that must be Sarah Pembroke. No word  
=of her yet.

=

=Will update tomorrow when time allows.

You have 5 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?

11/8/1989, 15:15 from Dirk Wheatley

=We have cleared a path to the basement and found metal  
=lock boxes and crates in three secured rooms. Envoy  
=Feeney tells me these are merely old files, but based on  
=Dr. Geistmann's journal I believe the tier one books to be  
=hidden amongst them. It's a fair amount, so going through  
=them will take time.

=

=At this point, we have identified the bodies as best we  
=can (I will provide the list in person) and secured the  
=area, and there isn't much left for me to do. With that in  
=mind, and given that he is the best person to catalogue  
=the books and files from the basement, I am relinquishing  
=the site to Dr. Kearney.

=

=Between you and me, I'm glad this is off my hands. I'll  
=still cast a net to search for Pembroke.

You have 4 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?

!!! URGENT !!!

System note: the sender has flagged this message as URGENT

11/8/1989, 20:15 from Aida Lang

=I finished interviewing our people and they all denied  
=speaking with Dr. Geistmann. To ensure no one was covering  
=their failure, I checked the data logs: no incoming  
=messages or phone calls from Dublin. Either Dr. Geistmann  
=hallucinated it, or his messages were re-routed. Proceed  
=with caution.

You have 3 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?



11/9/1989, 12:01 from Dirk Wheatley

=I received your message this morning, and forcefully  
=advocated that this investigation is handed back to  
=Security. Dr. Kearney refused to relinquish command. Do  
=we have mechanisms in place to relieve him? Do we want to?  
=Dublin survivors seem to respond well to him. Will await  
=response.

=

=No word of Pembroke. She had ample time to contact us  
=or double back to the site. I initially assumed she  
=hadn't made it out, but none of the bodies match her  
=description and age (as far as they still match anything).  
=Given the surprise nature of the attack, Envoy Pembroke's  
=disappearance warrants scrutiny. I will re-interview the  
=other envoys about her specifically and make inquiries  
=with her sister (she has no other living relatives).

You have 2 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?

11/9/1989, 12:04 from Aida Lang

=Do not relieve Dr. Kearney. The organization is already  
=stretched thin. Also, Dr. Kearney would be better  
=appraised of Dublin matters and is better equipped to  
=lead the organization forward than us. Keep searching for  
=Pembroke though.

You have 1 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?

11/11/1989 10:28, from Dirk Wheatley

=As discussed over the phone: it's been a week and Dr.  
=Kearney is eager for me to return to London. He expressed  
=a wish to move on and rebuild, and believes our resources  
=are better put to use there than in this investigation.

=

=As for Pembroke: everything I've learned indicates that  
=she was loyal to SAVE. I suppose it's possible that she  
=was compromised or replaced, but that's not the sense  
=I got from speaking to the other Dublin envoys. I find  
=it more likely that she was either too scared to return  
=or chose not to. If it's the latter, I'm just not sure  
=why. Did she find fault with the organization itself?  
=Does she want to distance herself from a person in the  
=organization? Dr. Kearney's insistence that I leave does  
=not give me time or leeway to find the answers. More on  
=this when I get back.

=

=This will be my last communication from Dublin. I am  
=officially objecting to Dr. Kearney's orders to return to  
=London, but will comply on your instruction.

You have 0 unread messages remaining.

<A>GAIN <N>EXT <R>EPLY <E>XIT?

You have 0 unread messages.

<W>RITE NEW MESSAGE <R>EAD MESSAGES <E>XIT?

You are now in the main lobby

Random quote: You are likely to be eaten by a grue.

COMMAND:

Disconnecting in 5...4...3...2...1...

#NULL has disconnected.



SAVE Emergency Convention, Nov. 11 1989

Dr. Kearney's Introduction Speech

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of you who gathered here in this time of grief. I especially want to praise the envoys of Dublin, who have persevered against all odds, and the envoys of London who did not hesitate to lend their aid.

I know the loss of Dublin has left a hole in our hearts. Dublin was more than the ancestral estate of our founder, more than a collection of manuscripts and files, more than a world hub from whence the incomparable Dr. Geistmann led us all. Dublin, above all, was part of our family. We fight together, we stand together, and in Dublin, we fell together. Now, we must rise together.

Under my plan, we will found a new world headquarters in Paris to gather and centralize all information on our enemy. We will enhance our defences and limit outside information on SAVE, creating a fortress to better protect us. All communication between offices will pass through Paris, where state-of-the-art security measures will prevent any leaks. We will also re-assemble the archives, beginning with the remains of the Dublin estate and eventually calling on all of you to contribute. Together we can rebuild, MUST rebuild, for a better and safer future.

As I take on the role of world coordinator, I don't stand alone. Instead, I am carried forward on your shoulders.

I am honoured by Aida Lang, whom you all know as head of security of the London office, and who has agreed to become my second-in-command. Agent Lang's office carried out the investigation of the attack, and I'm sure you all have questions for her.

As such, I now yield the floor.



## PROJECT UNKNOWN REPEL

Project UR is spearheaded by Gordon Pym and, to a lesser extent, Monica Castiglione. Its purpose is to deflect infiltration by the Unknown. UR takes a lot of cues from mundane intelligence companies. Offices are encouraged to store sensitive information off-line, either in the form of paper data or encrypted information on stand-alone hard drives. This information is also never relayed over the internet, which UR believes to be notoriously insecure despite SAVEpoint's best attempts (p. 110). UR instead recommends face-to-face meetings, sending envoys with briefcases from office to office, or using secure phone lines. Unique to SAVE, meetings through the Communicative Art are also an option, though some office managers worry that the Unknown can eavesdrop on these conversations. Master of the Sensing Art Nicola Leone is working in Milan to create an "Unknown Detection System" that lets any office check physical locations and envoys for manipulation or infiltration by the Unknown. The ambitious UDS plan has been hit-and-miss, however, and is a long way from any reliable results.

## CELLS

During the infiltration of SAVE in the late 20th century, many HQs were compromised or destroyed entirely. Nejem has made it a top priority to rebuild the SAVE network, albeit in a more secure, decentralized fashion. Where to begin, though, and how to proceed? HQs that had weathered the Unknown incursion in relatively good shape saw little reason to change; those HQs that were hit hardest were fighting for survival, and thus the most open to change and recovery after Project Lifeboat (CHILL p. 104). At the same time, they were also the HQs most in need of resources, information, and manpower, and the least likely to trust anyone offering it.

When Nejem's *Manifesto* came out, many smaller HQs were the first to respond; they needed help from outside but were unwilling to trust their former reporting structure. They were the most willing to band together in a loose network where the flow of information is lateral rather than top-down, and no one node knows enough to sink all of them in case of compromise. The result is a sea change on par with the shift from conventional to guerrilla warfare. Traditional HQs pride themselves on being entrenched bastions against the Unknown, gathering resources for envoys to draw upon in their continual efforts, and providing centralized support, knowledge, and strategic expertise for not only the envoys assigned to their areas, but also other HQs within the larger territory they

share. Cell HQs are those who see the necessity of a larger organization, but have decided the "perks" of a traditional organization come at too high a price against an enemy who depends on its prey developing a false sense of security before it strikes.

## ANATOMY OF A CELL

At their most basic, cell HQs are light, agile, extended local-area networks of envoys with a nominal leadership position. Rather than attempting to cover all possible eventualities, cell HQs excel in flexibility and fast responses to problems that arise. A cell HQ has connections to between one and three other cells; information is decentralized, copied, and disseminated via anonymous drops to avoid reliance on any one source. Missions are decided within an HQ; information on Unknown activity is shared externally, along with formally coded statements indicating response needed, if any, that are designed to share the minimal information necessary to avoid accidental conflicts without endangering the cell's members should a breach occur.

If this all sounds rather like wartime communications, that's because it is. While traditionalist HQs may see themselves as part of a society protecting mankind from the animals that lurk in the dark, cell HQs hew to a far less poetic philosophy: this is war with an intelligent enemy that wants nothing more than our annihilation. We are underfunded, outgunned, and thankfully largely incapable of inflicting the horrors that the Unknown can bring to bear. This does not mean, however, that we are powerless.

There is no point in building a wall that cannot be breached, because any wall will fall with enough force and time. The point is to not be behind a wall in the first place. Don't try to hide your information so it can't be found; instead arrange it so that when it is discovered, it gains your enemy nothing. The best defense is to be fast, thorough, and then disappear. Anything else is fighting the inevitable, and that's a fight no one ever wins.

## HOW CELL HQS FUNCTION

Not all envoys agree that Hayat Nejem's cell structure is the best organization for the future of SAVE. However, some envoys clearly identify with many of the benefits of such a structure against an overwhelming opponent and have adopted it themselves, either abandoning their more traditionalist comrades or convincing their team to adopt at least some of Nejem's ideas. In this structure, no single cell gives orders to any others; cells co-operate from time to time, but each is autonomous.

In a cell structure, no one group knows all of the others. Whereas traditionalist cells are arranged in a



top-down structure based on geographical location, cells are freed from geographical constraints. Unable to cover all eventualities, cells often turn to specialization. Some might serve as early detection and information gathering, while others might hone their ability to function as an infiltration and strike team. One cell might focus on ghost exorcisms, while another looks for evidence of shapeshifters. Note that a cell HQ may be a group of envoys with a joint mission who come together in teams depending on the needs of the situation, rather than a set group of envoys who always work together.

Because cell HQs rely on the ability to move quickly and change locations without warning, they rarely have anything in the way of a permanent physical presence. Libraries and files are on duplicated thumb drives with periodic archives and dead-drops. Dedicated cells and VPNs with two-step verification and regular password updates take the place of steel doors and surveillance codes. Meetings for an entire HQ are rare, and far more likely to take place online or through a coded communication burst than to be in person. Even then, such news is far more likely to be carried via word of mouth through small in-person meetings, or sent via encrypted email than ever risk putting an entire HQ's personnel in the same virtual or physical space at the same time.

Because a cell HQ isn't restricted to a specific geographical area, an HQ can be made up of envoys that don't necessarily inhabit the same region. For areas where travel is easy, envoys might be hundreds of miles apart at a given time, connected primarily through messages and research, only to join together in person wherever their skills are needed. Mobile or transient populations are also drawn to cell HQ organizations; good technology is far cheaper these days than a permanent address, whether you're staying ahead of a turbulent political situation, the local religious militia, the cartel's soldiers, a disease outbreak, or the agents of the Unknown.

In some regions, a cell's contacts can extend across national borders: this can create complications since bordering nations don't always see eye to eye on even simple matters of domestic policy, never mind supernatural threats. In war-torn areas as well as in minority or immigrant ghettos in major cities, the government of that country is not necessarily there to help those groups. Where prejudicial attitudes about minority populations exist, or where segments of the population are shunned or openly harassed, cell HQs not only have a place, but are sometimes the only answer. Using cells has particularly gained traction in areas with great distances or challenging terrain between metropolitan areas — large swaths of Africa, central

Asia, island groups like the Philippines, Indonesia, and the Caribbean, and even in the vast stretches of plains in north-central North America.

Envoys in cell HQs are often more easily able to combine their job as an envoy with their personal lives. The distant nature of their connections and sporadic need for in-person action mean that absences are easier to justify and less likely to inflict constant repetitive strain on work and personal relationships. The lack of physical overhead means that what resources there are focus on mobile property and consumables: tools and goods that are immediately useful in the fight against a particular foe.

At the same time, many of the useful resources that a traditionalist HQ can offer (counseling, emergency health care, disability pay, specialized training) are out of the reach of most cells. The resource load is light, but cell HQ recruitment must keep in mind a potential envoy's ability to provide for herself as well as contribute to the needs of the cell if necessary. Cells that are truly in trouble can contact other HQs for help, but the very nature of a cell is that it's better to disband and let envoys be absorbed into other cells (or start a new independent one) than it is to hold a compromised position and lose personnel to no end. Exact a heavy toll for any losses you take, and get free to fight again another day. No one battle will decide the war against the Unknown, and not everyone can be saved. It's a harsh lesson, but one that every envoy in a cell HQ must be willing to act on.

## CELL TO CELL

Cells operate on a bare-bones model; nothing extraneous to the mission is required. That applies to personnel, too. A full cell HQ requires enough envoys that various teams can be formed as needed; no one is on call all the time for all missions. Too many envoys, however, and the HQ risks becoming too large to maintain on such a sparse arrangement. The situation is too dire for people to sit around unused or bulk out a team unnecessarily. The balance, then, is for cells to recruit when they can, and be open to both absorbing envoys and splitting off new HQs when they must.

One of the hallmarks of the cell structure is that it encourages limited trust in both individuals and the larger organization despite a history of infiltration and subversion. Active, consistent damage control creates the confidence required to believe in each other; faith in one's fellow envoy is anything but blind. An envoy might be convinced to betray his HQ, but when he lacks substantive information, the damage is minor. Mitigated loss, persistent understanding on the part of envoys, and repeated success against the Unknown allow envoys and HQs to avoid the nightmare of the



Project Lifeboat communications blackout (CHILL p. 104), when no envoy dared to trust anyone they didn't personally know, and no one dared to communicate anything related to the Unknown or SAVE for fear of fates far worse than mere death.

This emotional flexibility allows cell HQs to interact in an informed, cautious way when they run across one another, or when they're contacted by an envoy whose HQ has disbanded. It takes time before she'll be fully trusted as a member of the HQ, but then even if the HQ were infiltrated, the amount of harm she could really do is minimal and easy to track.

Another feature of this model is that information is readily shared, if in generalized coded format. Details are rarely used, but formalized status updates are uploaded to the ongoing activity feed in SAVEpoint, creating a record of activity accessible by all HQs without divulging exact locations, activities, or identities. Cases that fall outside a cell's expertise can be given up to the organization as a whole to act on, rather than committing unsuitable resources to a battle they have no hope of winning. This also means that coordination between cells is ad hoc rather than the organized response of traditionalist HQs, relying on individual cells to know their teams' strengths and weaknesses best and thus judge their appropriate level of involvement.

Existing cells will likely come across other cells on occasion, and may even work together on a given case, trading off to the team that is more specialized in the needed type of response or area of engagement. Envoys may also come across contacts for a regional or local traditionalist HQ. Whether or not the cell chooses to get in touch, the traditionalist HQ almost always prefers a heads-up, so that resources aren't wasted chasing down mysterious figures that turn out to be other envoys. HQs may offer tidbits of information or even resources, both of which are always welcome, but cell HQ teams should resist being considered assets for the traditionalist HQ. Cell HQ teams decide among themselves where and how their skills are best used; the hierarchical chain of command in a traditionalist HQ flies in the face of that autonomy.

## CELL HQ RECRUITMENT

In Nejem's *Manifesto*, she emphasizes that "every agent will be replaceable at a moment's notice should they become compromised" (CHILL p. 116). One of the ways cell HQs approach this goal is through more active recruitment, with differing levels of commitment and trust depending on the needs of the cell and the ability of the individual.

Since Nejem's rise to prominence, cell HQs have developed a tiered approach to personnel staffing. The first tier is formed of dedicated and experienced envoys who make fighting the Unknown a dedicated concern in their lives, if not their full-time mission. These envoys form the nucleus of the cell HQ, rotating in and out of teams, providing the bulk of the manpower, and otherwise fighting the good fight, whether in the field or as medical or research support.

The second tier of cell personnel is formed of contacts. Whereas in traditional HQs, these individuals might be kept in the dark as much as possible, cell HQs consider these individuals almost as a sports team might consider its backup "second string" players. They largely live uninvolved with the Unknown and SAVE's business, perhaps providing resources like crash space, computer savvy, or just plain monetary donations. They have some training and knowledge, but are called upon only sporadically so that they don't become a target for the Unknown. Should one of the first tier envoys become compromised or knocked out of action, a second-string envoy hopefully stands ready to step up in her place.

The third tier of a cell HQ is formed of recruits, those who have the potential to become envoys but who are still largely in the dark. It takes time to gain the trust of potential recruits. Finding someone with a strong interest in investigating and combating the supernatural isn't enough; they also need the moral fiber to resist the corrupting influences of the Unknown and the Evil Way, and that's much more difficult to quantify. Skills are tertiary, though skills useful to SAVE are always much appreciated.

Whereas traditionalist HQs hold to the idea that spreading knowledge of the Unknown also spreads its influence, and thus recruit sparingly and only among those who have already been exposed, cell HQs believe that ignorance has a price as well. Therefore, cell envoys keep an eye out for those who seem both to serve humanity in some way and who have the intelligence and character to carry out those desires. Those people are thoroughly vetted over time and, when they seem ready, they're tested with a chance to provide support or help to an ongoing mission. If they step up and are willing to learn more, they can be brought into the cell as a contact.



December 27, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We arrived in New York just in time for Christmas as expected. It is very cold here and I am looking forward to the warmer climes we will experience aboard the Franconia. So far we have not experienced anything out of the ordinary but I will keep you apprised.

Daniel has turned out to be far more of a romantic than I realized. He surprised me with a lovely carriage ride around Central Park and even took me ice skating. It was very amusing, even though I could not manage to stay on my feet for long.

So far, research into my theory that the various shapeshifting creatures of legends are merely manifestations of the same unknown entity type has provided mixed results. The New York Public Library's special collection was somewhat helpful, but I think field research will prove the best path.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

THIS SPACE FOR WRITING MESSAGES

POST CARD

THIS SPACE FOR ADDRESS ONLY



January 6, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We set sail today. Our stateroom, the honeymoon suite, is graciously appointed and the staff seems eager to please. I believe our home for the next five months will be more than acceptable. My maid Sarah even has her own room.

We did have a brush with something odd earlier. As we entered the dining room I felt a chill run up my spine. I looked around and there was something hovering in my peripheral vision. It stayed there until the second course, then went away. It was most exciting. I think this shall turn out to be a wonderful cruise.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

Shanti Queen  
7 Jeffreys Way  
North Brunswick,  
Maine, U.S.A.

January 10, 1937

Dear Shanti,

Spent the afternoon in sunny Trinidad speaking to an Obeah man about the rituals he uses to remove curses and ward evil. He was able to tell me tales of creatures rumored to walk the streets at night and hide during the day. They sound similar to tales told in other places. I have to wonder if they are in fact the same creatures, or just close enough to sound like it. It was a most fruitful discussion and I was able to document much of it for SAE.

The presence in the dining room still appears and disappears after the first course. Neither I nor Sarah have been able to get any of the staff to tell us anything that may have happened aboard the ship but we will keep trying to discover the truth.

Yours Truly,  
Padma



January 17, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We docked in Rio de Janeiro last night and spent the day exploring the city. I got a chance to speak with a local crie woman. She was able to give me information about the eucantados, a creature who can take the form of a beautiful person or a river dolphin. They are apparently attracted to lively gatherings and are known to kidnap a mate from the human population. They sound much like some of the other tales I have gathered thus far. Most rewarding!

I think the presence has noticed that I can see it. It has begun lingering longer at mealtimes. Sarah has been working on the laundress. She used to work above decks in the dining room and is likely to be our best lead.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

February 1, 1937

Dear Shanti,

Made it to Cape Town safely. Sarah was able to get the laundress, Lettie, to admit that there was a guest who had choked on the soup course and died. I believe that is the presence I have been seeing, but I'm still not sure precisely what it wants from me or why it lingers on the ship.

I have arranged a local shaman to accompany us during our excursion to Victoria Falls. He will meet us in Durban and remain with us for the 5-day journey there and back. I believe he can be a great resource for SAE and hope he will consider joining forces with us.

February 9, 1937

Dear Shanti,

So much has happened since my last communique. The shaman, Avengoni, has agreed to work with the envoys in Cape Town. I have telegraphed them and they are going to arrange to meet with him monthly. We had many conversations during the trip and he was able to tell me of the impundulu or lightning bird. It apparently can take the form of a handsome man to seduce a woman. Curiouser and curiouser. I have so much information to add to the archives when I return to London.

The presence is getting stronger. It has taken to appearing in other parts of the ship, not just the dining room anymore. I saw it in the bathroom last night as I was changing for bed! I have gotten no closer to determining why it still lingers here beyond that this is where she died. The mystery remains.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

Truly,  
na

# Post Card

THIS SIDE FOR CORRESPONDENCE

February 13, 1937

Dear Shanti,

Madagascar was beautiful. I was able to get the vanilla beans you asked for, plump and soft, with a heady scent. I had the most delicious vanilla chicken for lunch. It was better than any chicken dish I have ever eaten, including the butter chicken Nana used to make us.

I was able to make contact with the presence. It was only a brief touch but she told me her name was Claire. I will investigate more tomorrow.

Yours Truly,  
Padma



POS

THIS SPA

February 17, 1937

Dear Shanti,

Landed in Bombay today. It is so wonderful to be back in India, even if we aren't going anywhere near home. Sarah and I went to the spice market and the smells transported me to sneaking sweets from Nana's kitchen in our childhood. It seemed almost magical how a smell can make you feel like a silly seven year old again. We shall be leaving for Delhi, then Agra, and Fatehpur Sikri in the morning and shall return to Bombay and the ship in a week.

Claire has spoken to me a few more times, never more than a word or two at a time. She has mentioned another name: Michael. I shall continue to try to make a stronger connection to her.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

Post Card

THIS SPACE FOR CORRESPONDENCE

March 3, 1937

Dear Shanti,

Our brief visit in Ceylon was barely long enough to acquire the cinnamon you requested. I did receive a reply from my contact with the cruise line. She says there are too many passengers named Claire and Michael to be of any use. I replied with the additional name and will hopefully receive word by the time we reach Singapore or Hong Kong.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

March 7, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We arrived in Singapore and received word from my contact. There was a couple, Claire and Michael O'Hanlon, who were poisoned by Claire's lady's maid, Kate, who fancied herself in love with Michael's valet. It seems the woman believed if they got rid of the couple they could take their places in society. While Claire succumbed to the poisoned soup, Michael did not and the plot was foiled. This, unfortunately, does not explain why poor Claire still lingers.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

March 1, 1937

Dear Shanti,

It was so wonderful to be surrounded by other Indians again, even if only for a brief time. I got to show Sarah some of the places we used to visit as children and share some memories of that time.

I remembered some tales that Nana used to tell us of the rakeshara. They could change size at will and assume the form of any creature, but fought on both sides in the battles between good and evil. I was able to talk to some elderly storytellers and collect more information from them. They also had the power of illusion and some may have preyed on humans. So many questions, so many answers.

Our friend Claire visited me again with another name: Kate. Yet another mystery to unravel. I look forward to sleeping in our stateroom tonight. I fear all the dusty travel has tired me more than I anticipated.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

7 Jeffreys  
North Brunswick,  
Maine, U.S.A.

March 5, 1937

Dear Shanti,

Penang is a bustling city of many contrasts. The desperately poor beg from the nouveau-riche and communists dine with capitalists. In the middle of all this I found an old storyteller with legends of a Hariman jadian, man by day and a tiger by night, but not hostile unless he is seeking revenge for an injustice done to him. Most interesting.

Claire has been more present lately, but less communicative. I wonder if perhaps we are nearing that part of the journey where she died.

Yours Truly,  
Padma



March 9, 1937

THIS SPACE FOR CORRESPONDENCE

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Shanti,

We landed in Bangkok and will make our way to the famed Angkor Wat in the morning. We saw a puppet dance as the entertainment after dinner. It interested with my interests as it told the tale of a hero who defeated a giant who could change into an invulnerable crocodile with diamond teeth. I had Sarah speak to the puppeteers afterwards and they were able to tell us more about the legend of Gaiithong.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

Shanti Queen  
7 Jeffreys Way  
North Brunswick,  
Maine, U.S.A.

March 13, 1937

Dear Shanti,

Angkor was beautiful and peaceful and a little sad. To see the ruins of a once great city slowly being reclaimed by nature was a reminder of how fragile our place in this world is.

Upon our return to Bangkok, I found another misadventure from my contact. She says that while Kate was executed for her crimes, the valet managed to escape custody. His name was Richard. Perhaps Claire seeks justice from him?

Yours Truly,  
Padma

April 1, 1937

Dear Shanti,

I am sorry that I have not written more frequently. We have had much excitement aboard. Claire has learned a new trick and has taken to moving objects in the dining room and our room! Whether this is meant to be malicious or not we have not yet determined.

We visited Java, Bali, and Borneo and now find ourselves in the Philippines, having listened to tales of the aswang from the chambermaid, Flora, who is from Manila. They are creatures that purportedly eat the unborn and small children and can transform into a cat, bat, bird, bear, or most often, a dog. They use plants to make doppelgangers of their victims that return to their homes and die.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

April 15, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We have arrived in Chinwangtao after stops in French Indo-China, Hong Kong, and Shanghai. The ship has taken on a group of Chinese acrobats as entertainment as we visit China. We have gotten them to tell us tales of the huli jing, a fox with many tails that transforms into a human woman. The story sounds somewhat familiar but the telling was divinely inspired.

Yours Truly,  
Padma



April 28, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We have had a whirlwind tour of the lands around the East China Sea. In Korea we heard legends of the kumihō, another fox with many tails that could turn into a beautiful woman who eats the hearts and livers of boys. In Nagasaki, Miyajima, Kobe, and Yokohama we heard similar tales of the obake, of which there are several kinds depending on what animal they transform into.

Claire has been more active than ever. She has taken to writing in the steam in the lavatory. Unfortunately, the writing is mangled, but she is getting better. I hope we can help the poor soul rest before the end of our journey.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

THIS SPACE FOR WRITING MESSAGES

May 20, 1937

Dear Shanti,

San Francisco is amazing. The library had several rare volumes that I have been hoping to find and read. Daniel has promised to bring me back at some point to spend more time there. I was able to find some legends of wechuge, men who are transformed when they are possessed by spirit animals. That alone was worth the stop here.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

May 15, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We have solved the mystery of Claire! Apparently the blackguard Richard had fallen on hard times and decided that the best place to hide was in plain sight on the ship where his crimes occurred. He was working in the boiler room, but he was arrested and turned over to the Honolulu police when we docked this morning. Hopefully he will not escape justice a second time.

Yours Truly,  
Padma

May 31, 1937

Dear Shanti,

We have made it safely to New York. By the time you receive this letter I will already be on my way back to you. I have made so much progress on my research and I believe it will be truly useful to the organization, if not now, in the future.

Yours Truly,  
Padma



## DEALING WITH GROWTH

Over time, healthy cell HQs build up a deep roster of envoys, contacts, and recruits, as the work of recruitment never really stops. Sometimes, this means that a team of envoys identifies a need they can fill elsewhere and separates from their existing cell to branch off and create a new one. There is no set formula for when a new HQ might split off from an old one. Ideally, when a healthy cell finds a niche where coverage is needed, where the skills needed match up with the abilities represented within the HQ, and where the HQ cannot effectively cover both its regular duties and the new area, one or more teams within the HQ split off, taking their contacts and recruits with them.

Of course, not every situation is ideal. The internal flexibility of cell HQs in terms of lateral reporting structures and revolving leadership roles means that personality conflicts and different styles of leadership are bound to cause clashes. Sometimes those issues resolve over time; sometimes an envoy leaves and transfers to another HQ, resolving the problem. Sometimes, though, the disagreement becomes a schism, and the only real solution is for the disagreeing sides to part ways before the HQ becomes a liability rather than a light against the Unknown. Cell HQs are designed to adapt to change, however; internal struggles that would wreck a traditionalist HQ can be handled through a realignment of resources. Where multiple traditional HQs would cause a problematic overlap, any number of cell HQs can function and trade off cases, thanks to adherence to the underlying philosophy of Nejem's *Manifesto*.

## CELL HQS AND THE *MANIFESTO*

The core function of Nejem's *Manifesto* was to lay out the strengths and weaknesses of SAVE, as well as a strategy to overcome them and defeat the Unknown. It provided a road map back from the brink of destruction for much of SAVE, pulling on lessons in modern warfare and ethics to present a way forward. War is hell, and secret wars are twice as hard, but using the basic tenets Nejem presented, cell HQs largely manage to get through. It should be noted, as the end of the *Manifesto* indicates, that even the ethical and moral rules she put in the document are, in the end, only guidelines.

While traditionalist HQs rely on training and rules, cell HQs seem positively reckless by comparison, relying on each envoy's personal moral compass to make decisions in the face of the Unknown. According to cell philosophy, however, the type of person who has been recruited and is serving in the fight against the Unknown is already the type of person who can be counted on to make the best choice in a bad situation.

The laws of society will be broken only as a last resort; the innocent will be spared if at all possible. The good of the many outweighs the good of one alone, but one alone is still worth saving. These are difficult choices, but part of being an envoy is being trusted enough to make hard decisions when necessary.

## CELL HQ WEAKNESSES

There are two major ways a cell or individual envoys can get in trouble: coming to the attention of law enforcement, or infiltration by the Unknown. Both are dangerous, and both can lead to the dissolution of a cell.

One of the reasons that law enforcement is so detrimental to a cell HQ comes down to resources. Cell-style organization models fit the model of terrorist organizations. This means that if a given team or cell HQ ends up on the radar of national or international law enforcement, it attracts undue attention and often swift and violent action, particularly if the local government is wary of opposition among its populace (as with the al-Assad regime in Nejem's home country of Syria). The fact that SAVE's enemies are rarely so mundane makes little difference.

When law enforcement takes a hand, it's best to sit tight and wait for things to be resolved. Cell HQs have some level of resources, but that tends to be more suited toward local legal expenses, not international felony prosecutions. Cell HQs can request additional resources anonymously, but it's regularly a far better idea to simply disband and disappear, creating a new HQ down the line and keeping SAVE out of the public eye and public record.

The second way a cell HQ gets into trouble is if the Unknown subverts an envoy or team. Having reformed following the communications lockdown in 2000, envoys in Nejem's area know full well the dangers of infiltration. Many older envoys lost team members, friends, or even loved ones in SAVE offices acting under Unknown influences. For that reason, cell HQs would rather eliminate threats than risk further compromise, even if that means disbanding an HQ to accomplish it. To some extent, infiltration is inevitable; the trick is to make it largely unprofitable for the Unknown.



## DIAGNOSIS: UNKNOWN

If a cell has been infiltrated, the best thing to do is scatter. Determining when a cell has been compromised is the tricky part. Anyone under the direct or indirect control of the Unknown will do their best to keep suspicious eyes focused on someone else. For the alert envoy, patterns will emerge: one or more envoys constantly blaming others for issues or failures; suggesting actions that are inappropriate to the situation; casting doubt on the abilities, research, or conclusions of others when it seems solid and reliable. Divide and conquer is the oldest stratagem in the history of warfare, and the Unknown has a masterful grasp of how it works.

Unauthorized transmissions using SAVE equipment could be a sign of infiltration. Another sign might be the same person surviving multiple attacks that left the rest of his team dead, injured, or missing. There are numerous tells of infiltration, and most of them are subtle, not clearly revealed except in light of additional incidents. Cell HQ envoys are trained to observe and head off those patterns, allowing compromised agents to be found and neutralized before things go too far.

## EXAMPLE CELL HQS

Each of the following HQs exhibits some aspect of the cell philosophy that's re-energized SAVE and provided it with new hope.

### IRKUTSK, RUSSIA

In a secret conference in 1910, Czar Nicolas was convinced to give a few Russian chapters of SAVE his blessing and sponsorship. The oldest still in operation is in southern Siberia, in Irkutsk.

On the very doorstep of the deepest freshwater lake in the world, Irkutsk has its share of incidents. Rumors have existed for centuries of spirits of all types inhabiting Lake Baikal. Werewolf infestations spread from time to time, but the remoteness of the place meant that little could be done to help until it was months too late. Once a Cossack fortress, Irkutsk has a long history of misery and death that's tantalizing to the Unknown.

The Czar's sponsorship included staffing Irkutsk with soldiers as well as promising individuals. Subsequent Bolshevik and Communist governments, while publicly shaming superstition, quietly continued to assign gifted and talented individuals to the area under the guise of exiling them for the good of the state. Cold War-era experiments in developing mental abilities, while largely unsuccessful, did yield an excellent training program for developing the abilities of those gifted in the Art. Since the breakup of

the Soviet Union, Irkutsk has been ignored by the Russian government; both the HQ and SAVE prefer it that way, as it allows far greater freedom of movement in both recruitment and staffing.

Irkutsk currently has eighteen envoys, four of whom are skilled in various aspects of the Art. From time to time, the unit shuffles its membership; some are re-assigned to other hotspots, while new envoys are shipped in for training and to keep the staff at full strength. The Irkutsk HQ is an excellent, if highly dangerous, envoy training facility.

### YAOUNDE, CAMEROON

This small HQ specializes in community outreach and information gathering. Its members spend much of the time interviewing local people, gathering as much information on local beliefs and potential Unknown activity as they can. There is a great deal of spirit activity in West Central Africa, and Cameroon is centrally located, allowing this HQ to cover a wide area.

One of this HQ's greatest challenges of late is getting local cooperation for their envoys to investigate cases. Unrest in the area leads to closed borders even for locals, and outsiders asking questions about faith and local traditions tend to be regarded with suspicion. Members of this HQ devote a great deal of time to networking and establishing their reputations with local leaders; this enables them to avoid most problems and gives them credentials for when they run into real problems.

Perhaps the HQ's greatest triumph was rooting out and destroying an Adze (West African vampire) purely by accident before it could kill the family of its host. The envoys stopped for the night in a remote village on their way home from completing a mission and happened upon the situation. The host was staying out of sight, claiming to be ill. Several of the team were skilled medical personnel, and asked the family's permission to help. The host was beyond help by the time it was discovered, but the creature itself was destroyed before it could leave the body as a cloud of flies.

Simon Atebe is the driving force behind this HQ, working as a researcher out of the University of Yaoundé. Of the Bamileke tribe, Simon is fluent in eleven languages, including English and French. Nalo Beti, a Yoruba originally from Nigeria, is a practitioner of the Art. She has knowledge of both the Protective and Incorporeal Disciplines.



## PIEDMONT HQ

Established in 1917 to investigate the Unknown throughout the Piedmont region of North Carolina, the Greensboro office had seen its share of cases when it was destroyed in 1996 by fire during an attack by the vampire Flavio Silva. Only three envoys survived: Mitchell Rapier, his older brother Dr. Jameson Rapier, and Professor Alastair Sutphin. A veteran envoy, Christopher Wade, had been tracking this vampire for years and arrived in the nick of time. The four eventually hunted and killed the vampire together three years later, having formed an HQ in the nearby town of Oak Ridge following the fire.

After 2012, the small HQ decided to adopt the cell model when their regional HQ in Charlotte fell under siege. Since then, the team has remained out of contact with SAVE's centralized structure, instead using SAVEpoint (p. XX) and taking on a more rural, regional perspective. Aside from a few random encounters, the region has been mostly quiet until recently, when a series of incidents turned Oak Ridge into a new hot spot of Unknown activity. There are even unconfirmed reports that a pack of loup garou have settled nearby, adding to the caseload of the current envoys.

From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

Date: November 2, 1999

Director Blackwood,

As directed, I have been collating reports of an entity that has been preying on children in the Bay Area. It appears to have first surfaced 10 years ago after the Loma Prieta quake. In the beginning, it appeared to only abduct a child every 6 or 7 months, but the attacks have grown in frequency and sophistication as the years have gone on and have now become as frequent as once every week or two. Its victims are usually indigents and/or undocumented, all under 15, some as young as 7. Frequently, it has been days before the missing child was reported to the police, out of fear of INS or the cops themselves. Parts of the bodies have been found over the years, enough pieces of each for there to be no mistake that the child was no longer among the living, because no one could lose that many pieces in such a grisly manner and survive. The hands, hearts, and heads are never among the parts found, however. Does the creature consider these some delicacy and consume them? Or are they its main meal, and animals have done the remainder of the trauma on the pieces found? Surely something to be investigated further?

Caroline Rhodes

WHO IS BLACKWOOD?

FEMALE?

NO ONE EVER REMEMBERS MEETING HER.

From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

Date: November 26, 1999

Director Blackwood,

At your suggestion I looked into the patterns of the locations of the disappearances. They did appear to occur in clusters similar to constellations, but not any that I'm familiar with. The reports also mention hearing an ice cream truck in the area which, in and of itself, isn't unusual but I contacted the companies that run the truck and none have any records of a truck operating in the areas in question at the times around the disappearances. All agreed that the areas were too transient to turn a profit, so any truck in the area must have been either an independent driver or an entity using the music as a lure to the unsuspecting.

Caroline Rhodes

WHY IS A DIRECTOR SO INVOLVED

WITH ADVISING A FIELD AGENT ON A CASE?

From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

December 25, 1999

Director Blackwood,

I followed your advice and I was able to get a recording of the song! A local musician was making a demo tape around the time and area and happened to capture the song on his recorder. I sent it to the lab for analysis and they were able to isolate the music separate from the music the artist was trying to capture. The music sounds at first like any other ice cream truck, but within the tinny repetition of "Pop Goes the Weasel" is a different melody and set of notes entirely. The techs were unable to identify what instrument made the sounds, however.

Caroline Rhodes

From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

December 26, 1999

Director Blackwood,



From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

December 26, 1999

Director Blackwood,

On your direction, I took the music sample to a friend at Julliard. We spoke to some of the musicians there and were able to narrow down the possibilities for the subliminal melody instrumentation to something like a theremin, but not. They had not heard anything quite like it and wanted to study it more. They will share any findings they come up with.

Caroline Rhodes

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From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

January 2, 2000

Director Blackwood,

After your counsel, I took the liberty of taking the plotting of the crime scenes to an astronomer friend to see if it matched any constellations he knew of. He was able to find some familiar patterning, but not enough to really say it was a true star map, at least not one he had ever seen. A disappointing finding, but the project intrigued him enough that he wanted to keep working on it.

The group at Julliard is no closer to finding an instrument that can produce the precise sounds that are heard in the recording other than running a synthesized sound through several filters. They did encounter a strange effect it had on the daughter of one of the professors who was at work with her father. She went into a trance whenever the music played. Perhaps we can take this as evidence of a new Unknown entity?

IS "BLACKWOOD" SOME SORT OF  
PUPPET MASTER?

— IS THIS DR. SAMANTHA BLACKWOOD?

From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

Date: January 18, 2000

Director Blackwood,

Upon your recommendation, I re-interviewed the witnesses to the most recent abductions that you pointed out. They all reported seeing a tall, thin man in an old-fashioned white uniform and hat driving an "old-timey" truck. None of them seemed to think this was out of the ordinary though, which I find odd. Perhaps exposure to the music alters your perceptions and perhaps lowers your inhibitions? None can remember actually seeing any children near the truck, although they cannot remember any other adults around it either.

Caroline Rhodes

-- BLACKWOOD IS OFFERING TOO MANY LEADS TO NOT BE SUSPICIOUS.

HOW DOES RHODES NOT SEE IT?

From: <crhodes@198.0.0.1>

To: "Blackwood" <blackwood@198.0.0.1>

Date: February 15, 2000

Director Blackwood,

With your guidance, I believe I have pieced together some more clues. I was able to discover constellations if you used the ordinal of each cluster rather than looking at the clusters themselves. You then apply various mathematical sequences to them and constellations appeared! The constellations appear to be ones that legends have called portents of evil: Draco, Hydra, etc. I was also able to identify what I believe will be the site of the next attack. I am still trying to pin down the timing though.

Caroline Rhodes

--

February 22, 2000

Director Blackwood,

I believe I have found the lair of the entity. With your permission I would like to lead a team to destroy the creature before it has a chance to strike again. I believe a full 9-person team to be needed and would like to request Andrew David be my second in command on this mission. I believe his military background will be an asset. I would like to take as many envoys with combat experience with me as possible, as I believe this entity to be extremely dangerous.

On a more personal note, your advice and guidance has been indispensable in this effort. I truly could not have done as much of this as I did without you. Thank you, Samantha.

Caroline Rhodes



## LOST HQS

From the mid 1980s through the end of the twentieth century, SAVE was being sabotaged from within. Envoys were fed misleading information, sometimes resulting in too many envoys assigned to deal with a small problem and leading to a shortage of resources elsewhere. In other cases, too few envoys were assigned, possibly with the wrong equipment for the job. Envoys died or disappeared at an alarming rate; HQs were compromised entirely, causing the collapse of entire regions in some cases.

It should not have been unexpected: SAVE fights against intelligent creatures capable of complex planning and subtle responses. It's only natural that the Unknown would take the battle to SAVE itself. Agents of the Unknown can fight a war of attrition with a reasonable expectation of winning. The creatures of the Unknown are patient; they can wait.

Over the course of roughly a decade and a half — starting slowly but achieving devastating results over time — dozens of HQs vanished with hundreds of envoys either dead or missing. Some survivors went underground, not daring to contact anyone within the organization they had once trusted. Some hooked up with other nearby HQs, but not everyone welcomed “orphaned” envoys from broken HQs.

The communications blackout in 2000 effectively dissolved SAVE as an organization, in practice if not in name. Even regional HQs were effectively reduced to functioning locally only; records were kept within each office and never shared. Envoys who attempted to break the communications embargo were typically ignored or ostracized. Resources could likewise no longer be shared; within the Pyramid, that was bad news indeed. Without the support of SAVE and regional HQs, doing the work required became more and more difficult. Eventually, many envoys simply gave up, falling back into old patterns: work, home, dinner, bed, repeat, all the while trying to forget about the evil lurking in the darkness outside their doors.

Not everyone was willing to give up the fight, however. Many HQs became that much more resolute in their cause, particularly in areas that had seen significant Unknown activity. Local offices often faced the brunt of the punishment for misguided or misdirected resources during the end of the twentieth century; many grew more independent as a result, hiding or changing their procedures to stay under the radar.

Convinced that SAVE was done for, many of these groups took what they had learned from their time in SAVE. Recruiting new members where they could, staying vigilant, and using the information they had to

## HOW TO USE LOST HQS

As an organization, SAVE is well aware that a number of HQs went dark during the communications blackout and never came back online, as it were, leaving giant holes in the organization's coverage. Nejem and the continental directors consider finding these offices and pulling them back into the fold to be a high priority. At the same time, neither side within SAVE has enough manpower to regularly assign dedicated envoy teams to locate and reintegrate these lost HQs.

If you and your players wish to fight the Unknown without ties to any overarching organization, running as a lost HQ is an excellent choice, leaving the option for SAVE to be reintegrated into the game at a future time, if desired. This option is covered in chapter three, Building a SAVE HQ (p. 93).

If you and your players want to play SAVE agents looking for lost HQs, there is a wealth of possibilities. Consider having the group assign extra points at character generation to represent more experienced envoys who specialize in going into potentially uncontrolled environments with a high probability of heavy Unknown presence, finding and providing aid to potentially hostile teams, and helping to neutralize major threats.

In addition, the Chill Master can always take a standard team of envoys and have them stumble across a lost HQ, either active or the remains of one. Lost HQs serve as a reminder of how easy it is to end up overwhelmed and in trouble, while also providing a wealth of potential information and plot hooks.

fight where they could, they rebuilt and restructured. Some teams were self-sufficient enough that they were able to continue operations without interruption, and do so pretty much as normal.

Full HQs became teams; knowledge of the Art often became specialized or lost altogether, as training was no longer available. Many teams gave up on the idea of a physical location, creating offices out of car trunks or RVs and moving them frequently, or just going online. Many offices were lost during this time. Others turned over personnel so rapidly that there's now no one left who knows about SAVE at all. Still these few brave souls fight on, unaware that there's again the potential for help and solidarity against the darkness.

## LOST HQ SURVIVAL

For envoys in a lost HQ, local survival is the name of the game. In rural areas, resources may be in short supply. Skills and information are the next best thing. In such cases, backup is rarely quick or convenient, if it exists at all; envoys have to be skilled and well prepared to survive. In a worst-case scenario, a lost HQ may consist of only a single team with perhaps



a couple of support personnel. No two lost HQs are exactly alike; their circumstances, threats, and experiences make each a unique entity.

