

elven FINE



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A Prologue

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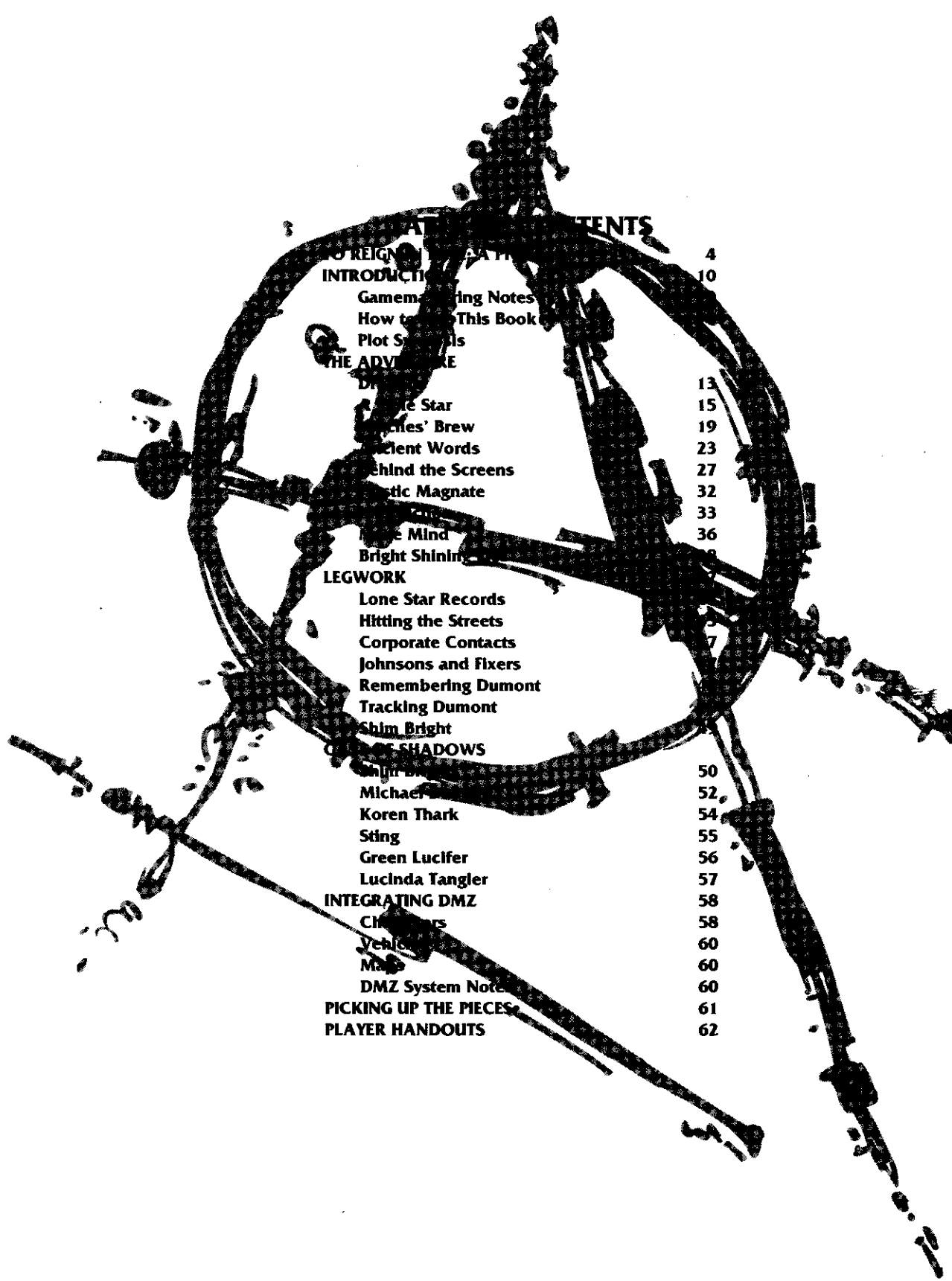
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Printed in the United States of America.

Published by
FASA Corporation
P.O. Box 6930
Chicago, IL 60680

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TO REIGN IN HELL: A Prologue

They stared at me as their bikes came to a halt, furtively assessing what level of threat I might represent. Then, starting with one Ancient who quickly infected the rest of the bikers, they snickered, cackled, and roared at some hilarious private joke.