Cut off from other HQs in 2000, many of the lost did their best to become self-sufficient. Some offices — such as Rockford, Illinois in the US, Lucknow in India, and Manila in the Philippines — were better able to set up a financial network to support the HQ because they had envoys who were either trained accounting staff or wealthy, with resources of their own.

Not every HQ could survive without external support. Many were able to hang on, but without guidance some felt lost, isolated, and without direction. Documentation became an important goal. The vast majority of materials were digitized whenever possible, with back-up copies kept in a secure location off-site, and further back-up copies stashed elsewhere. Some HQs even decided that, for the maximum level of portability, each envoy would carry a hard drive containing as much of the HQ's records and research data as possible. Most hard drives were kept in cars in case rapid departure was needed, but some envoys went so far as to keep summaries of the most important data on thumb drives and downloaded to cell phones, with instructions left behind for their executors on what to do with them if the envoy met an untimely demise.

## REBUILDING

With SAVE's financial resources no longer accessible, HQs were on their own to figure out how they could continue to operate. Some had their own resources to draw upon; others were able to find benefactors to keep envoys in the fight. Many envoys became expert scroungers and learned the fine art of bartering for what they needed. Not everything was available in this way; most gun shops won't give someone ammunition in exchange for washing the windows. Still, trades became commonplace, conserving cash resources for things that couldn't be had any other way.

Most benefactors weren't wealthy individuals; they were average folks with little knowledge of what these people were really up to, but enough to know that they seemed okay and needed some help. A few dollars could be spared here and there, or maybe an old chainsaw or laptop someone no longer needed would find its way into an envoy's hands. It wasn't the most efficient means of rebuilding an HQ's infrastructure, but every little bit helped.

Grateful citizens whose lives were directly improved by the removal of agents of the Unknown sometimes offered a token sum, a chicken, or some canned goods by way of thanks. These sparse resources went a long

way towards keeping teams of envoys in operation just that much longer.

## AVOIDING CONTACT

In the years prior to 2012, lost HQs may not have known that SAVE was still out there, and could very reasonably decide not to go look for the corrupted organization they once knew. In the years since Nejem's *Manifesto*, it's not unreasonable that a lost HQ may have heard that SAVE is operational again. That doesn't mean they are in any hurry to make themselves known. By the current day, HQs that were relieved to rejoin SAVE have already done so. This means that the remaining lost HQs have either lost all trust in SAVE and are resistant, are unaware that SAVE exists, or have been completely wiped out by despair, lack of resources, or the Unknown. In the end, though, they mostly all come down to the same thing.

Not everyone wants to be found.

If SAVE envoys stumble across a lost HQ, telling a tale of their own cell or HQ's infiltration or destruction by the Unknown, the lost HQ typically chooses from three options: believe the story and the envoys, believe the story but don't trust the envoys, or don't believe the story. Whether or not they believe the envoys, there's now a new problem to deal with; if these envoys are compromised, they know about this team and at least some of its envoys, putting their would-be refuge at great risk as well.

For small teams, taking in such refugees may be an untenable position. With not enough envoys on hand to guard the potentially compromised envoys, the group could easily be overrun. They may suggest that the fleeing envoys flee somewhere else. Larger groups are likely better equipped to deal with such a situation, but this assumes that they're willing to do so.

## SPOILS OF WAR

A few HQs around the world served as supply depots for more unusual or difficult to acquire equipment. Heavy arms, for example, are not readily available to most envoys; a handful of upper-echelon SAVE officials know how to get a shipment of military goods delivered to an anonymous, off-the-beaten path warehouse or empty lot. From there, it's immediately transferred to a secure storage facility under heavy security.

In the aftermath of Project Lifeboat, some of these depots went silent, refusing to answer even the simplest plea for assistance. Some decided it would be better to go down fighting, and did their best to distribute equipment to those HQs and cells still considered reliable. They hoped to get the stuff out in the field where it might actually do some good before things got totally out of hand.



The few that remain out of contact are still a mystery. Refusing to acknowledge any communication, it's uncertain if they will not — or cannot — respond. The chance that one or more have been infiltrated is a possibility. Though the Unknown would be unlikely to use such equipment directly, the amount of havoc that could be visited upon the world by putting these arms in the wrong hands is terrible to imagine, and precisely the sort of thing the Unknown would wish to encourage.

## SEARCHING FOR THE LOST

Searching for lost HQs holds a powerful allure for envoys. Reconnecting with a group that has lost touch with the SAVE network can be an invigorating morale-boost for all involved. The searchers may find the remains of the HQ, and perhaps some clues as to what occurred there. On the other hand, some within SAVE quietly oppose the idea of stirring up things better left quiet. If the Unknown expects a search party — or is tipped off that one might be coming — traps will be left behind. These can run the gamut from petty, painful annoyances such as tripwires and covered pits, to highly lethal traps — tripwires hooked to a grenade or a loaded shotgun, or deadfall pits lined with sharpened stakes. Some traps may be less physical in nature, exposing envoys to the possibility of possession or at least to corrupting influences. Trooping through the burnt-out shell of a building and stumbling across the remains of a former envoy from time to time is bad enough — worse if the remains were someone you knew. Bringing an entity back with you to attack or infect the rest of your team is perhaps the worst outcome of all.

## MAKING CONTACT

HQs wishing to establish contact with other teams of envoys should be prepared for no small amount of wariness. There very likely are still agents in the service of the Unknown within the ranks of SAVE. The tremendous loss of life and resources represented by this infiltration has left everyone paranoid. No one is completely above suspicion, and that uncertainty and mental anguish is a tasty treat to the Unknown. Most attempts at contact are met with silence while the other side finds out everything they can about the envoys attempting to make contact. Even if contact is made and all seems well, the contacting group should be extra careful not to seem overly eager. Envoys may have little to lose by reaching out; the lost HQ may have everything to lose by reaching out or even replying.

Once contact is established, the lost HQ may still not wish to join SAVE as a whole. The lost HQ may

wish instead to simply watch and wait, or maintain contact with the envoys but not with their HQ as a whole. Time and trust may change the situation, but envoys must be patient; no lost HQ still in existence got that way by being impetuous.

## CHANCE MEETINGS

The situation might arise where two teams from different HQs are investigating the same case. It will become obvious as things progress; witnesses will mention that some other group came around to interview them; books and reference materials pertinent to the case will already be checked out by someone else; as things come to a climax, the groups may actually start running into each other at crime scenes, the library, or even just around town. This has a great deal of potential for tragedy, but it's important to remind the players that these people are looking for information too; if they worked for the other side, they wouldn't need to know the details surrounding a case — they'd already have that information. Except in a case of rather extreme obfuscation, it's unlikely that agents of the Unknown would go to such tedious and time-consuming lengths to gain the trust of the group.

In an unfortunate coincidence, many of the same things will also happen as part of a cover-up, or as a prelude to an ambush by the Unknown. Critical reference materials will be missing; witnesses to events will be unwilling to talk or may have disappeared; teams may be ambushed by a larger number of opponents or by a more powerful entity than was expected. Taking out smaller pockets of resistance can clear the way for a larger strike against a better prepared group, such as an HQ.

As new traditionalist and cell HQs spring up, some may find they are in close proximity to another such group — either another recently formed cell, an HQ previously thought lost, or an already established group that doesn't recognize SAVE. Cooperation is essential for ultimate success, so the sooner neighbors can learn to work together, sharing information, envoys, and resources, the sooner they can make some real headway in the fight against the darkness of the Unknown.

## LOST HQS

The following were once SAVE HQs, but they've gone dark. Attempts have been made to contact them with no response. Should a team of envoys wish to investigate, SAVE will be happy to provide resources to return these HQs to the fold, or at least procure any information that might provide a clue as to what happened.



## KATHMANDU, NEPAL

The HQ in Kathmandu, being isolated by the mountainous terrain, relied on supplies and equipment brought in secretly under the guise of mountain-climbing expeditions, or scavenged from more legitimate expeditions that were tragically unsuccessful. Nepal is prone to landslides; scientists are developing accurate means of predicting these devastating natural disasters, but such help comes too late for the SAVE HQ in Nepal. Buried under tons of mud and rubble, only now are the remains of the HQ's equipment, files, and personnel being recovered. There is no clear indication that the Unknown was involved.

**Current Status:** Destroyed

## TRIPOLI, LIBYA

Under the Gaddhafi family regime, SAVE enjoyed a small amount of autonomy with the tacit understanding that members of the State's secret police were included among the force of envoys. When the Arab Spring came to Libya and the Gaddhafi regime was overthrown, anyone with ties to the Gaddhafi regime had to flee to survive. The HQ's resources were decimated. In the chaos, no one is sure if the SAVE HQ in Tripoli was attacked by the Unknown or swept away by historic events of the day. Attempts to contact the Tripoli HQ have been unsuccessful.

**Current Status:** Unknown

## BINGER, OKLAHOMA

Binger was never a major HQ. Located near a mound of potent supernatural activity, it became a sort of watchtower, a guard post over a particularly sensitive site. It was small but active, and they'd had a decent rate of success. When the order to go dark came, Binger had already succumbed to a different kind of darkness. Nearby cells investigated, reporting Binger's stronghold breached, its files plundered, and, except for a few gruesome traces, its personnel nowhere to be found. Envoys' residences were similarly ransacked, and family members had also vanished. It was not one of the worst losses SAVE would endure in the coming months, but for those who investigated it was a terrible portent of the future.

**Current Status:** Destroyed

## LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

Established shortly after World War II, the HQ in Las Cruces became part of the specialization push in the 1970s, researching local petroglyphs and other archaeological finds and how they related to the Unknown. A faction within the Las Cruces HQ became obsessed with investigating supposed government cover-ups and mysterious local sightings, straining relations with

the Central Archives and earning the HQ the label "unreliable" until the disappearance of all envoys in the late 1980s. The final communications indicated the HQ was investigating the mysterious "Taos Hum" to the north. No further data on this investigation was relayed, and the HQ was discovered to have ceased operation shortly thereafter. While the physical facilities of the HQ were investigated, no trace of the envoys or what happened to them has been found to date. The investigation is ongoing.

**Current Status:** Destroyed

## LADENBURG, BADEN-WURTTENBERG, GERMANY

Dating to pre-Roman times, the city Ladenburg held an active HQ that was also one of the oldest in Europe. Close to larger cities Heidelberg and Mannheim, its location was ideal to assist other HQs as well as investigate local incidents. In the 1980s, Ladenburg's envoys began acting strangely, cherry-picking their cases and avoiding contact with other HQs. When they went silent, no one was immediately alarmed; their previous erratic behavior made this lack of communication seem commonplace, but as weeks turned to months, an investigation was launched. Envoys on the scene reported that the site of the Ladenburg HQ had been destroyed by fire, but no bodies were found in the wreckage. No contact has been made since with any of the former HQ's envoys.

**Current Status:** Destroyed

## MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA

Despite being considered "out of the way" for an HQ, Morgantown — within easy reach of the central Eastern Seaboard and the Ohio River valley, and with a major interstate highway running from Florida to Canada passing through the city — is well situated to act as a strong back-up HQ in the region, not to mention investigating its own full slate of cases. Despite this, SAVE lost track of the Morgantown HQ during the dark days. When SAVE tried to re-establish contact, they were and have remained unresponsive.

Though they have chosen to stay silent, Morgantown's HQ is in relatively good shape. They have heard of the *Manifesto* and are trying to decide what model they wish to adopt, assuming they return to SAVE. Current envoys are split between many of the old guard wanting to rejoin the traditionalist camp and re-establish contact, and a desire among a number of the newer recruits to adopt more of Hayat Nejem's teachings and move in the direction of a cell structure.

**Current Status:** Unknown, presumed lost





## CHAPTER TWO: ENVOYS

It's a cliché at this point that every organization would be nothing without its people, but as a volunteer organization, SAVE is particularly beholden to its envoys for their sacrifices. Because taking up the gauntlet of fighting the Unknown has such a heavy cost, it takes a special sort of person to join up with SAVE — a sort that's perennially in short supply.



## WHAT KINDS OF PEOPLE BECOME ENVOYS?

What does it take for someone to come face-to-face with evil and decide to draw a line in the sand? Which characteristics do these people have in common, and what sets them apart from the rest of humanity? At its simplest, the common denominator for SAVE envoys is an understanding that the Unknown exists, it hurts people, and the envoy refuses to accept this as the way it must be.

Beyond this one similarity, envoys come from all walks of life, without regard to race, creed, or social status. SAVE has always endeavored to be a socially progressive organization, although its level of openness has always been a reflection of its times and locations. It took SAVE over a decade from the first female application to accept that women were as capable as men in confronting the Unknown, but the group still scandalously allowed entrance to Lady Chichester years before such mingling was considered acceptable. Similarly, the privileged white viewpoint of SAVE's founding members considered the Western way of viewing the world as the correct approach. The Unknown didn't care about skin color, and non-whites needed SAVE to come and help them repel the evil. SAVE lost valuable information in its earliest years as envoys came to the rescue and overlooked the ways that special individuals within every community combatted the Unknown.

Thankfully, such biased recruitment practices have long since faded into SAVE's history, and the group is at least open to anyone willing to face the dangers. SAVE is still a group comprised of fallible humans, capable of discrimination, prejudice, and callousness even without the Unknown's influence. Additionally, it isn't a monolithic entity — especially with the changes that occurred after the betrayal — and individual headquarters have their own approach to accepting membership. It's a sad facet of humanity that some people will always have a much harder time gaining acceptance than their neighbors.

### SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHICS

SAVE doesn't have a written equal opportunities policy, or guidelines on exactly who can join the group. Each HQ follows its own principles on allowing people entrance. Much like the rich, privileged men who founded SAVE, some HQs are slower to accept differences than others. This attitude is more prevalent in lost HQs and those of the newer cell structure. Having survived calamity and the direct attention of the Unknown, the non-traditional HQs hold a healthy dose of paranoia and are slow to trust outsiders. These HQs are more likely to accept people

known to them, either through bonds of blood and family; by moving in similar social circles, which allows SAVE to gauge the new recruit's suitability; or sharing membership in another group.

### TOUCHED BY FEAR

Brave people become envoys. It sounds simple, but it's a truth that applies to everyone who joins SAVE. These people encounter the Unknown and refuse to stand idly by while it hurts others. This doesn't mean envoys are immune to fear; every one of them has felt the fear of the Unknown. They get scared, they understand the risks, but they still confront the fear and walk into the darkness. They work to control the fear; they don't let it control them.

One theory postulates that envoys are literally touched by fear. In the past, several SAVE members with an academic or researcher bent have conducted their own studies on fellow envoys, trying to determine exactly what crucial factor leads someone to confronting the Unknown despite the terror they feel. While the results of these studies are far from conclusive — most lack statistical rigor or injected too much authorial bias into the results, and many of the earliest investigations were lost when the Archives were destroyed — many drew one similar conclusion amidst their outcomes. These studies appear to support the hypothesis that people who join SAVE don't just confront the Unknown and decide to stand against it; the encounter forever invisibly marks the candidate as having been touched by the Unknown and possibly claimed by it. Much like the monsters born from the Evil Way corrupting humans, SAVE envoys carry the influence, and in their own, more subtle way, empower the Unknown.

These findings are disturbing and unfortunately correspond to O'Boylan's earlier hypothesis that SAVE had unleashed the Unknown into the world. While senior envoys who know of O'Boylan's work don't agree with his theory — they argue that the Unknown already existed for SAVE to find — it does increase their concern that SAVE's actions have increased the Unknown's presence in the world. Who can say how much SAVE's acknowledgement of the Unknown's power has in turn unleashed more of its evil upon the world. On the other hand, critics suggest, if anyone in an encounter with the Unknown is marked by it, then its presence would spread regardless. Taking a stand to limit the spread of that mark is the only ethical and moral choice.



## After Action Report of Operation Ice Cream Man

By Andrew Mark David

February 25, 2000

I'm not sure what went wrong, so I'm just going to start at the beginning.

We were on the trail of a creature that was taking small children in the guise of an ice cream man and truck. We believed the song of the truck was the lure that hypnotized them as it drew them in. Adults didn't seem to be affected and it didn't affect all children. We managed to get a recording of the song and had it analyzed. The techs discovered the sub-harmonic frequencies contained in the song seemed to affect the amygdala of children with certain traits, traits that we later realized were related to the ARTs. We tracked reported sightings and were able to triangulate the probable lair of the creature. We made plans to converge on the location and capture the creature.

Senior Envoy Caroline Rhodes was the lead on the investigation and chose to infiltrate the lair. This was not a concern to me at the time as she had been the lead on several missions I was on before and had proven herself to be a more than capable leader.

Looking back on the incident, I now believe she was compromised. Her actions were erratic and not in keeping with her normal level headed self.

She suggested a plan for entry that, while unorthodox, was not unreasonable. However, once we arrived at the location, she ignored her own plan. Rather than wait for all teams to be in place, she had her team charge in. Their coms were set to radio silence, so we had no way of knowing what was going on. The remaining three teams tried to stick to the plan as best we could, but were ambushed by the creatures inside the lair. The intelligence Ms. Rhodes had vetted led us to believe there was a single creature, but there was an entire nest of no less than seven creatures when my team breached the entrance we were assigned to. The two other members of my squad were later found horribly mutilated. I believe the only reason I survived is because I was knocked unconscious early in the fight and one of my teammates pulled me back outside before returning to assist the others. I know of only one other survivor out of the ten of us who were sent: Ms. Rhodes.

The creatures seem to have since abandoned the lair. We were able to recover the bodies of most of the missing children but three still remain missing. They are believed to have been taken by the creatures when they left. We have no further leads on the whereabouts of the creatures, or if they continue to travel in a pack or have split and gone separate ways.

I wonder if the intel gathered on the creatures was even accurate, as most of it came from Ms. Rhodes.



## Intelligence Review of Operation Ice Cream Man

By Charlene Christopher (Unfiled)

March 5, 2000

As is standard on any mission where an envoy fatality has occurred, I have conducted a review of the evidence presented as proof a mission was needed.

1. The sources that Ms. Rhodes cited in her presentation of facts, while SAVE envoys, were all interviewed and none spoke to Ms. Rhodes. No phone or email records could be found to corroborate Ms. Rhodes' timeline of events. In most cases, the envoys in question were working other cases in other cities and were able to provide a reasonable alibi for the dates and times in question.
2. The missing children do not, to the best of our knowledge, have any latent ability in the ARTs. The Review Team members have conducted extensive interviews with their families. No evidence of encounters with the Unknown or exhibition of ability with any of the ARTs was found.
3. The subharmonics in the music presented as evidence of an Ice Cream Man entity cannot be reproduced by any other SAVE envoy. All reports of such appear to have been falsified.
4. The actions of Ms. Rhodes during the mission to breach the lair of the entity appear to be in direct violation of all SAVE protocols and directly led to the loss of envoy life.
5. She cannot, or will not, describe Director Blackwood, nor will she give any means to contact her other than the email we have from her computer.

I believe Ms. Caroline Rhodes to be compromised. Any cases she is currently in charge of should be immediately suspended. Any access to SAVE files and resources that she has should be revoked. If she is seen, she should be detained.

I further believe careful monitoring should be done of Mr. David, as he may be compromised too.

1. During my interview with him and during other interviews that were recorded, he would stare off into space for a moment or two before answering any question asked of him.
2. Since the incident, other agents have noticed unusual eating patterns, namely, that no one ever sees him eat or drink anything.
3. He is one of two people alive to have had contact with the person calling herself Director Blackwood but cannot, or will not, describe or give us a means to contact her.

(Note by Nathan Matthews, March 15, 2000: Ms. Christopher was found dead in her apartment. It was at first believed to be suicide but further investigation revealed evidence of foul play. The person calling herself Director Blackwood is the prime suspect. This file and the evidence referred to were found on Ms. Christopher's laptop, which had been tampered with in an apparent attempt to destroy said files. Printouts of the emails to "Director Blackwood" from Ms. Rhodes were found in a file in Ms. Christopher's office with her hand written notes on them.)



## SAFETY IN NUMBERS

Smart people join SAVE. Humans understand safety in numbers. In the darkest nights of pre-history, the earliest people knew the effectiveness of banding together against the terrors that lurked just out of sight. Many sets of eyes improved the chances of spotting danger as it approached, and alerting the rest of the group.

As predators, humans lacked tough hides and sharp talons, but they worked together and outmaneuvered their opponents. As with any herd animal, no tactic was effective all the time. When predators did strike, or the monsters of the Unknown lulled their victims away from the group and into the darkness, having a larger group decreased the chance of any particular individual being targeted.

Both these situations also apply to envoys. The creatures of the Unknown often delight in stalking a lone victim. With no one to watch out for her, the monster can run the hunt how it wants, luxuriating in the fear and confusion it engenders before striking. Working with SAVE gives envoys other people to work with and watch their backs. Envoys sometimes have clashes of personality or may not like each other — occasionally escalating to active dislike and plotting against one another in the social and political maneuverings within SAVE — but when confronting evil, envoys put aside any animosity to work together to protect humanity. All envoys agree that fighting the Unknown takes precedence over any petty feuds.

When envoys lose control of the mission and find themselves hunted rather than the hunters, working in a group increases their chances of survival. They can combine resources or inspire each other to develop desperate strategies that help them escape the situation. If the envoys find themselves in a situation where the whole group has little hope of working its way out, those most desperate to survive gain advantage from having other people around them. Though SAVE would prefer it to be otherwise, the old saying that someone doesn't have to outrun the predator as long as they can outrun the slowest member of the herd has been true many times in the organization's history.

## WIDE AWAKE

Responsible people join SAVE. It's frighteningly easy to "go back to sleep" after encountering the Unknown. Most people who survive their brush with evil close their eyes again, denying the existence of what they saw or questioning their sanity. They rationalize the Unknown as a more mundane source of fear — criminals, terrorists, gangers — and insist that the police or other mundane authorities deal with the problem. At best, this solution does nothing to counter the Unknown or the monsters it spawns. More commonly and much worse, sending people who are ignorant of the dangers against the Unknown simply serves up more victims to its malicious servants, corrupting and endangering humanity even more.

These envoys know that most people can't take care of themselves when confronted by what appears to be incomprehensible darkness. Human societies across the world are built around different people having different skills, specialties, and interests. Just as not everyone has the dedication, instinct, and desire to be a doctor (or indeed any other profession), most people aren't cut out to be envoys.

Strange as it may seem, SAVE prefers this to the alternative where everyone wants to join, regardless of suitability. Apart from the lingering concern of O'Boylan's thesis that acknowledging the Unknown empowers it, SAVE has always understood that bringing in the wrong people as envoys risks the lives of everyone.

## PAYING FOR SAFETY

A far preferable outcome, as far as SAVE is concerned, is for these people to become patrons of the Society. Hunting monsters is rarely a lucrative business, even for the traditionalist headquarters. As well as the toll on envoy sanity and safety, almost everything SAVE does has a financial cost. Even the most independent cell needs somewhere to store its equipment or information archives. Most cells also need a safe house somewhere to retreat to and recuperate when the Unknown's forces prove too strong for the envoys.

These resources require money to maintain, and grateful donors are a good source of these funds. Some cynical envoys believe that rich victims of the Unknown are more likely to pay to make it go away. They say the rich are accustomed to using money to make problems disappear. While this stereotyping is understandable, it's largely inaccurate. Although it varies between offices, most have well-off envoys working alongside those who lost everything or never had a penny to their name. The essential qualities that call someone to become an envoy appear to be independent of how many assets she has.



Most SAVE offices treat these donors with a measure of dignity, realizing that they're helping in a way they can understand. They take what the patrons can afford to give and use it wisely to stretch as far as possible. Rarely, some unscrupulous envoys see these patrons as exploitable goldmines. These envoys play on lingering fears, encouraging the donors to give more than they can afford. Sadly, these misguided envoys either don't understand or don't care that their actions are making the donors more vulnerable to the Unknown. People with wealth rarely want to give it all away; when they grow desperate and feel like they have no way out, mysterious benefactors tend to make an appearance in the donor's lives.

These harbingers of the Unknown usually offer to make the rich person's worries disappear for what appears to be far less than SAVE was extracting. These burned patrons are often very willing to provide information about the envoys to their new friend, or to undertake minor actions that lead SAVE envoys into traps. The subverted patron rarely even understands exactly what's occurred. Usually she rejoices in the disappearance of the people extorting her. Only much later does she realize how her benefactor asks for more each time, until the victim feels like she has nothing left to give but her soul.

### REFUSING THE CALL

It's entirely possible for people to deny the reality of what they've experienced, to gloss over the nightmares and do what they can to return to their previous ignorance. In fact, it's more than a mere possibility; most people who encounter the Unknown do exactly that. The human mind isn't geared to withstand the strain of facing such evil, and it's not necessarily a weakness of character for a person to close his eyes and turn away.

Some cynical envoys think that people who make this choice suffer for it, or are more readily victimized by the Unknown in the future. Envoys who think this way and who learn the truth suffer a crisis of faith at their own choice, because the reality is something quite different. Most people who choose to live in ignorance and explain away what they experienced are never troubled by the Unknown again. They experience life's smaller, mundane evils, and suffer the trials and tribulations of everyday life, but the darkness and monsters have many other victims to hunt, corrupt, and destroy.

People who choose the life of an envoy should take some measure of pride in their choice. They are special because they've chosen the difficult path. Unfortunately for SAVE, every year experienced envoys reach the limit of their endurance and walk

away from the fight, eager to rejoin the ranks of the ignorant, hoping they haven't gained enough of the Unknown's attention that they encounter its evil again.

### FIRST CONTACT

Most SAVE envoys started out like anyone else: cheerfully unaware that the sounds they thought were just the house settling were really a poltergeist. A few are legacy kids raised to destroy monsters by envoy parents, but even they can separate their lives into the time *before* they first encountered the Unknown, and the time *after*. The moment when someone experiences the impossible and knows it to be possible after all — the moment when someone discovers that her world is just a façade for dangers she has no name for — defines her. Those who chalk these moments up to fatigue, stress, pranks, or drunken stupors and forget they ever happened are, perhaps, the lucky ones. Those who can't forget, who prod the darkness to see how it moves or shoot it full of lead to protect their families, go on to walk the Silver Way.

### DISCOVERING THE UNKNOWN

First contact with the Unknown most commonly happens to survivors, the ones who pull through after a vampire attack or wisely move out of a haunted house before the ghost gets its revenge. They see the Unknown up close; they feel its malice. Maybe they lose a sibling to its claws, or maybe they pull off a desperate rescue. Maybe SAVE arrives to put down the monster that lives out in the shed and finds a new recruit watching the whole thing from the kitchen window. Envoys who started out this way often have a tired or jaded air about them. They've seen too much and they're in this for the long haul. The Unknown thrust itself upon them where they lived and it changed them.

In other first-contact stories, the future envoy is an active participant in his own disillusionment. People encounter strangeness all the time, but most of them dismiss it and move on, content in their ignorance. The ones who don't tend instead to track it down and pick it apart, or try to expose it to the masses. Although anyone can become curious when things aren't as they should be, some stumble across the Unknown more easily than others. People who go *looking* for weird phenomena, either professionally or as amateur hobbyists, often find more than they bargained for.

Some professions bring people close to the kinds of bloodshed and trauma the Unknown leaves in its wake as a matter of course, in prime position to encounter victims or evidence. People in the business



of gathering information and stories almost can't help but run across inexplicable anecdotes or ancient tomes in languages no human ever spoke. Hints of the Unknown speak more clearly to those who spend a lot of time away from civilization or who live outside the system.

## Running into Trouble

SAVE envoys come from all walks of life. Those already haunted by violence are prone to bumping into the Unknown on the job. Police officers, FBI agents, and private investigators contend with bloody mysteries day in and day out. What seems like a murder case or routine drug ring bust can turn out to be the predations of a wight or an epidemic of brain worms. One piece of otherworldly evidence is all it takes for some detectives to obsess over solving the unsolvable, which inevitably leads them to the Unknown.

On the other side of the law, criminals get involved with these creatures when their territory or victims overlap. Some end up performing even darker deeds than before, suborned by a monster's will. Others realize the danger it poses to humanity and turn their underworld skills to nobler purpose. Soldiers, security guards, and others charged with protection can find themselves fighting an enemy more dangerous than they know; those who choose to battle the inhuman foe regardless of the cost often take up that fight for the rest of their lives.

Some see the aftermath of the Unknown's victories in their professions. Doctors and nurses, EMTs, medical examiners, psychologists, counselors, clergy, and morgue workers all encounter the enemy's victims after it's already done its work. When they run into a problem they can't explain or a question they can't answer, some do everything in their power to discover the true cause or find the right treatment, bringing them face to face with the Evil Way. Those who later join SAVE are often among the most compassionate envoys, having seen up close what the Unknown can do.

Those who look for trouble and find it are likely to fall further down the rabbit hole until they emerge with answers. Scientists and archaeologists run across hints of the Unknown as phenomena or historical evidence that doesn't fit with current theories. A physicist might notice pockets of inverted gravity, while a historian studies a relic with markings from no known civilization. Both of them dig deeper into the conundrum until they find the truth; once they do, it throws everything they thought they knew into question. It might ruin them to learn that their life's work was built on a fundamental misunderstanding of reality — but it might also spur them to reshape

their life's work around a new understanding, to study the darkness until it too becomes subject to rules and timelines. They soon learn that the Unknown is not so accommodating, but that doesn't stop them from trying. These often become SAVE's most insatiable scholars, gathering data from their colleagues to learn what makes the Unknown tick and invent ways to combat it.

Occultists, paranormal investigators, and conspiracy theorists often chance upon the supernatural in the form of the Evil Way or the Art, as they search for ways to conduct séances and cast spells or document unexplained phenomena and post them on blogs. An occultist might mistake a tome enchanted by the Evil Way for a book of fertility rituals and find much darker forces at work than he expected. A conspiracy theorist might videotape what she thinks is alien activity only to find that she's actually recorded a SAVE envoy erecting a Sphere of Protection against a werewolf's attack. Some might inadvertently poke their noses into SAVE archives while searching for occult resources or exploring urban legends. Occultists are among SAVE's most cautious and practical envoys, knowing full well what the forces of dark magic are capable of, while the paranormal investigators and conspiracy theorists tend to feel vindicated and become SAVE's most dedicated and headstrong danger seekers.

Some people encounter evidence of the Unknown while trying to gather information or find inspiration in stories. Librarians and archivists collect knowledge in all forms and make it accessible, bringing them in contact not only with rare tomes and suspicious heirlooms, but with people asking questions — and if one thing exposes the workings of the Unknown, it's too many questions. In many ways a librarian is an investigator, combing every possible resource to find the answers and serve her patrons. If the trail of questions forms a weird pattern or points her to dubious characters, she might delve deeply enough to find the monster behind the mystery. An archivist called upon to catalog a box of old letters may read them and realize the elderly woman who just passed away knew more than anyone believed. A museum curator who acquires a collection of Egyptian tomb artifacts may find deathly intruders rising to steal them back on the late shift. These folks are often the ones who organize SAVE's files, classify creatures, keep knowledge flowing among cells, and know how to preserve — or properly destroy — dangerous objects of power.

Journalists, spies, and creative types are more likely to run across stories of the Unknown out in the world. They deal in anecdotes and what's happening in people's lives right now. Reporters, secret operatives, and any others who peddle information for a



living practice finding inconsistencies and examining details. They look for what's strange and different, because it makes for reportable news or valuable intelligence. It's all too easy for them to pick up on threads that sound somehow *off* and follow them back to an Unknown mastermind or a subtle spirit manipulating events. Writers and artists, on the other hand, tend to seek new experiences and worldviews, which puts them directly into the Unknown's spotlight. They go out of their way to meet quirky people and recluses, hang out in unfamiliar nightlife hotspots, and explore hidden corners in city and wilderness to unearth new ideas. They watch and listen. With their wandering eyes and vivid imaginations, they're among the most willing to believe evidence of the Unknown, and among the least likely to forget about it afterward.

The Unknown stumbles over those on the outskirts of society about as often as they stumble over it. Creatures who think in big-picture terms believe it's in their best interests to encourage poverty and homelessness; the system doesn't protect the struggling people it produces, and they must learn to be self-reliant. Monsters think that makes them easy pickings, but that self-reliance helps these people escape the clutches of the darkness and take advantage of its overconfidence. Once they survive what lurks in back alleys, SAVE is the only place they can look for help, and as a result they often become SAVE's most loyal full-time envoys.

Others who spend long hours away from bustling civilization, whether by exploring nature, living off the grid, or traveling constantly, inhabit the very spaces the Unknown hoards for itself to keep away from the public eye. A trucker who drives all night on empty highways and a park ranger who patrols the forest alone are isolated and vulnerable in the Unknown's backyard. People afflicted with wanderlust and wonder regularly attract unwanted attention, and their explorer's instincts don't want to turn back from the new world they've found once they're in it.

What about your average Jane, though, working a nine-to-five gig coding Java and watching TV like everyone else? The Unknown finds her too. That power outage at her office building might turn out to be a haunting when she goes down to the basement to reset the circuit breakers. That inspection officer asking weird questions at her construction site might be a SAVE envoy trying to pin down a shapeshifter. That funny Internet friend who shares all her interests might be cruising for something else when it asks to meet in person. Sometimes someone is just in the wrong place at the wrong time and witnesses something unreal. Sometimes her instincts tell her that no matter how normal a situation may seem, it's *not*. If

she doesn't manage to shake it off, she alienates her friends and family with her insistence that no, it really was a zombie! To prove she's not crazy, she picks at the scab until proof falls out, gaining just enough knowledge to be dangerous.

## DISCOVERING SAVE

Once someone discovers the Unknown, discovering SAVE isn't far behind. Most first contact situations with SAVE happen after someone peers into the abyss or recovers from an attack. Survivors of the Unknown's predations and the people surrounding a case — like witnesses and those connected to the victim — are the easiest potential recruits for envoys to find, already in the thick of things as accessories to an investigation. Traditionalist HQs prefer this method, as it cuts down on initiating the unsuspecting into the world of the supernatural. Many envoys only extend the truth to those who express an interest in what *really* happened, loath to foist unpleasant knowledge onto someone who doesn't really want it. Some even outright lie to avoid giving anything away, too distrustful to risk it. In some places, though, SAVE's ranks are thin and they can't afford to be so choosy. Some envoys are taught to drop hints like breadcrumbs and encourage the witness to follow the trail. A few of the more aggressive (or desperate) cell HQs even espouse the philosophy that anyone who experiences the Unknown is *already* considered an envoy who can be called to action at any time, whether he wants to act or not. SAVE also sometimes recruits repeat victims — when a creature latches onto a place or a person and plays the long game to terrorize someone, envoys can often convince him to fight back against his tormentor.

Since SAVE's primary mission is to protect people from the Evil Way, envoys often come across would-be victims — or would-be rescuers — right in the middle of an encounter with the Unknown. In many cases, the envoys prevent the monster from harming its innocent prey and leave before they have to face inquiry. In other cases, the hunted insists on becoming the hunter and wants to help, or an interloper investigating on her own happens across the envoys mid-chase. Now they must not only destroy the creature, but also protect and swiftly educate an untrained, inexperienced rookie, all while keeping their limbs attached to their bodies. Sometimes a new recruit is their reward. Sometimes, though, they fail. The amateur makes a mistake and an envoy dies. The envoys spread themselves too thin and the monster picks them off. Their charge is as terrified of the Art as he is of the vampire and flees alone into the dark.

Lost HQs and those with reason to be wary are hesitant to take recruits they find this way, fearing the



worst case scenario: the Unknown plants false victims in SAVE's path as promising prospects to get its foot in the door, infiltrating without having to fake a previous SAVE identity. And sometimes, an envoy deliberately recruits civilians mid-fight, courting disaster in hopes of finding a few keepers. Most offices frown on this, but one or two sweep it under the rug if they get a valuable resource out of it.

Often, when someone gets wind of strange happenings and investigates independently, she crosses SAVE's path before the creature responsible for the disturbance ever shows its face. When an envoy picks up the trail of a supernatural murder, he may meet the homicide detective in the middle and end up with a lot of explaining to do. A suspicious doctor who catches an envoy miraculously healing wounds she couldn't even identify is likely to grill him about it. Cell HQs in particular like to recruit this way, as the newcomer has already proven herself resourceful and talented in the field. These folks are easy to convince — who doesn't want to keep doing what she's doing, but with more resources and backup? A fair number of envoys begin their careers this way, and the singular ones who manage to out-SAVE SAVE on their first rodeos usually become swiftly rising stars.

Some offices put envoys on website-crawling duty (or write algorithms to do it for them), searching for the wheat among the chaff of paranormal sightings blogs and conspiracy theory forums to find people who have seen something real. Not everyone who receives an email offering resources and the truth is willing to follow up, but enough are that the Internet is a decent tool for recruitment.

Occasionally, envoys hear news of miracles, or witchcraft, or psychic powers, and realize they've discovered a rare specimen: someone who figured out how to use the Art on her own. These people are hot commodities for SAVE; if multiple HQs hear about one at the same time, the race is on for who can convince her to join first. Unfortunately, telling the difference between a legitimate prodigy and a monster pretending to be one can be distressingly difficult.

## The SAVE Debrief

Since SAVE has no kind of official authority as far as the world at large is concerned, it can be tough to manufacture reasons to interview people about a trauma they just went through or a loved one they lost. The simplest way is to *pose* as official authorities, but it gets tricky when the actual authorities are on the same case or envoys don't have access to convincing forgeries. This is why many SAVE offices try to maintain contacts in their local police forces. A detective or medical examiner can invite envoys to the scene as assistants or consultants. Contacts or envoys ensconced in a hospital or counseling center help too. When legitimate avenues aren't possible, envoys get creative. They pretend to be reporters, oral historians, students writing a paper, documentarians, social workers, or any number of other knowledge seekers out to hear the witness' story.

With an excuse to talk, the envoys must make every minute count. Most people are either reluctant to divulge the details of something they think is nonsense or too upset to have the conversation. SAVE tries to send envoys with experience drawing people out of their shells or getting information from them, and most offices much prefer the carrot to the stick, understanding full well just how awful an encounter with the Unknown is and what kind of lasting impact it can have. That's not to say it always works out that way, though. In a pinch, when the creature closes in and the envoys have mere hours or minutes to solve the case before someone dies, the right person and the light touch aren't always options. SAVE tries to be as sensitive as it can, but it's spilled its share of milk and burned its share of bridges. When witnesses become belligerent, either because they're under the Evil Way's influence or just because they don't want to cooperate, some HQs take them in by force and do whatever is needed to get answers.

Envoys aren't the only ones looking for answers during a debriefing. Witnesses to abominations and those who have lost friends to the darkness want to know *why*. "What happened?" "Who are you?" "How did you know how to kill it?" Most envoys try to deflect questions or answer them as briefly as possible, unless they view the interviewee as a recruit. Some offices provide a Debrief FAQ to their envoys for just this situation — in a time of stress, it's nice to have guidelines to turn to, and internal consistency helps contain potential information leaks. The following document is circulated mostly among traditionalist HQs, although even cells and isolationists like to provide some suggestions.



## SAVE Debrief Frequently Asked Questions, v. 3.2

A copy of this document should accompany all envoy teams into the field.  
Please record all other questions asked by the witness for future updates to this list.

**Q: *Why don't you tell people about SAVE and the Unknown?***

A: As much as we would love to advertise on television, revealing ourselves to the Unknown so blatantly would put us all in grave danger. The element of surprise is our greatest weapon. Besides, public knowledge of the Unknown would cause mass panic, in the event that anyone believed us at all.

**Q: *Does the government know about SAVE and the Unknown?***

A: No.

*(Note: this may not be true depending on your location. Give this response anyway. The last thing we need is to expose the few government contacts we have.)*

**Q: *Are you some kind of psychic? Doesn't magic make you one of the bad guys?***

A: Not at all. We practice the Art of the Silver Way. Our abilities help us fight the Unknown and protect innocent people like you. Every practitioner trains diligently to master these talents, which are never used to inflict harm.

**Q: *Where do monsters come from? What do they want?***

A: They come from the Unknown, a dimension outside our world, equivalent to Hell if you like. Sometimes they escape, or malicious agents of the Evil Way summon them here. They want nothing less than the ruin of humanity. We stand as guardians between them and you.

**Q: *Who holds SAVE accountable?***

A: We hold ourselves accountable. SAVE maintains strict policies and codified procedures for every contingency, and a rigorous recruitment regimen to vet our envoys. Don't worry — SAVE is on your side.



## TRUTH AND CONSEQUENCES

Working for SAVE puts envoys on the front line of the war, not just between light and dark but also between knowledge and fear. The Unknown is everywhere, and every operation has a high potential cost. Sometimes that cost is one that can be paid in money, but sometimes it's everything an envoy has.

### CAUSE OF DEATH: UNKNOWN

What happens when an envoy falls to the Unknown? The office and his team mourn, a new envoy is assigned to the group (hopefully), and the work of saving the world continues, one case at a time. What happens outside of SAVE, though? People have lives and families, and no one wants to risk exposing innocents to the Unknown at a time when they're most vulnerable. Is it more ethical or moral to cover up a death with a disappearance or a lie to hide the truth, or is best left alone, even if that means outsiders discovering what happened?

### COVERING TRACKS

When faced with the death of one of their own due to battle with the Unknown, SAVE HQs must come to terms with one of two equally dreadful choices: stage an accident to cover up the true cause of death, or, if that isn't possible and the cause of death is likely to draw attention from the press or law enforcement, they can attempt to substitute the deceased envoy's body (or his or her records) with another more conventionally deceased individual. Neither of these tasks is simple or without risk; for that reason, HQs tend not to attempt them unless absolutely necessary. Well-established HQs with contacts in the coroner's office are the most likely to succeed; others may have to resort to hoping no one pays attention to things that can't be explained and it blows over quickly.

Traditionalist HQs are the most likely to have community ties and resources to pull off either cover-up option with very little fuss. Both rural and urban police forces are sufficiently overtaxed to make the authorities choose an easier, rational, explainable option over an irrational one. Cell HQs, depending on whether they transitioned from a traditional model or formed anew, may not have the connections to call on inside help. Their teams may use a more brute force model, wherein envoys hack into a computer, break into a local facility, or exert some other form of pressure to cover up the truth.

Lost HQs are the most varied in their responses. Envoys may be able to pull off some form of switch, depending on the size of the facility and the number of teams available, as well as how invested in their local

community they are. More likely, however, a lost HQ will do its best to make the cause of death uncertain or just get rid of the body altogether. Getting ahead of the problem by reducing the amount of evidence of the Unknown is far simpler than trying to clean up after the fact, if problematic in other ways. More than one area with numerous suspicious disappearances over the years is simply an HQ trying to shield the public and the envoys' families from the truth. Try explaining that to the *America's Cold Cases* television show, however.

Regardless of HQ model, all of SAVE is agreed that sometimes, it's necessary to take steps to preserve an air of normality about envoys' deaths, no matter how abnormal they may be. It's also necessary to do everything in a team's power to make sure nobody, and no body, gets left behind.

### NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

A "no envoy left behind" policy may seem impractical, but it's actually the most practical long-term solution. Working as a team against the Unknown means needing to trust each other with your life. Trust comes from knowing that if you get in a jam, you won't be left to the ironic mercies of whatever creature you're fighting — and if you fall, your body won't become something your friends have to fear.

For all the ideological squabbles within SAVE, this is one policy that receives nearly universal support. Sadly, it isn't always possible. SAVE envoys have risked everything to retrieve the bodies of their friends, only to fail in the end. Retrieving bodies is rarely worth losing more lives over, unless it's the choice between that and putting down a new monster. That said, the only thing worse than losing a colleague is not being able to do them a final service and return their body to their loved ones. Both instances have taken a toll on envoys from every cell on the planet.

When retrieval isn't possible, SAVE leaders have empowered HQs to do whatever is necessary. Traditionalist cells, which tend to have more resources and pull, have been known to go to great lengths to ensure that, if they can't recover the body, it won't be recovered by anyone else, either. A memorable example comes from the New Jersey office's files in 1987. Office chief Selma Fry and her deputy Lydia Scarrow lost a new recruit during an investigation at Long Branch Pier. Their envoy was murdered by a cursed doll, itself the center of a hub of spectral remnants that had taken up residence in the popular attraction. Unable to retrieve the body of their colleague, Fry and Scarrow set fire to the pier after the area was free of civilians. The doll was destroyed, the spectral remnants scattered, and the body washed



up down the coast a few days later, where the team's contacts later recovered it. The methods differ, but the unofficial rule is universal; no one gets left behind. If an envoy can't be recovered, then the Unknown pays dearly.

### PAYING RESPECTS

Even when the body is recovered, the work is only beginning. Traditionalist HQs may have a "benevolent fund" that they encourage all envoys to donate to regularly. This helps cover funeral costs and supports the families of those that fall in battle. This isn't a universal practice outside the more established urban HQs, such as London, Paris, New York, and Rome; if nothing else, a regular payment to someone else's benevolent fund would be difficult for any envoy to explain. In many cases, however, the survivors put together whatever money they can to help the family and bribe the necessary people to conceal the truth. Lost HQs vary in their approaches for handling the deaths of team members. Their envoys are often forced to choose between honoring fallen comrades and protecting those they left behind, assuming they have sufficient resources for any of it.

For the most part, envoys have relationships beyond SAVE; it's encouraged, even if there is additional risk of loss involved. Isolation has proven to be more damaging than connection with the world beyond SAVE. Each envoy must decide for herself, however, how much she is willing to share, and thus potentially put her loved ones at risk.

### SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME

Envoy romance is a long-running staple of SAVE life. Envoys often find themselves drawn to others in the HQ, even if these affairs burn out quickly. The intimate and heightened emotional experiences they share, in addition to the freedom of not needing to hide their common SAVE involvement, contribute to a unique recipe for emotional intimacy. That doesn't mean every SAVE couple is a good match, of course, but fighting off horrors beyond understanding does have a way of putting relationship problems in perspective. Therapeutic techniques can be applied to relationship issues just as easily as to trauma, and training always provides a good opportunity to separate people if necessary for a week or two to let things cool down.

### CORRUPTED BY THE UNKNOWN

One of the infuriating aspects of the Unknown is its ability to influence and even corrupt envoys. Through masquerade and mimicry, some of its creatures can infiltrate HQs. Through infection and contagion and mental influence, it can force envoys to turn to its service, even against their own friends and colleagues. Sometimes these changes are reversible. Sometimes, however, they are not. A question that divides old SAVE cells from new is what to do with an envoy who's fallen to corruption by the Unknown. There are a few facilities within SAVE as a whole in which to house and care for those who can't be left to their own devices or who need time and assistance to overcome the damage that's been done to them. Both cell and traditionalist HQs have access to them, in theory, though cell HQs may not realize it or may not take advantage of it, if it means making their HQ too widely known. Some traditionalist HQs have had a zero tolerance policy following Dublin in '89, but most have relaxed their hardline reactions in the years since.

As with many questions of betrayal, intentional or not, it's easy to demand a harsh penalty in the abstract. It's far harder to look into the face of your team member and mete out punishment for something that may not be within their control. Common protocols call for rendering the person unconscious or otherwise unable to harm themselves or others while doing as little injury as possible. The Protective Art allows a corrupted individual to be kept within a warded area, though this won't prevent him or her from speaking or acting within that space. Tasers or mace/pepper spray and zip-ties can be effective in taking out an influenced team member and neutralizing her until she can be removed safely from the situation. Tranquilizer darts or otherwise drugging a team member is also considered relatively harmless, though not ideal. Most HQs keep non-lethal weapons on hand for just such eventualities, though. SAVE isn't in the habit of wasting assets, and SAVE's people are the biggest asset it has.



Douglas & Audrie:

Please familiarize yourself with these journal accounts from envoys Michael O'Boylan and Benjamin Lewis, dated August 1913. This case bears striking similarity to our current situation, so if you find anything useful, write down any pertinent details, make notes in the margins, etc. Just have it prepped by tomorrow's a.m. briefing. It should go without saying that these excerpts are intended for SAVE Washington, DC, envoy use only. Do not distribute without direct written permission from the director. She'll be in the meeting if you have any questions.

Asst. Director Vic Sturgis

Michael O'Boylan - August 28, 1913

After the trouble in Baltimore, we planned on heading north again to escape the heat, but I received a telegram from Nate Drummond just before we left the city. His nephew's set up in DC now, and says they're having a spate of disappearances, including a few public figures. Drummond wanted Benny and me to look into it, knowing we were in Baltimore. We agreed we'd make contact with his nephew and see if we can suss out whether there's any Unknown involvement or not. Benny's got the Model T, so we made it down to DC in just over an hour, meeting with Ernest Drummond at the DC headquarters on Callen Street, just down from K Street.

The DC team had already taken care of most of the initial interviews, so we were able to look over a compiled and annotated list of missing persons, which included a clerk at the Treasury Department, a well-known solicitor, and the wife of the junior senator from Massachusetts, along with eleven other individuals, all of whom disappeared since April of 1912. At least four people on the list had last been seen on foot, and in one additional instance on bicycle, in the area along the Tidal Basin. The senator's wife, the most recently missing, vanished the day before Nate Drummond's telegram.

Envoys Habel Winston and William R Robertson have examined the Tidal Basin area on several occasions, finding in one instance a small pile of bones and teeth, as well as part of a jawbone with three teeth still placed. Benny confirmed the bones and teeth were human remains and questioned Winston and Robertson as to the location they were found. Robertson stated he discovered the bones in the grass, a few feet from the walkway. Winston clarified that the bones were found under one of the newly planted cherry trees gifted by Japan. Winston further stated that due to the ongoing planting of the trees, the ground has been upturned in multiple areas along the Tidal Basin, and it's possible that these bones had been uncovered during the planting. Benny doesn't seem to think that's the case, as the bones and teeth don't have any fine particulate dirt lodged in the crevices. In fact, he says the bones appear to have been completely picked clean, like "a turtle left on an anthill."

With no further information available from the DC envoys, Benny and I decided to investigate on our own. We spent several hours along the Tidal Basin, looking for any additional evidence of the missing persons. The loose dirt around the most recently planted trees didn't yield any remains, human or otherwise, nor did we find anything along the waterline. Using a long pole with attached netting, Benny was able to dredge slightly deeper, but was interrupted by a DC Metropolitan police officer. Luckily, we were able to talk our way out of a citation, though any additional inspection of the water should probably happen after dark with a torch or a lantern.



should probably happen after dark with a torch or a lantern.

As we prepared to return to the DC headquarters, I noticed something beneath one of the larger cherry trees, glinting in the light of setting sun. I knelt down and discovered a severed portion of a hand, namely the little and ring fingers, the lower knuckle of the middle finger, and portion of the side of the hand. The glinting that caught my eye resulted from the sunlight reflecting on the ring on the hand's ring finger. Benny wrapped the hand in his handkerchief and tucked it away into his pocket to avoid any untoward attention as he carried it back to the office, where he will examine it more thoroughly through autopsy and give his full report.

#### AUTOPSY REPORT - Benjamin Lewis, 08-28-1913

Found along the Tidal Basin, the hand belongs to a white female, approximately mid-thirties to mid-forties. Based on the condition of the nails (long and manicured) and skin (no callouses) on the intact fingers, this woman likely performed very little manual labor. I found no foreign blood, tissue, or hair under the nails, though I identified plant fibers and flakes of bark consistent with the Somei Yoshino variety cherry tree under which it was found. With the current temperature and humidity, I estimate the hand was removed within the last thirty-six hours.

The section hand was cleanly severed as though by a blade or axe, rather than raggedly, as might indicate a bite or tear. The section recovered includes the complete fourth and fifth phalanges, as well as the third, fourth, and fifth metacarpals; the complete hamate, triquetral, and pisiform carpals; and portions of the capitate and lunate carpals. The bone and ligaments are sliced-through, likely in a single stroke. The remaining muscle tissue appears to have been drained of blood prior to the hand being removed.



Michael O'Boylan — August 29, 1913

Benny and I stayed in the flat above the DC headquarters, which is a fortuitous set-up compared to some of our lodgings in the past. This also allowed us to quickly liaise with the DC envoys and confirm that the ring on the severed hand in the park belongs to Mary Weeks, the senator's wife. While Glass interviewed the senator's staff and Ernest broke the bad news to the senator, I worked with Winston to learn more about the circumstances of Mary's death.

Winston has some experience with postcognitive inquiry, though her formal training was recently curtailed when the DC office lost two envoys to a violent encounter with a ghost in the crumbling ruins of a building in an area Winston referred to as Swampoodle, now largely dominated by Union Station. Without the guidance of her more experienced colleagues, Winston is now like a rudderless ship, tapping into the Art as best she can but with little direction. While postcognition has never been my forte, I provided Winston with verbal instruction and Benny offered her encouragement as she held Mary Weeks' ring in her hand and tried to piece together the circumstances of her violent death. Twice, Winston saw visions of Mary still alive, at times clearly unconnected to her death. As Winston tried harder to focus on the last moments of Mary's life, the ring gripped so tightly in her hand that her knuckles whitened, I heard her exclaim in great frustration, "All I can see is that damn tree!"

Benny perked up immediately at this, leaping from his seat and snatching his satchel from its spot on the floor. Benny's satchel is something of a legend, as he somehow manages to use it to transport twice the amount of books that should fit into a single bag of that size, turning it into a portable abridged version of the Archival Library. While I assisted Winston to a comfortable seat and provided her with a glass of water — use of the Art can take a heavy toll on new envoys especially — Benny dug through various books and cases containing scrolls or maps. Finally, he pulled out a book, which I recognized as Thomas Belby's compiled translations and treatises on oracle bone script, a tome that is useful only rarely in the Western half of the world, but which has been indispensable on a handful of occasions when my colleagues and I have traveled in the East to deal with unique or unfamiliar manifestations of the Unknown.

Benny flipped through the pages with slightly less reverence than usual, flipping to a page that he held up before me, tapping a handwritten note alongside a printed description of contemporary Japanese mythology on kodama, tree-dwelling spirits. The scribbled annotation, barely legible, read, "Kachi says some of the trees are hungry." I apologized to Winston as I once again pressed the ring into her palm, urging her to try once more to visualize Mary Weeks' death. This time, the air around Winston seemed to quiver with her effort, and if her knuckles had whitened before, they blanched paler than that partial severed hand. "The tree!" she shouted. "Its leaves look like razors!"

Winston fell into a near-swoon, slumped back in her chair. Benny fanned her with the book while he and I formulated a plan to investigate this tree. By the time Winston recovered, we had readied several of the tools of our trade. I armed myself with a pair of knives, one silver and one iron, and Benny, genius that he is, pieced together a flamethrower. Words of wisdom from Benny: "Trees don't like fire."



Benjamin Lewis - August 29, 1913

Words of wisdom from Benny: "Quit misquoting me, you ass!"

I created a rudimentary device for igniting a flammable liquid as it sprays, so yes, I technically did jury rig a flamethrower using the tools and equipment available to me at the DC SAVF headquarters. However, I gave a much more detailed and comprehensive, if admittedly less succinct, explanation of how to use it and why, with citations of two specific examples where fire has been an effective tool for driving the Unknown out of demonic flora. Boy-O's pithy summary isn't inaccurate, however. Trees don't, in my experience, like fire.

Ernest Drummond and William Robertson returned from the senator's office, and I brought them up to speed while Michael guided Miss Winston through a few exercises to help her regain some of her vigor. By then, the sun was beginning to sink. I would have preferred at least a day of reconnaissance, but Michael and Ernest both argued in favor of moving forward in hopes of preventing another casualty. Drummond, Robertson, and Miss Winston readied themselves, and we headed to the Tidal Basin, the five of us and my flamethrower packed into my Model T, with Glass seated on Drummond's lap, being the smallest.

After parking, we approached the tree in question via the pathway. Robertson and Michael both held torches, though Michael's other hand was at his belt, ready to draw one of his daggers should the need arise. Miss Winston wore the dreamy look I associate with someone preparing to take a glimpse at the future. As I expected, when we neared the tree where we discovered the severed hand of Mary Weeks, Miss Winston put her arm out to call us to a stop. She looked exhausted, already shaky on her feet, but I watched the dreamy-eyed look overtake her.

As her vision seemed to clear, she glanced at Drummond with such a sharp look of alarm that Michael and I both naturally assumed a defensive stance, sensing her next words would be a warning. Robertson seemed more concerned with helping to steady Miss Winston. She brushed him aside - in fairness, she easily has a foot and fifty pounds on Robertson - and directed her words to her director.

"Watch out for the roots, sir," Miss Winston warned Drummond. He nodded his understanding, then we proceeded towards the tree, with weapons at the ready. At initial approach, it looked much like the other cherry trees planted in a line along the pathway, though now that I knew more, I began to see the small difference. The other cherry trees, most planted within the last year, were still slender, their branches not yet filled-out. In contrast, this "hungry tree" had a trunk half again as thick, with full branches and large leaves twinkling in the moonlight. It looked well fed, as one might imagine it would after as many as fourteen victims in the past year.

As we grew nearer, the tree's branches began to rustle in the wind...only no other tree shook, and we felt no breeze upon our faces. Michael, always the bold one, rushed forwards toward the tree. I watch its branches lower, limber as arms to grab at him, but Michael slashed at the branches with his silver dagger. The tip of one vicious branch dropped to the ground, thick sap oozing from it - or perhaps it was blood, black in the moonlight.

Michael's actions spurred the rest of us into action. Between the whipping branches and my four companions, I could barely track any individual's movement but Michael's, whose fighting style I know



well from these past years traveling together. He held the silver blade in his right hand, blade pointed up, and the iron dagger in his left hand, blade downward. He sliced at the tree without regard for the sharp-edged leaves leaving fine, strangely bloodless cuts on his face and hands.

Drummond, perhaps spurred by Miss Winston's words of caution, stayed out of immediate reach of the tree, behind Robertson, though when I saw the wildly flailing branches bouncing off an invisible barrier around Robertson, Drummond's actions made more sense. Miss Winston's tactic seemed to primarily involve distraction, shouting and darting closer, then leaping back when the branches struck. Michael continued to stab at the tree with his daggers. The liquid pouring from the truck was now obviously blood, Michael's arms coated in it.

The tree's movements began to slow as it bled out. Michael cut several more branches, which fell to the ground, looking for all the world like headless snakes, spasming and twitching. I shouted for Michael to move, and I pulled the tab to activate my flamethrower. Soon, the tree was engulfed in flames, its branches no longer whipping at my companions. As I watched Michael stepping backwards, aware from the fire, I heard a loud pop and then a bubbling wheeze behind me. I turned in time to see the root impaling Drummond go limp and slither to the ground, Drummond dropping beside it.

Miss Winston and Glass rushed to their director's side, so the tree was left for Michael and me to finish. It burned faster than I expected. Drummond still gasped for breath, with Glass on one side and Miss Winston on the other, when the tree was nothing but a pillar of charred wood and ash, a strange meaty smell mixing with the scent of wood smoke. The remaining exposed roots lay still.

Michael put a snippet of branch into a vial pulled from his coat pocket. Robertson and Miss Winston tried to help Drummond to his feet, but I could see he would never survive the walk to the Model T. I handed Glass my equipment and lifted Drummond as carefully as I could, carrying him more easily than I had carried Michael out of Fort Nelson. I sat with Robertson, Drummond supported between us, while Miss Winston quietly dabbed her eyes with my last good handkerchief. Drummond's breathing sounded increasingly wet, and bubbles of blood started forming at the corners of his mouth. Robertson's set jaw indicated he, too, knew Drummond was not likely to survive the night, if he even lived through the ride home.

As soon as we reached the headquarters, we rushed Drummond inside, hopeful that Robertson or I could successfully slow his bleeding. We barely had Drummond on the table when I heard the crackling sound I know too well, the death rattle that let me know we were too late to do anything, for Drummond but notify his uncle, so that Nathaniel Drummond could notify the rest of his nephew's family. Robertson's face went pale. I noticed then that Michael and Miss Winston were not in the room with us.

I collected what evidence I could from Ernest Drummond's body for the office's records. As is too often the case with SAVE, preventing more deaths among the public had hastened the death of one of our own. While I had only known Drummond for two days, and his uncle only by reputation and Michael's stories, the loss of any envoy is a personal loss to each of us within SAVE.



Michael O'Boylan - August 29, 1913

As Benny and Glass carried Ernest's body into the room Benny had used the previous night for the autopsy on Harry Weeks' hand, I tended to Winston. She didn't weep as I expected, but only shed a few slow tears, which she wiped away angrily.

"I warned him," she kept repeating to me. "I warned him to look out for the roots. Why didn't he listen?"

I had no answer for her. The gift of premonition is nearly as often a curse. I've witnessed many a comrade see his vision play out before him, the expression on his face the same as Winston's now bore. What is the purpose of this manifestation of the Art, if that which can be seen can't be stopped? Benny might have a wiser-sounding answer to that than I do.

Winston swallowed her anger and helped me tag the piece of branch I had retrieved from the scene. I agreed to copy the journal entries Benny and I had written on this subject matter, which we would leave behind with the sample, all tagged, logged, and filed away for future use, should the need ever arise. I personally think I will put a wide berth between myself and Washington DC for a while. It may be time to return to the Central Archives and start consolidating the records I've kept on my travels with Benny, Drummond, Dr. Gunderhage, and the rest of my mentors and companions.

Envoys: For additional references to this case, please check SAVE DC's casetiles #12A-12F (1912) Vampire Tree.



## INJURY

One of the oldest jokes told among SAVE envoys is this: Death is inconvenient, but injury is tragic. The death of an envoy is devastating, but at least it has finality. Explaining a series of hospital visits to concerned family members does not, particularly if the injury is severe or chronic. The Restorative School goes a long way toward taking care of the worst problems, but even if every HQ had a Restorative specialist or three, which they don't, the Art can't and shouldn't solve everything. Sometimes medical treatment is the only reasonable way forward.

Through the remains of the Asclepius Network (CHILL p. 121), contacts, or personal experience, most injuries can be treated in house. Some of the most established cells, notably the Woolsey and Plunketts cells in London and Cardiff, even have in-house clinics. The majority of HQs, however, simply make do.

In the modern day, SAVE policy is that first-aid training is mandatory for envoys. Most envoys can tie a tourniquet competently and put pressure on a wound, as well as identify and treat for shock. Many can even set a bone. A smaller number know how to remove a bullet or stitch a stab wound so it won't scar. For jobs like that, contacts are often literal lifesavers. For extreme cases, envoys are trained to memorize where the nearest pharmacy or veterinarian surgery is and what to look for when they break in.

Injuries to an envoy can also cause serious damage to the envoy's personal life; if you aren't regularly a thrill seeker and you return home with obvious injuries, it's entirely reasonable for loved ones to be alarmed and refuse to accept the excuse that you've recently joined a fight club. Experienced teams often come up with a mutual rough-and-tumble hobby cover in advance that they can all be a part of to reasonably excuse minor injuries in their daily lives.

## THE MADDRELL INCIDENT, 2005

In 2005, Alexandra Maddrell, one of the Manx envoys, lost a foot to a werewolf attack. Her HQ leader, Henrik Teere, attempted to fake a farming accident to explain the injury. Teere was discovered and, faced with a choice between going public and going to prison, he pled guilty. He served five years in prison for Reckless Endangerment to protect the organization. Tobias Quinney, his number two, took over.

The cell held the line for five years, during which time Quinney continued rising through the ranks of his day job at the *Manx Sentinel* Newspaper. He quashed whatever stories he could, shifted Maddrell off active duty, and "interviewed" Teere weekly for what was ostensibly a book. In reality, Quinney was being briefed by his old boss.

By the time Teere was released, Quinney was section editor. The week of Teere's release, he ran a retrospective on the story and exclusive "proof" that the accident had been the fault of Orry Gelling, a local farmer with a known reputation for animal cruelty. Gelling, in reality a vampire, was forced to move as a result of the bad press; Quinney led his team in tracking down and killing the creature once and for all. Both Teere and Maddrell administered the killing blow.

## WORKING WITH CONTACTS

The Maddrell Incident is something of an outlier, but it shows the lengths some HQ chiefs go to in order to protect their people. Faked accidents are common, occasionally even staging muggings or thefts to justify weapon injuries. In very serious cases, injured envoys are dropped off at hospitals as John or Jane Doe. This gives their colleagues a few hours to clean up before the injured envoy is formally identified and also gives them some effective treatment in a relatively safe place.

If placing an envoy in hospital under an alias isn't viable, there's always the criminal underworld. Off-the-books hospitals and mob doctors are no one's first choice, but if it's a choice between a colleague dying and breaking the law, even the most law abiding cell will choose the former.

There are some instances where even serious injury can be concealed. Envoys who work in the emergency services or armed forces have families who are used to unusual hours, long absences, and occasional injuries. Academics can take semester breaks to do "research," or even take a research secondment or visiting professor position for longer convalescences. Likewise envoys who work in business are often able to use their contacts to take extended "consultancy" trips that give them time to heal. This is a common practice in the traditionalist HQs of cities like London, Berlin, and Tokyo.

Lost HQs invariably have a more difficult time of things. The Petropavlovsk HQ in particular was hit by a wave of serious injuries and debt, both to the local medical facilities and the mob. The only way to pay that off was to go "in house." Now, they work as an offshoot of the local mob chapter, uneasily struggling to balance the demands of SAVE work with the needs of their new "patrons."

Often, these procedures are enough but not always. In many countries, employers can still fire an absent employee. Families may refuse to believe the excuses. Countless incidents in the organization's files tell of lives being saved, but relationships paying the price. In these events, an envoy's team is his main solace and shield. This is the real reason SAVE exists: anyone can



stand up to the Unknown; it's making sure they can do it again and again that makes SAVE worthwhile.

## PERMANENT INJURY

Not every wound can be treated or hidden. In extreme cases, such as permanent injury, cell leaders are authorized to draw from the benevolent fund to help cover medical costs. Should injuries permanently bench an envoy from active duty, they're also under orders to find them other work, both in and out of the organization. SAVE never quite lets its people go as long as they're willing and able to help. A spot on a cold case team or a consultancy position is always in the cards. This way the HQ can still make use of their expertise and the envoy can still contribute. See "Disabled Envoys," p. 75, for more information.

## RETIREMENT

The life of an envoy is often violent, terrifying, and short, but that's not always the case. Veterans are the backbone of SAVE, the source of the organization's institutional memory and key to their renewed successes in fighting back against the Unknown. SAVE's established support structures mean that many envoys spend decades in service, and in some cases, live past it.

Retiring is an honorable choice for an envoy to make. Whether due to age, health, or just a feeling that you've done all you can handle doing, the ability to leave on good terms and your own two feet is nothing to scoff at. For healthy, well-staffed HQs, retiring is a time for celebrating the envoy's contribution; the envoy will be missed, but she'll continue to play a supportive role in the ongoing fight. For HQs short on resources and personnel, retirement is a less joyful occasion. Now and then an HQ chief might try to talk the envoy out of her decision, but no envoy chooses retirement lightly; they all know far too well what's at stake.

Traditionalist cells in particular have found that when one of their envoys retires, they tend to do so for two reasons: injury or familial need. Injury or psychological trauma figures most heavily among the reasons for retirement. While SAVE is historically welcoming to individuals with disabilities, particularly if they suffered them in service to the organization, sometimes an envoy simply cannot contribute any further, whether in the front lines or as office support.

Familial need also takes its toll on SAVE's ranks. Envoys typically drop out due to parenthood, caring for sick relatives, and other major family upheavals, just as with any job. Some circumstances, such as imminent parenthood or sickness, mean it's easier for envoys to view the separation as temporary, coming back into service later when their personal lives aren't

so pressing. In most cases, envoys have the option to return to SAVE and take up the struggle again at a later time. No HQ is so well staffed that a veteran isn't welcomed back into service, whether on the front lines or as support.

## COLD CASE TEAMS

One of the few procedures viewed as important throughout SAVE is the creation of cold case teams. Retired or benched envoys are a valuable intelligence commodity that SAVE capitalizes on by creating teams that informally investigate cold cases, cross-referencing them and doing deep research to hopefully uncover new information for field teams. Cold case officers don't enter the field, but they have full access to their HQ's resources. Cold case teams tend to meet once a month in person, often for dinner, and discuss ongoing investigations and cases. Teams vary wildly in size, but their job remains the same, providing a second line of both support and defense. Active envoys hold the Unknown back. Cold case teams work out why it doesn't always work in hopes of improving the odds for tomorrow.

Lydia Scarrow is one such expert. The veteran envoy's work with the York office concluded in 1995 with an attempted mass exorcism at the Damocles Hotel just outside the city (p. 132). Scarrow, whose career with the organization took in HQs on both sides of the Atlantic, the schism and what came after, couldn't cope with the loss of still more colleagues. She retired to a small cottage outside the city, although, like many envoys, she remained on staff as an unofficial consultant.

Scarrow remains active to this day and her post-SAVE career is typical of many retirees. She takes on no new cases but has dinner with the current York HQ chief once a month. Nicknamed "Queen Lydia," Scarrow's formidable experience means she has no problem dressing down envoys with less experience than her. That first dinner is viewed as a rite of passage for new HQ chiefs. Scarrow also maintains a keen interest in the Damocles case and lives a mile away.



From: the Office of Charlene Christopher

San Francisco HQ Chief

To: all SAVE Headquarters

Re: Project Lifeboat

Effective immediately, all offices are to go dark. An infiltration has been detected originating near our San Francisco office. Envoy Caroline Rhodes was affected by an entity of the Unknown. Her behavior led to the death of several other envoys. What we did not realize at the time was that she was also serving as a vector for what we are calling an infection. Envoy Andrew David was infected, we believe, during a mission with Envoy Rhodes. Envoy Rhodes managed to infect others at 3 more locations before her access to SAVE was cut off and she was detained.

Additionally, and more disturbingly, someone or something managed to insert themselves as Director of the Oakland office. We do not have nor have we ever had an Oakland office. Somehow they managed to recruit and convince agents that they were a legitimate Director and that the office was a real branch, despite the San Francisco office being so close. No one who saw them is still alive; they even managed to kill the investigator assigned to look into the case that caused the deaths of so many agents.

Unfortunately, we did not detect the infection of the 4 envoys or the ersatz office. We believe they have served as the vector for the infection of many others. As such, we cannot know who we can trust with the secrets and safety of SAVE. All HQs are ordered to cease all missions immediately and desist from all activity. This includes all contact with other HQs. If you receive a call from another office, they are in violation of protocol and should not be trusted.

Be warned: these infected envoys retain all the knowledge of the host, including information about our protocols and weaknesses, both as individuals and as an organization. This means they will use your greatest fears and insecurities to turn you against your allies. I believe I am the last envoy associated with the San Francisco HQ to not be infected.

It is with a heavy heart that I make this decision. I know this will likely lead to the forces of the Unknown gaining a greater foothold in our world. However, in the long run, I believe it to be far more dangerous to let the knowledge and resources of SAVE fall into the hands of the Unknown. If the Unknown were to find out the depth of our knowledge of them, they would be able to adapt. I don't want to consider the damage the Unknown could do if they knew how to breach the precautions and safeguards we have worked for decades to put in place against the fraction of the creatures and entities we know about.

Stay safe, my friends. I do not ask you to stop fighting the forces of the Unknown, merely to take extreme precautions to protect yourselves and any information about SAVE or the Unknown that you have access to or in your possession. I know I could not keep most of you from helping those in need, even if I wished to. I want you to know I respect and admire you for that giving spirit. Good luck, and stay safe.

Charlene Christopher

Head of SAVE San Francisco HQ



## DISABLED ENVOYS

SAVE is, in some ways, diverse by necessity. Decades before concepts like “ableism” became part of the popular consciousness, envoys with a variety of disabilities were working against the Unknown. Some were disabled before they decided to fight against the darkness, while others became disabled due to particularly bad cases. In the end, the need to stop the Unknown isn’t only the prerogative of the able-bodied.

SAVE’s inclusivity of the disabled isn’t out of charity, however. Some of it is making do with what’s available, but it’s more than that. Many disabled envoys see their condition as an inherent strength in their fight against the Unknown. One such envoy, Dr. Geneviève Bélanger, wrote the following in a SAVE report from 1976: “If we confined ourselves only to those agents that were healthy, stable, and sane, we wouldn’t have anyone left within our ranks. I do not see this as a weakness. Instead, those of us called ‘handicapped’ can truly understand what it is like to silently struggle against an invisible force every day of their lives. I submit that I am a stronger envoy from my wheelchair, not a weaker one.”

### DISABILITIES AND DRAWBACKS

Let’s talk mechanics for a bit. Many disabilities tie into existing Drawbacks (CHILL, pp. 71-74). Addiction, Frail, Impairment, Mental Disorder, Poor Sense, and Phobia are the most common ones associated with known disabilities, but others may make sense with particular characters or situations. Regardless of SAVE’s perspectives on how disabled envoys are just as valuable as any other, from a mechanical perspectives Drawbacks need to be relevant — by taking the Drawback, you’re saying “I want this to be a factor in gameplay.” Bringing up a Drawback doesn’t mean the CM is belittling or denigrating the disability. It’s entirely possible to play a character that drinks too much without taking the Addiction drawback, in much the same way that someone who’s a drunk isn’t necessarily the same thing as someone who’s an addict.

That said, taking a Drawback is never a reason to be sidelined. If you’re playing an envoy with limited mobility, that shouldn’t mean your character always needs to stay behind while the rest of the team goes out and attacks the Unknown. Drawbacks are only interesting when they’re challenged in the course of a case, not used to prevent access to the case entirely. Put simply, disabilities give the CM a built-in reason to turn tokens light; she can’t do that if your envoy isn’t in the thick of things.

If a particular Drawback is preventing you from engaging in the game, talk to the other players and the CM about the issue. We’ll discuss this more in Chapter 3, from the CM’s perspective. Don’t worry — we’ve got your back.

## PART OF THE TEAM

While Dr. Bélanger’s report is hyperbolic, it contains a grain of truth. Pick ten random envoys, and easily five of them will have some form of physical or mental disability, ranging from mild phobias and hearing aids all the way to severe mental problems and broken spines.

So many envoys wear glasses that many joke about poor sight being a requirement for membership: “If you don’t have trouble reading when you sign up, poring over dusty old manuscripts will ruin your sight in no time!” Fewer are willing to quip about mental illness. A couple have tried lines like “You don’t have to be crazy to work here; it’s an occupational hazard,” but it’s always with a nervous laugh and a quick look to see who’s listening. In truth, the humor is not meant to poke fun at the disabled, but rather as a way to shrug off the reality that all envoys face as they fight the Unknown.

Understanding that SAVE envoys are unlikely to be in top physical and mental condition provides an air of inclusivity and a focus on positive contributions. When most of the people you work with have some kind of personal challenge, you stop looking at disabled people as unusual. Each SAVE office considers what their envoys bring to the table. Teams quickly learn to get past their reluctance to work alongside disabled coworkers when they’re deep in a case.

Just because the team can look past an envoy’s personal challenges, however, doesn’t mean the challenges don’t exist. Sure, a disabled envoy isn’t less valuable because of their disability, but that challenge is still a factor in how the team operates. No matter how highly SAVE values Dr. Bélanger’s skills, her wheelchair is a liability if a case takes the team deep into the woods. Just as SAVE as an organization accepts their envoys for who they are, disabled envoys have to be honest with their team (and themselves) about their limitations.

It sounds easy. It isn’t.



## VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE DISABILITIES

Some disabilities are visible, obvious, or otherwise known quantities for envoys to overcome. Everyone understands the problem when your glasses are broken, or the team buys a van with a wheelchair ramp when they go on investigations. Visible disabilities are something that a casual observer can take in at a glance and understand that someone has a disability. Some disabilities are only visible because of the presence of corrective aids, such as glasses or hearing aids, but it's still understood by others that there's a challenge being overcome.

Visible disabilities are known quantities, which can be both good and bad for the disabled envoy. Positively, most people are sympathetic to those with visible disabilities. Many are willing to make an effort to assist — especially if that effort is minimal. Opening a door for someone with a walker is simple, as is pushing someone in a wheelchair a short distance.

Other disabilities are invisible or not easily understood as a disability. An outside observer can't look at a person and see an addiction, chronic fatigue, or a mental disorder. Only through conversation or prolonged observation can someone understand that someone is disabled, and even then they might attribute the disability to other factors. The helpful spirit that rises for visible disabilities breaks down quickly after someone has to repeat an instruction for the third time to a hearing-impaired envoy or needs to learn sign language in order to communicate. The kindness of strangers is simultaneously important and impossible to rely on.

Those with invisible disabilities have the ability to “pass” as unchallenged people from time to time — unlike those with visible disabilities, strangers don't immediately treat them differently. However, this makes it harder (or even impossible) to ask for help because the envoy's disability isn't obvious or easily understood. Further, many people may not even consider the disability to be valid or “real,” accusing the envoy of being lazy, having a low willpower, or making up the issues for attention. It's a struggle to get others to understand that there is a problem, and a greater challenge to get the help needed when necessary. It doesn't help that the disabled envoy may not even be able to communicate that there's a problem due to the nature of their disability.

Whether envoys have visible or invisible disabilities, they all have to deal with an additional factor: the perception that they're helpless or otherwise unable to contribute. Many people persist in the belief that those who are disabled are incapable of contributing at the same level as an able person. The lines drawn sometimes appear arbitrary to the disabled themselves:

someone who can't see well without glasses is rarely (if ever) considered to be diminished, whereas someone who can't hear well is perceived as disabled. A crippling fear of heights is viewed as understandable, but a mild fear of being forgotten is viewed as bizarre and unhealthy.

Within SAVE, the focus is on contributions. Envoys with weak senses aren't often put on scouting missions, whether it's due to bad sight or bad hearing. Those with a deep phobia aren't put in situations where they would be incapacitated by the object of their fear, regardless of the nature of that fear. SAVE doesn't operate in a vacuum, however. How average people view and interact with disabled envoys can potentially impact or derail a case, and those factors need to be considered by the team just as much as the impact of the disabilities themselves.

## FIGHTING THE UNKNOWN

Disabled envoys fight the Unknown just like any other envoy. SAVE shifted internal terminology from “handicapped” to “disabled” in the 1980s to focus on “ability, rather than injury.” Just because someone cannot perform a function within the same range as another person, that doesn't mean they are incapable of performing the function at all. SAVE understood — perhaps more than other mundane institutions — that disabilities didn't *prevent* an envoy's contribution, but rather *changed* it. In fact, in some cases, the presence of a disabled envoy improved the team.

One HQ based in Cleveland brought on a deaf man by the name of Viktor Abdulov. He lost his hearing when he was a Russian soldier in the 90s, but his brush with the Unknown was over a decade later. By that time, Viktor had moved to the United States and become comfortable with American Sign Language (ASL), which he taught to his team. Some envoys resented having to learn sign language, but they quickly realized the advantages of having a silent and largely innocuous means to communicate. They were able to incorporate many ASL signs into mundane-seeming gestures, giving them an advantage when they needed to infiltrate an auction that was being used by a cult to smuggle artifacts of the Unknown.

Similarly, an envoy in Hong Kong (one of the Lucky 20 Men) named Ing Ye is autistic. Prior to his selection as part of the Lucky 20 Men, Ye was dismissed and ignored by other envoys. However, one night Ye noticed something odd about one of the newest recruits and went to the head of the office. Ye explained that the recruit wasn't moving right and “felt cold,” and he insisted that the recruit be checked out. The recruit in question was tested. They discovered that the temperature around him was half



a degree colder than anywhere else in the room — a result of him being possessed by a vengeful ghost. The malevolent ghost was exorcised, and Ye was admitted into the team.

### ON THE SHELF

Sometimes, the challenge for a disabled envoy is just too great. Maybe they've racked up one injury too many. Perhaps the mental strain is just too much, and they've had a breakdown. Whatever the reason, the envoy in question can choose to be put (or be forced to go) "on the shelf." This isn't retirement, but rather a chance for the envoy to heal or come to terms with his new challenges.

SAVE does what it can for envoys that are on the shelf, but there's only so much that can be done — what resources they have must be devoted to the continual fight against the Unknown. Often other envoys in the cell use their own skills to help out where they can, but in many cases all that's needed is time — the one resource that HQs sometimes can't afford to spend. Some envoys are pulled off the shelf before they've had a chance to recover, exacerbating their disabilities or forcing them to come to terms with their limitations before they're ready. Others transfer to a new HQ that might be better equipped to handle their recuperation. Inevitably, though, barring retirement, the disabled envoy is drawn back into the fight. No matter what, the struggle against the Unknown is ongoing, and every envoy is needed to stand against it.

### CIRCUMSTANTIAL BENEFITS FROM DISABILITIES

Nowhere in this book, or in **CHILL**, will you find mechanical benefits for disabilities. That's because disabilities are far more complex than "autism adds 15 to Perception TNs." If a disability is taken as a Drawback, that should be the primarily mechanical interaction it has with the game system. That doesn't mean, however, that disabilities can't occasionally provide some small benefit in certain circumstances. The CM may allow the group a chance to do something they wouldn't normally have access to (such as the example of communicating via ASL), or give a small, ad-hoc circumstantial benefit when it suits the story (such as a higher chance to notice possession). These benefits should never be relied upon and are up to the CM's discretion, but offering them once in a while can reinforce that disabled characters bring a different perspective and set of skills to a case.





# ESTHER ADEBAYO, MD

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

ATTRIBUTES		SKILLS		SPECIALTIES	DAMAGE
AGILITY	AGL 50		Movement 50	> Long Distance B 65	<b>INJURY</b> Superficial (-5 STA) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical (-50 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Lethal
STRENGTH	STR 55		Prowess 55		
STAMINA	STA 53	Close Quarters Combat	27		
FOCUS	FOC 55		Research 28		<b>TRAUMA</b> Distressed (-5 WPR) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Traumatized (-50 penalty)
PERSONALITY	PSY 60	Communication	60	> Empathy E 90	
WILLPOWER	WPR 58	Interview	58	> Counselor M 108	
DEXTERITY	DEX 50	Fieldcraft	25		<b>SHOCK</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.
PERCEPTION	PCN 65	Investigation	33		
REFLEXES	REF 58	Ranged Weapons	29		
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	STU 13				

<b>EDGES AND DRAWBACKS</b>	<b>DRIVE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prevent further tragedies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crisis Counselor (3 CP)	<b>HISTORY</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Help husband cope with stress of being SAVE envoy (P)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Esther Adebayo, MD**  
**Description:** 45 years, 5'4", 180 lbs., black hair, brown eyes  
**History:** Esther Adebayo was raised in Lagos and met and married her SAVE envoy husband, Olawale, there before moving to London where she had a successful career as a psychiatrist. She began running long distances to support a friend with breast cancer and found it was something she actually enjoyed doing. After seeing the effects of the stress of dealing with the Unknown in her husband and his colleagues, she joined SAVE hoping that she could make a difference in their lives.





# STEFAN AHLBERG

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

## ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	<b>AGL</b>	60
STRENGTH	<b>STR</b>	40
STAMINA	<b>STA</b>	50
FOCUS	<b>FOC</b>	50
PERSONALITY	<b>PSY</b>	55
WILLPOWER	<b>WPR</b>	53
DEXTERITY	<b>DEX</b>	50
PERCEPTION	<b>PCN</b>	60
REFLEXES	<b>REF</b>	55
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	<b>STU</b>	30

## SKILLS

Movement	60
Prowess	40
Close Quarters Combat	25
Research	50
Communication	55
Interview	27
Fieldcraft	50
Investigation	27
Ranged Weapons	28

## SPECIALTIES

> Hiking E 90
> Academic B 65, Folklore B 65
> Survival E 80

## DAMAGE

### INJURY

- ☐ Superficial (-5 STA)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Critical (-50 penalty)
- ☐ Lethal

### TRAUMA

- ☐ Distressed (-5 WPR)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Traumatized (-50 penalty)

### SHOCK ☐

Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.

## THE ART

### Sensing

» Premonition B 60

## EDGES AND DRAWBACKS

Attractive (1 CP), Background: Artist (2 CP),  
Emergency Medic (1 CP),  
Information Source: Art Gallery Owners (1 CP)

Impairment (leg injury, 2 CP), Marked (1 CP),  
Reluctant to Harm (2 CP)

## DRIVE

☐

To protect the natural world from the Unknown

☐

## HISTORY

☐

The Mara are attractive, but dangerously ruthless. (P)

☐
☐
☐

### Stefan Ahlberg

**Description:** 36 years, 5'11", 195 lbs,  
dark blond hair, blue eyes

**History:** Born in the city of Uppsala, Sweden, Stefan was raised with a love of nature, and as a result took up hiking and learned some survival skills. The perceptive boy showed a talent for art (and a hidden talent for the Art), and at sixteen went to Stockholm to study painting and art history. After graduating, he found that his talents were in expressionist landscape painting, though he has also dabbled in realism. He is protective of the environment, using his artwork to show the beauty and value of nature. To keep himself fed and sheltered, Stefan worked whatever jobs he could, never losing sight of the fact he is a painter. Stefan came to the attention of SAVE some eight years ago, when he encountered a Mara — a goblin-like creature that feeds on fear by causing nightmares — in the forest outside of town while on a painting retreat. After SAVE helped him defeat the Mara, he was recruited to the Stockholm office. His gift for the Sensory Art was triggered that day, and he has a pronounced limp from the battle.





# AASHI CHAUDHRI

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

ATTRIBUTES			SKILLS		SPECIALTIES		DAMAGE	
AGILITY	AGL	35		Movement	35		<b>INJURY</b> Superficial (-5 STA) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical (-50 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Lethal	<b>TRAUMA</b> Distressed (-5 WPR) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Traumatized (-50 penalty)
STRENGTH	STR	30		Prowess	30			
STAMINA	STA	33	Close Quarters Combat	17				
FOCUS	FOC	70		Research	70	> Internet M 120		
PERSONALITY	PSY	65		Communication	65			
WILLPOWER	WPR	68		Interview	34	> Online E64	<b>SHOCK</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.	
DEXTERITY	DEX	50		Fieldcraft	25			
PERCEPTION	PCN	60		Investigation	60	> Computer Forensics M 110		
REFLEXES	REF	55		Ranged Weapons	28	> Handgun B 43		
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	STU	12						

## THE ART

Kinetic  
» Power Surge B 65

## EDGES AND DRAWBACKS

Hopeful (3 CP), Peace of Mind (2 CP)  
Adrenal Overload (4 CP), Impairment (polio survivor, uses wheelchair or crutches, 4 CP), Marked (1 CP)

DRIVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prevent others from suffering same fate as her parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
HISTORY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Devised a method to trap a Digital Entity (A)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

### Aashi Chaudhri

**Description:** 26 years, 5'2" 140 lbs., dark brown hair, brown eyes

**History:** Aashi Chaudhri is a bubbly young woman from Chennai with an infectious smile and mad hacking skills. A childhood survivor of polio, she uses crutches or a wheelchair to get around most places. She had her first brush with the Unknown while looking into the death of her parents, which the authorities had deemed a freak accident. She discovered a Digital Entity that put her on SAVE's radar. When she worked out a method to contain the entity that almost worked, SAVE offered her a position and a lab. She doesn't get out into the field as much as she would like to due to mobility issues, but she has become a go-to resource for all things computer related.





# ROLAND HOLLISTER

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

## ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	<b>AGL</b>	60
STRENGTH	<b>STR</b>	65
STAMINA	<b>STA</b>	63
FOCUS	<b>FOC</b>	50
PERSONALITY	<b>PSY</b>	55
WILLPOWER	<b>WPR</b>	53
DEXTERITY	<b>DEX</b>	60
PERCEPTION	<b>PCN</b>	45
REFLEXES	<b>REF</b>	53
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	<b>STU</b>	9

## SKILLS

Movement	60
Prowess	65
Close Quarters Combat	63
Research	25
Communication	55
Interview	27
Fieldcraft	60
Investigation	23
Ranged Weapons	53

## SPECIALTIES

> Traps B 75  
> Rifle E 83

## DAMAGE

### INJURY

- ☐ Superficial (-5 STA)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Critical (-50 penalty)
- ☐ Lethal

### TRAUMA

- ☐ Distressed (-5 WPR)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Traumatized (-50 penalty)

### SHOCK ☐

Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.

## THE ART

Protective  
» Blessing B 65

## EDGES AND DRAWBACKS

Background: Rancher (2 CP), Bruiser (2 CP),  
Natural Leader (2 CP), Seasoned Envoy (1 CP)

Cursed (3 CP), Hunted (The Creature from the Ranch, 3 CP),  
Poor Sense (scent, 2 CP), Reluctant to Harm (4 CP)

## DRIVE

- ☐ Teach others to protect themselves from the Unknown ☐

## HISTORY

- ☐ Drove off a predatory creature from his ranch (P) ☐
- ☐ Protected a team from a pack of ghouls in a cave (A) ☐
- ☐ ☐

### Roland Hollister

**Description:** 45 years, 6'1", 175 lbs,  
light brown hair, hazel eyes

**History:** Roland had his first encounter with the Unknown on his family's cattle ranch in Texas, when he was in his teens. Cattle on the ranch started to go missing. He still isn't sure exactly what he saw that night, but it put him on a path that led him to SAVE. He eventually inherited the family ranch. When not running the ranch, he operates as a senior SAVE envoy in Texas, and periodically meets up with other SAVE envoys who travel to remote locations to investigate the Unknown. The roving field team that he sometimes works with is made up of senior envoys from various SAVE offices. They often tackle tough cases that various continental headquarters think will be especially challenging or important.





# Anaru Kamara

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

ATTRIBUTES			SKILLS		SPECIALTIES		DAMAGE
AGILITY	AGL	55	Movement 55				<b>INJURY</b> Superficial (-5 STA) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical (-50 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Lethal
STRENGTH	STR	50	Prowess 50				
STAMINA	STA	53	Close Quarters Combat	27	> Escrima B 42		
FOCUS	FOC	70	Research 35				
PERSONALITY	PSY	45	Communication 45				
WILLPOWER	WPR	58	Interview 29		> Injured B 44		<b>TRAUMA</b> Distressed (-5 WPR) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Traumatized (-50 penalty)
DEXTERITY	DEX	65	Fieldcraft 33		> Driving B 48		
PERCEPTION	PCN	60	Investigation 30				
REFLEXES	REF	63	Ranged Weapons 32				
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	STU	12					

THE ART	EDGES AND DRAWBACKS
Protective » Line of Defense E 100	Emergency Medic (2 CP), Pet (terrier, 2 CP) Reluctant to Harm (2 CP)

DRIVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Protect people from harm	<input type="checkbox"/>
HISTORY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed a Patupaiarehe's song to its victim (A)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Anaru Kamara**  
**Description:** 29 years, 6'1", 180 lbs., dark brown hair, brown eyes  
**History:** The eldest of a large Maori family in Auckland, Anaru has always had an instinct to protect those weaker than himself. When his rugby career was sidelined by a knee injury, he became a paramedic.  
While on the job one night he came across a creature he had, up to that point, only heard of in the bedtime stories his grandmother told of the Patupaiarehe. Those stories led him to the creature's lair and the SAVE envoy it was about to feed on. Anaru was able to destroy it and rescue the envoy in the process.





# ALOYSIUS LEWIS

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

## ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	<b>AGL</b>	40
STRENGTH	<b>STR</b>	50
STAMINA	<b>STA</b>	45
FOCUS	<b>FOC</b>	70
PERSONALITY	<b>PSY</b>	40
WILLPOWER	<b>WPR</b>	55
DEXTERITY	<b>DEX</b>	50
PERCEPTION	<b>PCN</b>	65
REFLEXES	<b>REF</b>	58
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	<b>STU</b>	13

## SKILLS

Movement	40
Prowess	50
Close Quarters Combat	23
Research	35
Communication	40
Interview	28
Fieldcraft	50
Investigation	65
Ranged Weapons	58

## SPECIALTIES

> Repair E 80  
> Pistol B 73

## DAMAGE

### INJURY

- Superficial (-5 STA)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Critical (-50 penalty)
- ☐ Lethal

### TRAUMA

- Distressed (-5 WPR)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Traumatized (-50 penalty)

### SHOCK ☐

Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.

## THE ART

Kinetic

» Skeleton Key B 65

## EDGES AND DRAWBACKS

Beginner's Luck (1 CP), Hopeful (1 CP), Situational Awareness (3 CP)

Hunted (doppelganger, 2 CP), Infamous (3 CP)

## DRIVE

☐

Get his life back

☐

## HISTORY

☐

Life destroyed by a doppelganger (A)

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

### Aloysius Lewis

**Description:** 45 years, 5'6", 150 lbs, black hair, brown eyes

**History:** Aloysius nearly lost everything when he beat a doppelganger in a game of poker while in college. The creature never forgot him. Twenty years later, when it was finished destroying the life of the man it was currently impersonating, it came for Aloysius. It stole his form and wrecked his reputation, his standing at his job, and attempted to end his marriage. His wife figured out what was happening, however, and risked her life to get Aloysius out of trouble and in touch with SAVE. The doppelganger has not yet been found and dealt with, and Aloysius lives carefully, staying away from his wife and his old life, looking for a way to track down the creature and destroy it with SAVE's help.





# EMILY MONTGOMERY

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

ATTRIBUTES			SKILLS		SPECIALTIES		DAMAGE
AGILITY	AGL	55	Movement	55	> Evasion B 70		<b>INJURY</b> Superficial (-5 STA) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical (-50 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Lethal
STRENGTH	STR	70	Prowess	70			
STAMINA	STA	63	Close Quarters Combat	32	> MMA E 62		
FOCUS	FOC	40	Research	20			<b>TRAUMA</b> Distressed (-5 WPR) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Traumatized (-50 penalty)
PERSONALITY	PSY	50	Communication	50	> Leadership E 80		
WILLPOWER	WPR	45	Interview	23			
DEXTERITY	DEX	55	Fieldcraft	55			<b>SHOCK</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.
PERCEPTION	PCN	45	Investigation	23			
REFLEXES	REF	50	Ranged Weapons	50	> Rifle E 80, Military Weapons B 65		
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	STU	9					

THE ART	EDGES AND DRAWBACKS
Restorative » Feat of Strength E 100 » Resilience B 85	Courageous (2 CP) Cursed (3 CP), Poor Reflexes (3 CP)

DRIVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avenge her fallen comrades	<input type="checkbox"/>
HISTORY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Squad was wiped out by a djinni in Iraq (P)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Emily Montgomery**  
**Description:** 39 years, 5'5", 150 lbs., blonde hair, blue eyes  
**History:** Emily Montgomery was the only daughter in a Welsh family of career soldiers. She worked her way through the enlisted ranks, became a second lieutenant in the British Army, and was given a command running supply caravans during the Iraq war. After months of unremarkable missions, her squad was attacked one night by a djinni. Fortunately, a SAVE team was tracking it, but it arrived too late to save the rest of the squad. Lt. Montgomery served the remainder of her enlistment and was discharged honorably. The next day she called the number on the card the envoy had given her and joined SAVE.





# NATHANIEL POWELL

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

## ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	<b>AGL</b>	40
STRENGTH	<b>STR</b>	40
STAMINA	<b>STA</b>	40
FOCUS	<b>FOC</b>	65
PERSONALITY	<b>PSY</b>	65
WILLPOWER	<b>WPR</b>	65
DEXTERITY	<b>DEX</b>	50
PERCEPTION	<b>PCN</b>	60
REFLEXES	<b>REF</b>	55
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	<b>STU</b>	12

## SKILLS

Movement	20
Prowess	40
Close Quarters Combat	20
Research	65
Communication	65
Interview	33
Fieldcraft	25
Investigation	60
Ranged Weapons	28

## SPECIALTIES

> Epidemiology M 115

> Forensics B 75

## DAMAGE

### INJURY

- ☐ Superficial (-5 STA)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Critical (-50 penalty)
- ☐ Lethal

### TRAUMA

- ☐ Distressed (-5 WPR)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Traumatized (-50 penalty)

### SHOCK ☐

Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.

## THE ART

Communicative  
» Calm B 80

## EDGES AND DRAWBACKS

Hopeful (3 CP), Information Source: Hospital (1 CP), Strong Stomach (1 CP)  
Clumsy (3 CP), Impairment (weak lungs, 2 CP)

## DRIVE

☐

Prevent the spread of the Unknown

☐

## HISTORY

☐

Found an infectious meme with statistics (P)

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

**Nathaniel Powell**

**Description:** 43 years, 5'8", 215 lbs, auburn hair, blue eyes.

**History:** An epidemiologist by training, Nathaniel first confronted the supernatural when working on a case for the CDC. The outbreak was indeed an infection, but not one that science could explain, as the only common link to the patients were they all listened to the same radio broadcast on Halloween. The CDC ignored Nathaniel's theories on the matter, but in controlling the outbreak, SAVE learned of his talents and recruited him to help predict and curtail the spread of other infectious Unknown entities.





# KAYLA JUSTINE PROFFITT

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

ATTRIBUTES			SKILLS		SPECIALTIES		DAMAGE
AGILITY	AGL	50	Movement	50	> Swimming	B 65	<b>INJURY</b> Superficial (-5 STA) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical (-50 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Lethal
STRENGTH	STR	40	Prowess	40			
STAMINA	STA	45	Close Quarters Combat	23	> American Kempo Karate	E 53	
FOCUS	FOC	55	Research	55	> Financial Forensics	E 85	
PERSONALITY	PSY	65	Communication	65	> Teaching	B 80	<b>TRAUMA</b> Distressed (-5 WPR) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Traumatized (-50 penalty)
WILLPOWER	WPR	60	Interview	60	> Conversational Interrogation	B 75	
DEXTERITY	DEX	45	Fieldcraft	23			
PERCEPTION	PCN	65	Investigation	65			
REFLEXES	REF	55	Ranged Weapons	28			<b>SHOCK</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	STU	13					

THE ART	EDGES AND DRAWBACKS
Communicative » Calm B 80 » Familiar Face B 80	Attractive (1 CP), Background: IRS Agent/Auditor (2 CP) Poor Sense (vision, correctable, 1 CP), Poor Sense (hearing, correctable, 2 CP), Reluctant to Harm (4 CP), Weak Stomach (2 CP)

DRIVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serve the greater community	<input type="checkbox"/>
HISTORY	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tracked down a cult by following the money trail (P)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Kayla Justine Proffitt**  
**Description:** 27 years, 5'7", 135 lbs, black hair, blue eyes.  
**History:** Kayla has an uncanny way with people, able to set them at ease no matter the situation. That, as well as her love of solving financial puzzles, is what makes Kayla such a great tax agent. Surprisingly, this is also what makes her a valued SAVE envoy. Since her first run-in with SAVE and the Unknown tracking down a corporate-financed cult, Kayla's efforts show her fellow envoys that even real monsters covet money and the power it brings in a human-dominated world. Money leaves a trail that the right tracker can follow all the way from lackey to lair.





# DERRICK RUNYON

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

## ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	<b>AGL</b>	60
STRENGTH	<b>STR</b>	45
STAMINA	<b>STA</b>	53
FOCUS	<b>FOC</b>	50
PERSONALITY	<b>PSY</b>	50
WILLPOWER	<b>WPR</b>	50
DEXTERITY	<b>DEX</b>	55
PERCEPTION	<b>PCN</b>	60
REFLEXES	<b>REF</b>	58
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	<b>STU</b>	30

## SKILLS

Movement	60
Prowess	45
Close Quarters Combat	27
Research	25
Communication	50
Interview	50
Fieldcraft	28
Investigation	30
Ranged Weapons	29

## SPECIALTIES

- > Folklore B 40
- > Deception E 80
- > Reverse Interrogation B 65
- > Pilot E 58

## DAMAGE

### INJURY

- Superficial (-5 STA)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Critical (-50 penalty)
- ☐ Lethal

### TRAUMA

- Distressed (-5 WPR)
- ☐ Minor (-10 penalty)
- ☐ Serious (-20 penalty)
- ☐ Major (-30 penalty)
- ☐ Traumatized (-50 penalty)

### SHOCK ☐

Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.

## THE ART

- Incorporeal
  - » Light as a Feather B 68
- Sensing
  - » Clairvoyance B 75

## EDGES AND DRAWBACKS

- Attractive (1 CP), Highly Attuned (1 CP)
- Glass Jaw (4 CP), Marked (1 CP)

## DRIVE

☐

Lay unquiet spirits to rest

☐

## HISTORY

☐

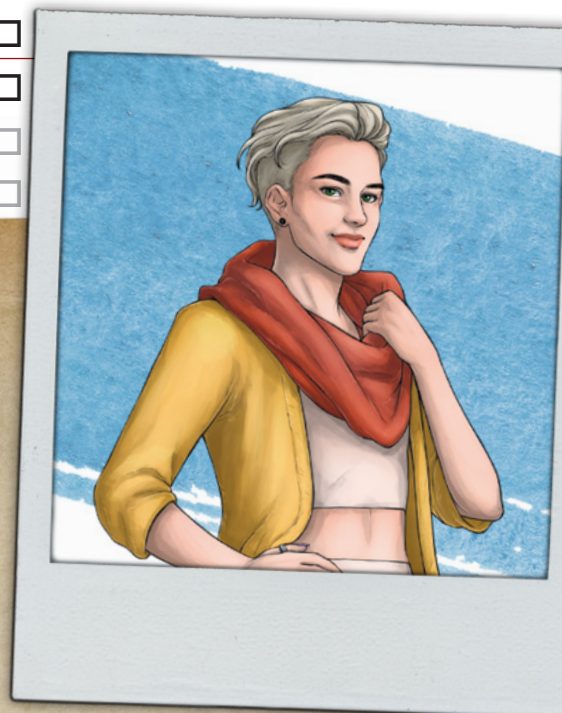
Marked by a spectral remnant (A)

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

### Derrick Runyon

**Description:** 24 years, 5'10", 160 lbs., bleached blonde hair, green eyes

**History:** Derrick has always been aware of the Unknown. They just thought it was normal to see and hear people no one else could. Born to a wealthy family in Ottawa, they've never had to work and flitted from vocation to vocation while "finding themselves" (the Runyon family, never quite comfortable with Derrick being genderfluid, largely leaves them be). Derrick was working as a fashion designer when they accidentally brushed up against something backstage at their first runway show that marked them as a lodestone for spirits. It still haunts them. SAVE took an interest and are helping Derrick hone their ability while they try to help others and get rid of the thing that lurks just on the edge of their mind.





# GABRIELA SILVA

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

ATTRIBUTES			SKILLS		SPECIALTIES		DAMAGE	
AGILITY	AGL	55	Movement	55	> Brazilian Jiu Jitsu B 40	<b>INJURY</b> Superficial (-5 STA) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical (-50 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Lethal		
STRENGTH	STR	45	Prowess	45				
STAMINA	STA	50	Close Quarters Combat	25				
FOCUS	FOC	55	Research	28	> Interrogation E 59	<b>TRAUMA</b> Distressed (-5 WPR) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty) <input type="checkbox"/> Traumatized (-50 penalty)		
PERSONALITY	PSY	60	Communication	60				
WILLPOWER	WPR	58	Interview	29				
DEXTERITY	DEX	65	Fieldcraft	33	> Handgun E 88	<b>SHOCK</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check instead of taking an Injury; apply the Injury's penalty to DEX, PCN, REF, and associated skills.		
PERCEPTION	PCN	50	Investigation	50				
REFLEXES	REF	58	Ranged Weapons	58				
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	STU	10						

EDGES AND DRAWBACKS		DRIVE			
Tough as Nails (1 CP)		<input type="checkbox"/>		Carry on the family tradition	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natural Leader (2 CP)		<input type="checkbox"/>		Survived a firefight with a vampire's cult (P)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>

**Gabriela Silva**  
**Description:** 23 years, 5'8", 160 lbs., dark brown hair, green eyes.  
**History:** Gabriela Silva is a second generation SAVE envoy. While she had always planned on following in her mother's footsteps eventually, she got a degree in criminal justice from the Universidade de Sao Paulo before joining the Departamento de Policia Federal. When her mother went missing on a case, Gabriela and her girlfriend joined SAVE to better look for her. While there, Gabriela discovered the backlog of cases marked "Transferred to the Dublin Office," one of which was her mother's, and began digging into them. So far, she has not found her mother or anyone willing to talk about what happened, but she knows someone in SAVE must have the truth.





# SIARO TALBEK

CURRENT STAMINA

CURRENT WILLPOWER

ATTRIBUTES			SKILLS		SPECIALTIES		DAMAGE	
AGILITY	<b>AGL</b>	50		Movement	50		<b>INJURY</b>	
STRENGTH	<b>STR</b>	40		Prowess	40		<input type="checkbox"/> Superficial (-5 STA)	
STAMINA	<b>STA</b>	45	Close Quarters Combat	23			<input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty)	
FOCUS	<b>FOC</b>	70		Research	70	> Medical E 100	<input type="checkbox"/> Serious (-20 penalty)	
PERSONALITY	<b>PSY</b>	55		Communication	55		<input type="checkbox"/> Major (-30 penalty)	
WILLPOWER	<b>WPR</b>	63		Interview	32	> Academic E 62	<input type="checkbox"/> Critical (-50 penalty)	
DEXTERITY	<b>DEX</b>	50		Fieldcraft	25		<input type="checkbox"/> Lethal	
PERCEPTION	<b>PCN</b>	60		Investigation	60	> Forensics E 90	<b>TRAUMA</b>	
REFLEXES	<b>REF</b>	55		Ranged Weapons	28		<input type="checkbox"/> Distressed (-5 WPR)	
SENSING THE UNKNOWN	<b>STU</b>	12					<input type="checkbox"/> Minor (-10 penalty)	
<b>EDGES AND DRAWBACKS</b>			<b>DRIVE</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>		Learn the truth about the undead	
Background: Clinical Pathologist (3 CP), Inured (2 CP)			<b>HISTORY</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>		Accidentally summoned a reoccurring specter (A)	
Reluctant to Harm (2 CP)					<input type="checkbox"/>			
					<input type="checkbox"/>			

## Siaro Talbek

**Description:** 40 years, 5'10", 165 lbs, black hair, brown eyes.

**History:** Siaro was born in Providence, Rhode Island. His parents were from Lebanon, and he has a slight accent that surfaces when he is scared or upset. He attended Brown University as an undergrad, and then Brown's Alpert Medical School. Currently he's employed by a large national reference laboratory as a roaming laboratory director. Being called back to the same site three years in a row led to him discovering a reoccurring specter, and being recruited into SAVE.

The flexible nature of his job allows him to travel and set his own hours, perfect for a SAVE envoy. His demeanor is low-key, somewhat reserved but friendly once he warms up. Siaro specializes in laboratory medicine, not forensics, and gets annoyed with people asking him about autopsies.







# CHAPTER THREE: THE CHILL MASTER

As the Chill Master, SAVE presents both a wealth of opportunities and a high level of imaginative overhead. On one hand, you have an in-universe way to introduce new cases, NPCs, and plot threads. On the other, you have to plan what SAVE does and represent all the faces associated with it outside of the characters. In this chapter, we provide ways to have the players help with the overhead of fleshing out SAVE while maximizing the opportunities available within your game.

## CHARACTER EDGES AND DRAWBACKS

While **CHILL 3RD EDITION** provides a number of Edges and Drawbacks (pp. 67-74), there's always room to expand. SAVE is a global, multicultural, inclusive organization. Diverse doesn't begin to cover it, because every HQ, and by association every team of envoys, is unique. Consider these traits as options for both character creation and Development Points, allowing players to further customize their envoys.



## EDGES

While many of these Edges are found among SAVE envoys, they aren't exclusive to SAVE and can be acquired by anyone.

### ADRENALINE RUSH (1 OR 2 CP)

Some professions and hobbies attract people addicted to seeking thrills: extreme athlete, first responder, soldier, and most certainly SAVE envoys. When the adrenaline hits your system, you're ready to get the job done.

**System:** When the character is injured and the player marks the Shock Box, she regains 15 Stamina in addition to the normal benefits. For the 2 CP version of this Edge, the character regains 20 Stamina and 10 Willpower.

### BEGINNER'S LUCK (1 CP)

When faced with a problem or task you don't know much about, you don't let your lack of experience stop you. The results aren't always perfect, but your beginner's luck rarely runs out.

**System:** When the player turns a token or marks a personal takeaway for a check using an untrained skill, add an additional 10 to the target number. This Edge cannot be used for a specialization of an untrained skill, only the skill itself.

### BRUISER (2 OR 3 CP)

Maybe you had a hard life and learned to power through pain, or maybe your body shrugs off punishment due to good genes. Either way, you can take more punishment than the average person.

**System:** For 2 CP, the player reduces the amount of Stamina lost from any Injury by 5. For 3 CP, the player reduces it by 10. The reduction applies to every Injury sustained, but this Edge does not change or reduce Injury penalties.

### SIXTH SENSE (1 CP)

Attunement to the Sensing School of the Art conveys significant enhancement to paranormal perception, but also requires dedicated practice and usually a competent teacher from SAVE. You didn't have formal tutelage, but you do have a better-than-average ability to detect the presence and powers of the Unknown.

**System:** The character's Sense Unknown score is equal to Perception divided by 3 instead of by 5. Also, reduce the Development Point cost of attuning to the Sensing School of the Art by 1 point.

## DRAWBACKS

Much like the Edges provided, these Drawbacks aren't specific to SAVE and may be used by any character.

### GLASS JAW (2, 3, OR 4 CP)

Whether the result of past injury or illness or simply how you were born, you don't take physical punishment well. You've largely learned to avoid getting in harm's way, but as an envoy, avoiding injury is sometimes impossible.

**System:** Every time the character suffers Injury, the player must reduce the envoy's Stamina by an additional amount based on the CP value of Glass Jaw. 2 CP adds an additional 10 Stamina loss to each Injury, 3 CP adds 15, and 4 CP adds 20.

### ADRENAL OVERLOAD (4 CP)

The adrenaline from being in a high-stress situation lets most people ignore pain and continue to fight for a short time. You feel the effects of stress and shock, but don't get the normal benefits. When you're hurt, you still feel everything, and additionally suffer the typical negative effects to your wits.

**System:** After marking the Shock Box, the character suffers Injury penalties to physical traits (Agility, Strength, Stamina, and associated skills) as well as the precision traits (Dexterity, Perception, Reflexes, and associated skills) until the end of the scene. The player must make a General WPR check each time the character is Injured; if the roll fails, the player must mark Shock.

### LOW RESERVES (3 CP)

Worst-case scenarios don't inspire the best in you. When injury or panic strikes, you feel exhaustion instead of exhilaration.

**System:** The Stamina loss from an Injury is not ignored when the player marks the Shock Box.

### UNATTUNED (3 OR 5 CP)

You may have stumbled on a terrifying beast or evil apparition, but you never connected to Unknown energies like your fellow envoys. Detecting the Unknown isn't impossible for you, but you like to stay grounded while the more mystically sensitive members of your team deal with any unseen forces.

**System:** For 3 CP, the player cannot turn tokens dark or mark Arcane takeaways to Sense the Unknown. If the character has the 5 CP version of this Drawback, she also cannot be Attuned to any Schools of the Art or learn any disciplines.



<elry0810> Maezine!  
<elry0810> Have you actually read the contract addenda that the panelists sent over?  
<mabe5253> Yes  
<mabe5253> What seems to be the problem?  
<elry0810> The green room riders!  
<elry0810> Some of them seem a bit far-fetched.  
<mabe5253> For example?  
<elry0810> Do you know how difficult it is to find Moxie in Seattle?  
<elry0810> Who drinks Moxie anymore?  
<mabe5253> What's wrong with Moxie?  
<mabe5253> I like Moxie!  
<elry0810> And Vegemite!  
<elry0810> Have you ever smelled Vegemite?  
<mabe5253> Why yes, yes I have  
<mabe5253> I'll give you the Vegemite one  
<elry0810> Mr. Robinson is insisting he sit as far away as possible from Dr. Wandel.  
<elry0810> He says Dr. Wandel's "energy" interferes with his abilities and is worried that he will not be able to demonstrate his skills properly if he is too close.  
<mabe5253> Those two have been oil and water for as long as I can remember  
<elry0810> I'm not saying we shouldn't honor these requests,  
<elry0810> But next time could we be a little more discerning?  
<elry0810> And maybe read the riders a little more carefully before we agree to them?  
<elry0810> And maybe, just maybe we could say no to some of them?  
<mabe5253> I won't make any promises.  
<mabe5253> We have orders to be as helpful as possible  
<mabe5253> This is an important occasion  
<elry0810> I know  
<elry0810> And in the grand scheme of things these are petty concerns  
<elry0810> Is anyone considering the obvious?  
<elry0810> Are we painting a giant "Attack here" sign by putting our best and brightest in one place?  
<mabe5253> I asked that  
<mabe5253> Several times  
<mabe5253> I lobbied against such a public venue, such a large event  
<mabe5253> I suggested each school have a smaller meeting in different locations  
<mabe5253> Spread it out a bit  
<mabe5253> It was decided that the benefits outweigh the risks  
<mabe5253> That they wanted the different schools interacting with each other  
<mabe5253> Learning from each other  
<mabe5253> They insist the collaboration can only help  
<mabe5253> But after the last time...  
<elry0810> That's what I was wondering.  
<elry0810> I mean, how many envoys were affected in Salem?  
<elry0810> It was only 2 years ago  
<elry0810> I'm sure some of them are still suffering the effects.  
<mabe5253> I know  
<mabe5253> And you're right  
<mabe5253> I'm doing all I can  
<mabe5253> We've increased security, brought in as many envoys with skill in the Protective Art as we can  
<mabe5253> They are determined to hold it so it's our job to make it as safe as possible  
<elry0810> I'm not so sure  
<elry0810> But I trust you  
<elry0810> I know you're doing the best you can, considering the circumstances  
<mabe5253> I'm sure it will be fine, Eleanor  
<mabe5253> Talk to Nathan about the Moxie  
<mabe5253> He drinks it too  
<elry0810> Now you tell me  
mabe5253 has disconnected  
elry0810 has disconnected



## BUILDING A SAVE HQ

*Miles stifled a yawn as he stretched both arms in front of his chest, fingers interlocked and palms facing out. He surveyed the furniture — the desk and shelves looked like a set made from mahogany, covered with brown stain that bordered on purple, and obviously hand crafted. Each piece hosted enough dings and blemishes that it was clear they were secondhand or heirloom. Miles stood to examine a photograph of four young people, probably about his age, standing in what he recognized as the quad of the Georgia Tech campus. He turned quickly when he heard a cough from the doorway.*

*"Everything here — the facilities, the envoys, the archives — all of it started with a round of beers and a plan made by the people in that photograph." Marcus entered his office and walked past the large desk before offering his hand to Miles. "I'm sad to say the other three who were in that photo are no longer with us, but I'm glad you are."*

This section provides rules for an additional customization of an HQ, building on the methods given in the **CHILL 3RD EDITION** core book (p. 141). This new step doesn't change the existing process to create an HQ. These rules comprise an additional step to be added between Phases Three and Four of the HQ creation process, allowing the players to purchase special benefits related to their headquarters that have a mechanical impact rather than being purely narrative/setting driven.

The additional steps given here allow players to purchase benefits tied directly to their HQ and the SAVE office to which they belong. Not all of the decisions made about the HQ in Phase Two and brainstormed ideas generated in Phase Three will be represented by purchased HQ traits. By representing only specific aspects of the HQ, players can prioritize the aspects they feel are most important and most likely to affect gameplay in their favor.

Using the new HQ creation rules, once players have chosen a path for their office, they follow three steps to purchase HQ takeaways, Qualities, and Advantages, all of which provide the envoys with benefits related to the characters' physical base of operations and the collective resources of the team to which the envoys belong. Based on the chosen path, players as a group receive a small number of HQP (Headquarters Points) to spend. They can choose to supplement this pool by setting some Character Points aside prior to character creation.

## SAVE HQ CREATION SUMMARY

The complete guidelines for running a SAVE HQ creation session are in the **Chill 3rd Edition** book, but are summarized here for easy reference.

### Phase One: Talk Horror

Each player provides examples of the type of horror they enjoy, and any content or topics that should be excluded during the game. Use books, television, movies, and other media for comparison and examples.

### Phase Two: The Big Picture

The players and CM determine the location for the game and HQ, and then address five topics: path, technology, rules, leadership, and the Unknown. Path describes whether the HQ follows the traditional SAVE model, the cell structure proposed by Hayat Nejem, or if the HQ is lost from SAVE. The chosen path is relevant to the new HQ creation rules because it determines the starting Headquarters Points (HQP) and benefits available for the HQ.

### Phase Three: Filling in the Details

The players and CM take turns inserting a new person, place, or thing into the setting. They can also modify or tweak an existing person, place, or thing instead of adding something new. The results of the brainstorming session should be three to ten important ideas for the campaign. These ideas can be integrated into the new rules if the players decide to represent any of the people, places, or things with purchasable Qualities or Advantages.

### Phase Four: Setting Sheet

The setting sheet is a place to consolidate the information and ideas developed over the previous three phases. The SAVE HQ Creation Sheet from the **Chill 3rd Edition** core book doesn't include space for the additional rules presented in this book, but an updated and expanded HQ Sheet with space for the HQ History, Qualities, and Advantages can be found on the **Chill** website (<http://growlingdoorgames.com/chill.html>).

Let's follow the group from the SAVE HQ creation section of **Chill 3rd Edition** as they use the new rules for HQ Points and benefits. The CM, Mike, explains to the three players (Emma, Cecil, and Tanya) that none of their previous brainstorming about the story or HQ has changed, but the players can choose to spend some of their points to buy benefits for the HQ.



## STEP ONE: CHOOSING A PATH

Having discussed preferences for the types of horror to feature in the game, the path and philosophies of the characters' SAVE office, and the important people, places, and things in their corner of the world, the players can buy benefits for their group through the headquarters. The first step is determining what stats their HQ starts with by looking at the path chosen by the players.

### TRADITIONAL HQ

**Traditional HQ:** If the players decided on a traditional office, they gain the benefit of membership in old-world SAVE. The organization still boasts wealthy patrons and benefactors, along with the world's most notable collections of information about the Unknown. These additional resources come with a significant cost, however: the players' characters are not at the top of the food chain in SAVE and likely are not the leaders in their office. They'll be expected to follow orders; in addition, that office's resources must be devoted to multiple teams at someone else's discretion, meaning they may not always be available when the team wants them.

**System:** Starting with a traditional HQ provides the players with 3 HQ Points, one HQ history slot with a takeaway, and two additional empty HQ history slots. The perks of the traditional HQ come with a special disadvantage called Chain of Command.

### DISADVANTAGE: CHAIN OF COMMAND

Hierarchical organizations like the traditional model of SAVE provide significant resources, but not all of them are available to the envoys at any given time. The CM can *turn a token light* once per session to restrict the characters from using any or all of the Qualities and Advantages of their HQ for the remainder of a scene or recovery.

### CELL HQ

Characters who belong to an HQ adopting the modern, more insulated approach endorsed by Hayat Nejem don't have access to the full benefits of the SAVE bureaucracy, but also enjoy a greater degree of self-determination. Most teams following the new model connect with two or three other SAVE offices and trade information with envoys online. The characters may comprise all of the active envoys in the HQ, or they might hold positions of leadership or authority depending on how the HQ handles decision-making and discipline.

**System:** A cell HQ begins with 2 HQ Points, one HQ history slot with a takeaway, and one additional empty HQ history slot.

### QUALITY: US AGAINST THE WORLD

This HQ Quality represents the characters' connections to one another and cohesion as a group, formed through facing impossible odds together. No matter what horrors they face, they can always rely on their team members. Any player may check one of their character's personal takeaways and give the benefit (+10 to a target number or decreased Trauma rank) to a fellow team member.

### LOST HQ

The third path available for the players, a lost HQ, indicates either that the HQ broke all ties with SAVE or that they were never part of SAVE to begin with. Other SAVE teams may come to look for the envoys if their successes (or failures) attract attention, but the characters should become accustomed to facing Unknown threats without the benefit of a parent organization or friendly field offices in neighboring cities. Lost HQs can be well-funded; the characters may even represent a small portion of a larger collective of monster hunters not affiliated with SAVE.

**System:** A lost HQ starts with only 1 HQ Point and one HQ history slot with a takeaway. Lost HQs also begin with a special Quality at no cost to the players, Us Against the World.

The group previously decided that their Toronto-based SAVE HQ followed Hayat Nejem's model for a cell style HQ. Mike informs them that they get an HQ history with a takeaway, an additional empty HQ history slot, and 2 HQ Points.



## STEP TWO: HQ HISTORY AND TAKEAWAYS

Based on the HQ type, the characters' home base begins with a set number of open HQ history slots and HQ takeaways. The players may purchase additional HQ history slots for 2 HQP each. Players may also fill an empty slot with a takeaway for 2 HQP. The HQ must have an open history slot in order to purchase a new takeaway for the HQ, just as with a takeaway for player characters.

An HQ takeaway functions the same as character takeaways, except that any player can mark the box to the left of the HQ takeaway once per case instead of turning a token. Just as with a character's takeaway, it should reference something meaningful to the team or HQ from one of their cases. HQ takeaways don't have a type (Personal or Arcane) and thus can be used to gain any benefit available through a token turn (+10 to TN, Sense Unknown, Insight, or Art). Likewise, the CM can mark the checkbox on the right side of an HQ takeaway once per case instead of turning a token light. Unlike character history takeaways, HQ takeaways aren't automatically added at the end of each case, but the players can purchase them with Development Points (CHILL p. 56).

Tanya suggests that their free HQ takeaway should be "Mystery of the Toronto faerie ring" to represent the time and resources the team has spent observing and researching the biggest hot spot of Unknown activity on their turf. The other players agree and decide they don't want to buy any additional takeaways or open history slots right now. Mike makes a note of the 2 HQ Points the players have available and continues.

## STEP THREE: QUALITIES AND ADVANTAGES

After determining the starting HQ Points and history based on the type of HQ, and adding new HQ history slots and takeaways, players should decide which Qualities and Advantages to include in their HQ. **Qualities** describe any aspect of the characters' home base available to them while on their home turf that doesn't not require a token turn to activate.

**Advantages** require players to *turn a token dark*, but may be employed away from the HQ and normally offer a more significant benefit. Players should look over the full list of Qualities and Advantages (p. 98) together when picking which to include for their envoys' HQ.

Tanya, Emma, and Cecil read through the list of Qualities and Advantages together. Cecil immediately suggests they purchase a Research Proficiency. The HQ is housed at Toronto University and led by a scientist, so even envoys who don't excel at researching will have an advantage with that skill.

Tanya notes that the old, underground facility probably isn't a good candidate for Qualities like Creature Comforts or Secure, but suggests that they keep an Infirmary and have a retired envoy on campus who provides medical aid when an active field envoy gets hurt. Cecil and Emma agree, and they make a note for the Infirmary Quality and Medic Advantage.

Emma doesn't see anything else important for their HQ until she reads the description for the Connection Advantage. She asks Mike what he thinks about the envoys having a contact within Toronto Hall who's aware of the vampire conspiracy (which the group developed during their brainstorm in Phase Three of HQ creation) and can help them navigate political or law enforcement problems that may arise during their exploits. Mike and the other players agree that's a great idea. Mike notes Connection 1 along with the Qualities and Advantages already chosen.



## STEP FOUR: INVEST CHARACTER POINTS

After the players collectively decide on the benefits they want for the HQ, the CM should determine the total number of HQP required to purchase them, then subtract the number of HQP received from the path (traditional, cell, or lost). The remaining HQP deficit must be paid for with Character Points invested by the players. Each player can convert Character Points (CP) into HQ Points, one CP for one HQP.

Player investment must be equitable; each player must give the same number of CP from their starting total. Any unspent HQP left over remain with the HQ and are available after future cases to develop the HQ's resources. Players opting for a pre-made character or customized template may invest Character Points by reducing attributes; giving up Edges, skills, or the Art; or adding additional Drawbacks.

## HOW MUCH TO INVEST

The new HQ rules should supplement the characters in **Chill** and not eclipse them; players spending CP are defining their characters' relationships to their HQ. As an important note, groups that decide to spend few or none of their Character Points for the HQ don't necessarily belong to an HQ with no resources; their characters just don't have access to those resources at this time. Similarly, characters beginning with a resource-rich HQ aren't automatically veteran envoys.

No set limit prevents the players from spending as many Character Points as they like, but the benefits of Qualities don't usually extend beyond the characters' base of operations and Advantages are normally only used once per case. Unless the CM and players have a specific reason in mind, players are discouraged from investing more than 10 CP each when they create their HQ.

**Example:** A group decide to play members of a band attacked by an Unknown entity while on tour, and then brought into SAVE by the envoy who rescued them. They want to be part of an organization with deep pockets and vast knowledge, but the characters themselves begin with little practical ability in hunting or investigating the Unknown. Each player invests 10 Character Points into the HQ, allowing the group to buy several Qualities and Advantages for the team to share. Instead of a house or other structure, they decide that the Qualities apply to the band's tour bus, which functions as a mobile HQ.

**Example:** Another group of players decides to play a campaign focused around former envoys who either retired or abandoned SAVE, but are brought back into the fight against the Unknown through unfortunate circumstances. They decide that the envoys have a wealth of experience and skill, but no official affiliation with SAVE and no history of working together. The players invest no Character Points at the start of the campaign, but plan to buy Qualities and Advantages with Development Points later.

After the three players finish deciding on Qualities and Advantages, Mike looks over the list and tallies up the required HQ Points. The Research Proficiency costs 3 HQP, Infirmary costs 2 HQP, Medic costs 5 HQP, and Connection is another 4 HQP. The players need a total of 14 HQP to buy the Qualities and Advantages they decided on.

Mike applies the 2 free HQP they got from choosing cell, meaning that each player needs to invest 4 Character Points. Emma, Tanya, and Cecil all agree they like the HQ benefits they selected enough to spend the points. Mike originally planned to have them create characters with 80 CP each, so he reduces the pool to 76 CP.



## HQ DEVELOPMENT

As envoys learn and develop the skills needed to face the Unknown, they can also expand the resources available from their headquarters. Investing the characters' Development Points into the HQ can represent enlisting the help of a retired envoy to help train the team, stashing weapons all over the headquarters to prepare for the inevitable day when something from the Unknown comes to find them, or becoming more trusted and connected within an already well-funded SAVE office.

The players may buy additional HQ history slots, takeaways, Qualities, and Advantages after a case, providing they have enough HQP. The HQP costs for each are the same as during HQ creation. The players' HQ also generates one free HQP after each case. Any player can also spend her character's Development Points on a one-for-one basis to generate HQP.

Investing Development Points after a case works just like spending Character Points during HQ creation, except that the players no longer need to invest equally. HQ Points generated after a case don't need to be spent immediately; the CM should note them on the HQ sheet so the team can decide how and when to spend them.

## REPLACING QUALITIES AND ADVANTAGES

During the course of a campaign, some purchased Qualities and Advantages may no longer make sense for the characters' HQ. A trusted Ally might be killed while helping the player characters, the house they used as a base of operations could be burned to the ground by a pyrokinetic ghost, or a particularly long case might end with news that their Mentor succumbed to cancer just as the characters prepared to celebrate vanquishing a powerful creature of the Unknown.

When the CM and players decide that a Quality or Advantage should be removed from the HQ, the HQP for the benefit is refunded and added to the available HQP pool. The players can decide when and how to spend those points after any subsequent case.

## ADDING NEW ENVOYS

These new rules don't change how the group adds a new character to a campaign after the existing players created their HQ, whether she's an additional character for a new player or replacing a fallen or retired envoy for an existing player. When creating the new character, the player doesn't invest her CP into the existing HQ. She may contribute Development Points earned by her character after cases.

## CHANGING PATHS

During a long-term **Chill** campaign, the envoys may change their attitude about SAVE, their current HQ, and even how best to fight the Unknown. Members of a lost HQ might decide the risk of infiltration is worth the safety of belonging to the traditional organization after losing a valued team member. A team of envoys using Hayat Nejem's cell HQ structure could opt to sever all contact with other offices and become a lost HQ after a neighboring group of envoys betrays them. Whatever the reason, the players and CM have the option to adjust their chosen HQ path during a campaign.

If the players decide to change paths, the CM should approve the decision. The players then receive or remove HQP as noted in the table. Bonus HQP is added to the available pool of points. Lost HQP is either subtracted from their unspent HQP, or Qualities or Advantages worth the appropriate number of HQP are removed from the HQ.

### HQP ADJUSTMENT FOR PATH CHANGE

Old Path	New Path	HQP Change
Traditional	Cell	-4 HQP
Traditional	Lost	-6 HQP
Cell	Traditional	+4 HQP
Cell	Lost	-3 HQP
Lost	Traditional	+6 HQP
Lost	Cell	+3 HQP

In addition to the change in HQP, players deciding to leave the traditional HQ model remove the Chain of Command Disadvantage (as their resources are no longer controlled by the old world SAVE bureaucracy). Eschewing the lost HQ path means the characters no longer benefit from the Us Against the World Quality (the characters must adjust to new dynamics and rules within a different organization). Conversely, becoming a traditional HQ adds the Chain of Command Disadvantage, just as adopting the lost HQ path provides the Us Against the World Quality.

After two months of playing their **Chill** campaign each week, the three players have 3 HQP from completing cases. They collectively spend another 4 Development Points from their characters for a total of 7 HQP. Their most recent case revolved around the vampire conspiracy in Toronto, and culminated in the murder of the characters' Connection in city hall. The death of that character adds an additional 4 HQP to the available pool of points, leaving them with 11 HQP.



Mike introduced a new NPC during one of their games, a member of a lost HQ near Toronto whom the PCs saved from zombies. Emma enjoyed Mike's portrayal of the NPC and wants to bring him back for future games. She suggests the team spend 6 of their HQP to make that NPC an Ally. The characters work together with Mike and create a 90 CP envoy that the players can bring into the game to help them once per case.

Cecil and Tanya want both of their characters to start learning the Protective School of the Art. Both characters witnessed intense, violent murders by creatures of the Unknown, and are now motivated to delve into the Art to help protect their own team as well as others. Tanya suggests they spend 5 HQP for a Mentor who can potentially lower the DP cost of the Protective Attunement and any disciplines from that School. Cecil remembers that the leader of Toronto SAVE used a Protective discipline during one of their game sessions and suggests to Mike that she be their Mentor. Mike agrees and notes the changes to the team's HQ on the HQ sheet.

## QUALITIES

Each of the Qualities listed below includes the cost in HQP, a description, and an explanation of its mechanics.

### CONSECRATED (2 HQP)

Spiritual trappings such as a church or holy ground have never provided consistent protection against the Evil Way. Still, some places seem to naturally resist the Unknown, making the manifestations easier to sense. The characters in the office may perform rituals to claim the space within their headquarters, or perhaps all the time spent poring over ancient tomes and training for the next fight becomes a line drawn in the cosmic sand. Either way, the envoys can become sensitive to Unknown encroachment within their base of operations.

**System:** Within the dedicated space of the headquarters, whether that's a two-bedroom apartment or a sprawling estate, the player characters are more sensitive to the Unknown. All Sense Unknown checks made within the HQ receive a +30 bonus to the target number. Additionally, if a player *turns a token dark* to Sense the Unknown within the HQ, the result is considered High instead of Low.

### CREATURE COMFORTS (3 HQP)

After returning home from an intense battle or a long night of snooping through a crime scene, envoys learn to appreciate the little things like a well-stocked fridge or luxurious bedding. The envoys may also enjoy the not-so-little things, like a chef kept on staff or a sauna on site. No matter the particulars, when the time comes to refuel and recharge the body, the envoys' headquarters has everything they need.

**System:** Each envoy who spends a recovery period in the headquarters regains twice the normal amount of Stamina.

### INFIRMARY (2 HQP)

No group of envoys faces off against Unknown threats without at least occasional injury. Observant nurses and doctors tend to ask uncomfortable questions the second or third time they see the same group of people wheeled into the emergency room with unusual injuries. An in-house infirmary with the tools and supplies necessary for everything, from simple treatments such as stitching a cut to more complicated procedures like removing a bullet, avoids inquisitive hospital staff and lets envoys recover in a more secure environment.

**System:** The HQ includes a fully stocked infirmary with medical supplies and equipment. A character with the 2 CP version of the Emergency Medic Edge (**CHILL** p. 68) can provide Comprehensive Aid to an injured character during a scene or recovery period while using the HQ's infirmary. Players may purchase Infirmary multiple times and have additional locations off-site where Comprehensive Aid can be administered.

### SECURE (2 HQP)

Apparitions and ancient creatures from the Unknown may not be intimidated by a state-of-the-art security system, but accomplished envoys know the value of alarms and surveillance. Whatever the method, whether cameras and motion detectors or a vigilant German shepherd, no one gets inside the HQ without the characters knowing.

**System:** No one can get inside or even particularly close to the characters' HQ without their knowledge. The security system can't prevent someone from forcing entry and it offers no special resistance to an Unknown threat, but if someone attempts to break in or surveil the HQ, the envoys will know.



### PANIC ROOM (2 HQP)

Members of SAVE learn to take precautions, usually after one too many close calls or hearing a cautionary tale about a fallen envoy. The characters built a secure room within the headquarters or somewhere off-site in case of an emergency. Panic rooms typically have reinforced walls, one way in and out, a hidden entrance, and enough supplies to let the team wait out a threat. The extra protection won't do much against incorporeal entities or a creature whose influence extends beyond their body, but even a rampaging lycanthrope or hungry ghoul will give up when faced with walls made of steel and concrete.

**System:** Players can purchase Panic Room multiple times, and should decide the location of each Panic Room. The room offers protection from most mundane threats and even some Unknown entities. Unless a creature can become incorporeal or has knowledge of a relevant Evil Way discipline, the players remain safe inside the panic room.

### TRANQUILITY (3 HQP)

Confronting the horrors of the Unknown, compounded with the isolation of keeping those battles a secret, wears down even the most stalwart envoys over time. As a means of self-care, some teams learn to stave off the stress. Particular strategies vary by office, but the headquarters may be home to an affectionate pet, an insulated meditation room or Zen garden, a top-shelf console game setup, or even a sensory deprivation chamber. Whatever the characters decided to include in their home base, they can mentally recover and prepare for the next fight.

**System:** Every envoy who spends a recovery period in the headquarters regains twice the normal amount of Willpower.

### MENTOR (4 OR 5 HQP)

Few resources available to a SAVE office trump the experience and knowledge of a seasoned envoy. The characters have a relationship with someone willing to help develop the talents needed in their battle against the supernatural. While the team may find someone ignorant of the Unknown to help them, the types of skills needed most often lead to an experienced or retired envoy.

**System:** After purchasing the Mentor Quality, the players decide on a single skill (4 HQP) or School of the Art (5 HQP) that the mentor can teach the characters. The players may purchase Mentor multiple times in order to add additional skills or Schools of the Art to their Mentor's stable of teachable talents, or to represent additional Mentors.

After each case, a character can spend time learning one skill or School of the Art from a Mentor. A skill includes becoming trained or any relevant specialty. A School of the Art includes attunement and all disciplines within the School. The player must roll a General check using the character's relevant attribute; if successful, the cost of learning or advancing the skill or School is reduced by one Development Point (cannot be lowered below zero). The attribute check cannot benefit from token turns or other modifiers except for a relevant Background. A character learning from a Mentor cannot spend Development Points on any other skills or Art before the next case.

**Example:** Monet's character, Amaya, decides the time has come to learn how to shoot a gun. Fortunately, her team developed a relationship with a former SAVE field envoy who was a military veteran. During HQ creation, Monet and the other players spent 9 HQP for a Mentor who can help the characters learn Ranged Weapons and the Restorative School of disciplines. Amaya spends her time after their most recent case training with the Mentor, and Monet rolls a General check using Amaya's Reflexes score (55). She rolls a 40 and can spend 2 Development Points instead of 3 for Amaya to become trained in Ranged Weapons. Monet plans to have Amaya return after the next case to buy the Beginner level of a "handgun" specialization, which will cost 0 Development Points if she succeeds on the attribute check again.

### WEAPONS STASH (2 HQP)

Over time, envoys learn that nowhere is truly safe. A bit of paranoia can be quite reasonable for a SAVE team. Whether because of experience or the advice of others, the characters prepared their headquarters by hiding weapons everywhere possible. Someday, a creature may come to kill the team in their sleep, but the envoys know that they won't face any threat on their home turf empty-handed.

**System:** The characters have planted small weapons throughout their HQ and can take an action to retrieve one regardless of where they are inside their headquarters. Players decide what weapon they find and how it's hidden, but this Quality is limited to small weapons like handguns, knives, tasers, batons, etc. Broadswords and machine guns may be locked away in the team's armory, but cannot be easily retrieved at a moment's notice.





More...

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## Security Breach

tags: InboxSAVE**A Andris Szalai**

(September 12, 2015, 05:35)

to: Eszter Farkas

Eszter,

I arrived back at the Nyíregyháza safehouse early this morning and found a side window broken. I didn't think too much of it at first, because the pane is so small. I had time to unload my files and unpack my bags before I heard noise coming from the cellar. When I went down, I saw someone rifling through the filing cabinets. I shouted at her and she didn't jump, she just turned around. When I reached for her, she grabbed me by the wrist and stared at me.

I took the files away from her — they're all older files, mostly your old letters to and from Robin Stevens — and currently have her ziptied to a rolling desk chair until you tell me what you want me to do with her. She's small, can't be more than 17 or 18, and looks like one of the Budapest bath party girls. I think she might be high, because once I had her in the chair, she got pretty out of it. Now she's just sitting there staring again, not at anything specific.  
How to proceed?

Andris

**E Eszter Farkas**

(September 12, 2015, 07:44)

to: Andris Szalai

Andris,  
Question her, record either audio or video, and send it to me. Use tact, I trust your judgment. The last thing we need is this to turn out to be nothing more than some kid looking for drugs or money and being exposed to the Unknown unnecessarily.

Eszter Farkas  
Director, SAVE Budapest

**A Andris Szalai**

(September 12, 2015, 09:12)

to: Eszter Farkas

Eszter,

Video file attached. Do you recognize the name Egyeni Ciocan? The girl won't give me her name, but you'll see in the video, she's dropping Ciocan's name every other question.

Andris

**Video\_12\_9\_15\_girl.auz**

MailFrog tip: only download files from trusted sources!

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← Andris Szalai



You're sure she said Ciocan?  
The audio on the file isn't very clear.

She was crying, getting pretty worked up. She definitely said Ciocan.

Did she give you a location?

No. She's in and out. Sometimes she sounds like she's high, and she keeps saying I need to stay away from Egyeni Ciocan, like she's trying to warn me, but nothing she's saying makes sense.

Warn you about what?

She keeps saying he's already got me, and he won't let me go, like he won't let her go. She keeps talking about how we both know the only way out.

She's not in great shape. Could be a tweaker, maybe heroin. Hard to tell with her in and out like that. Looks underfed, dark circles under her eyes, could be some trackmarks on her arms, and I noticed a red mark around her wrist when I put on the zipties. It's shaped like a handprint.

I think whoever she's getting the files for, this Ciocan guy or someone else, he's hurting her.

Send me a picture?

System Message:  
Tap to display attachment



← Andris Szalai



.pic

Is that a bruise or a burn?

It almost looks like a blister or a chemical burn.

Ask her what Ciocan is looking for. Don't lead, just make conversation, try to gain her trust. If he's hurting her and you can reassure her we can keep her safe, she might help.

I'll let you know.





More...

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## Security Breach

tags: **Inbox****SAVE****A Andris Szalai** (September 12, 2015, 05:35)**E Eszter Farkas** (September 12, 2015, 07:44)**A Andris Szalai** (September 12, 2015, 09:12)**A Andris Szalai** (September 12, 2015, 12:02)

to: Eszter Farkas

Eszter,

Things are getting weird out here. Do you think you could send someone from headquarters out to the safehouse? I'm starting to think we're looking at a case of possession, because sometimes she's a scared 17-year-old kid warning me about this Ciocan guy, and sometimes she's completely calm and I swear to god, she's got an accent, sounds Romanian, which goes along w/ the name. It's starting to mess with my head. Every time I think I'm making progress with the kid, the kid disappears and I'm looking into these cold eyes, like she can see everything I'm thinking. I'm not equipped to handle this alone. I'm breaking out into hives or something. I can't stop scratching my wrist. Is it possible to use the Communicative Art to give somebody psychic hives?

Andris

**E Eszter Farkas** (September 12, 2015, 12:17)

to: Andris Szalai

BCC: Robin E. Stevens &lt;ComArt01@spoint.nl&gt;

Andris,

Just leave her be. Make sure she's secured, and go back upstairs to wait. Don't engage in any conversation about Ciocan. Confirm with me when you're up there.

Eszter Farkas  
Director, SAVE Budapest

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## PLEASE RESPOND

tags: [Inbox](#)[SAVE](#)**E Eszter Farkas**

(September 12, 2015, 12:25)

to: Andris Szalai

BCC: Robin E. Stevens &lt;ComArt01@spoint.nl&gt;

Andris,

If you get this, please respond ASAP.

Eszter Farkas

Director, SAVE Budapest

**E Eszter Farkas**

(September 12, 2015, 12:37)

to: Robin E. Stevens

Mr. Stevens,

I believe we have a situation at one of our safehouses. Andris Szalai isn't responding to his emails or phone calls. As you may have noticed in the previous emails, Egyeni Ciocan may be involved. Andris is a reliable envoy, but he's absolutely not prepared to deal with this alone. I have a team en route to Nyíregyháza. There's a possibility Andris has been compromised. How do you recommend we proceed in this situation?

Eszter Farkas

Director, SAVE Budapest

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← Andris Szalai



you can reassure her we can keep her safe, she might help.

I'll let you know.

12.9.15 12:20

Andris, status report.

12.9.15 12:26

Andris, if you get this, please respond ASAP

Status report. I called you twice, no answer.

Dammit Andris, if you let your battery die again, I'm going to kill you

12.9.15 12:39

Andris, there's a team on the way.

Everything is fine.

Andris, you almost gave me a heart attack! You have to keep your phone with you when you're on an active assignment.

I apologize. It won't happen again.

Tell it to the team when they get there.

A team isn't necessary. The situation is under control here.

Did you feed the chickens?

Not yet. I'll go take care of that now. Again, my apologies for worrying you.

Who is this? Where's Andris?

I am Andris.

← Andris Szalai



WHO IS THIS? WHERE'S ANDRIS?

I am Andris.

Like hell you are. Andris would recognize the code phrase and give the proper response. Who are you and what did you do with Andris?

I promise you that Andris is right here. He is typing on his phone. He was surprisingly amenable. Is this your lackadaisical training or does Mr. Stevens no longer have any system for quality control?

Is this Ciocan?

I'll be happy to answer that question if you give your team the stop order.

And why would I do that?

Because Andris is holding his gun in his other hand, and I'm sure you don't want his blood on your hands. Or his hands, I suppose. I hate to get my own hands dirty. I only touch when necessary.

12.9.15 12:47

I issued the stop order. Nobody's coming. Now, will you please let Andris go and we can talk about this reasonably?

I tried to be reasonable. That's why I sent the girl. He should have let her take the files.





More...

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## On my way

tags: Inbox SAVE**E Robin E. Stevens**

(September 12, 2015, 12:48)

to: Eszter Farkas

Ms. Farkas,

My assistant is booking a flight to Budapest as I write this email. Minimize contact with Mr. Szalai as much as possible. Absolutely no physical contact with him or the girl. Do what you need to do to contain them both. Your team and anyone else entering that safehouse needs full protective anti-contamination gear. Treat it like a communicable disease until we know more. If Ciocan is involved, we'll need more resources than you have available locally. I will hopefully be there within the next 14 hours.

Regards,  
R. Stevens

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**ADVANTAGES**

Each of the Advantages listed below includes the cost in HQP, a description, and an explanation of its mechanics.

**ALLY (6 HQP)**

While a Mentor offers training in skills and the Art, an Ally provides boots-on-the-ground support. An Ally may be an envoy from a sister SAVE chapter, a local police officer with knowledge of the Unknown, or some other individual willing to sacrifice her time and risk her safety to help the player characters in a moment of need. The Ally should be in close enough physical proximity to reach the player characters when they need assistance. She brings her own skills and experience, and functions in all ways as a fully-developed character working alongside the player characters until the next recovery. Players must *turn a token dark* to activate the Ally, who is played by the CM but whose actions are determined by the players.

**System:** The players work together with the CM to create an additional character during HQ creation. The players and CM should build the Ally as a full-fledged character with an additional 10 CP more than starting value for the player characters. By turning a token, the players can enlist the Ally's direct assistance during a case until the next recovery period. During that time, the Ally character's abilities are available to

the players and they may decide how the Ally will help them.

The CM cannot use a token turn to kill or disable the Ally, but the players may only bring in the Ally to help once per case. If the Ally character becomes part of the story without the players turning a token and directly controlling her actions, the CM can *turn a token light* to remove her from the scene, but not kill her. The players can purchase multiple Allies for the HQ; each one can be brought in to help once per case. While the Ally is helping the player characters, she can be killed during the normal course of play if the players put her at risk.

**CALL THE CAVALRY (4 HQP)**

On a good day, one player character can be saved from death's door. On a great day, the entire team makes it out alive. Whether through fate, luck, or — if the player characters are from a traditional HQ — the timely arrival of a SAVE strike team, the player characters manage to collectively avoid death. Calling the Cavalry functions as a *deus ex machina*, sparing the entire group of envoys from what seems like a hopeless situation.

**System:** Once per case, the players may *turn all available tokens dark* to remove all the player characters from a dangerous or deadly situation. Calling the Cavalry in this way functions similarly to the players



turning all available tokens to prevent a player character's death. None of them will die during the current scene, and they will all be taken from harm's way, but the characters will suffer from any injuries or trauma already inflicted. The presence of the "cavalry," in whatever form it takes, could also add new complications to the investigation.

### CONNECTION (4 HQP)

It's not what you know, it's who you know. The player characters have developed a professional relationship with someone possessing useful skills, knowledge, or access, and can call upon this Connection for help resolving a crisis, cutting through red tape, or otherwise simplifying a complicated situation.

**System:** The players must decide the nature of the Connection when they purchase the Advantage, and they may spend points to buy multiple distinct Connections for the HQ. Once per case per Connection, the players can *turn a token dark* to resolve or avoid a difficult situation, acquire something particularly rare or exotic, or otherwise resolve a problem for the characters using their Connection. The CM and players should discuss the type of things the Connection can reasonably be used for when the players purchase this Advantage.

**Example:** Monet, Carrie, and Jason decide that their characters helped a smuggler, Benton McGowan, dispatch an illicitly shipped mummy that killed several of Benton's employees after they accidentally awakened it. They spend 4 HQP and can now turn a token once per case to call upon Benton. The players and the CM agree that Benton could help them procure an artifact or illegal weaponry, or arrange meetings with a criminal element during a case.

### COUNSELOR (4 HQP)

The intrinsic horror and violence of dealing with the Unknown can take a heavy toll on envoys. Having the support of a trained Counselor helps envoys cope with the things they've seen and done in the name of SAVE. HQs with affiliated Counselors give player characters an opportunity to recover from traumatic experiences.

**System:** By *turning a token dark*, the players can call on the Counselor once per case to help any or all of the characters integrate one level of trauma incurred during the current case, provided the characters do nothing else during the recovery period.

### INFORMATION SOURCE (4 HQP)

The SAVE team to which the player characters belong has access to an archive, database, person, or group that can provide valuable information during a case. The

source could be a collection of ancient occult tomes hidden in a restricted section of the local university library, an Internet trawler who analyzes vast swaths of data to find patterns of the Unknown, or a network of paid informants keeping an eye on the city where the envoys reside.

**System:** Just like the Edge available to player characters, the players should decide what type of information source their HQ has access to and what kind of information it can provide. Once per case, any envoy can *turn a token dark* to gain a new Interest and Esoteric clue from the HQ's contact. The CM determines how much in game time passes before the clues are provided.

### MEDIC (5 HQP)

When envoys sustain injury in the course of their work for SAVE, emergency medical care can be the difference between life and death. A Medic can stabilize or provide other emergency treatment in the field. Medics also provide an alternative to going to the ER with an "animal" bite or some other difficult-to-explain wound that might invite unwanted attention.

**System:** By *turning a token dark*, the players gain access to their medic during a case. The medic can provide first aid or comprehensive care (**CHILL** p. 180) during a scene or recovery to any characters present. Depending on the circumstances, the CM can determine the envoys' medic cannot get to them until the following scene.

### PROFICIENCY (3 HQP)

Some SAVE offices excel in certain areas when investigating or confronting the Unknown. Even if some of the individual envoys aren't trained or well-versed in the chosen skill, when the chips are down they're more likely to succeed. The envoys' HQ may be the back room of a firing range, the office could have an impressive history as a repository of arcane knowledge, or envoys throughout the region might be sent to their HQ to learn interview techniques with one of the senior envoys. Whatever the reason, the player characters can gain a leg up within the chosen skill.

**System:** When a player *turns a token dark* or marks a takeaway to add to the target number during a check of the chosen skill or related specialty, gain an additional +10 to the target number in addition to the standard +10 (for a total of +20). Certain disciplines of the Art can provide additional bonuses when the player turns a token, which are cumulative with a Proficiency. The players can purchase multiple Proficiencies to gain the bonus for each additional skill.



## SAVE AS A RESOURCE

SAVE works to understand the Unknown, since understanding negates fear. It protects humanity from the monsters that prey on us by shedding light on the darkness. Though the organization grew from academic-style halls, understanding is just the first step to empower envoys to fight back and stop the darkness from encroaching.

As a general rule, SAVE shares what it knows with envoys. The Society withholds information if it's unreliable, known to be incorrect, or is likely to make the envoys question SAVE's goals and methods, thereby hampering the fight against the Unknown.

In practical terms, SAVE can help envoys in three ways: knowledge, equipment, and support. How much of each is available to envoys depends heavily on the location, style, and history of their headquarters.

### DIVERSE OFFICES

SAVE's organizational structure used to be easy to understand. Envoys worked at offices, which reported to regional headquarters, which in turn answered to the central SAVE headquarters in Dublin. This simple model also proved to leave SAVE vulnerable to infiltration and attack by the Unknown.

Following the near destruction of SAVE and Nejem's drive to restructure the organization into cells, the group is now considerably strengthened against disaster. Unfortunately, this security came at the cost of decentralization of resources, and a huge disparity between what offices can offer. Various envoys are working to overcome these limitations — including Nejem — but so far they've not succeeded in balancing security with connectivity.

The different styles of HQ in the modern SAVE organization also impact the amount of information available to envoys. The restructure gave SAVE a chance at survival, but it complicated the resources SAVE could guarantee its envoys.

### TRADITIONALISTS

Before Nejem diversified SAVE's structure, the traditional offices were storehouses of equipment and knowledge. The members of each one had connections within the community that they could call upon for help. Even following the reformation, little has changed for the traditionalists.

Traditional HQs have carefully hoarded information and equipment through successive generations of members and therefore usually have greater access to these resources. Traditionalist offices still work to cement themselves in the community and identify those people who can help in the fight against the Unknown — even though these people remain ignorant of the truth of the enemy.

While envoys enjoy greater access to information, this is often tempered by potentially being out-of-date. The archives of traditionalist offices also tend towards considerable author bias or misunderstanding (and therefore misreporting) the facts as they occurred.

Similarly, envoys can call upon most equipment that they might need in the field. As most traditionalist HQs tend to be older and well-established, they've invested in robust, hard-wearing gear. The items are unlikely to be state-of-the-art, but they're more likely to survive the rigors of field work against Unknown creatures and often show signs of this wear when assigned to envoys.

### CELL HQS

HQs operating under Nejem's cell model vary considerably in what information and other resources they can offer. By design, each cell is an individual unit with only loose ties to each other and to SAVE's broader structure. Nejem works to encourage traditionalist headquarters to divert what they don't need to cells, but reaching out to them and passing the gear is difficult.

The same applies to information. The digital age has afforded various paths to access SAVE's electronic archives, but even these have their own difficulties for offices to overcome. Many archives are exchanged via peer-to-peer channels or hosted on the deep web. SAVEpoint (p. 110) provides a central point of intelligence for cell HQs, but the system is still imperfect and relies heavily on personal connections to function. SAVEpoint gets around this by optionally assigning numerical identifiers to each HQ, and by providing a coded interface allowing standardized statements to be entered, recording activity while avoiding any specifics.

### LOST HEADQUARTERS

As each lost office is unique, it's difficult to say exactly what resources they can offer envoys. Some follow a traditionalist model and have the stockpiles and community links that come with a secure base of operations and a semi-open engagement with the people around them. Some follow a cell-like structure, having splintered into semi-independent units that have loose ties with each other but maintain tight security and secrecy, limiting what the other cells know about them. Others have entirely different approaches, like the office in Adelaide, Australia, where envoys recruit to make sub-cells as they see fit, each of which knows nothing about SAVE except that it exists. They occasionally receive instructions and, when times are desperate, these "envoys" can call a phone number, enter a code, and request assistance. No one has ever admitted to calling the number and surviving to tell the tale.



## USING SAVE

Whatever structure the envoys have for their headquarters, SAVE is a valuable resource that the Chill Master should use to full advantage. The characters can find their own threats to fight or SAVE can assign critical missions. Sometimes the envoys won't understand how these help the broader Society, but they know their success is important. Other times, the envoys may need information and equipment, and this is the chance for the CM to keep the narrative moving by providing what the players need without having to invent convoluted situations or scenarios to obtain what they're looking for. For the CM, SAVE is a treasure trove of ideas, story seeds, and narrative drive.

## SAVE CAN'T ANSWER WHAT ENVOYS DON'T ASK

This may seem obvious, but it's often a point CMs can miss. SAVE has limited resources, and its information isn't exhaustive. If you don't ask the right questions, you don't receive the right answers. Similarly, if the envoys give SAVE the wrong information, they'll get the wrong answers in return (if anything at all).

This equates to several limitations on seeking information from SAVE. SAVE rarely has time to offer alternative hypotheses beyond the most likely. The Unknown is too vast for headquarters-bound assistants to be second-guessing envoys in the field. If all witnesses to an attack tell tales of a shape-shifting monster that hunts by moonlight, SAVE will provide information on lycanthropes. If the creature is actually a previously unknown type of vampire that must assume bat-like form to feed, the office can't anticipate this from the limited available information.

Take this example further, to when the team decides it's facing an inherent lycanthrope. If the envoys ask SAVE for advice, they'll be told that silver bullets are the answer. Here they've provided incorrect information and received the easiest possible answer. Every SAVE office has more threats than it can mitigate, so if the players put the idea of "inherent lycanthrope" into a researcher's head, her first instinct won't be to seek clarification and ask why the envoys think this is the case. She'll provide an answer that fits the information and move on to helping the next team.

## SAVE DOESN'T KNOW EVERYTHING

One of the key difficulties SAVE encounters is the sheer variability of threats encountered by envoys. This means that SAVE's records detailing what worked for a similar monster may not work for this specimen. For every lycanthrope that's immune to any damage not inflicted by silver, another is vulnerable to mundane bullets, but heals impossibly fast. Without considerable research effort, it's impossible to tell the two apart.

Even with this effort, some subgroups can't be definitively identified without direct confrontation.

Every HQ's available resources are constantly challenged by the growing prevalence of the darkness and the need for equipment to fight it. No envoy wants to waste dozens or hundreds of ineffective automatic rounds against a target when just one silver bullet would do. (Nor does an envoy want to be asked questions by authorities about why she needs to carry an assault rifle in the dead of night.) Similarly, why waste specialized ammunition when overwhelming standard firepower will do the job?

Some terrors even go beyond this level of specialization. The ghosts and other spectral entities left behind by restless dead share similar weakness to having their physical remains buried on consecrated ground, or having their murderer brought to justice. This does little to help the envoys confronting the restless spirit with no clue where his remains were discarded, or how he was killed, or by whom. Likewise, SAVE's information can sometimes point the envoys in the right direction, but offer solutions that are vastly different — and sometimes contradictory.

Knowing that the available evidence indicates the threat could come from a narrow list of suspects helps in shedding light on the Unknown. It also helps the envoys prioritize what they need to do next, what investigations they should focus on, which enquiries they can leave to later, and in which order they need to interview surviving victims.

## PROVIDING INFORMATION MAKES A BETTER GAME

Don't be afraid to give out answers. **Chill** is a game of investigative horror; few things are more frustrating than envoys talking to a character who has the information they need but won't share it because the CM thinks that will make the mystery too easy to solve. Discovering what causes the threat is part of the fun, of course, but the other part — many would say the most enjoyable part — is working out how to defeat the monster once the team knows what it is. Knowing you're dealing with a djinni but having no way of learning its true name doesn't help destroy it. This forces the players to invent creative ways to overcome those limitations, creating a greater sense of accomplishment and fun when they do manage to combat the seemingly unstoppable evil.

Remember that when players have the answer to their problem, all they really have is a plan; plans can (and do) go wrong at the flip of a token. Even when SAVE gives every bit of support to the characters, that doesn't mean an instant or even an easy win.



## HOW SAVE CAN HELP

Every SAVE headquarters is different, which gives the Chill Master freedom to decide exactly how useful SAVE can be in a particular game. When making this decision, the primary aspect to remember is that every SAVE HQ is tailored by the players to meet their game needs. This helps show the CM in the players' expectations, and should help determine how present (or absent) SAVE is from the character's lives.

Also, regardless of what appearance the local Society presence takes, SAVE tends to offer a similar range of assistance to all envoys — knowledge, assistance, and equipment, in that order. Of these, the equipment and allies the characters can call upon will vary considerably between games. The resource most likely to be available across SAVE offices is accumulated knowledge. Exceptions do exist of course, especially after the infiltration and rebuilding; CMs shouldn't feel obliged to directly use anything described here. The needs of the game (and having fun) take priority over these words.

## KNOWLEDGE ABOVE ALL

SAVE has a long history of accumulating knowledge. Even before they encountered the Unknown, SAVE's founders were men of the written word, valuing the works of those who had come before them. This legacy was not lost when they created SAVE. They kept detailed logs of their interactions with the creatures and monsters and presented their work through familiar academic channels. Though this attracted ridicule and derision, O'Boylan was especially dedicated to recording and reporting SAVE's findings for future generations.

## SCIENTIFIC APPROACH

As SAVE's membership expanded, every member accepted the important task of chronicling her encounters to assist future generations. The Chill Master should take advantage of this. Not every envoy will be academically inclined or as diligent at keeping records as dedicated researchers in an HQ, but each envoy has an expectation that they'll at least take notes to help document for their fellow envoys.

To help simulate this practice in game, the CM should encourage players to take notes of their own encounters. The CM can give players the choice of how they record details, and what they deem to be important, or she can impose a system upon their characters as dictated by their local headquarters. This is still about having fun, so don't make the required detail too arduous or the players won't enjoy the experience.

Even SAVE hasn't agreed on a consistent approach to recording details of creatures of the Unknown. As described in **CHILL** (p. 229), the Society primarily uses three imperfect systems.

Threat levels help other envoys know how dangerous creatures might be, but they don't provide much detail beyond that. Additionally, the threat a creature poses is a highly subjective decision. One group of envoys may consider a monster to be a minor challenge, while another group would find the encounter very difficult — possibly even leading to envoy death.

The Garrett System works well for grouping consistently similar creatures, but falters when something is outside accepted norms. Shapeshifting Undead that rampage by the light of the full moon, or incorporeal Vampires that must possess the bodies of the living to progress their evil plans confound the Garrett System.

O'Boylan's original method helps envoys know the powers and abilities of creatures, but doesn't place similar power sets into defined groupings that might have similar weaknesses.

The group may decide to use an existing method, an amalgam of the three, or invent a new system of their own. Whatever they decide, the CM should work to incorporate these notes into the broader game world. The envoys may hear of another cell that overcame the Unknown thanks to records the characters diligently entered into the system, or of a group killed because they were ill-equipped without knowledge the characters hadn't yet recorded. **Chill** is a horror game; the players should feel the negative impacts of their inaction more keenly than the positives of their actions. Just don't forget to include positive feedback as needed by the group to enjoy the game.

Whichever system the players decide to use, don't feel as if everything the envoys record has to be accurate or corroborate what was previously known. Though the scientific method of recording findings has been immensely valuable in human advancement, the Unknown often fails to meet human requirements for complete and accurate classification. Most often, information obtained by envoys gives broadly accurate categories that become increasingly unreliable when dealing with individuals. This means that CMs should feel free to change the powers of any **Chill** creature they send against the envoys, or invent a new monster that has the same powers and abilities of a known creature but very different weaknesses. Make certain to leave enough clues to help envoys deal with creatures that look the same but are different, to avoid making the game too difficult.



## THE DIGITAL AGE

Whichever method the characters use to record and contribute to SAVE's knowledge base, distribution of information remains a challenge. The CM must decide how characters access and disseminate information.

When dealing with low-tech (or extremely paranoid) traditionalist headquarters, envoys may have to travel across the world to physically sit in a library and painstakingly search through old tomes and scraps of barely-legible notepaper. This approach is fine if the group enjoys this style of game, but can be frustrating to players expecting to play characters living in the modern world. Since information is the primary benefit SAVE can offer its envoys, the CM should consider giving them access to as much as they can handle.

In the digital age, SAVE is still as paranoid about data compromise and loss, but modern computing allows multiple redundancies and cloud backups to safeguard against emergencies. All but the most hidebound traditionalist HQs acknowledge the value of redundant modern data sources. As noted in *Chill*, Alexandria has taken the lead in converting SAVE's archives to digital format, painstakingly digitizing the journals, logs, and notes of former envoys (*CHILL* p. 132).

The CM should explore how this particular HQ disseminates this knowledge. It could be as simple as the envoys logging into a computer and just having access. Almost all SAVE offices have a computer with some kind of searchable database about the Unknown. Several offices have gone a step further, building forums where envoys can share experiences or blow off steam. These open forums attract their fair share of undesirable characters — not all of whom are servants of the Unknown — which gives the CM another source of drama and potential conflict to add to the game. Not every *Chill* threat has to be from otherworldly sources; sometimes an obsessive human with computer access and too much interest in the envoys (or SAVE) can be a significant antagonist.

## THE VIRTUAL HQ

The players may focus attention on the hidden workings of SAVE's virtual networks and how it protects information from malicious entities. *Chill* Masters may find that adding some kind of virtual community encourages the player's interests and entices them to broader engagement with SAVE as a whole.

As an example, SAVEpoint appeared in 2015 as an alternative online resource for HQs around the world. SAVEpoint was created by a group of like-minded envoys who were also programmers, archivists and cryptographers. They built SAVEpoint as an encrypted, cloud-based data repository to be shared with envoys everywhere, but particularly to connect

## SAVEPOINT ACTIVITY CODES

To avoid the problems inherent in revealing too much information online and yet still providing a centralized clearing house of cell HQ activity (and in fact all of SAVE, should they wish to participate), HQs are given a numerical identifier when they register a SAVEpoint account. Account holders can override this and put an identifiable name, but most cell HQs do not. They can also update activity into a central feed, much like a private Twitter interface that feeds to all the HQs. An entry noting that a team investigated a missing persons report for two women would look like this:

<735-081 2FMI; 1T; +SU; ?GS: LY-AS

Interpreted, this means that HQ 735-081 (the assigned numeric identifier) investigated a report of two missing women (2FMI). One team was assigned. Sense the Unknown came up positive. They suspect an Astral Lycanthrope might be behind it (?GS: LY-AS) but aren't sure.

Common activity codes include:

MI	Missing Individual(s)
DI	Deceased Individual(s)
UA	Unknown Attack
HT	Haunting
AA	Animal Attack
#T	Number of teams assigned
+SU	Unknown is present
-SU	No Unknown influence found
?	Unsure/Unverified
GS	Garrett System ( <i>CHILL</i> p. 229)
VP	Vampire
LY	Lycanthrope
GT	Ghost
UC	Unknown Creature
EW	Evil Way

with cell HQs without revealing information and creating vulnerabilities. It connects the experiences, triumphs and failures of envoys from all walks of life, without the need to defend a physical location.

Perhaps the envoys are pioneers and help turn SAVE's nascent digital explorations into SAVEpoint (or some other community). Alternatively, the characters may simply be interested users who get to know the virtual personas of their fellow envoys, which launches a globe-trotting series of adventures as they travel between headquarters to meet their online colleagues. Perhaps the envoys are the first to notice strange glitches and unusual accesses within SAVEpoint. Did SAVEpoint's originators know of the Unknown's range of electronic threats? How protected is the virtual office? Are these irregular activities signs of external hacking, a traitorous SAVEpoint member, or the attentions of a new digital creature of the Unknown?



Case No. 0037-C7H  
Location: Spokane, Washington  
Date: March 2, 1979  
Envoy: Alexis Harrison

Arrived on scene at Other World, Inc. headquarters in Spokane, Washington, shortly behind FBI -- there for different reasons. Approximately 20-25 employees on site; difficult to get a head count due to FBI and local law enforcement presence. Employees primarily dressed in white lab coats over business apparel. Waited two hours for agents to finish removing boxes from the premises and depart the scene before making contact. Noted no indication of the FBI uncovering any information pertaining to the Unknown or to SAVE.

Quick read of the employees helped single out those most likely to have actual information on the whereabouts of Celeste Meyers (aka Bridgette Duber, former envoy, SAVE Seattle, 1970-1976), Other World, Inc. founder and CEO. Identified Jason Lovejoy, Caucasian male approximately 22 to 25 years of age, from surveillance photographs of Meyers. Lovejoy worked as Meyers' assistant until she fled on or around February 22, 1979. Lovejoy seemed confused by the FBI presence and Meyers' absence. He demonstrated difficulty maintaining eye contact prior to and during the interview, and occasionally lapsed into silence, as demonstrated in the following transcript of my on-site interview of Lovejoy.

Interview Transcript -- Lovejoy, Jason R. 02/27/79 1400

HARRISON: It's okay with you if I record this?

LOVEJOY: I guess so. Like, I already gave my statement to the agent.

HARRISON: This is Envoy Alexis Harrison, interviewing Jason Lovejoy, case number zero zero three seven dash Charlie seven Hotel. Mr. Lovejoy, will you state your full name, please? (long silence) Mr. Lovejoy, please state your full name.

LOVEJOY: Jason Richard Lovejoy.

HARRISON: And your position with Other World, Inc.?

LOVEJOY: I was a, uh, personal assistant.

HARRISON: For Celeste Meyers?

LOVEJOY: Yes, ma'am. I was Ms. Meyers' personal assistant.

HARRISON: For how long? (long pause) Mr. Lovejoy? (long pause) Jason?

LOVEJOY: Oh. Yes, ma'am. From May of '78, I guess, until the company bit it a week or so ago.

HARRISON: And how did you enter into employment with Ms. Meyers?

LOVEJOY: What?

HARRISON: How did you hear about the position at Other World, Inc.?

LOVEJOY: I saw a flyer at EJ Skatewaves.



HARRISON: The skatepark?

LOVEJOY: Yeah. I saw a flyer. I never thought about getting an office job, but I saw the flyer. Like, it called to me.

HARRISON: So, you were with the company for the full eight months it was open.

LOVEJOY: Yes, ma'am. I was one of the first hires outside the science department. Kind of a shock when it all closed down so sudden like that, like I was there from the beginning, and I thought things were going great, then boom, we're bankrupt and all but the lower floor of building's locked and no last paychecks, even.

HARRISON: And you were aware of the experiments?

LOVEJOY: (long pause) Experiments?

HARRISON: The human experiments, or the "voluntary human trials," as Celeste Meyers called them in her patent applications.

LOVEJOY: No, ma'am. I was not aware of any human experiments.

HARRISON: Did you assist Ms. Meyers in selecting the subjects for human experiments?

LOVEJOY: (long pause) What?

HARRISON: Do you understand the question, Jason?

LOVEJOY: Yes, ma'am.

HARRISON: So you didn't assist Ms. Meyers in interviewing candidates for these trials, as her records indicate?

LOVEJOY: Like, I did assist Ms. Meyers in screening the right applicants for positions with the science department. They were all, you know, scientists. Nerd-types. Ms. Meyers was real busy, so she had me talk to them, since I'm really good at talking to people.

HARRISON: Did Ms. Meyers ever speak to you or any other employee about SAVE?

LOVEJOY: SAVE?

HARRISON: Is that a yes or a no, Jason?

LOVEJOY: I don't know what SAVE is, ma'am.

HARRISON: Did Ms. Meyers ever speak to you about her personal history? Mention an alias or any previous name she might have used?

LOVEJOY: (long pause) Ms. Meyers talked to me about my work. She said I was great with people.

HARRISON: Okay. Now, did you have a lot of experience as a personal assistant before Ms. Meyers hired you?

LOVEJOY: Uh. Experience?



HARRISON: Yes. You mentioned you never thought about getting an office job before you saw the flyer for Other World, Inc. Did you have any professional experience as a personal assistant or doing any other kind of secretarial work?

LOVEJOY: Look, ma'am, I just worked there, okay? I didn't know about any of that stuff you're talking about. (long pause) Ms. Meyers was a really cool boss.

HARRISON: Did Ms. Meyers tell you why she hired you, despite your lack of professional experience?

LOVEJOY: I'm real good with people, like I said. Ms. Meyers, she said I had people skills.

HARRISON: People skills?

LOVEJOY: Yeah, like I was good at talking to people, all kinds of situations, like talking stuff up, talking people down, talking them into doing...things.

HARRISON: Talking people into doing things? (long pause) Jason, what do you mean, you could talk people into doing things?

LOVEJOY: Ms. Meyers had me talk to the science people, 'cause they'd always sign her papers after I talked to them. We practiced interviewing techniques when she hired me. She said I had a lot of natural talent. A lot of talent, she said. I'd just talk to them, nothing weird or anything, ma'am. I'd just tell them about how great the company is, what a great lady Ms. Meyers is, and they'd always want to come work for us. Every time.

HARRISON: I see. Did you ever see any of these "science people" again after your interviews with them? After they signed Ms. Meyers' papers.

LOVEJOY: Am I in trouble? I'm supposed to get a phone call if I'm in trouble, right? Do I need a lawyer?

HARRISON: A lawyer won't be able to help with this. Answer the question, Jason. Did you ever see them again after the interviews.

LOVEJOY: (barely audible) Sometimes.

HARRISON: Repeat that a little louder, please.

LOVEJOY: I said, sometimes. Sometimes I'd see them again, around the office. Sometimes they just went in, and, uh... (long pause)

HARRISON: Went in and what, Jason?

LOVEJOY: She was helping people. She said she had a way to keep people safe, like they wouldn't get sick or hurt, they wouldn't have to worry about getting robbed, stuff like that. She was helping them, she said. I was helping her help people, and if we made a little money doing that, it wasn't hurting anybody, she said. She was helping me be my best self, she said, and it was all real scientific. I could be my best self, and we could help a lot of people, if we could just hire the right ones.

HARRISON: Jason. What happened to the ones that weren't the right ones? The other ones? The ones you didn't see around the office? They went in, and what?



LOVEJOY: (mumbles)

HARRISON: Jason! What happened to the other ones.

LOVEJOY: They didn't come out. Please, I didn't do anything wrong! Ms. Meyers, she said I was doing something great. I didn't see or hear anything. It was a good job, ma'am, I just answered the phones and made her appointments and--

HARRISON: And talked to them. Right.

LOVEJOY: Did you find Ms. Meyers? She said she'd take care of us. We were the right people for the job, and she was going to take care of us.

HARRISON: Did Ms. Meyers indicate where she might be going?

LOVEJOY: To them.

HARRISON: Them?

LOVEJOY: To them.

HARRISON: Who's "them," Jason?

LOVEJOY: (long pause) I don't understand the question, ma'am.

HARRISON: You said Ms. Meyers was going "to them." Who's "them?"

LOVEJOY: I don't understand the question, ma'am.

HARRISON: Jason, do you understand why I'm interviewing you?

LOVEJOY: We're the right people. I'm good with people.

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Situation Assessment: The read I got on him indicated that his confusion was genuine, and I didn't detect any malice, just a simple desire to save his own skin from any potential prosecution and a whole lot of wondering what was happening to him in the moment. I'm certain that he knew Meyers was involved in something not on the up and up, but I don't think he knows about the Art or understands what Meyers was doing with it. I noticed a lot of repetition of "she said" and the idea of the "right" people. Hard to know if that's manipulation of the regular human variety or a more malevolent form of influence.

Lovejoy clearly shares some of my own "natural talent" as he put it, which Meyers may have cultivated in him to an extent, but he doesn't have any context for it. My recommendation is that we bring him in for further testing, and then training, if deemed appropriate. Lovejoy isn't what I'd call academic, but he's got something, and that something needs a healthier direction, if you'll excuse me saying so, sir. I think he could be a danger to himself or others in his current state, and frankly, the last thing we need is Meyers -- I can't think of her as Duber, as somebody who used to be one of us -- getting ahold of him again and setting up this whole scheme again somewhere else.

Look, I know I'm supposed to write these things up as formally as possible, but excuse my French, sir, this whole Meyers thing has me scared shitless. It's one thing when



the Unknown is working through creepy-crawlies. That, I get. Monsters, I get. That's its own kind of terrifying, I suppose, but it's the kind of terrifying I understand. The Unknown manipulating people into thinking it's good and helpful isn't new, either. Still turns my stomach, but after three years with SAVE, it's nothing I haven't seen before. The Unknown builds a lot of its foundation on lies. That's how it works.

This whole fancy glass-sided building set-up? The Unknown gone corporate, a former SAVE envoy twisting the Art into something sick and wrong to make a buck? Sir, I don't know what to say about that. If she hadn't been stupid enough to apply for patents for whatever it is she was working on, who knows how much damage she could've done? How many of the right people, or worse, the wrong people, might she and her company have drawn in?

The even bigger question: who is "them?" I'm not sure I really want to know. I don't know if it's better for Meyers to have gone to them or better for her to have been interrupted by a federal investigation. That's why you're the director and I'm the envoy, I guess. This is way above my paygrade.

## INFILTRATION

The infiltration of 2000 was nearly SAVE's death knell. Somehow the Unknown overcame SAVE's awareness and defenses and attacked. To this day, SAVE hasn't discovered how the infiltration occurred, much less what to avoid to prevent a similar attack. Nejem changed the organization to safeguard against the future risk, but were her alterations sufficient, or is the Unknown simply regrouping and playing a long game before striking again?

Presented here are three suggested scenarios for how the infiltration may have worked. None is more correct than any of the others, nor are they more valid than any alternative written by the Chill Master for her game.

### THE DECEIVER

Few are as easy to deceive as those with youthful inexperience and good intentions. They come into SAVE believing that they can fight the Unknown and win. They soon see how wrong they were. Doubt soon creeps into their minds. After hundreds of years, how can SAVE not know how to fight the darkness? Why do SAVE's leaders always seem to know what you're about to face, but can't say? Why are they keeping vital information from envoys?

### INFILTRATION AND GOALS

The Deceiver didn't need to seed doubts, it just needed to watch and wait for the right opportunity. Gabriel Booth had been with SAVE for just over two years, and had already lost too many friends. Every threat assigned to Gabriel and whichever envoys he

worked with always went wrong. Usually the opposition was nothing like what SAVE's information suggested. Other times, the creature's weaknesses were recorded incorrectly in the archives. Whatever the cause, good people died, and Gabriel grew angrier.

The Deceiver approached Gabriel after another disastrous mission. Gabriel was injured and needed help. The Deceiver offered its assistance if Gabriel would just listen. All it wanted was to expose SAVE's knowledge of the Unknown to the wider world. This may have been because knowing would empower the Unknown, spreading fear throughout humanity as they understood the darkness beyond their ignorance. Perhaps it wanted the exposure to bring down SAVE. To outsiders, the archives would appear as the ramblings of conspiracy theorists and violent lunatics. Many corrupted humans left loved ones behind who had no idea where they had gone. The archives contained information that would have led to the imprisonment of many envoys, and financial ruin for SAVE. If the Deceiver's plan worked, SAVE would be lost forever.

### DEFEAT

Gabriel's inflamed mistrust of SAVE's archives made him obsess over them. He studied the journals and records every moment that he could, hoping to find the secret to stopping the Unknown once and for all. The Deceiver gently guided and pushed this obsession, convinced that the human would grow frustrated with the uncertain records and expose them to disbelievers and the families of the victims who were



collateral damage. The Deceiver thought this would be the catalyst that would bring down SAVE.

Instead, Gabriel discovered a mistranslated ritual he thought would summon and bind all manner of Unknown creatures; secret knowledge to protect humanity that SAVE refused to use. Confident that he no longer needed the “guidance” of his new mentor (and certain that his benefactor was just as untrustworthy as SAVE’s leadership), Gabriel didn’t tell the Deceiver of his discovery.

As he performed the ritual in Dublin headquarters in secret, Gabriel discovered the ritual successfully summoned scores of ravenous creatures, but gave no control over them. Though well intentioned, Gabriel Booth had invited the evil inside SAVE. Gabriel was the first to die in the carnage. SAVE lost much in the confused battle for survival, but managed to overcome the Unknown. Though frustrated, the Deceiver wasn’t truly defeated. At most, the creature suffered a setback, and retreated to regroup and further study SAVE to learn better ways to expose and destroy the Society.

## THE RESTRUCTURE

SAVE’s new cell structure makes future compromise in the same manner difficult. Loosely connected offices, and the lack of a central information archive, means each smaller unit of SAVE will have to be individually destroyed. As cells fall, SAVE will notice. The Society will know that enemies are attacking it again and will move to either counterattack, or cut the afflicted cells loose and close ranks in defense against the enemy.

Alternatively, the Deceiver will need to invent some grand threat to bring the entire group together again. Though the Deceiver doesn’t yet know of the digitizing of SAVE’s archives, it will be extremely interested in this knowledge. Though the humans don’t realize it, a single organization connected digitally is almost as vulnerable to the Unknown as a single physical entity. The Deceiver will be keen to exploit this weakness, should a careless envoy ever reveal it to the creature.

## PREDICTABILITY

SAVE envoys are human first, and humans are creatures of habit. Expeditions quickly fall into familiar patterns: investigate the Unknown, fight and destroy its creatures, return to the office to regroup and reflect. Many then return home, to loved ones and domestic chores. Few ever varied their routines as a security precaution. It was only a matter of time before something noticed.

Rather than some creature of the Unknown exploiting the weakness, this time human rivals nearly defeated SAVE. *Croix Illuminée* was a French Rosicrucian offshoot that combined ancient mysteries

with technical advancements. *Illuminée* chapter houses were wonders filled with clockwork automata, mechanical servants, and spring-powered scrying devices. Despite these achievements, the *Illuminée* struggled to incorporate their mystic knowledge with modern electronics. They believed SAVE’s storehouse of knowledge held the answers to overcoming their limitations.

Members of *Croix Illuminée* watched SAVE’s operations for months, noting how envoys operated and the activities that drew SAVE’s attention. *Croix Illuminée* then arranged events to attract SAVE. They called creatures to locations controlled by the *Illuminée* and learned much more about SAVE’s operations and patterns, at the cost of many innocent lives.

## INFILTRATION AND GOALS

Though *Croix Illuminée* lacked SAVE’s extensive knowledge of the Unknown, the *Illuminée* knew summoning rites to call creatures and strip their essence to power devices. The *Illuminée* figured they simply had to summon creatures using the rituals’ first stages, and unleash the uncontrolled monsters against SAVE. On a moonless night, *Croix Illuminée* arrived at the Dublin headquarters and directed their clockwork monstrosities to attack the grounds as a diversion. While SAVE scrambled to defend against mechanical assailants, the *Illuminée* entered the building and used the confusion as cover to enact their rituals.

## DEFEAT

*Croix Illuminée*’s defeat came from ignorance, overconfidence, and underestimating SAVE. The *Illuminée* thought their rituals purified the mystical essence of the creatures. They didn’t understand that the evil remained, and that every *Illuminée* sanctum was filled with self-aware minions of the Unknown. The Evil Way had corrupted *Croix Illuminée*’s rituals from their earliest foundation. The devices watched their “masters” and waited for the right time. On the night of the infiltration, the mutinous automata wrecked *Croix Illuminée* chapter houses across Europe and slaughtered nearly the entire order.

*Croix Illuminée* vastly overestimated their ability to take advantage of the chaos, especially with their automata slaughtering envoy and *Illuminée* alike. The *Illuminée* thought the summoned monsters would focus on SAVE’s resistance, but in running from confrontations, the *Illuminée* drew the Unknown’s attention by avoiding the monsters. The creatures fell on them like predators isolating and hunting the weakest members of a herd.

Finally, SAVE’s ability to fight against the Unknown was astonishing. Even when attacked by



surprise, envoys rallied and brought all their resources to bear. By the infiltration's end, *Croix Illuminée* was even more reduced than SAVE.

## THE RESTRUCTURE

The distributed office structure reduces SAVE's predictability. Envoys no longer report to easily discoverable offices, all with the same procedures. If one office is compromised, it only destroys itself—or possibly a small cluster of locations.

Under the new structure, the greatest risk comes from within. Many *Croix Illuminée* survivors reached out to SAVE in the aftermath, claiming to be newly recruited survivors of recently destroyed offices. In the confusion following the infiltration, SAVE took them at their word. They now linger within the Society. Some have assimilated and try to forget their roles in the infiltration. Others wait and watch, ready to strike again.

## POWER CORRUPTS

SAVE's codified practice of the Art insulates envoys from corruption, but it doesn't completely immunize them from Unknown attention. Practitioners of the Art are dedicated, determined individuals brimming with power and potential. Most practitioners want to learn more and refine their craft, and the Unknown is ready to guide these individuals towards power. If they're too ambitious, at some point these people may cross a line and become monsters.

## INFILTRATION

SAVE wasn't infiltrated. The Society welcomed Gregory Bradford and trained him to be an envoy. SAVE soon learned that Bradford was an eager pupil and prodigy of the Art. He quickly grasped the basics of the Incorporeal Art and worked diligently to master control of his abilities. Bradford's teachers commented that he could one day surpass even David Robinson's ability. Knowing one school wasn't enough for Bradford, however. He soon learned the rudiments of the Sensing and Kinetic Arts and had ambitions on attuning the remainder.

Bradford's fall came from his thirst for knowledge and ignorance of the danger. Bradford yearned to understand the underlying principles of the Art, and believed the best way to do so was to extend disciplines beyond their intended purpose. He twisted his knowledge into new manifestations and subverted approved teachings into darker outcomes. The Unknown soon became aware of Bradford's potential, and extended the temptation of power.

## GOALS

If the Unknown has understandable goals, it intended to subvert SAVE's greatest pupil and turn him against the organization. Exactly how the Unknown planted seeds of the Evil Way before Bradford remains a mystery. Its servants were subtle and cautious. Bradford never set out to use corrupted methods; his ambition drove him to follow each tantalizing new piece of information. Bradford saw the boundaries of well-defined disciplines as fuzzy grey spaces to be explored. The tomes he read always hinted at something more. Every advancement of knowledge contained another small crumb of the Evil Way. Eventually these tiny fragments drove Bradford to embrace corruption.

## DEFEAT

Bradford's rapid advancement contained the seeds of its own downfall. On the night of the infiltration, Bradford gained access to normally restricted documents within the Dublin headquarters. His mentors counseled caution, but deemed the manuscripts safe enough for study.

Bradford absorbed pages of information as the night grew darker. After hours of attempting to replicate what he read, Bradford surrendered his soul for the knowledge he sought. The raw and uncontrolled power was unlike anything he'd ever experienced. The Evil Way pulsed from Bradford in waves of destructive force. The foundations of Dublin headquarters shook; every envoy with any talent in the Art felt the Unknown unleashed within their sanctuary. Bradford's uncontrolled power was a gateway for all kinds of monsters, who stepped through the envoy and into the heart of SAVE.

The Unknown would have been unstoppable were it not for Bradford's desperate attempts to control his disintegrating form. As his body melted to ash, leaving only an incorporeal shadow, Bradford spied a decorative urn that had somehow survived the destruction. He bound his power and what remained of his self to the urn, and was violently pulled into the sealed container in an angry, screaming vortex. With the gateway closed, the monsters' reinforcements were spent. SAVE marshaled its forces and repelled the Unknown invasion.

## THE RESTRUCTURE

SAVE's reorganization makes it less vulnerable, but it's likely to one day face Bradford again. Many records of artifacts and treasures were lost; new catalogues were based on scraps of information. Many items were labeled with as much detail as research and the Art revealed, but their true natures and risks remain a mystery.





# CHAPTER FOUR: CASES

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SAVE's strengths and weaknesses allow campaigns to add extra depth and variety to what can easily become a "monster of the week" scenario. While hunting monsters is the business of envoys, over time the stakes have to be higher than that in order for the stories to remain compelling. Ghosts come back to haunt characters, old friends fall into darkness, and old loves light the way home, even if they gutter and fade in the process. SAVE isn't just its resources, it's also the networks of people who know each other and have relationships with one another to manage. In the following cases, SAVE's history, politics, and organization become important story elements that can add new resources and complications to any **Chill** campaign.



## A HOUSE DIVIDED

*Twelve years ago, a little college tucked away in the shadow of the Green Mountains took Montpelier's best envoys. Just last week, history repeated itself. Now the lost HQ has become found again as they make a desperate plea, and you're their last hope. Either the third time's the charm, or you're about to become SAVE's newest transfers to the Dublin office.*

**Important Traits:** None

**Major Menace:** Kunyaba, a djinni

**Minor Menace:** Melody Mori, a SAVE envoy subjugated by the Evil Way

### SETUP

This case takes place in Hanover, New Hampshire, a small, traditional New England college town. It's fairly isolated and has a history that goes back to the 1700s. A week ago, the SAVE HQ in Montpelier, Vermont sent three envoys to investigate a cold case that suddenly seems to be active after all.

In the early 2000s, four students on campus died mysteriously. The police couldn't figure out the murders, all of which involved students who had traveled together to Morocco on the foreign study program. Unbeknownst to anyone, one of those students brought back an ancient amphoriskos — a ceramic container about a foot tall, with two handles placed high on its body, plugged with a gleaming fist-sized ruby stopper.

All SAVE could discover at the time was that the students were acting strangely and abandoning their usual activities since their return, and that they were last spotted near the Facilities building in the middle of the night. The last report from Hanover ends with the envoys' suspicion that they tipped off the monster; that was the last anyone heard of them. Montpelier's records indicate that due to the troubles crippling SAVE at the time, no one was sent to follow up. The file was subsequently forgotten.

It wasn't until two weeks ago that the Montpelier HQ was reminded of the case. The student paper ran a piece on famous incidents on campus. A veteran envoy, Charlie Cooperton, remembered and retrieved the file. The HQ assembled a team and sent three envoys to see what information they could dig up: Melody Mori, Leanne McLaughlin, and Vince Parker.

The three envoys picked up the investigation and tracked a clue to the utility tunnels that run beneath the campus quad. These tunnels are relatively new, built in the early 90s to facilitate the expansion of the campus. Envoy Melody Mori found the Moroccan amphoriskos half-buried in the earth of the tunnels. Lured to the bottle, she opened it, freeing a powerful

djinni. The djinni used the Evil Way on Mori, bringing her into its service.

Under the djinni's influence, Mori worked to keep her fellow envoys in the dark and unaware of the amphoriskos. Her teammates realized something was wrong, however, and started watching her movements without her knowledge. When Mori snuck out one night to replace the amphoriskos in the tunnels where she'd found it, they followed her. At the Facilities building in front of the entrance to the tunnels, McLaughlin and Parker confronted her about the amphoriskos. She seemed to see reason for a moment, but fled before they could repair the damage that had been done to her sanity. The next day, the djinni took matters into its own hands, exerting its power over her.

Mori tricked and cornered each of her friends, manipulating them into ambushes so the djinni could kill them with its Wound discipline. She laid the bodies out in their hotel rooms afterward. Stymied, the police called the case a strange double-murder, leaving Mori behind to serve the djinni in its ongoing quest to torment humanity.

The djinni has no plan beyond making everyone's lives as miserable as possible without being discovered or losing its valuable new servant. Given a chance, it uses its disciplines to sow madness, spread paranoia, and frame innocents for awful deeds. Mori now stays at a small bed-and-breakfast, checked in under a false name and paying with cash. She's stashed the amphoriskos in an older, hidden steam tunnel that branches off from the main utility tunnels in use today. She keeps the ruby stopper on her person at all times.

### SAVE

The SAVE office in Montpelier is considered a lost HQ. After the fall of Charleston, Montpelier cut off all communications with the rest of SAVE and operated completely on its own. Busy with their own troubles, other offices couldn't afford to check in, especially in such a remote location. As a result, many thought Montpelier had fallen to the Unknown; the Montpelier envoys preferred that, as there was less chance of the Unknown coming to hunt them down that way.

Now, however, the Montpelier office is undermanned. It doesn't have that many recruits and its chief, Laura Malvey, is desperate to find help. Fearing that whatever's out there will track its dead envoys back to them, she broke radio silence, asking another SAVE office to send reinforcements. Those reinforcements are the players' characters.

Whoever sends the players' envoys on this mission warns that if Mori still operates in the area, she may



not be amenable to another HQ's help, so they should step gently. The mission's top priority is to find out what happened to Mori and bring her back if possible, and then to destroy any Unknown creatures involved.

Old habits die hard, and Montpelier and its envoys remain suspicious and aloof despite the fact that it requested help. Malvey reluctantly cooperates with the "outsiders," however, and smooths over the standoffish behavior of her remaining envoys. She gives the player characters the original case file from 2003, arranges for a rental car, and sets them up with lodging near the college, an hour northwest in secluded Hanover.

## THE TIMELINE

- June 5, 2003: Four students return from Morocco with the amporiskos containing the djinni.
- June 7-18, 2003: The djinni turns the students against each other, causing their deaths..
- June 19, 2003: SAVE envoys from the Montpelier office arrive to investigate the string of murders.
- June 21, 2003: The Montpelier envoys send their last report to HQ. They seal the djinni away, but vanish or die in the process.
- September 23, 2015: The Montpelier SAVE office dispatches Leanne McLaughlin, Vince Parker, and Melody Mori to Hanover, NH to re-open the cold case file. Three envoys are all the office can spare, and there is little expectation that the team will uncover meaningful evidence.
- September 25, 2015: Mori finds the amporiskos and frees the djinni.
- September 28, 2015: McLaughlin and Parker confront Mori about the amporiskos.
- September 30, 2015: Mori and the djinni kill McLaughlin and Parker.
- October 1-3, 2015: The djinni wreaks havoc. No further bodies are found, but strange behavior abounds and paranoia increases all over town.
- October 4, 2015: The Montpelier office asks for help after losing contact with its envoys.
- October 5, 2015: The envoys arrive in Hanover. **STARTING POINT FOR PCs.**
- October 8, 2015: If the envoys haven't confronted her yet, Mori catches on to the investigation and takes steps to sabotage it.
- October 9, 2015: If the envoys haven't destroyed it yet, the djinni frames one of the envoys for Carter Fairchild's murder.

- October 10, 2015: Homecoming. The students gather in huge numbers on the quad to build an enormous bonfire and celebrate. If the envoys haven't stopped the djinni by then, its influence culminates in a frenzy of violence.

## THE CASE

The most obvious starting points are the recent murders and the original case file, but the players might have other ideas, and that's fine too. They could instead start off by asking the Montpelier HQ for information about Melody Mori herself, or by gathering stories about urban legends on campus and checking related places for traces of the Unknown.

## FALLEN ENVOYS

When the characters investigate the murders, the police have already cleared the bodies and the scene is closed to visitors. SAVE has no contacts in the police force here, so if the envoys want to gain access to the police file, they need to get creative. Perhaps they pose as FBI agents, sneak into the station in the middle of the night, or seduce the detective in charge of the case. Any route they take requires at least one Specific and opposed check and some teamwork. The same goes for gaining access to the murdered envoys' hotel rooms — perhaps they sneak in, use those FBI aliases, or bribe a housekeeper.

Establishing a strong identity as FBI agents or other officials may apply a +10 to the envoys' scores after they're accepted, but such agents tend not to travel in packs, so the envoys should be careful.

The file reveals that a housekeeper at the hotel found the bodies peacefully laid out on their beds, but sporting grisly wounds. The cause of death hasn't been satisfactorily determined; the wounds weren't made by any known weapon or animal. The room held very little blood, making it unlikely the victims were killed there. Investigators found no sign of struggle in either room and neither body had any foreign fingerprints on it. They did find Mori's fingerprints on both door-knobs, however.

Mori hasn't checked out of the hotel and hasn't been there since before the bodies were found, as far as anyone knows. Her whereabouts are currently unknown. The wounds are inconsistent with the force and size of someone matching Mori's physique, however. Surveillance footage from the hotel shows the presence of someone dark-skinned in the lobby who couldn't be identified either by hotel personnel or in any records. The file shows that the police consider this individual a possible suspect.



Inside the hotel rooms, Sensing the Unknown carries a +20 modifier; the djinni was here a few days ago. The rooms are cool and silent, smelling of dust. Heavy drapes block out the sunlight, and yellow barricade tape crisscrosses the doors. The concierge, the housekeepers, and the few remaining guests are wary and evasive — incidental victims of the djinni's paranoia tactics in a house of death. Searching these rooms requires a Specific Investigation check.

The envoys may visit the morgue and gain access to the bodies — again, this requires some creativity and a roll. Examining the corpses requires a Specific Investigation check, aided by any specialty or Edge that provides medical knowledge. Sensing the Unknown near the bodies carries a +10 modifier.

From here, the envoys might turn to the matter of the vanished envoy (“Following the Footsteps”) or dig further into what they know so far with some research (“Hitting the Books”).

Clues the envoys can find while investigating the murders include:

- Victims were surprised when they died and show no signs of physical restraint or captivity (Vital), at the morgue. Implies that either the victims were ambushed, didn't suspect foul play, or went willingly to their deaths.
- Faint smell of spices and smoke (Vital), in the hotel rooms, on the corpses in the morgue, or interviewing hotel staff.
- Victims were directly killed by the Evil Way (Interest), Low or High result viewing the bodies. Colossal result identifies the discipline as some form of Wound, which the Montpelier SAVE office has previously encountered.
- Clumsily turned-down bedsheets, arranged after the bodies were laid out (Interest), Low result, noticing it in the hotel rooms. High result, it's also in the police report. Colossal result, it implies some effort to treat the situation as normal — or make a mockery of it.
- Mori is staying at a local B&B under a false name (Esoteric), Colossal result asking around for someone of her description or following up on police leads on the victims' missing third companion. They learn the false name or the specific B&B this way, but not both.
- Napkin from the Dirt Cowboy Cafe (False Lead), Botch. It is under the desk in one of the hotel rooms, but it was dropped by a police officer during the initial investigation. At the cafe, the envoys interact with a barista

influenced by the djinni, possibly tipping it off to their presence.

- Salt on the fingers of McLaughlin's corpse (False Lead), Botch at the morgue. Irrelevant, but may point envoys toward the wrong kind of creature.

## FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS

Following the trail of the Montpelier envoys' case leads to the Facilities building, where they can ask around to see if anyone has seen Mori or in fact anything strange at all. Doing so requires Specific Interview or Communication checks, depending on the approach. A security guard is available for questioning, as is a tour guide with an office there named Carter Fairchild. The security guard is reluctant to answer any questions unless the envoys present themselves as official authorities of some kind. Carter is more helpful, but if something makes him suspicious (such as a Botch result), he makes excuses to leave and reports them to campus security if left unchecked.

Questioning Carter reveals the existence of the tunnels underneath the quad. He readily agrees to give them the tour, but the next tour is scheduled for the day after tomorrow (this is true regardless of which day on the timeline the envoys have reached by this point; shift the timeline as necessary).

If the envoys wait to take the tour, *turn a token light*. While they wait, Mori discovers that they're looking for her and alerts the djinni. The djinni finds and kills Carter while wearing the form of one of the envoys, framing the envoy for the murder. Before the envoys can take the tour, the police arrive to arrest one of them!

At any point during the case, if Mori is given enough time or the envoys slip up, or she manages to escape from them after they've found her, the framing can happen regardless of who the djinni's unfortunate victim is. If *too* much time passes, it might happen to more than one envoy!

If the envoys don't wait and instead try to break into the Facilities building and sneak into the tunnels early, *turn a token light*. They run into Carter, who comes back to retrieve something he left in his office. They need Specific and opposed checks to convince him to help out, incapacitate him, or do something else to stop him from alerting security.

From here, the envoys might turn their attention to the murders (“Fallen Envoys”) or dig further into what they know so far with some research (“Hitting the Books”).

Clues the envoys can find while retracing Mori's steps include:



- Mori was caught arguing with two companions about some kind of “vase” inside the building after hours, and the security guard removed them from the premises (Vital), interview the guard or rifle through records and surveillance footage. Botch during the interview causes a –10 penalty to further attempts to speak with *any* campus security. High result confirms that Mori’s companions match the descriptions of McLaughlin and Parker. Implies that conflict divided the Montpelier envoys just before the murders, and leads to research about the “vase.”
- A week or so before the after-hours altercation, the Montpelier envoys took a tour of the utility tunnels that run under the quad (Vital), this comes from talking to Carter or finding tour records.
- Exact location of the tunnel entrance (Interest), High result while investigating records, or Colossal result while talking to Carter (he shows them with pride). Also learned with a separate General Investigation check if they later decide to sneak into the tunnels without waiting.
- The college actually sits atop *two* sets of tunnels (Interest), High result while talking to Carter or looking at records reveals that the original tunnels under the college were built two centuries ago. These older steam tunnels became unstable and were abandoned and their entrances were collapsed. In the early 90s, the new set of tunnels was built to give the newly expanded campus better infrastructure for electricity, water, steam, and network cables.
- Mori carried a fist-sized ruby, of which she was desperately protective (Esoteric), Colossal result while interviewing the guard, checking surveillance footage, or reading records.
- Carter had a conversation with the Montpelier envoys about burial rituals in various cultures (False Lead), Botch while talking to Carter. Can point the envoys toward the wrong kind of creature.

## HITTING THE BOOKS

Eventually the envoys will probably research the creature and the bottle from information they pick up elsewhere. They may also research Mori herself, or follow up on local legends to see if any of them carry traces of truth. Going through the Montpelier SAVE office for any of these takes a –15 penalty, as

they resent having to divulge information about its envoys or the insights it has painstakingly collected over the years. If the envoys Botch a roll while talking to Montpelier, the office clams up entirely.

If the characters learn any clues from HQ about Mori, they also automatically discover that she is a chef who owns her own restaurant, was born and raised in Montpelier, and that she was recruited to SAVE when she managed to keep her head and evacuate the restaurant during a major haunting. Investigating her restaurant reveals that it’s been closed for over a week; a High or Colossal result allows the envoys to track her back to her B&B from the restaurant, both through witnesses and evidence that she’s been there to pick up money recently.

Local legends can be found in the main campus library, in the special collections library containing rare tomes and campus history archives, or simply by asking around. Librarians, professors, and even students are enthusiastic about sharing stories handed down through generations. While most of these legends end up as false leads, since the djinni came from Morocco, tales about the centuries-old steam tunnel network (purported by students to be haunted) are found this way, in case the envoys haven’t discovered it yet.

Envoys can use information learned elsewhere to research the creature itself. SAVE has better information about the djinni and its trappings than the libraries do, but the special collections library contains enough rare books on esoteric subjects to know a little. Generally assume that a High result in the libraries can reveal what a Low result provides from SAVE.

Research takes time. The more homework the envoys do, the more time Mori has to catch onto them and try to sabotage their efforts. She may reveal them to the djinni, remove NPCs who know something, or destroy the corpses and hotel evidence if the envoys haven’t found them yet. Give the players opportunities to potentially notice the sabotage and catch up with her while she tails their investigation. (Again, adjust the timeline as needed.)

Clues the envoys can find with research include:

- Scent of spices and smoke can indicate the presence of certain djinn, which are creatures known to come from Middle Eastern nations (Vital), envoys can use the Morocco lead from the original case file to get here.
- Djinn live in bottles or other containers, can be trapped inside if the stopper is made of the right gemstone, and must be set free by a human to roam the Known world (Vital), helps the characters realize that Mori released the djinni.



- Speaking a djinni's true name can command it to enter its bottle (Vital), this will only come from SAVE, though envoys can learn it later from the djinni itself if they're clever. If Montpellier is uncooperative, the envoys can consult their home offices.
- Mori has a history of poking around where she shouldn't (Interest), Low result from Montpellier HQ. High result also reveals that she trained in stealth and handguns because she didn't want to confront the Unknown up close. She's good at reading people, and she's been trained in both the Restorative and Kinetic Schools of the Art. Colossal result reveals specific disciplines (see "NPCs," p. 124).
- Account of a djinni that was killed using fire (False Lead), Botch result in SAVE's records, special collections library, or part of an urban legend involving the original college hall burning down after some students summoned a monster. The creature was not actually a djinni.
- Djinni are immortal and can't be killed. They can impersonate humans, and they influence the minds of those who set them free (Interest), Low or High result researching the creature via case clues. Tells the envoys *why* Mori turned against her companions, or at least why she cut off communication with SAVE. It also sets them looking for ways to trap the creature, since it's indestructible.
- The three most infamous Moroccan djinn are Sheliak, Kunyaba, and Chaimaa (Interest), High result at SAVE or special collections library, giving the envoys some trial-and-error options.
- Infamous legend of Doc Benton (False Lead), Botch looking for local legends. College storytelling tradition tells of the healer-turned-undead madman who has supposedly been murdering and terrorizing inhabitants of the area for generations. Sends the envoys on a hike up lonely Mount Moosilauke, where they become easy pickings for the djinni, its influenced servants, wild animals, or even other creatures of the Unknown!

## CONFRONTING THE UNKNOWN

In the utility tunnels, the envoys find a network of dusty underground pipes and wiring stretching through a massive corridor cut from stone. Lights flicker at intervals just long enough to preserve unsettling dim patches in between. Eventually they come to a collapsed portion of tunnel that has been dug through. They can follow the tight makeshift passage into an enormous rusted, broken pipe, which leads into the abandoned steam tunnel network. The older tunnels are pitch dark and perilous; any Movement rolls made inside them take a -15 penalty for the unstable terrain. If the envoys make a successful General Investigation check to find the old tunnels, they do so in just one visit. If not, it takes several trips to find them, which gives Mori time to sabotage their efforts, as in "Following the Footsteps." The envoys might also locate the hidden hole where Mori originally found the amphoriskos, which carries a Sense the Unknown modifier of +30.

The envoys come to a fork in the old tunnels. Down the left fork lies a large pipe that empties into a sewer. The envoys can use Specific Investigation checks here to track Mori's footprints and other signs of frequent passage to find her B&B. Mori is in her room when they get there. She won't cooperate and may attack or run, depending on the envoys' approach, but if they manage to restrain or incapacitate her long enough to break the djinni's influence, she'll aid them. She'll support them with her disciplines in battle, but refuses to get close to the creature and is too afraid to attack it directly. She can give them Vital or Interest clues they might still be lacking (although she doesn't know the djinni's true name), and hands over the stopper for the amphoriskos. She's devastated at the part she played in her colleagues' deaths, and admits that she remembers tucking them into bed with her Hidden Hand discipline, as though wishing they were simply asleep.

The right fork in the abandoned tunnel leads to the dark, enclosed niche where Mori stowed the open amphoriskos. The niche is a half-collapsed hole with a low ceiling. It looks like the den of some long-dead animal, accessible through a broken pipe with jagged and rusty edges. The hole is only big enough for three people to occupy fully; the same Movement penalties apply here as elsewhere in the old tunnels. The bottle itself sits propped up on a makeshift ledge of stone. If the envoys are stealthy enough in a Specific and opposed Movement check against the djinni's EWS, they can back out of the niche and even perhaps take pictures of the amphoriskos before it notices their presence and emerges. However, if they move the amphoriskos or attempt to seal it, the djinni emerges immediately. Botched rolls or *turning a token light*



causes a cave-in, which isn't a solution — the djinni easily escapes the rubble, and the bottle is now buried.

Once the envoys confront the djinni, deliberately or not, it attempts to kill everyone present. It may try to use its Influence discipline on them, but it won't try that again on Mori if she's sided with the characters — it's angry that she betrayed it and wishes her dead. If Carter or another NPC is present when the djinni emerges, *turn a token light* in addition to the discipline's cost. The djinni automatically Influences the NPC into helping it without a roll. If Mori hasn't been rescued by this point, she aids the djinni in battle and through both using her handgun and using her Hidden Hand discipline to throw objects at the envoys from a distance. She arrives a few rounds into the fight if she isn't there at first.

If the envoys have learned enough to know the secret of the djinni's true name or can trick it into saying the name, they can command it to enter its amphoriskos (see "Kunyaba, the Djinni"). Otherwise, they need to deplete its STA until it's forced back into its Lair. If Mori isn't on their side by this point, they need to wrest the stopper from her in order to trap the djinni. If the bottle was buried in a cave-in, they also need to retrieve it somehow.

## AFTERMATH

Since the djinni can't be killed, trapping it in its amphoriskos is the best outcome for the envoys. If they do anything with the amphoriskos other than giving it to SAVE, though, someone else inevitably releases it in the future — and it certainly wants revenge. (This might happen even if they do give it to SAVE, but at least SAVE can stave it off and prepare in the meantime.) If they fail to trap it before Homecoming on October 10, it uses its EWDs to twist the campus-wide celebrations into deadly mayhem, made even more terrifying by the traditional massive bonfire the students build and ignite on the quad.

This case is about sealing the monster away, but more than that, it's about Melody Mori and the potential for saving her life and soul. If the envoys can't restore her sanity, they may be forced to kill her to stop the djinni and save their own lives. Are they willing to take the life of a fellow soldier against the dark?

## NPCS

These are the NPCs used in **A House Divided**.

### MELODY MORI, SAVE ENVOY

STA: 22	WPR: 24	REF: 45
<b>Specialties:</b> Handguns (B42); Hiding (E70); Reading People (M82)		
<b>Disciplines of the Art:</b> Hidden Hand (B42); Invigorate (E57)		
<b>Drives:</b> <i>Serve the djinni; Escape and grieve</i> (subconscious)		

### KUNYABA, THE DJINNI

EWS: 100 (Deadly)	REF: 80	STA: 95
<b>Disciplines:</b> Change Weather, Corporeal Manifestation, Darken, Haywire, Influence, Lure, Shriek, Steal Form, Wound		
<b>Aspects:</b> Incorporeal (true form only), Invulnerable, Lair (bottle), Native Environment (fire), Regeneration, Special Weakness (true name), Telltale (smoky, spicy scent), Tough, Unliving		

In its natural form, Kunyaba appears as a writhing blood-red pillar of smoke. When it uses Corporeal Manifestation to appear human, its default appearance is that of an androgynous dark-skinned person of indeterminate heritage. It often uses Steal Form, however, to take the forms of specific humans to ruin their reputations or play with their minds.

**Lair:** Kunyaba's bottle cannot be damaged or destroyed. Once stoppered with the ruby, the bottle acts as a prison as well as a home and only a human can release it. While trapped, it can use its Lure discipline on nearby victims, but no others.

A djinni regenerates any lost Stamina within 24 hours while within its bottle. If reduced to 0 STA, it must retreat to its bottle to recover. Otherwise it doesn't take Injuries or suffer Injury penalties, nor can it ever die.

**Special Weakness:** "Kunyaba" is the djinni's true name and can be used to force it back into its Lair if discovered. The envoy must speak the name with the bottle and djinni both nearby, succeed on a Specific and opposed Communication vs. EWS check to send the djinni swirling back into the amphoriskos, then seal it with the ruby stopper. Uttering the name also serves as the vulnerability for its Steal Form discipline, causing its skin to ripple briefly as though it were made of nothing but smoke after all.



## RUNNING A HOUSE DIVIDED

The CM should figure out what happens if the envoys stumble across the djinni before they know enough to win. If they take the tunnel tour immediately and haven't figured out what they're up against yet, they're liable to wake the djinni early. Watch for opportunities to let Mori cross paths with them before they find the amphoriskos, and/or let the djinni play with them like a cat plays with its dinner, letting them escape and using its more subtle disciplines to try to ruin their lives before it goes for violence.

Players might go to Montpelier to force more information out of the reluctant coordinator there. It's a valid avenue, but it won't make the envoys any friends. Obviously, the HQ needs the envoys' help and won't turn completely hostile, but the CM can *turn a token light* to make things more complicated with interpersonal drama, or postpone the consequences until after the case is over.

The real horror of this case isn't in the djinni's ability to kill, but in its subtlety. As the CM, ramp up the paranoia and mind games as the investigation goes on, and watch for opportunities to spring moral dilemmas on the players. Most of the enemies they might face here aren't monsters, but people under the djinni's influence. On the other hand, anyone could be the monster at any time. Once the players discover that, whether through research or coming face to face with a stolen form, play up the characters' uncertainty. Use the rule that adds a dark token when the Unknown becomes aware of the envoys to alert the players that *now* is when they should start worrying about NPCs being the djinni in disguise; but avoid accidentally taking away the players' ability to be proactive by making them too paranoid out of character.

## CLUES

These clues are included for the CM to use, but they're by no means comprehensive. Add more or change these as needed to fit your game.

## VITAL CLUES

- The Montpelier envoys were surprised when they died and show no signs of physical restraint or captivity.
- A faint smell of spices and smoke lingers in the hotel rooms and on the corpses.
- Mori was caught arguing with two companions about some kind of "vase" inside the Facilities building after hours, and the security guard removed them from the premises.
- A week or so before the after-hours altercation, the Montpelier envoys took a tour of the utility tunnels that run under the quad.

- The scent of spices and smoke can indicate the presence of certain djinn, which are creatures known to come from Middle Eastern nations.
- Djinn live in bottles or other containers, can be trapped inside if the stopper is made of the right gemstone, and must be set free by a human to roam the Known world.
- Speaking a djinni's true name can command it to enter its bottle.

## INTEREST CLUES

- The victims were directly killed by the Evil Way; Colossal result, the discipline that killed them was some form of Wound.
- Clumsily turned-down sheets arranged after the bodies were set on the beds; Colossal result, the turned-down sheets imply some effort to treat the situation as normal — or make a mockery of it.
- The exact location of the tunnel entrance inside the Facilities building.
- The college actually sits atop *two* sets of tunnels, one much older.
- Mori has a history of poking around where she shouldn't; High result reveals her areas of expertise; Colossal result reveals her specific disciplines of the Art.
- Djinni are immortal and can't be killed, they can impersonate humans, and they influence the minds of those who set them free.
- The three most infamous Moroccan djinn are Sheliak, Kunyaba, and Chaimaa.

## ESOTERIC CLUES

- Mori is staying at a local B&B under a false name.
- Mori carried a fist-sized ruby, of which she was desperately protective.

## FALSE LEADS

- A napkin from the Dirt Cowboy Café is found at the hotel, which leads to interacting with a barista influenced by the djinni.
- Salt is found on the fingers of McLaughlin's corpse.
- Carter had a conversation with the Montpelier envoys about burial rituals in various cultures.
- The envoys hear or read an account of a djinni that was killed using fire.
- The envoys hear or read about the infamous local legend of Doc Benton.



## SLAUGHTER OF HOPE

*One should rather die than be betrayed. There is no deceit in death. It delivers precisely what it has promised. Betrayal, though...betrayal is the willful slaughter of hope.*

— Steven Deitz

It seemed like just a normal series of cases. Your SAVE HQ always deals with the strange and bizarre, but nothing offered any connections between the various incidents you'd investigated over the past several months. And yet, now you're hearing that some of the people you've interviewed have turned up dead, and all in the same way: exsanguination. Some monster is hunting innocent people down, people who have already had to deal with the horrors of the Unknown. The only thing they have in common, though, is you.

**Important Traits:** None. The only important element that's strictly necessary is to have a cell that's more or less the same composition over the course of several cases.

**Major Menace:** Lester Geiger, a former SAVE envoy that was turned into an unusual and powerful vampire.

**Minor Menace:** Elijah Matthews, servant to Lester and double agent inside SAVE.

### SETUP

Envoys all know that their fight against the Unknown will end. The hope is that the end will be with the destruction of the Unknown, or maybe even just neutralizing it once in a while, but most of them know in their hearts that it'll more likely end with their death. For Lester Geiger, his fight against the Unknown ended when he died...but his fight against SAVE was just starting.

Lester was part of the Charleston, SC SAVE HQ back in the early 2000s, before the entire group stopped contacting other HQs around 2006. At the time, he and a few members of his cell were investigating a string of mysterious murders. The lack of blood in the victims and the times of death all occurring in the early morning painted a pretty clear picture of what type creature they were tracking down, but after weeks of questioning, research, and stakeouts, they didn't have any idea who the creature was or where it would strike next.

Late one evening, Lester received an anonymous tip forwarded to him by one of his informants. The rest of his team had worked 30 hours straight on a stakeout that didn't pan out. Exhausted and not wanting to bother anyone else on what was probably another dead end, he went to check it out on his own.

## STORY ARCS AND META-CASES

Most cases in **Chill** are compartmentalized: learn of an unusual situation, open a case, navigate a couple of twists and turns, and ultimately confront the Unknown. Some elements of the case may return to play out in subsequent cases; once in a while, a creature might return to torment the envoys. In general, though, it's assumed that once a case is closed, that's that.

"Slaughter of Hope" is something different. It's a story that's layered onto other cases, played out as a secondary plotline or in-between cases long before it becomes a case in its own right. In television terms, this would be a season-long story arc, where all the B-plots come together at the season finale. Here, we're calling it a "meta-case," something that ties a number of largely unconnected cases together.

As such, some of the information you'll find here may be a little less focused than what you'd normally expect. We give you advice, suggestions, and lots of information to help you out, but more than in a typical case, a lot of the context depends on the game you're running.

It turned out that the lead was good. Before he could call for help, though, he was killed and turned into a Carpathian vampire.

The creature left him to his fate. The next few days drove Lester insane as he struggled to cope with what he had become. Within a week, he had left Charleston and his old cell behind, convinced in his confusion that SAVE had somehow abandoned him to the vampire.

Over time, Lester learned that he needed blood every night to survive, but drinking the blood of those who experienced the Unknown sustained him for much longer — the kinds of people SAVE interacted with every day. He knew that tracking down envoys for their blood was a risky proposition, but the people who envoys question or interact with? Those were much easier to hunt. What better way to find out who envoys are talking to, of course, than to have an envoy in your pocket?

A previous attempt to convert an envoy (Maria Smith) went badly — she ended up killing herself rather than remaining in Lester's thrall. Now, Lester has decided to create his own envoy, one pliable to his will and focused on his needs. He settled on Elijah Matthews, an out-of-work police officer. Lester was Elijah's first brush with the supernatural, but hopefully not his last. A little Influence, a believable story, and Elijah was approached by SAVE to become an envoy.

Lester stayed away for a few months, allowing Elijah to become secure inside SAVE and gain the trust of the other envoys. But now, Lester has come back. He's ready for Elijah to betray SAVE so he can reap the rewards.



## SAVE

As this isn't a typical case, SAVE doesn't have a file ready with all the information the envoys need to investigate. However, it does have information relevant to Lester Geiger and Elijah Matthews — it just requires the envoys to know that it's important and figure out where to look.

Despite the disappearance of the Charleston HQ in 2006, many of their records were left behind and distributed to the rest of SAVE for safe-keeping. As such, the official record of Lester Geiger is relatively easy to acquire. He was a newspaper reporter in Atlanta, GA, with a knack for knowing when the people he was interviewing were lying. In 1999, his boyfriend was possessed by a vengeful ghost. Lester worked with the investigating envoys; his skill and potential to learn the Art led the envoys to recruit him after the case was over. A little over a year after he was recruited, he was transferred to the Charleston, SC HQ.

Lester's service record with SAVE for the next few years was typical, or as close to "typical" as the life of an envoy gets. He worked well with his cell, helped to close about a half-dozen cases, and was neither exemplary nor problematic. His records stop around October of 2004; he was reported missing by SAVE and the police in December. There's no information on what happened in between the two dates: Lester destroyed the records after he was converted into a vampire, and there aren't any members of his cell around anymore to discuss his final case.

Once SAVE realizes that one of their envoys has become a creature of the Unknown, Lester will be considered "kill on sight." The cell will be told that their highest priority is to eliminate Lester. They will have access to all manner of vampire-hunting resources: stakes, garlic, crosses, concealed weapon permits, silver bullets, a discretionary budget, whatever it takes (within reason and within SAVE's means). After all the hard work that SAVE has done to rebuild the organization, they aren't going to let an ex-envoy tear it all down again.

As for Elijah, SAVE only has the information from his original assessment and recruitment, as well as the background check they did on him. During his initiation he was legally declared dead, which makes some records a little harder to get a hold of without his death certificate. The story he gives (see p. 128) is nebulous enough, and there's very little evidence one way or the other. If he's revealed as a puppet of Lester's, the cell will have orders to capture him and assess if he's redeemable. If they can remove Lester's influence, then he's to be saved. If not, then the team will have to eliminate him as a threat.

## THE TIMELINE

- September 2nd, 1999: Lester Geiger recruited into SAVE.
- January 11th, 2001: Lester transferred to Charleston, SC SAVE HQ.
- October 7th, 2004: Lester's cell starts investigating a string of murders by an unknown Carpathian vampire.
- December 2nd, 2004: Lester gets an anonymous tip, which leads to him being converted into a vampire. The unknown vampire then leaves him.
- December 7th, 2004: Lester infiltrates his former HQ and destroys all records of the investigation into the vampire.
- December 9th, 2004: Lester leaves Charleston, travelling from city to city to stay ahead of SAVE.
- April 21st, 2010: Lester uses his Influence to convert an envoy, Maria Smith, and have her lead him to those who have witnessed the Unknown.
- April 25th, 2010: In a rare moment of lucidity, Maria commits suicide to prevent herself from being used further.
- November 30th, 2015: Elijah Matthews is "rescued" by Lester and converted into his minion.
- December 5th, 2015: SAVE makes sure that Elijah is legally declared dead, at Elijah's request.
- February 25th, 2016: Elijah is transferred to the envoys' cell. **STARTING POINT FOR PCs.**

## THE CASE

"Slaughter of Hope" is unusual, as the scenes of this case generally take place between or during other cases. The idea is that once Elijah joins the team, strange events start happening that eventually lead the characters to realize that something ties all the cases together. As such, entire sessions or even cases might happen between the scenes presented below; the advice given is therefore much more general and abstract. While any **Chill** case can (and maybe even should) be adapted for your own game, "Slaughter of Hope" doesn't work without some adaptation. There's more advice under "Running Slaughter of Hope" on p. 131, but for now just realize that one scene doesn't necessarily lead into another scene.



## INTRODUCING ELIJAH

The case starts when Elijah Matthews is transferred to the PCs' team from another SAVE HQ – choose one that's within a reasonable drive of where your game is set, but too small to handle his training. Elijah has only been a member of SAVE for a couple of months and is all too happy to defer to the other envoys. If the players question him (whether just asking or through a more thorough process), he offers the following information:

- Elijah first encountered the Unknown when a vampire attacked him (Vital).

If questioned about the attack, he says that the situation was a bit of a blur. The envoys who rescued him said that his mind had been controlled. He remembers being on patrol at the time, however, and that he was shot during the incident.

- Elijah joined SAVE soon after, only a couple of months ago (Interest).
- Elijah was legally declared dead in the city he was rescued in (Interest).

If asked, Elijah admits that he asked SAVE to do that. He was shot in the line of duty and didn't think he could go back to being a police officer after what he had seen.

- Elijah didn't have any family or friends of any note in his old town (Vital).

He'll be up front about the fact that he's kind of a loner and didn't fit in well with his co-workers. He didn't make friends easily; most of his family is dead, estranged, or lives in a different country.

- Elijah transferred to this HQ because the one that rescued and initiated him is too small (Interest).

If the cell checks, they'll find that this is true — Elijah's old HQ doesn't have enough resources to bring a new envoy in. Combined with the fact that he's supposed to be dead, a transfer seemed the best solution.

- One of the first deaths was someone he knew personally, Sarah Franck, a friend who'd been having problems with her apartment being haunted (Extraneous).
- John Freedman is a SAVE agent who was recruited not long after Elijah, who has

worked on many of the same cases (False Lead).

During the questioning, it's very hard to determine if Elijah is lying. All of the clues are more or less the truth, particularly the one about the vampire attack. He *was* on patrol when he was attacked by a vampire (Lester), he *did* have his mind altered (by Lester), he *was* shot during the incident (by Lester), and he *does* have a hard time remembering exactly what happened (again, his mind was altered by Lester). As far as Elijah knows, he's telling the truth. At the time of his introduction, the Influence over him is keeping him from even realizing that he's the minion of a vampire.

From here, go to "A Phone Call."

## A PHONE CALL

Once Elijah is introduced, the envoys should have at least one case with Elijah without incident. If Elijah starts acting suspicious right away, the PC envoys won't have a chance to potentially develop a connection with Elijah.

After the first case has passed, find a moment when the envoys are interviewing someone who has witnessed something of the Unknown (ideally, a character you don't think will come to harm during the course of the case). During that scene, Elijah receives a phone call, and takes it outside. When he comes back, he claims it was a friend from the city he was recruited in, just wanting to say hi.

In reality, the call is from Lester, who's back in town. Lester has used his Mental Possession discipline to take control of Elijah and see the interviewee for himself. During the rest of the interview, "Elijah" is very quiet, trying to avoid saying or doing anything that would alert the envoys to the possession. Once the interview is over, "Elijah" offers to bring the car around, step outside for air, or otherwise get away from the cell for a few minutes. At that point, the Mental Possession ends.

Once Lester has released him, Elijah has no memory of anything since he took the phone call, but he knows he was possessed (as Lester explained this to him previously). As such, Elijah remains quiet, trying to pick up what happened from the context of the cell's conversation. If an envoy asks Elijah a direct question about something he did while under Lester's possession, however, he'll give a vague (and probably incorrect) answer. Play fair with the players here: you don't want to give the whole game away just yet, but if they stumble into it, give them something to go on. Consider it an Esoteric clue.



From here, go to “The Victim(s).” If the envoys suddenly become very suspicious, go instead to “Confronting Elijah.”

- Elijah sometimes takes phone calls from “a friend back home” during cases (Vital), acquired while the envoys are interviewing a witness.
- Elijah’s memory after the phone call isn’t clear (Esoteric), acquired by talking with Elijah after the interview in which he took a phone call.

## THE VICTIM(S)

After the case in which Elijah was possessed is closed, you have two options. If you plan to run “Slaughter of Hope” over the course of several cases, go back to “A Phone Call” and run a version of that for more interviews — the case works better if there are at least two victims so the envoys can discover the pattern. On the other hand, if you want to accelerate the pace of the case or if the PC envoys are starting to get suspicious of Elijah, run this scene soon after the case is closed. It’s up to you; once people start dying, however, the rest of this case will start to fall into place pretty quickly.

Run this scene as if it were the start of a new case: a mysterious death or a series of mysterious deaths are brought to the attention of the cell. Maybe this is through a pre-established police contact or the ramblings of a known conspiracy theorist, or maybe one of the envoys recognizes a name on a news website. Regardless, the envoys know at least one of the victims.

Upon examining the body of one of the victims, the envoys should quickly discover that the victim was drained of blood. There are two puncture marks on the neck of the victim — a wound that’s consistent with the feeding habits of Carpathian vampires. The time of death is always the evening after the case they were involved with was closed.

Make it easy for the envoys to make the mental jump to “vampire” here. The connection to their own cases should come fairly easily as well, but the fact that the cell itself is the connection may not come right away. If the clues don’t point the PC envoys in the right direction, let them explore fruitlessly for a while (Lester is very careful about not leaving evidence), and then move into another case and “A Phone Call.”

If the envoys realize they’re the common link, they’ll likely start questioning each other. Go to “Confronting Elijah.”

- The bodies are drained of blood (Vital), acquired from examining the body of the victims.
- The victim or victims are all former interviewees of the cell (Vital).
- The time of death in every case is the evening after the case was closed (Vital).
- Every victim was interviewed at a time when Elijah left the room (Interest).
- The wound is two puncture marks on the neck (Interest).
- The wound is consistent with the feeding habits of Carpathian vampires (Esoteric).

## CONFRONTING ELIJAH

Depending on your group, they may suspect Elijah very rapidly, or it may take a long time as the cell exhausts other options. Play out this “mole hunt” for as long as you and the group are enjoying it, but if the investigation stalls, give the envoys a chance to roll and pick up some of the clues involving Elijah (such as his phone calls and the fact that he acts strange during and after those same interviews).

As the finger moves to Elijah, he’ll try to excuse himself to make a phone call. Whether he succeeds in calling Lester or not determines how this scene plays out:

**If Elijah Does Call Lester:** Lester tries to pretend to be Elijah as long as possible, in order to throw suspicion off of himself. If it’s clear that the cell is suspicious of Elijah, Lester may even have Elijah confess to being the murderer. Any skilled interrogation will start to reveal discrepancies in “Elijah’s” responses, though, such as forgetting the other characters’ names or mangling obvious references to their past work together. Eventually, the story will fall apart and Lester will abandon Elijah’s mind. If he does so, Elijah (not realizing that he’s already been questioned) will react as if he couldn’t call Lester.

**If Elijah Can’t Call Lester:** Elijah folds pretty quickly once confronted. He’s terrified of Lester, and the Influence is wearing down after such a long period away from the vampire. He still doesn’t remember much of what happened during his first encounter with Lester, but he knows that he’s been forced to call a certain number whenever he meets someone who isn’t an envoy and who has encountered the Unknown. He doesn’t remember what happens after those calls, but once the bodies started showing up, he became very worried that he was somehow responsible. He may even believe that he’s the murderer (although it’s likely that he has an alibi for the actual murders, since he was probably with the cell).

From here, go to “Confronting the Unknown.”



## CONFRONTING THE UNKNOWN

Once the envoys have Elijah in their custody and a phone number, they can track down Lester. If Lester knows the cell is after him, he'll take precautions (such as ditching the cell phone he was using), but Elijah still has a mental link to the vampire after months of Influence and Mental Possession. The chase could spread out over sessions as the cell tracks the monster down, or it could be resolved with a couple of dice rolls and some quick narration.

Once confronted, Lester does whatever he can to escape. He won't admit it, even to himself, but he's terrified of SAVE because he knows that envoys destroy monsters, period. He'll mainly attempt to Influence Elijah and other envoys to fight for him. (No matter what, Elijah won't be able to harm Lester, due to the Influence.) Barring that, he'll try to lure envoys to him one at a time, so he can attempt to pick them off. If he ends up in a straight-up fight with a team of envoys, he knows how it will end. If they're prepared, the end isn't in much doubt.

One thing he won't do, however, is plead with the envoys — in his twisted mind, he's convinced that SAVE doesn't care about him. He won't give the envoys the satisfaction of watching him beg.

## AFTERMATH

As soon as Lester is destroyed, the Influence over Elijah is lifted. He'll remember everything about Lester's attack on him and how he was manipulated and crafted into becoming an envoy. Depending on how you want to proceed, this might cause Elijah to quit SAVE and go his own way, or steel his resolve to fight the Unknown even more. Either way, he'll likely leave the team at that point, whether it's to retire to a mundane life or join a new HQ.

Lester is dead, but the unknown Carpathian vampire who created him might feel the loss and come investigating. That vampire might even feel the connection that Lester had with Elijah and use that to hunt Elijah down, possibly turning Elijah himself into a vampire.

The revelation that Lester was turned into a vampire may prompt another examination of the 2006 Charleston incident, which could lead to a new investigation into what really happened to that HQ.

## MENTAL POSSESSION

"WHEN YOU GET CLOSE TO HIM, I WANT YOU TO CALL THIS NUMBER. YOU'LL FEEL DIZZY FOR A MOMENT, AND THEN YOU'LL WAKE UP IN YOUR BED, SAFE AND SOUND. DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS IN THE MEANTIME. YOU'RE DEVOTED TO ME, REMEMBER. DON'T YOU WANT TO DO WHATEVER YOU CAN TO MAKE ME HAPPY?"

**Cost:** Turn 3 tokens

**Roll:** S/O, EWS vs. current WPR

**Range:** Sight (or Hearing, if under Influence)

**Area:** N/A

**Effect:** Similar to Possession, this discipline is used by corporeal creatures to take complete control of a target's mind and senses. Once successful, the creature's mind enters that of the target's, completely overpowering her will and taking over her body for a time. The possessing creature cannot intentionally harm the body of the target, but it can force the body to do anything else it's capable of. The CM must roll a S/O check, using the creature's EWS against the target's PSY whenever the creature's actions within the target might arouse suspicion. The possessing creature can use appropriate mental disciplines while controlling the target, as long as it doesn't directly harm the target in the process.

While Mental Possession is active, the creature has no knowledge of what happens to his own body. If the target is under the effects of the creature's Influence discipline, the range is changed from sight to hearing, allowing the creature to call his target and possess them accordingly. This allows the creature to contact his target from a safe distance, assuring his body is secure.

Effect	Duration
Common	Lasts one round.
Notable	Lasts three rounds.
Potent	Lasts five rounds.
Deadly	Lasts one scene.
Legendary	Lasts until the next sunrise.

For purposes of "Slaughter of Hope," Elijah is considered to always be Influenced by Lester, until Lester chooses to break the Influence or is destroyed.



## NPCS

These are the NPCs for use in “Slaughter of Hope.”

## LESTER GEIGER, VAMPIRE

Lester Geiger is one of the most terrifying creatures that SAVE has to deal with: an envoy that has fallen to the darkness. Over a decade ago, Lester was an envoy with the Charleston, SC SAVE HQ. He was investigating a case involving a Carpathian vampire, and got an anonymous tip late one evening. Foolishly, he decided to check it out himself rather than bother the rest of his team. That night he was murdered and turned into one of the undead.

Although Lester was never a strong practitioner of the Art, he knew enough to strengthen his mind against attack. Perhaps it was that knowledge that gave him a stronger-than-normal pull over the minds of his victims, or maybe it was due to all of the unusual supernatural occurrences he’d been around that seeped into his body. Either way, he came out... changed, and discovered that the blood of those that had touched the Unknown was far more sustaining than mundane blood. Lester isn’t so stupid as to hunt down envoys — why go after the people who know the best ways to destroy you? — but he knew better than most that SAVE often forgot about the people tormented by the Unknown after the case was over.

And he knew exactly what happened to people that SAVE left behind.

**EWS:** 96  
(Deadly)

**REF:** 70

**STA:** 90

**Injury:** Superficial, Minor –10, Serious –20, Major –30, Critical –50, Lethal

**Aspects:** Bane (crosses), Deadly Attack (Serious Injury), Parasitic, Special Weakness (running water, sunlight, wood), Specialization (weapon +20), Supernatural Speed, Sustenance, Unliving

**Special Weakness (wood):** As a vampire, Lester suffers STA loss normally but does not suffer Injury penalties or Lethal Injury. If reduced to zero STA, Lester immediately uses Change Form to turn into mist and flee. He then regenerates all Stamina and heals any Injuries over the next 24 hours. If an envoy pierces Lester’s heart with a wooden stake, he is immobilized and cannot move. At that point, cutting off his head or burning him to ash can kill him.

**Special Weakness (sunlight):** Lester will die if he is exposed to sunlight for at least five minutes. Unless he is immobilized, though, he turns into mist and flees when he notices sunlight.

**Special Weakness (running water):** Lester cannot cross running water under his own power, such as using a footbridge or stepping stones. He can ride over running water in vehicles with no difficulty, however.

Lester has a special taste for the blood of living humans touched by the supernatural. If he feeds from someone who has witnessed or been influenced by the Unknown, he does not need to feed again for a week before receiving an Injury, instead of a night.

## ELIJAH MATTHEWS

Elijah is the perfect SAVE envoy. He’s a former police officer that has the right balance of combat training, investigative skill, skepticism, and quick thinking to make him attractive to any HQ. He’s soft-spoken enough to ease people’s concerns, and handsome enough to get both male and female attention.

It also helps that he has a former-envoy-turned-vampire that can mold him into the perfect bait for SAVE. Elijah is a fabrication: a man specifically built up by Lester to be attractive to SAVE as a recruit. Once Elijah’s inside an HQ, his master can use Elijah to find suitable victims for Lester’s undead thirst. It’s something Elijah does eagerly, because the alternative could be that he ends up as Lester’s next meal.

**STA:** 65

**WPR:** 40

**REF:** 65

**Specializations:** Handgun (B80), Law (B55), Unarmed Combat (B80)

**Drive:** I want to serve my master, Lester.

## RUNNING SLAUGHTER OF HOPE

One of the biggest challenges of running this case is portraying Elijah. Because he’s an NPC, some players (not necessarily their characters, but the *players*) are more likely to distrust him. The case can’t get off the ground if the characters aren’t at least willing to give the new guy a chance, but that lingering distrust across the PC/NPC divide isn’t necessarily bad. Indeed, part of the twist in this case is that the PC envoys may come to believe that Elijah is the creature, when he’s actually a *victim*. It turns that out-of-game distrust around.

When portraying Elijah, make sure that he’s an active part of the investigation. When he’s not acting under Lester’s control (such as in “A Phone Call”), he should be a useful, helpful agent. If you plan to run “Slaughter of Hope” over the course of a number of sessions, it might be valuable to flesh him out on a full character sheet, just like a PC. Include him in combat and investigation rolls, and make sure he’s speaking



up during debriefings and interviews. If he's helpful, useful, and visible, you have a better chance of the character becoming more accepted into the cell.

## CLUES

Here are all the clues for "Slaughter of Hope" in one location. Perhaps more than any other **Chill** case, this isn't a list of all possible clues — feel free to add new ones or revise the ones presented here to fit within your game.

## VITAL CLUES

- Elijah first encountered the Unknown when a vampire attacked him.
- Elijah didn't have any family or friends of any note in his old town.
- Elijah sometimes takes phone calls from "a friend back home" during cases.
- The bodies are drained of blood.
- The victim or victims are all former interviewees of the cell.
- The time of death in every case is the evening after the case was closed

## INTEREST CLUES

- Elijah joined SAVE soon after he was attacked, only a couple of months ago.
- Elijah was legally declared dead in the city he was rescued in.
- Elijah transferred to this HQ because the one that rescued and initiated him is too small.
- Every victim was interviewed at a time when Elijah left the room.
- The wound is two puncture marks on the neck.

## ESOTERIC CLUES

- Elijah's memory after the phone call isn't clear.
- The wound is consistent with the feeding habits of Carpathian vampires.

## LAST NIGHT AT THE DAMOCLES

Lydia Scarrow is a living legend. An envoy with a 30 year, transatlantic career, Scarrow has closed more cases than many other active envoys have worked. She's brilliant, tenacious, and retired, living quietly outside the city of York in England..

Lydia's final case was a horrific mass exorcism at the Damocles Hotel, just outside York. She was the only survivor and the trauma ended her career. Now, Lydia Scarrow has returned to the scene of the crime. But which crime? Who's guilty? And will you survive long enough to find out?

**Important Traits:** None.

**Major Menace:** The ghosts of the SAVE envoys lost on the last Damocles mission.

**Minor Menace:** Lydia Scarrow, battling her own PTSD and the ghosts of colleagues trying to possess her.

## SETUP

Lydia Scarrow would question whether or not they truly live. A veteran envoy whose career has crossed the Atlantic, Scarrow has seen it all. She held one of the major cells in England together after the catastrophic events of 2000, participated in a multi-office hunt through the Vancouver woods for the largest werewolf colony in recent history, and personally recruited and trained over forty other envoys. To say she has regrets would be inaccurate; there are times, however, when she wishes she'd never learned about the Unknown.

The Damocles Hotel was Lydia Scarrow's last case. In 2010, she led her team into the quiet country hotel in the English countryside. They walked into a disaster. The Damocles was built on the remains of an English Civil War era graveyard that hadn't been properly disinterred and was full of spectral remnants. The SAVE team fought a holding action from almost the moment they set foot in the building. The unprecedented amount of poltergeist activity claimed the lives of three envoys by dawn and left Lydia with psychological injuries that would never fully heal.

Scarrow retired but remained in the region to run a horse farm on the outskirts of York. Of course, very few envoys ever fully retire. Scarrow worked as part of a cold case team for the York HQ and made sure to have dinner with each successive local HQ chief once a month. The practice, nicknamed "Dinner with the Queen," became a rite of passage.

The Damocles haunted her, however, both metaphorically and through the ghosts of her colleagues. Scarrow continued to research the case and try to understand exactly why it had gone so wrong. She argued and cajoled and was ultimately, quietly, ignored.



## SAVE FILES ON THE DAMOCLES AND LYDIA SCARROW

The Damocles Hotel is a “Dublin office case.” SAVE hasn’t conducted active research there for years. As a result, their own file ends with the after-action reports for Scarrow’s disastrous mission.

The files on the envoys involved are substantially better maintained. Nathaniel Duffy was a new recruit, a stage magician with extensive local knowledge. The Damocles was his first and last case. Indira Maree was a veteran envoy, experienced in the Incorporeal School of the Art, who had worked with Scarrow on numerous previous occasions. Finally, Prinya Archer was a gifted psychic and long term Birmingham-based envoy who had recently transferred to the area.

### SAVE SLANG

The burning of the Dublin office in 1989 was, prior to the loss of Charleston at least, the worst tragedy in the history of SAVE. As a result, it’s achieved a sort of mythic status in the organization. To be “transferred to the Dublin office” means to be killed in action, generally in an ambush or against overwhelming forces. A “Dublin office case” is SAVE slang for a case that’s claimed too many lives already. Informal notes on cold cases often say they should be filed with the “Dublin office.”

## LYDIA SCARROW’S BACKGROUND

Lydia Scarrow was a journalist, American born to English parents, who grew up in New York in the 1960s. She became an active part of the left-wing politics and feminist movements, fighting what seemed to be a holding action against the systems keeping down the underprivileged and minority voices.

That holding action coupled with her journalistic ability brought her to SAVE’s attention. Working in New Jersey in 1985, she was assigned to a series of murders that ranged across the state. In the course of her investigation, she was recruited by Selma Fry, the leader of the Trenton HQ. Together the two cracked the case; Fry, impressed, offered her a job. Scarrow accepted. For the next four years, she and Fry closed a record number of cases in the often-embattled Garden State. The envoys worked numerous exorcisms and possessions, closed four vampire cases, and were part of a multi-office operation that took down a digital entity in Times Square on New Year’s Eve.

The team had countless successes, but each came at a price. In 1989, one in particular proved especially costly. Along with their Staten Island colleagues, Scarrow and Fry uncovered systemic abuses of power in New York’s psychiatric institutions. Despite appearances, Scarrow and Fry discovered there was no supernatural element to the case, just hideous,

absolute human cruelty. Both envoys struggled to make sense of what they discovered; Fry ultimately retired to run for office in Staten Island to deal with the issue directly. Upon her election, she retired from SAVE and Scarrow took charge of the Trenton HQ.

Scarrow worked a further decade in New Jersey and New York, leading and training a generation of some of the finest envoys on the Eastern Seaboard.

After years of successful service, Lydia decided to return to England and join up with the local SAVE offices. With fears of the Millennium Bug looming, she accepted a position in the North of the country. In March 2010, she led a team into the Damocles Hotel, where her luck finally ran out.

Now that Scarrow has left a message saying she’s going to meet up with her old team, the York office is panicked. Lydia Scarrow is viewed as a national treasure, a personal hero, and a terrifying asset if she’s allowed to fall into the Unknown’s hands. The characters’ orders are simple: investigate the Damocles Hotel and save Lydia Scarrow, by any means necessary.

## THE TIMELINE

- October 4th 1985: Lydia Scarrow recruited as a SAVE Envoy
- March 20th 2010: Lydia Scarrow leads a team of Envoys into the Damocles hotel.
- March 21st 2010: Scarrow is the only envoy to escape the Damocles Hotel.
- March 31st 2010: Lydia Scarrow formally retires from active service but remains active as a consultant and continues to research the Damocles Hotel incident.
- November 1st, 2015: The Damocles Hotel is closed for renovations.
- November 11th, 2015: Lydia Scarrow sends a message to York HQ telling them she’s going to meet with her old team and goes to the Damocles Hotel. **STARTING POINT FOR PCs.**

## THE CASE

“Last Night at the Damocles” works best when run as part of an established campaign for two reasons. The most important is this gives you the chance to make the case personal for the characters. One of the best ways to do this is to introduce Scarrow in earlier adventures, either as an NPC they consult or someone whose work they read up on when researching a case. Establishing her reputation gives your characters more of an emotional investment in finding her. It also makes sense narratively; this is a dangerous, delicate case and one that only envoys with some experience will be best equipped to handle.



Scarrow has been haunted by the ghosts of her team for years. She's told no one due to misplaced survivor's guilt at escaping the Damocles. Finally pushed too far, she's been possessed by the spirit of Indira Maree who has taken her to the Damoc Salvifico, Scarrow's home, is a large, sprawling farmhouse with attached horse stables located 10 miles outside York. It's kept with the exact ramshackle precision you'd expect a journalist and former envoy to have. Scarrow lives alone; characters will have to break in with a +20 bonus on any rolls due to the isolated location. Once they do, Information checks reveal the following clues:

- A note on the table says "I'm going back for them" (Vital), found with a physical search.
- The browsing history on her computer includes a booking page for the Damocles Hotel (Vital), found if they search her computer. The page itself has a note mentioning the hotel is currently closed for refurbishment.
- Scarrow keeps a folder on the case, noting that Indira Maree died in the basement (Vital).
- Most of the photographs hanging in Scarrow's home are photos of her time in SAVE, but there aren't any of her time in the York office (Interest), High success on Investigation check.
- A locked desk drawer contains the pictures from the York office, framed but taken down. All the pictures of Indira Maree are turned around in their frames, so the back of the photo faces out (Interest), High success on Investigation check.
- Scarrow has an indalo pendant hanging from the lamp in her office with a date on the back (Interest). With High success on a Research check, envoys recognize the date as the day Scarrow became an envoy.
- A map hanging on one wall shows the Damocles Hotel in relation to local ley lines (Esoteric), found by examining the map. Colossal success reveals that her house, five miles from the hotel, sits on the same ley line.
- A photo of the burned-out Trenton office with the scrawled warning (False Lead), found in a separate folder on her desk.

Once the characters have confirmed she's gone to the Damocles, they'll either go there themselves or call in and ask for backup. If they call the local HQ, Angus Monroe orders them to go and retrieve her; support will be incoming.

## ARRIVING AT THE DAMOCLES

The Damocles sits on two acres of landscaped ground. It's a tall, square building, 5 floors of rooms, with a dining hall, spa, and manicured lawns. Every light is on as the characters roll up; there's a single car parked at the front entrance when they arrive — Lydia's land rover.

The hotel is covered with signs explaining it's being renovated. The front door is open. An Investigate check (Low) reveals that it wasn't forced. Sense the Unknown checks on the first floor receive a +30 modifier, and reveal that something on that floor is aware of their presence.

Further Information checks outside reveal the following:

- Lydia's car engine is warm (Vital), from investigating outside the hotel.
- A sealed envelope lies in the front passenger seat, with the words "To SAVE" written on the front (Vital), High results in realizing this is her last will and testament. She writes that copies have been sent to her lawyer and the York HQ. She wills the proceeds of her estate to the Trenton HQ in the United States.
- A second envelope lies in the backseat floorboard (Extraneous), containing Scarrow's suspicions of Monroe. She states that she believes he was compromised by the Unknown prior to the first Damocles haunting and breaks down the entire caseload of the York office during his tenure there. She also states her hope is that she'll be able to record further evidence inside the hotel.
- The air around the Damocles Hotel is noticeably colder (Esoteric). Anyone moving more than 10 feet away from the front door notices the temperature rise dramatically.
- The noise from the nearby road is unusually muted within 10 feet of the hotel walls (Esoteric).



## CHECKING IN

Once inside, the characters discover that the hotel looks to be in perfect working order. The stairs and surfaces are clean, there are fresh flowers in each vase, and the reception desk is freshly polished. Information checks return the following clues:

- The guestbook has had every page ripped out but two. The oldest is from the night of the original SAVE mission and lists the names of the team present: Indira Maree, Lydia Scarrow, Nathaniel Duffy, Prinya Archer. The second is from the day the characters arrive. It shows Scarrow signing in with all four names, and then doing so again and again, repeating the names down the page (Vital). A successful PCN check will show her handwriting changes in style completely by the bottom of the page. A Colossal success reveals to anyone who examined Indira Maree's file that the new handwriting belongs to the dead envoy.
- The newspapers on the front desk are all from the day of the first SAVE mission (Interest). High PCN check reveals the newspapers smell faintly of the horse farm, indicating that Scarrow brought them with her.
- The main lobby has two paintings on the wall; one shows a parade of English Civil War soldiers, while the other shows the hotel at night from outside (Esoteric). High Research check reveals that the first painting depicts the ghosts who originally haunted the hotel; Colossal success reveals that the second painting has had a single figure, abstracted but recognizably Scarrow, added to it, and the paint on that figure is still slightly wet.

## FROM THE GROUND UP

When the envoys begin to explore the hotel, the basement where the old English Civil War graveyard resides and the staff quarters on the top floor will probably be their primary objectives. The rest of the hotel has its share of threats as well, however. The dead envoys are focused on trying to drive Scarrow to suicide; once they realize other SAVE envoys are in the building, however, they'll try to drive them away. Lights will flick on and off, windows and doors will slam, messages will appear, and envoys will be thrown around. Do any and everything you need to in order to make it clear just how much the spectral remnants want their living colleagues to leave, though they aren't quite prepared to use lethal force.

Here's a list of the rooms on each floor:

- Basement: Exposed foundations, Boiler Room, walled off remains of graveyard
- Ground Floor: Reception Hall, Kitchen, Dining Room, Bar, Back Terrace
- Floors 2-4: Guest Rooms, single and double beds
- Floor 5: Staff Quarters

Lydia will be found on the fifth floor, either in the manager's room or climbing over the fifth-floor bannister (there are no elevators). An Information check reveals that these are the locations where two of her envoys, Archer and Duffy, were killed, and the spectral remnants are using these locations to try to force Scarrow to commit suicide. A High success on this check should also reveal that Maree died in the basement, rather than the staff quarters.

## HELPING SCARROW

The characters are here to save Scarrow, but what they may not realize is that Scarrow is here largely of her own volition. She let Maree possess her and came to the Damocles in the hopes of finally giving both herself and her colleagues some peace, and from there all three of her former teammates tried to possess her at once. To fully release Scarrow from their control, the envoys have to free her from her Possessed state.

If the envoys wish to use the Art, solid choices are Mental Shield, Sphere of Protection, and Voice of the Dead. Envoys using Mental Shield should have the option to try to target either one specific remnant or all of them at once. The CM can *turn a token light* to make it an opposed check. If the envoy tries to block one at a time, she will have to make three separate uses of the discipline. If she tries to shield Scarrow against all three of them at once, she will have to make the



check at a -40 modifier (-10 for each remnant plus Scarrow's, as she invited the Possession).

Sphere of Protection will force Scarrow back out of the area, but will not normally rid her of Possession, unless a way can be found to trap her within a sphere for an extended period of time, forcing the remnants out of her. Voice of the Dead can channel a remnant, pulling it out of Scarrow, but it's temporary and the remnant is free to return at the end of the discipline's duration.

While Possessing Scarrow, each remnant individually is considered Notable. When working together, the remnants are considered Deadly. As each remnant is removed, the potency of their combined abilities drops by one rating.

In addition, a successful General PCN check allows the envoys to notice that Scarrow is wearing multiple indalo pendants, each one belonging to a dead team member. Every time one of them is removed from her, drop the duration of the Possession by a level. In addition, if an indalo is destroyed, then the remnant to which it belonged is banished.

Finally, if anyone brought Scarrow's own indalo from the farm and can place it on her, it adds a +10 modifier to attempts to use Mental Shield on Scarrow.

It's possible the characters will help her exorcise herself straight away. If so, go to "Confronting the Unknown." If not, she'll be dragged between the manager's room and the bannister, alternately harassing the envoys and fleeing from them as her dead colleagues keep tormenting her.

## SCARROW'S GAMBIT

Scarrow has been haunted by her dead colleagues for years. Between the guilt and the constant haunting, she's had enough. Their ghosts may be trying to kill her, but she's a former SAVE leader; she won't leave her people behind any longer. She's taking a risk in the hope that she has the strength to bring all of her teammates a long-delayed final rest.

Maree's ghost is the strongest and angriest, and Scarrow is growing increasingly vulnerable to it. She realizes this, and thus has decided to act before she's sufficiently worn down and still has some hope of control. Both Duffy and Archer are weaker individually, but the two together might have enough power to create a stalemate between the three, if Scarrow can find a way to turn them against one another. This would then potentially allow Scarrow to lay Maree to rest while she still has the strength to do so. It's risky, but Scarrow hopes that the York HQ will send a team to help; she would have asked more clearly, but as she was already fighting possession by Maree, she could only be so direct.

Scarrow is hoping that the remnants of Duffy and Archer are so driven with their own need for vengeance that as she headed up the stairs, they'd team up and stop Maree from dragging her to the basement. Her hope is that the two top-floor spirits will fight it out against one another, and she'll last long enough for a retrieval team to find her or, if necessary, for her to face Maree by herself in the basement.

Scarrow's plan is working, but she's being dragged around the top floor from spot to spot, only just resisting the exhortations to suicide, while Maree's remnant becomes increasingly enraged. Any envoy making a PCN check at -10 notices that Scarrow's movements jerk her away from the stairs every time she gets too close, and that she seems to be being contorted by two different spirits.

While those spirits are in open conflict with each other over the same physical body, they're still a real threat to both Scarrow and the envoys. Even if the envoys can't force the spirits out of Scarrow, they can attempt to convince them to leave voluntarily via PER vs EWS rolls to persuade the remnant that what they're doing is wrong. If any of the envoys have noticed that the remnants have attacked but not tried to kill them, their attempts to persuade receive a +10 modifier as they point out that on some level the remnants still value human life.

## CONFRONTING THE UNKNOWN

Prior to Maree's exorcism, she wrests control of Scarrow away from the other two remnants and drags her downstairs to the basement. When the envoys follow her, they'll find her beating on the door to the walled-off graveyard ruins. Maree wants to drive her former friend to suicide on the exact spot where she was killed.

There are several ways to play this final confrontation. See the methods listed in "Helping Scarrow" for more information on exorcising the remnants. If Maree/Scarrow is successful in breaking through the door and getting to the graveyard, any attempts to remove Scarrow from Maree's control will take a -50 modifier to the target number. Once there, Scarrow/Maree will attack the envoys in hope of provoking them to kill her.

## AFTERMATH

As soon as the final exorcism is completed, the building is finally free of the ghosts that have haunted it for decades. If Scarrow has sacrificed herself or the envoys have made the call to execute her, then there will be a full enquiry. They'll be removed from active service until their motives can be examined. Scarrow had a lot of friends and the characters will have to satisfy them all that the decision was the right one.



## NPCS

These are the NPCs for use in “Last Night at the Damocles.”

### LYDIA SCARROW, VETERAN SAVE ENVOY

**Description:** 63 years old, 5’10, 190 lbs, bobbed brown hair, blue eyes

**History:** Lydia Scarrow is a veteran envoy with decades of field experience on both sides of the Atlantic. She’s driven, principled, resourceful and a legend amongst the staff of her HQs. She’s also in deep trouble.

Scarrow has allowed herself to be possessed by the ghost of her former protégé Indira Maree, who was killed in the original exorcism at the Damocles. Once she arrives, the other two ghosts in the building attempt to wrest control away from Maree and drive Scarrow to suicide themselves. The ghosts of Lydia’s former team are haunting the building and they need Lydia to complete their “mission” by driving her to suicide in the building, preferably on the site of one of their deaths.

**STA:** 55      **WPR:** 70      **REF:** 48

**Specializations:** Investigation (M98), Communication (E100)

**Drive:** bring peace to her team, end their shared suffering

### NATHANIEL DUFFY, SPECTRAL REMNANT

**EWS:** 85      **REF:** 80      **STA:** 60

**Disciplines:** Apparition, Control Weather, Inhabit, Possession, Shriek

**Aspects:** Incorporeal, Spectral Attack, Specialization (Possession)

### PRINYA ARCHER, SPECTRAL REMNANT

**EWS:** 90      **REF:** 80      **STA:** 70

**Disciplines:** Apparition, Blunder, Corporeal Manifestation, Possession, Unknown Light

**Aspects:** Incorporeal, Spectral Attack, Specialization (Possession)

### INDIRA MAREE, SPECTRAL REMNANT

**EWS:** 95      **REF:** 75      **STA:** 70

**Disciplines:** Apparition, Blunder, Corporeal Manifestation, Possession, Quiet

**Aspects:** Incorporeal, Spectral Attack, Specialization (Possession)

## RUNNING LAST NIGHT AT THE DAMOCLES

The big challenge with this scenario is picking, and honoring, the emotional connection you want it to center on. If you’re looking at this as a standard SAVE mission then it’s absolutely vital that the characters care on two different levels. No envoy on Earth will sit idly by and watch a colleague get in trouble; after all, they know how dangerous the job is.

The scenario works even better if you make it personal. The obvious way to do this is have Scarrow introduced as an NPC in an earlier adventure, if possible. That way you’ve got her established as an ally and the characters have some inkling of what she’s been through. Alternatively, have her be one of the envoys’ trainers. They’ve worked with Scarrow directly, so when she goes off the grid they’re worried not just professionally but personally.

Finally, there’s the moral dilemma. Scarrow is an immensely knowledgeable envoy and a massive asset to either SAVE or the Unknown. Losing her is not an option. Killing her is. The tug of war between saving and executing her has extra resonance if the characters have worked with her before. Scarrow’s role, of course, can be customized for a particular campaign and replaced with an established NPC, or even the envoys themselves. Perhaps the Damocles ghosts are someone else’s training officer or old friend? Perhaps the characters have been lured there to embody the dead SAVE team and reenact the doomed mission in order to help the ghosts find peace? However you want to play it, remember to keep it character driven, focused, and personal. This scenario is less about the haunting than it is the cost of working for SAVE. Keep focused on that, and your characters will never forget their stay at the Damocles.



## CLUES

Here are all the listed clues for “Last Night at the Damocles.” It is not, however, a list of all possible clues. Feel free to add new ones or revise the ones presented here to fit within your game.

### VITAL CLUES

- A note at Scarrow’s house says “I’m going back for them.”
- Her browser history includes a page for the Damocles Hotel.
- A folder in her house has the details of the prior case at the Damocles, including the deaths of her team members.
- All the hotel guestbook’s pages have been ripped out except for today’s and the day of the original Damocles case.

### INTEREST CLUES

- Her house is full of photos from her time in SAVE, except for the York office.
- Scarrow has an indalo pendant hanging from the lamp in her office with a date on the back.
- Scarrow’s engine is still warm when the envoys pull up.
- Scarrow’s will is on the passenger’s seat of her car.
- The newspapers at the front desk are all from the day of the original case.

### ESOTERIC CLUES

- A map shows the Damocles Hotel in relation to local ley lines.
- The air around the Damocles Hotel is noticeably colder.
- Noise from the road is strangely muted as you approach the hotel.
- The paintings in the lobby give clues to the history of the Damocles and its cases.

### EXTRANEOUS CLUES

- Scarrow believes the chief of the York HQ has been compromised by the Unknown and arranged her team’s deaths.
- The construction workers don’t remember leaving the hotel worksite.

### FALSE LEADS

- Scarrow’s desk has a photo of the burned-out Trenton office.

## DEADLY SECRETS

Sometimes, an envoy falls in the line of duty. SAVE holds a memorial in her honor and does everything it can to bring closure to her family. Sometimes the death is unavoidable; the envoy gives her life to save her comrades or to ensure the end of the Unknown threat. Other times, the death is senseless; the envoy dies due to misinformation or some other avoidable mistake. It is those times when the Unknown can step in, creating a ghost bent on revenge. When that kind of death happens on the watch of another envoy, SAVE asks uncomfortable questions.

In Downtown New Orleans, Victor Rami is attempting to prevent those questions by hiding the truth of Monica Spencer’s death. Her ghost has other plans.

**Important Traits:** Incorporeal Attunement might be helpful, but is not completely necessary. Monica uses Corporeal Manifestation whenever she engages the envoys.

**Major Menace:** Monica Spencer, protector remnant

**Minor Menace:** Victor Rami, SAVE envoy

### SETUP

The characters get a request to go to New Orleans to help the struggling HQ there deal with an Unknown threat. The reports are varied, but some evidence indicates a vampire. In reality, a protector remnant is attempting to lure SAVE envoys to its location to kill them.

Monica Spencer died the year before in an abandoned industrial park in the Ninth Ward. Now her restless ghost is seeking revenge on SAVE for her death. Victor Rami was with Monica when she died, and he’s trying to keep Monica’s presence as a ghost a secret. He’s completely antagonistic to the characters, though he pretends to be helping them during their investigation.

In 2013, the SAVE HQ in New Orleans was a small operation. It consisted of four field envoys: Monica Spencer, Markus Lawrence, Victor Rami, and Janeka King; a single director: Joseph Thibodeaux; and a disabled envoy on desk duty: Latricia Jones. Though the team was small, they were able to handle most Unknown threats. Many low-income areas of New Orleans were never rebuilt after the damage from Hurricane Katrina, and these places, ideal hide-outs close to the main city center, tend to attract the Unknown. Much of SAVE’s work was therefore centered in the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Wards.

As often happens, Monica and Markus had a secret love affair. A vampire attacked and injured Monica



during a mission; Markus refused to leave her, and the team made a slow egress as they carried her out.

During the escape, the vampire fatally injured Markus, though he made it back to HQ before dying. Monica felt responsible for Markus's death and was never able to forgive herself. SAVE offered grief counseling, but she hid the extent of her depression from her doctors. SAVE removed her from active duty for a while due to mental wellness issues. Her doctor prescribed medication and she was allowed back on field status in early 2014.

During her second mission out in the field after returning, the team was investigating a new vampire threat. It was the same vampire who had killed Markus the previous year. Under the vampire's Influence, Monica decided she would rather die than face her lover's murderer. As she and Victor were investigating the vampire's supposed lair in an abandoned industrial park, she begged him for his gun. He handed it over, not realizing there was a problem, and she shot herself in the head. Afterward, he later contacted Janeka to report finding Monica's body, disavowing any knowledge of her death. Together, they hunted down and eventually killed the vampire.

Victor was struck by the awful realization that he had helped his good friend kill herself, intentionally or not. He tried to take a leave of absence from SAVE, but the office was so short-staffed that he returned soon thereafter, unable to leave Janeka as the only other field envoy. Victor's secret has been eating at him, slowly driving him mad. His guilt has led to self-loathing and paranoia that SAVE will find out what really happened and rightly blame him for Monica's death.

In the past few months, the industrial park where Monica died has come across SAVE's radar several times. Victor and Janeka investigated the first few incidents and found evidence of the Unknown, but nothing concrete. The third time Victor went alone and saw Monica's remnant. Seeing her ghost was terrifying on its own, but she flew into a frenzy when she saw him. She raged that it was his fault she died. Really, she blamed all of SAVE, but Victor was the only one there to vent her wrath upon.

Victor left the industrial park terrified of what would happen if SAVE found out about Monica. Paranoid that SAVE investigations will reveal the truth of Monica's death and blame him, he's convinced himself that his only recourse is to cover up any trace of her completely. He is paranoid, defensive, and suffering from deep depression. He truly believes he has everything to lose, and thus will do anything and everything to protect his secret.

Recently, an anonymous caller left a message reporting Unknown activity in the industrial park, saying people's lives were in danger. Joseph decided to call in outside support as he feels Victor and Janeka cannot handle the threat on their own. Victor requested to be the liaison on the case, allowing Janeka to focus on smaller threats and monitoring the situation while the additional envoys are in town. He is determined to throw them off the case, doing whatever it takes to solve the situation without the truth of Monica's death coming to light.

The industrial park is located on Florida Avenue just west of the Turning Basin along the shore. East across the basin canal is the Lower Ninth Ward, which is spotted with rebuilt houses but is mostly abandoned. Further west are new development housing and poor neighborhoods. Just south of the building is an industrial metal supplier and refinery. The SAVE HQ in New Orleans is located on the east side of Metairie near Lakeview.

## SAVE

The abandoned areas of New Orleans are well-known hot spots for Unknown activity. Envoys make patrols of the area, but also pay informants to call in any strange or suspicious behavior in the area. Most of their calls and sources end up being false leads, but they tend to send at least one envoy to investigate every call. The New Orleans team investigated the industrial park on the last three tips and came back empty handed. This last call indicated that people's lives might be in jeopardy, however, so Joseph has decided to call in additional aid.

The envoys are tasked with investigating the area to determine what the Unknown threat is and determine a way to deal with it. SAVE is willing to give any assistance the characters need for this mission. The New Orleans HQ provides the characters with lodging, a car, computer access, and gear. Victor is assigned to the envoys to help them with their investigation. Janeka is willing to help with case files and anything within the HQ the characters might need. She has prepared a list of suspicious activity in the area for the past year or two. She also monitors the police radio frequencies for activity related to the area.



## TIMELINE

- August 31, 2005: A steel cutting mill is flooded during Hurricane Katrina. The company moves away and never returns.
- June 04, 2013: SAVE envoy Markus Lawrence dies during an encounter with the Unknown.
- February 10, 2014: SAVE envoys begin investigations in the industrial park with the steel mill. They discover the vampire threat from the previous year.
- February 11, 2014: Monica uses Victor's gun to take her own life in the steel mill.
- February 15, 2014: Victor and Janeka find and kill the vampire threat.
- June 04, 2014: SAVE receives reports of Unknown activity at the closed industrial park. Victor and Janeka investigate, but find no evidence.
- February 11, 2015: SAVE receives reports of Unknown activity. Victor investigates alone and finds Monica's remnant. He does not report this sighting.
- February 27, 2015: An anonymous tip indicates people's lives might be in danger. Joseph Thibodeaux decides to call in additional envoys.
- February, 28, 2015: Victor goes to the industrial park to plant false evidence and misleading information to deter the envoys.
- March, 01, 2015: The additional SAVE envoys arrive in New Orleans. **STARTING POINT FOR PCs.**
- March, 02, 2015: Victor offers to assist the team since he was there for the previous encounter.
- March, 03, 2015: The characters find a mutilated body across the street from the industrial park in an abandoned house.
- March, 04, 2015: Police respond to a report of loud noises and disturbances in the abandoned mill. Two officers go missing.
- March, 05, 2015: Police pull Officer Joe Miller's body from the canal. It is covered in dark bruises.

## THE CASE

Victor and Janeka greet the characters upon arrival in New Orleans. Both seem eager to have assistance on this case, and get right into setting the envoys up. Each has their own theories about what the problem could be and wants to debrief the envoys before they start their investigations. Following that, the characters should investigate the area surrounding the industrial park and the park itself.

## THE SAVE HQ

Whenever the characters arrive, they have a chance to talk with both Janeka and Victor at the SAVE HQ. Janeka has compiled a list of Unknown activity in and around the area for the past several years. She is willing to go through the case files with the characters if they ask her, but otherwise she hands them over. She's available to answer questions and give a rundown of what SAVE knows, but she often directs them to Victor, as he was the last person to go down to the industrial park and he is going to be their companion.

Victor initially seems helpful to the envoys. He is personable and charming, though he wants to direct their investigations and keep them away from the industrial park as long as possible. He is sure that if the characters go directly to the industrial park, he won't have time to banish Monica on his own. Of course, he knows he can't divert them too far from this avenue of investigation without suspicion, so there's only so much he can do. Victor plays up the vampire angle, telling the characters that New Orleans often has issues with vampire threats. He tells them that he remembers a vampire lair that was never resolved and wants to take the characters to the neighborhood near the industrial park to investigate.

NOTE to CM: This section presents a lot of clues. The SAVE HQ is the characters' base of operations, but is also their main research point. Most Research roles for this case involve digging through SAVE files or case reports. The characters may want to visit the SAVE HQ later in the investigation to speak with Janeka or search for more information. Certain clues from this scene have greater relevance later in the story, so feel free to pick and choose which clues you give when.

- Protector remnants (Vital), Low success on Research check. If the characters research types of ghosts, they find that when a SAVE envoy comes back, it is usually as a protector remnant. The SAVE HQ has general notes about spectral remnants. They are tied to a specific location and are considered to be failures in life. Generally showing the remnant its failure or giving it a moment to shine banishes it.
- Monica died in the steel mill (Vital), Low Information check either talking to Janeka and asking about deaths in the area or reading through case files.
- Victor's involvement in Monica's death (Interest), a High success on a Research check while searching through the case files; not only do the envoys read about Monica's



death in the steel mill, but they find out that Victor on assignment with Monica when she died.

- Footprints (Esoteric), Colossal success on an Information check; the characters not only learn about Monica's death and Victor being there, but they also find photographs of the scene. The characters can make out only one set of footprints in the dust of the steel mill. A Low success on an Investigation (Forensics) roll reveals the footprints are similar to those found outside the "vampire house."
- Monica's personnel file (Interest), with a High success, the characters may convince Janeka to let them look at Monica's personnel file. Inside, they find a prescription for antidepressants that was current at the time of her death.
- Monica's personal possessions (Esoteric), going through Monica's possessions. If the characters feel it's necessary to go through Monica's possessions, they find evidence that she and Markus were very close. A diary kept during therapy sessions reveals that Markus died saving her life and that she blamed herself for his death.
- Old case file (Interest), exploring the files in the office and Low success on a Research check; they find a file from the early 2000s that details a SAVE envoy who died while fighting the Unknown coming back as a protector remnant three years later. The ghost manifested as a person and called the HQ with a tip about a copycat in the area. When the envoys arrived, they spoke with the manifested ghost, who offered them food and drink. They stayed in the location for three hours before they realized the ghost had locked them in. The reports of what happened are jumbled, but the takeaway is that the envoys were scared out of their wits. Two died before they could escape. They eventually burned the place to the ground and salted the earth. SAVE never saw the ghost again.
- Victor's story (False Lead), Botch on Information check; if the characters ask Victor about Monica's death in the steel mill, he attempts to divert their attention elsewhere. Otherwise, he tells them the same story he put in his report: he found her mutilated body, but did not see the vampire do it.

## THE VAMPIRE HOUSE

Victor takes the characters to a neighborhood full of empty lots and abandoned houses. The street is lined with boarded up and dilapidated houses, many rotted through and filled with mold. The entire area is dangerous. After entering a few vacant or unused houses, the envoys find a house with a body inside.

This abandoned house has been stripped and nearly gutted. The floorboards are rotted through in most places and a high water mark is still evident on the walls. A woman's corpse lies in the center of the room. She's been dead for at least 24 hours. The only wound on her body is a single slash wound on the neck. The body is completely exsanguinated, but no blood can be found around the body. The house has no signs of inhabitation, such as furniture, bedding, or litter.

- No Unknown presence (Vital), Sensing the Unknown check; if one of the characters decides to Sense the Unknown, they find no Unknown presence in or around the house.
- Victor seems jumpy (Vital), talking to Victor; he seems over eager to point to the culprit as being a vampire. Any number of Unknown creatures could exsanguinate a body, including a normal person. He seems pushy about the calling the threat a vampire.
- Suspicious circumstances (Interest), Investigation check; bruising patterns around the hands and neck indicate the person was dead before her blood was drained. Patterns around her fingernails indicate that someone cleaned the body. With a High success, the characters can determine the woman died elsewhere and her body was planted here.
- Only one set of footprints, (Esoteric); searching the outside of the house, footprints can be seen in the muddy areas near the front porch. The footprints are a jumble of multiple crossings. With a High success on an Investigation (Forensics) check, the investigating characters can determine that all the prints belong to the same person.



## THE OFFICER'S BODY

The day after the characters arrive, the police got a call from a location near the industrial park reporting loud noises coming from inside one of the buildings. The police suspected vandals and responded to the call. The two officers who responded never returned.

The police formed a task force to search for them and dredged Officer Joe Miller's body from the canal the next day. They find Officer Shandra Blake wandering terrified and disoriented down a street in the Ninth Ward that same afternoon. Janeka offers to set up an interview with the characters and the police who found the dead officer's body. She gives them directions to the precinct and sends them on their way.

The characters may choose to leave Victor behind during this scene or not. If they don't allow him to come along, he tries to discourage them from trying to talk to Officer Blake, afraid she'll talk about Monica's ghost.

The 5th District police station on St. Bernard Ave is situated in the middle of a neighborhood consisting of tiny houses with neatly trimmed lawns. The building is a newer construction with white and orange concrete facing on the outside and high windows. Officer Terrance Smith is available to talk about finding Officer Miller's body. The characters can secure an interview with Officer Blake with a High success on a Communication roll. The characters can gain access to Miller's body with a Low success on a Communication roll.

Officer Smith tells the characters the following information:

- The police pulled Officer Miller's body from the canal about 200 ft. south of the industrial park.
- Bruises cover his body and he had blood stains on his shirt.
- The body was water logged, but the coroner's report indicates massive head trauma as the cause of death.

If the characters obtain an interview with Shandra Blake, they must travel to a nearby hospital to speak with her. She is dirty and bruised, but otherwise fine. She's badly shaken and terrified by what happened to her, so her story is badly disjointed. She is able to impart the following information:

- When they arrived on scene, they found a woman in the steel mill inside the industrial complex. She seemed upset, and they thought she was their caller. She didn't seem

to be living there, but she offered them food and drink. When they refused, the woman was offended and asked if they belonged to SAVE. The two officers thought she was some kind of religious nut and attempted to arrest her.

- Everything after the attempted arrest is a jumble for Shandra. She remembers the woman running and then disappearing. Both officers followed, but they lost track of one another. She heard Joe scream but couldn't find him anywhere. She must have gotten turned around, because she then could not find her way out of the mill. She remembers some kind of invisible force attacking her and running for her life. She does not recall how she escaped, as she was likely in shock by that time.

If Victor accompanies the characters to the police station, he rationalizes away Shandra's story by telling the characters that vampires have powers to change people's minds and memories. If the characters call him on this, he concedes that it is likely a ghost of some sort.

- Dirt under nails (Vital), examining the body; unlike the body found in the house earlier, Miller's body has not been cleaned. He has dirt under his nails and bloodstains on his shirt. The characters can only gain this clue by looking at the body.
- Missing person's report (Esoteric), a High success while interviewing Officer Smith; he recently received a missing person's report for a Sarah Johnston. She was last seen entering her home on March 1st. Her family reported her missing on March 5th. A Low success on a Research roll about Sarah reveals that she is Victor's next-door neighbor.



## THE INDUSTRIAL PARK

With a body of evidence pointing directly at the steel mill in the industrial park, the characters are likely to turn their attentions towards it. The industrial park takes up two city blocks, with a parking lot shared between a large storage warehouse and steel cutting mill. A locked gate surrounds the entire grounds, but climbing the gate should be easy. Investigations of the warehouse or the parking lot yield little information other than the lack of an Unknown presence or strange activities. From the outside, the steel mill is unimpressive.

- Victor's mood shifts (Vital), entering the steel mill; at first, Victor is reluctant to help the characters investigate the industrial park. Once they make up their minds, he goes from grudging acceptance to enthusiastic participation. He directs them to check the steel mill, saying that everything so far points to that building over the other one.
- Unknown Presence (Vital), Sense the Unknown check; even from the outside of the steel mill, characters who use Sense the Unknown can feel the presence radiating from it.

## CONFRONTING THE UNKNOWN

By now, the envoys should suspect Monica's ghost. They may know she is a protector remnant and may even know how to deal with her. They may just find that this is the next logical choice for their investigation. Victor is reluctant to agree to the investigation, especially since he has not been able to deal with Monica himself as of yet. Once the envoys are set on going to the steel mill, however, Victor quickly comes up with a plan to deal with the characters. If they enter the steel mill, he plans to sacrifice them to Monica's remnant in the hope of banishing her.

The characters must contend not only with Monica's remnant, but also with Victor. His plan is simple. He hopes to disable the characters by shooting them in the back while they are busy dealing with Monica, so that she can finish them off.

The fight with Monica could go one of two ways. Either the characters come up with a brilliant plan for destroying the steel mill without ever entering it, or they go into the mill and fight Monica, destroying the mill later. Either way, once they get close enough to the building to affect it — plant bombs, douse it in gasoline to set on fire, hit it with a car, whatever — Monica shows up. She first tries to lure them inside by manifesting as someone else and begging for help. She's not aware of what they are planning, but she recognizes Victor immediately. He has been there every night attempting to banish her and she's tired of him.

She uses her Evil Way disciplines to disorient the characters using Change Weather, Illusion, and Haywire at the worst moments for the envoys. If they get inside the building, she uses her Illusions to create terrifying images. She waits to use her Wound discipline on the characters, however, until they either seem appropriately afraid or take actions to destroy her building. It is at this point that Victor steps in and pulls his weapon on them.

The characters may be able to talk Victor down if the players gain a Colossal success on a Communication (Empathy) roll. He has completely lost it and has done too much by this point to easily back down. If they are able to talk him down, he tries to help them defeat Monica.



## AFTERMATH

The ending of this could play out in a few different ways. The characters could defeat Monica's ghost by destroying the steel mill. This is the best possible outcome, no matter what happens with Victor. If they escape without destroying the mill, Monica continues to inhabit it and eventually becomes a problem in the future. Victor's fate directly relates to this. If Victor escapes unscathed and Monica is still around, the encounter leaves her furious and she takes it out on the SAVE HQ. She dissociates from the steel mill and attaches to the SAVE HQ. This takes up a lot of her energy, so she isn't able to act immediately. If Victor dies — either because the envoys kill him or the ghost kills him — she is satiated for a time, and it appears as though the characters successfully banished her.

If the characters are able to talk Victor down, he eventually discloses what really happened to Monica. He also confesses to his neighbor Sarah's murder, and SAVE sends him to a special rehabilitation unit.

## NPCS

This section contains the NPCs used in "Deadly Secrets."

### MONICA SPENCER

<b>EWS:</b> 100 (Deadly)	<b>REF:</b> 70	<b>STA:</b> 90
<b>Injury:</b> N/A		
<b>Disciplines:</b> Change Weather (fog), Corporeal Manifestation, Haywire, Illusion, Unseen Hand, Wound		
<b>Aspects:</b> Incorporeal, Invulnerable, Special Weakness (abode)		
<b>Special Weakness:</b> Monica is impervious to all damage. The only way to defeat her is to destroy the steel mill.		

### VICTOR RAMI

<b>STA:</b> 60	<b>WPR:</b> 50	<b>REF:</b> 53
<b>Specializations:</b> Handgun (E70), Knife Fighting (B55)		
<b>Drive:</b> I must protect my secret at all costs.		

## RUNNING DEADLY SECRETS

The overall mood for this case is one of psychological horror. Monica's story and Victor's choices are the source of the horror in this case. Watch out for making Victor seem too shady or shifty in the beginning. He might be suffering paranoia, but he is functional, cunning, charming, and looking to protect himself. He wants to lure the characters into a false sense of camaraderie so that he can accomplish his goals without them getting in the way. The clues that make him seem overly friendly, pushy, or simply wrong are vital, but should be subtle. Maybe it's obvious he's hiding something or something isn't right with him, but he should not look like a murdering scumbag. Turning against the envoys while they are fighting Monica's remnant should come as a shock.

It's easy to escape from Monica's ghost by simply leaving the steel mill. The characters are SAVE envoys, however, and this is probably not going to feel like an option to them. If they don't know or realize they need to destroy the mill, the fight might get a little frustrating for the players. If they haven't come to that conclusion by the time the fight happens, feel free to drop a few hints. Maybe have her recoil as a stray shot blows a hole in a wall, or focus her attention on anyone who attempts to use stray debris as improvised weapons.

The characters may try to skip directly to the industrial complex without following Victor's guidance. If that's their first choice, Victor is completely against it. If they decide to go anyway, let them, but realize they aren't going to know enough about Monica's remnant to defeat her. This may lead to a retreat and further investigation. Don't feel the need to go easy on them, but Victor doesn't betray them in this instance, as he has not yet come to the conclusion that they need to die.



## CLUES

The following clues show up during the characters' investigations. This list is for CM reference, as each of the clues listed here is also detailed in each individual scene in which they may be obtained. If a scene is skipped for whatever reason, or characters fail to investigate a scene that would give a vital clue, feel free to give it out during a different part of the investigation. If these clues don't seem sufficient or the players are having difficulty, make up additional clues to help them in their investigations.

## VITAL CLUES

- Victor seems on edge and overly helpful. He displays notes of paranoia and suspicion of the characters without cause.
- All the bodies found have died in different ways.
- All of the activity reported or discovered happens in or around the industrial park, specifically the steel mill.
- Monica Spencer died in the steel mill.
- Protector remnants are different from normal remnants and the only way to banish them is by destroying the location they haunt.

## INTEREST CLUES

- Victor was the only one present when Monica died. His report indicates they had split up and he heard her fire her gun. When he arrived on scene, he found her body.
- Someone cleaned the evidence from the woman's body found in the abandoned house, and then planted it there. At the same time, the police officer found later was brutally killed with no care taken towards cleaning up the bodies.
- Monica Spencer was taking medication for depression.
- A case file from the early 2000s details a SAVE envoy who died while fighting the Unknown, and came back as a protector remnant.
- Voice recordings from the anonymous tips line reveal a female voice obscured by quite a bit of static.

## ESOTERIC CLUES

- Monica Spencer and Markus Lawrence were lovers. She blamed herself for his death, and never recovered from the guilt.
- The photographs of the after action report from Monica's death show footprints in the blood, which are exactly the same as the ones found outside the abandoned house in the Ninth Ward. These prints match Victor's height and weight exactly.
- The woman from the abandoned house is Sarah Johnston, Victor's next door neighbor who was last seen entering her home on March 1st. Her family reported her missing on March 5th.

## EXTRANEOUS CLUES AND FALSE LEADS

- Victor has planted a false case file into the pile that indicates a vampire threat that was never resolved.
- Victor continuously lies to the characters about any knowledge of strange activities within the steel mill.





# CHAPTER FIVE: CREATURES OF THE UNKNOWN

Records and files for creatures of the Unknown are compiled piecemeal through eyewitness narratives, envoy after-action reports, and tales passed down through the ages. Sometimes the information is inaccurate or inexact, but usually there's enough there to defeat the creatures. Some creatures are harder to track than others; these monsters give SAVE pause whenever they come up. Usually, it means these creatures have ways of deceiving SAVE, returning after a certain amount of time, or simply that SAVE has never found a way to truly destroy them.



## BAT LORD (VAMPIRE)

*Our team was sent to Mexico City to respond to a report of a woman being arrested for a murderous rampage. We had dealt with vampires before, and SAVE claimed this had all the hallmarks. There's this small old church down in Mexico City. The windows are boarded up and the place has been abandoned for years. We tracked the creature there and apparently it was living in the building along with thousands of bats. We went in with our wood and garlic, and none of it did any good. It's taken Rose, and we have little to go on other than that we might be able to hurt it with a special kind of wood. I hope we get it in time.*

—José Ramirez, SAVE envoy report

**EWS:** 100  
(Deadly)

**REF:** 80

**STA:** 100

**Injury:** Superficial, Minor –10, Serious –20, Major –30, Critical –50, Lethal

**Disciplines:** Bride (Unique), Change Form (mist, man), Chill, Darken, Halt, Shriek, Stifle, Swarm (Bats)

**Aspects:** Bane (wild onions), Flight, Parasitic, Special Weakness (mahogany, high frequency sounds), Supernatural Speed, Sustenance, Unfeeling, Unliving

The Bat Lord is a vampire-like creature found in Central America. Few still exist today, though reports on their activity is spotty as few SAVE envoys have encountered one and lived to tell about it. In its natural form, a Bat Lord appears as a tall human with the head and arms of a bat with a wingspan of nearly 20 feet. It can Change Form to resemble a tall, lean, old man (usually native Central American) with milky white eyes.

**Special Weakness (mahogany):** The Bat Lord suffers STA loss normally, but does not suffer Injury penalties nor Critical Injury unless damaged by a weapon fashioned from mahogany. If reduced to zero Stamina but it does not suffer a Critical Injury, the Bat Lord immediately changes into mist and flees to a nearby cave, where it regenerates all lost STA and heals all wounds in the next 24 hours. If a Bat Lord is struck in the heart with a mahogany weapon, it is destroyed immediately.

**Special Weakness (high-frequency sounds):** Bat Lords are nearly blind and rely on bat-like sonar to navigate. They can be blinded by the use of continuous high-frequency sounds.

**Sustenance:** A Bat Lord must drink the blood of a living human once per week in order to survive. It can survive on bats in a limited manner if it cannot gain access to humans, but only for about a month before it begins to suffer the ill effects of lack of sustenance.



## BRIDE

**Cost:** Add 1 Token

**Roll:** EWS vs. Current WPR

**Range:** Sight

**Area:** N/A

**Effect:** A Bat Lord generally only uses this discipline once every 10 years, but will turn it against someone stumbling into its abode if it feels threatened. In the past, SAVE assumed this power was only directed at women, but a few recent incidents have changed that opinion.

If the victim rolls a higher result level than the Bat Lord, the creature is unable to affect the target. If the results are equal, the victim falls into a torpor-like hibernation for 2D10 weeks. If the Bat Lord's result is higher than the victim's, the hibernation lasts 1D10 weeks. The "bride" awakens with a great hunger — at first for insects, then bats, then eventually humans. After 10 years with the Bat Lord, the completely insane victim is released, and wanders to a nearby city where she goes on a bloodthirsty rampage until dealt with by local authorities. A Bat Lord's bride is still a normal human and takes damage normally. If the Bat Lord is destroyed, any victims affected by the Bride discipline immediately recover and lose all memories of their experiences.



## THE BETRAYER (UNIQUE BEING)

Attn: Laura Gonzales, Director

*Please send backup. Half the team is missing, and the other half is badly injured. Your source's information was not only incomplete this time, it was just wrong. We aren't dealing with any simple ghost. The thing isn't even a ghost at all. It's definitely of the Unknown, but we were severely underprepared and outclassed. See if your source has any information about shape changing monsters, because I don't even know what this thing is, much less how to handle it.*

— Andre Dos Santos, SAVE field agent

**EWS:** 125

(Legendary)

**REF:** 80

**STA:** 120

**Injury:** Superficial, Minor –10, Serious –20, Major –30, Critical –50, Lethal

**Disciplines:** Appear Dead (Other), Change Form, Darken, Influence, Swarm

**Aspects:** Cloaked, Master, Sturdy, Supernatural Speed, Tough

This ancient creature of the Unknown is thought to date as far back as humanity, showing up now and again as different trickster or chaos inducing entities throughout history. Stories from ancient Egypt of Apep, the foe of Ra, likely spring from the Betrayer's antics, as do stories of Lotan and Typhon. A few scholars even attribute stories of Loki and Eris to the acts of the Betrayer. Not all acts of chaos can be traced back directly to the creature, but plenty can. The Betrayer is classified as a unique being and one to be wary of under all circumstances, although whether there is more than one or the creature is capable of some form of slow regeneration or rebirth remains unknown.

As long as SAVE has been an organization, the Betrayer has been plaguing their operations. It takes joy in leading envoys astray and watching them fail. The creature actively seeks out SAVE HQs and attempts to bring them to ruin by feeding them false information. It is cunning and subtle, keeping just far enough away and using just enough truth to convince envoys of its veracity. It often poses as an anonymous informant, giving good information on small threats, just enough to gain trust. It then mixes lies in with the truth, eventually trapping the envoys within a web of lies so complex that in many cases they have to abandon years' worth of work in order to recover.

No one is sure why the Betrayer latched onto SAVE specifically, but records indicate that it has abandoned all other endeavors in favor of messing with the organization (though the trustworthiness of those records is suspect). Some scholars believe the Betrayer's acts



are a correction by the Unknown, seeking to remove the only real threat to its activities. Others believe that the overt actions against SAVE are simply another diversion to prevent envoys from paying attention to some greater working. Many HQs that survived the blackout years attribute the near destruction of the organization solely to the Betrayer, though others feel there was more going on.

The Betrayer is rumored to be able to change its shape into any form, but seems to prefer an alligator or crocodile when not appearing as a human. It has some affinity for the animals, enslaving them to carry out simple tasks and protect it from harm. The Betrayer is never far from at least a few of its minion creatures, and directs them against any who attempt to attack it. If all else fails, the Betrayer is highly capable in combat, preferring to fight as a crocodile and attacking with supernatural speed. The Betrayer can be killed through damage alone. It is a little tougher than the average crocodile, but it can be killed with enough brute force.



## BLOOD THISTLE (SERVITOR)

*I knew Bill from the fire station. We didn't talk much, but he had that kind of face you can't forget. He had stopped coming into the office, and a few of us were worried about it. I should have been more attentive, but the number of arson cases in the city was getting out of hand. It wasn't until I talked to his wife that I realized something was seriously wrong. She said the last time she saw him, he looked sick. When she pressed him about it, he hit her and left. I'm sure it was him in that fire. His face, you can't forget it. What's weird is that I've never seen a person go up in flames like that before.*

— Marsha Holvin, SAVE interview

**EWS:** 60  
(Common) **REF:** NA/Special **STA:** 20/Special

**Injury:** Superficial, Minor –10, Serious –20, Major –30, Critical –50, Lethal

**Disciplines:** Gnarl, Influence

**Aspects:** Bloodless, Minion, Special Weakness (flowering plant, fire), Tough

On the surface, the blood thistle appears as a normal plant, similar to silver thistles but with blood-brown petals. This plant is rooted in the Unknown, created by a practitioner of the Art who has turned to the Evil Way. The plant grows on the unmarked grave of a ritual sacrifice. The plant's roots grow into and around the body, taking its form and rising from the grave. The plant's roots separate from the flowering portion of the plant and form a simulacrum of the person who gave the blood thistle life. The root body has the same REF and STA as its donor body.

At first glance, the blood thistle's root body appears as a normal person. Upon closer inspection, the wooden coils and roots that make up the body are clearly visible. The blood thistle is sentient and can perform simple and complex tasks. Without specific instructions, the plant will go out in search of blood by which to sustain itself, bringing bodies back to the flowering portion of the plant to water it with their blood. If the simulacrum takes damage, the blood thistle buries a new body beneath the flowering portion, which creates a new body. The plant can only animate one body at a time, and the previous body will simply break down into sticks and mud when the new one arises. The practitioner who created the blood thistle can bury a new body to create a new simulacrum at any time, destroying the old body in the process.



Whoever knows the name of the original sacrifice can command the blood thistle. This is often the practitioner who created it, though if someone else learns the name, they too can command the blood thistle.

**Special Weakness (flowering plant)** The only way to destroy a blood thistle is to find and destroy the flowering portion of the plant. The plant's root body attempts to protect the flowering portion at all costs, even above following commands given to it. The will to survive is too strong. If the flowering portion is destroyed before the root portion, the roots will fall apart into composite sticks and mud.

**Special Weakness (fire)** Fire automatically deals Critical Injury to the blood thistle. Damage due to fire immediately kills the flowering portion of the blood thistle.



## CHANGELINGS (MONSTER)

*You know they always speak of serial killers the same way. "He was such a nice guy," "He was always so neighborly," "We would have never guessed." I knew there was something wrong with John from the day he moved in next door. He never left his house, and I never saw lights on. Every now and then someone would come over, but it was always someone different. Hell, I'm not even sure I saw the guy after that first day he moved in. No, I'm not at all surprised to hear they found all those bodies in the basement. I'm just disappointed they didn't catch him before he vacated.*

— Marie Porter, *SAVE* interview

**EWS:** 90  
(Potent)

**REF:** 90

**STA:** 75

**Injury:** Superficial, Minor –10, Serious –20, Major –30, Critical –50, Lethal

**Disciplines:** Gnarl, Steal Form, Whisper, Wound

**Aspects:** Special Weakness (iron), Sustenance (human life force), Unkillable

The story of the changeling is not a new one. For ages, people have reported missing children, replaced by an imperfect replica. Sometimes the switch is never even noticed by the parents, other times the parents go to great lengths to find the missing child. If they fail to find their own child, all they can do is face their loss, all the while living with something that looks like their beloved child, but they know down deep it is something else.

Changelings are creatures of the Unknown that take over the life of a human, often immediately after birth. Changelings rarely replace children older than three or four, though it's not completely unheard of. The longer the parents have to bond with their human child, the more likely they are to notice the switch, reducing the survivability of the changeling child. Changelings appear as humans, though their true forms are only roughly humanoid with amphibian features and warts all over the skin. A changeling does not realize its true nature until adulthood, at which point it realizes it's a creature of the Unknown.

The adult changeling is a cold and logical being who seeks to replace humanity. It shuns human society and feels superior in every way. A changeling mimics humans and can take on the form of any human it has met before, though it prefers to assume a single human guise unless something forces it to abandon the persona. It seeks out positions of power and then uses others to do its bidding.



**Sustenance (human life force):** Each month, a changeling is compelled to kill a human in an act of wanton violence. It must feed on the life force of its victim as she dies. During this time, the changeling reverts to its true form for 1 hour. If caught in the act, it cannot return to any other human form again.

**Unkillable:** Normal weapons deal damage to the changeling, but it cannot be killed unless it's struck by an iron weapon. If it's dealt damage by a weapon coated in silver or forged with silver, it becomes immune to all damage from similar weapons, even those made of iron.

**Special Weakness (iron):** A changeling cannot be killed unless the final blow is dealt with a weapon forged of iron. If it was first damaged by a similar weapon forged or coated in silver, the iron has no effect on the changeling.

## THE CREEPS (MONSTER)

*I'll tell you what I can remember. At first Efe from down the street started coming around to talk, asking if I had seen her cats. Then, everyone in the neighborhood got a little friendlier, spending all day talking to each other. I didn't want to talk to them, I've got better things to do. When people started going missing is when I got concerned. I didn't see my friend Zoputan for three days, so I went to his house and I found a body. From there, I don't know. I remember thinking I should call the police. There was this blue stuff all around him, I thought it was a chemical. I might have touched it, I can't remember. Next thing, I'm waking up next to a different body in a different house. That blue stuff was all over the place. So I ran. You know the rest.*

— Utibe Okafor, Excerpt from a SAVE interview, Lagos, Nigeria

**EWS:** 95  
(Potent)

**REF:** N/A

**STA:** N/A

**Injury:** N/A

**Disciplines:** Influence

**Aspects:** Invulnerable, Special Weakness (fire, sunlight), Sustenance (human flesh)

The creeps is a creature of the Unknown with a strange dual nature. When exposed to air, it appears as a viscous blue liquid. The liquid can move slowly, but cannot use its Evil Way discipline. When the creature encounters a warm-blooded animal or human, it attempts to enter its body and from there functions as a virus.

The creeps can enter its host through any orifice or open wound. It invades host cells and makes copies of itself, which then leave the cells and eventually the body looking for a new host. As long as the creeps is in the host body, it can use its Influence discipline on the host. This insidious creature has two simple goals: to reproduce and infect more hosts, and to eat human flesh. Both are accomplished by taking control of the host body to come into contact with other people.

An infestation of the creeps starts with an animal, such as a family pet, and then spreads to the people in the household, then to family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and so on. If not stopped quickly, an entire town could turn into carriers of the flesh-eating creatures in short order. Thankfully, the creeps have a long reproduction cycle, about two weeks, and must leave the host body to feed. Once outside the host body, the creeps loses control of its host. Generally, if no other suitable host is present after feeding, the creeps must slowly make its way to a new host body.



**Special Weakness (fire, sunlight):** The creeps is completely invulnerable unless left in direct sunlight or set on fire. In those cases, it is destroyed within minutes. The only way to kill the creeps when it's inhabiting a host body is to burn the body. Killing the host drives the creeps out, but does not kill it. While in its liquid state, the creeps can be killed with fire or by being exposed to direct sunlight for at least 10 minutes.

**Sustenance (human flesh):** The creeps must feed on human flesh once every week or it loses its ability to use its Influence discipline, even when in a host body. In some cases, the creeps has gone dormant inside an unwitting host for a long period of time to escape notice or complete destruction.



## GANABE (MONSTER)

*I've seen some pretty bad stuff before, but this is in my top ten. Whatever it is that has been killing people has been taking its time. We found the girl in a terrible state, but she was still alive. I'm not sure she'll make it; I'm not sure I'd want to if I were her. It was still there, but it got away after it killed one envoy and stole another. It just grabbed Jonah and ran out the door with him. Our bullets bounced right off the damn thing.*

*We're gonna need a bigger team to go after this one.*

—Killian Stevens, *SAVE* after action report

**EWS:** 85–125 (Potent-Legendary) **REF:** 65–95 **STA:** 75–125

**Injury:** Superficial, Minor –10, Serious –20, Major –30, Critical –50, Lethal

**Disciplines:** Steal Form (special); (Choose 1–4 additional): Confuse, Halt, Haywire, Influence, Lure, Torture

**Aspects:** Invulnerable, Parasitic Special Weakness (blessed, iron, silver), Specialization (Deceptive +20)

Stories of doppelgangers and creatures that steal or replace people are as old as time. One such creature, sometimes mistaken for a simple changeling, is the ganabe. This rare creature is an immortal being of the Unknown. Ganabe is a term that finds its origins in the ancient Hebrew word for thief. The greater connotation may come from ancient slave dealers and men who stole people to later sell. Either way, the ganabe steals a person's life force and wears her life as its own.

Ganabes are immortal creatures of the Unknown, with an ultimate goal of amassing power in the form of psychic energies released from the violent murder of humans. They are classified as monsters by SAVE. The creature is not a single entity, but instead a community of creatures, all connected via a psychic link to the eldest ganabe. As they absorb the terror and fear from their victims, they feed their elder, who in turn empowers them.

The life cycle of a ganabe community is extremely long. Elders can only produce new ganabe when they've gained enough psychic power to otherwise increase in potency. New ganabe are expected to assist in gathering psychic energy to allow the community to thrive. If an elder dies, all the oldest ganabe hope to break off and create new communities, becoming the new elder. Usually, this leads to at least two to three splinter communities, weakening the overall power base of all the new communities. That said, elder ganabe rarely die.



The creatures are roughly humanoid in appearance, but have non-distinct features. Their eyes and mouths are barely slits in an otherwise blank head. They do not have distinctive marks on their bodies, and run far shorter than an average adult human.

SAVE records of ganabe are scattered and disjointed. The last time any were reported was back in the late 1990s before the communications blackout. The most any headquarters can boast is a copy of a nearly ancient text describing the creature's habits and assumed weaknesses.

**Special Weakness (blessed, iron, silver):** Depending on the power level of the ganabe, it has different weaknesses to certain types of weapons. At Potent, the ganabe is damaged by blessed weapons or weapons made of a significant portion of iron or silver. At Deadly, the ganabe is damaged by only blessed weapons and weapons forged or coated in silver. At Legendary, the ganabe is only damaged by a weapon forged or coated completely in silver.

**Steal Form:** To use Steal Form, a ganabe must absorb its victim's life force, ultimately killing her. This process happens quickly; within just a few moments, a ganabe can siphon the life from its prey and gain a new form. Using this Discipline completely heals the ganabe of any wounds it suffered while in its previous incarnation.

## PROTECTOR REMNANT (GHOST)

*Margarete died in that house two years ago. Maybe we should have connected the dots, but no one thought we'd have to deal with one of our own. The report was simple: some noises, maybe a haunting. Sure enough, when we got there we picked up typical ghost activity. We were so sure it was a normal haunting, and we did everything by the book. She had us before we went through the door.*

*Nothing we tried worked, and things just kept escalating. By the time it had gotten so bad we needed to call an evacuation, she had cut off all our outside communications and locked us in. When I saw Margarete standing there in that hallway, holding the knife that killed her, I knew we didn't have a chance. I jumped through a window while she was carving on Lawrence. I'm not proud, but at least I'm still alive.*

— Lynn Thomas, SAVE envoy report

**EWS:** 70–110  
(Notable–Deadly)

**REF:** 55–90

**STA:** 80–120

**Injury:** N/A

**Disciplines:** (Choose 4–6) Appear Dead (self), Blackout, Change Form, Change Weather (fog), Corporeal Manifestation, Dreamsend, Gnarl, Haywire, Illusion, Swarm, Throw Voice, Unseen Hand, Wound, Write

**Aspects:** Incorporeal, Invulnerable, Special Weakness (abode)

The protector remnant is a powerful type of spectral remnant, created when a SAVE envoy dies while failing to save someone else from the Unknown. Invariably all protector remnants haunt the locations of their death, though at least one has been reported attached directly to a SAVE headquarters. These remnants specifically seek to destroy other SAVE envoys as a living embodiment of their failure.

The protector remnant lures members of SAVE to its place of death by begging them to come and protect it from Unknown horrors. Once there, the remnant tries to establish a sense of trust from the envoys, all the while convincing them some creature of the Unknown is plaguing it. Once the envoys make definitive efforts towards helping the remnant, it turns on them. It uses its Evil Way disciplines to scare the envoys, then eventually tries to kill them. The remnant needs two specific conditions to kill an envoy: the victim must be terrified, and she must have full knowledge of the remnant's reason for killing her.



When the creature manifests, it appears physically as he or she did before dying. Sometimes the remnant will use Change Form and appear in other forms, however. In this way, the remnant can confuse the envoys it intends to kill.

**Special Weakness (abode):** A protector remnant can only be fully destroyed if the place it is haunting is destroyed. If any piece of a structure or building from the location remains intact, the remnant can survive. If these pieces are removed from the location, the remnant has nothing to attach itself to, and will dissolve into the Unknown, never to return.





## REOCCURRING SPECTER (GHOST)

*I always enjoyed Purim, it was my mother's favorite holiday. But now, it brings me nothing but pain and terror. Five years ago, my mother died in a car accident on the way home from the community Purim spiel. She had been drinking and we went off the road. She died that night in the ICU, while I was in a coma. Now, every year on that day, I see her. I'm not just talking about memories or reminders. She comes to me and tries to kill me. Every single year.*

— Richard Lowe, SAVE Interview

**EWS:** 95 (Potent)    **REF:** 65    **STA:** 60

**Injury:** N/A

**Disciplines:** Apparition, Darken, Haywire, Spook, Throw Voice, Unknown Light, Unseen Hand, Wound, Write

**Aspects:** Discipline Master, Incorporeal, Spectral Attack

A reoccurring specter is the ghost of someone who died on a day that was important to them for some reason. It could be an anniversary date, a birthday, a particularly beloved holiday, or just a day that person remembers fondly each year. Each year, on that day after the ghost's death, it returns to the world in a terrible rage. A reoccurring specter tends to haunt the location it died in, though some have been reported to haunt living relatives. The ghost appears at midnight on the anniversary of its death and returns to wherever it came from the following midnight, wreaking havoc during its manifestation.

Like other ghosts, a reoccurring specter can be banished by helping it fulfill a goal or destroying whatever fixation it has. With only one day a year available to investigate or observe the ghost's actions, however, this could take several years. Destroying the remains of the ghost doesn't seem to be enough, though it does remove its ability to use its Evil Way disciplines.



## WILL-O'-THE-WISP (MINION)

*It's funny how a moment of anger can lead to so many regrets. I watched Jonathan leave the bar that night, and I was so angry I didn't care. I watched him stalk off past the road and to the woods. I saw the lights through the window near my bar seat. I thought that it would be good if he got lost in there and never came back. And he didn't. We searched all through the woods, and finally found him floating face down in a stretch of water.*

— Howie Price, SAVE interview

**EWS:** 75 (Notable)    **REF:** 0    **STA:** 30

**Injury:** N/A

**Disciplines:** Lure

**Aspects:** Incorporeal, Minion

Evidence shows that these creatures do not act on instinct, but instead act under the control of another creature. A Will-o'-the-Wisp acts as a sentry in a location, drawing out envoys and exposing them to the creature's master. The creature is dangerous enough to draw SAVE's attention; when they destroy it, the master is alerted to their presence.

The Will-o'-the-Wisp uses Lure to create lights like fireflies or dancing candle flames. Once the victim begins to follow the lights, it uses the Influence discipline to ensure she continues into dangerous terrain such as a deep bog, off the side of a cliff, or into a furnace. Exposing the creature to a strong light, such as a well-lit room or the beam from a spotlight, destroys it. A weaker light from a flashlight or lantern causes the creature to shy away, but does not destroy it.

**Minion:** Any creature with the Master aspect may create a Will-o'-the-Wisp by collecting the soul from a living being.

## XAXOG (MONSTER)

*The case made us all uneasy. We understood cult behavior, but this was worse than normal. Each of them seemed to work on their own accord, instead of following the lead of some charismatic leader. Most of them had no connections to the others, and they didn't seem to have any driving purpose. They simply came together and worked to perpetuate increasingly gruesome crimes.*

— Latoya Rector, SAVE Envoy Report

**EWS:** 100  
(Deadly)

**REF:** 85

**STA:** 100

**Injury:** Superficial, Minor –10, Serious –20, Major –30, Critical –50, Lethal

**Disciplines:** Alert, Blunder, Dreamsend, Exploit, Illusion, Influence, Ride Senses, Whisper

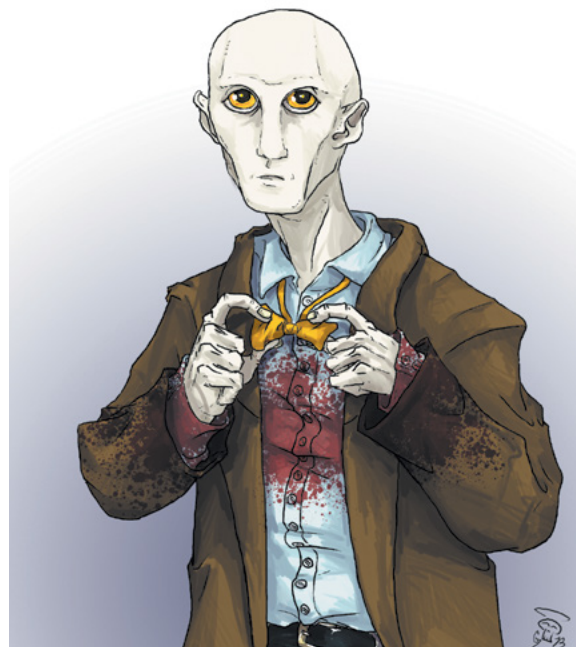
**Aspects:** Discipline Master, Lair

Xaxogs are creatures of the Unknown who warp and twist a person's sense of right and wrong, causing a normally good person to perform evil acts. The first reported case involved an entire SAVE envoy team gone rogue that started murdering innocent people. At first, SAVE believed the team turned to the Evil Way and locked them up. When another envoy took up where the group had left off, SAVE dug deeper and found the presence of the xaxog.

Once the creature was destroyed, all the envoys that had been under its control recovered, though they had no memories of the acts they committed. Some scholars propose the Unknown created them as a corrective measure against SAVE, but after the original report, other cases of murder cults led by xaxogs have surfaced, some having nothing to do with SAVE envoys.

The xaxog appears human at first glance, though close scrutiny reveals a sickly pallor and eyes that are too large. Xaxogs are territorial creatures who live and act alone, coming together only for reproductive purposes. A young xaxog moves into a location and creates a lair for itself, living and acting from there until death or some external presence forces it to leave.

Xaxogs seem to act on instinct, gaining control over a person or group of people and forcing them to act out horrific crimes. It first uses its Exploit discipline to find out the person's worst crime. It then uses the guilt of that crime as well as a combination of other Evil Way disciplines to trick and guilt her into taking what she believes to be pre-emptive actions to prevent evil acts. These actions themselves are terrible, but while under the sway of the xaxog, the person cannot see the horror in her own acts. The xaxog does



have the Influence discipline, but only uses this as a last resort to break strong-willed people.

A xaxog is not particularly difficult to kill — having no special protections against damage or injury — as long as an envoy can lure it out of its lair or brave the defenses the lair has in place.

**Lair:** The xaxog's lair is its safe haven and only true defense. The lair has the ability to use Blackout, Darken, Illusion, and Quiet to dim the senses and confuse those who enter, giving the xaxog time to escape or kill the intruder.



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