I felt my cheeks flush with shame, though I fought for control. At first, I could not understand their scorn. Like them, I was an elf and looked no different. Besides, I had gone to great pains to outfit myself appropriately. Silver chains dangled from my black leather jacket, and the toes of my boots glittered in the half-light with razored spurs. My fingerless gloves bristled with gleaming metal studs, and I'd even gone to the ridiculous length of affecting a green and purple mohawk so I would fit in. Even the antique Harley I rode matched their chosen steeds of steel.

As the group continued to clutch their sides and whoop out new peals of laughter every time one of them looked at me, the truth finally dawned. Everything about me was perfect—too perfect. In this noble gathering of elves, my clothes were just too new. My studs and spurs showed no tarnish of blood residue and my fingernails lacked the telltale oily grit from working on a bike. These details and many more revealed my true identity.

For these denizens of Seattle's sprawl, the only thing funnier than an elf up from Tir Tairngire is an elf from the wilds who attempts to disguise his origins. My precautions, my schemes, had been worse than for naught, they had betrayed me.

If my face was red before, it now burned with shame.

One elf, distinctive for the pink scar slashed over one milky eye, approached and wiped his hands on my jacket. "Geez, chummer, real wiz rags, 'kay?" Like a court jester, the jackanapes turned to his compatriots and bellowed, "His Majesty has sent his Minister of Fashion to us, chummers. Show some respect."

As the clown bent to drop his pants in derision, I twisted my wrist and raced the Harley's engine. Its bass roar exploded like gunshots off the interior walls of this warehouse where the Ancients had gathered. The cycle's thunder shocked the scarred elf into a twisting leap backward. His pants tangled around his knees, catching his flailing limbs and bringing him down unceremoniously onto his backside.

My effort at bravado earned me a momentary respite as the Ancients suddenly turned their scorn against the fallen elf, but the bluff was more than transparent to several other Ancients. One of them, lean even for an elf, sliced through the crowd. Though she was not as voluptuous as I tend to prefer, her aggressive bearing and spirit were seductive enough. Yellow light flashed like a beacon in her mechanical eyes, and highlights shot from her long coppery hair. Her gaze raked over me once, then again, more slowly. "You jacked, chummer?"

I shook my head.

"Magicker?"

I shrugged carelessly, hoping to give the impression of possessing more abilities than I in fact did.

She shrugged wearily, then smiled, flashing long canine implants. "So yer a fern-witch come to the sprawl to run with the Ancients, eh? Why don't the High Prince just shoot you misfits instead of sending you to us to die?"

I sensed the probe in her question, but I killed the smile it almost brought to my lips. Could it be they'd been told I was on my way to Seattle, but not why I had been exiled? Did the High Prince think me so useless that he would consign my fate to hands such as these? If so, that would not be the first gross blunder he had made.

Before I could answer, the roar of another bike approaching caught everyone's attention. The syncopated rhythm of the bike's engine must have been familiar, for it thundered new life into the lethargic gang. The jester scrambled to his feet, tugging his pants into place. Grins broke over the faces of the rest, and my last inquisitor bared her teeth.

Blond hair flowing down his back, the leader of the Ancients pulled his bike alongside and slightly ahead of mine. He gave me a quick look, his corpse-white face showing no emotion, then killed the engine and parked his bike. Leaving his mirrored sunglasses in place despite the dimness, he swung off the Harley and stood there, stretching the muscles of his slender form like a cat rising from a sun-warmed nap.

"In from the Tir, eh, chummer?" He planted his fists on his narrow hips. "By the gods, you're a sight. Got your lunch in that backpack?"

"I was told that being armed would be a good idea if I wanted to survive here in the sprawl."

He pulled off his glasses and hung them from his handlebars by a cord. "I hope you're better acquainted with whatever you've got in there than you are with your fancy clothes." He looked at me again, his black eyes searching and evaluating. "I'm Wasp, and I run the Ancients. We usually enjoy welcoming the High Prince's special pals, but that'll have to wait until later. Pearl, did you reach everyone concerning our meeting?"

The jester nodded solemnly. "Everyone's itching for a fight after sitting out the night of fire. Keno and Johnny Dark are pulling together the Eastsiders. They'll meet us at the border on Westlake."

"Good." Wasp wandered across the floor to a billiards table. As Pearl swept the balls into the pockets, Wasp drew a map from inside his vest, unfolded it and laid it out on the green felt. I killed my Harley's engine and followed, taking up a position at the far end of the table. Pearl stood at Wasp's right hand, and the female leaned on the table directly opposite the Ancients' leader.

"Look, chummers, here's the score. It's time to consolidate our territory. We're going to take the streets from Dexter to Aurora, starting at Harrison and going on down to Denny."

The whipcord samurai narrowed her Fujikon eyes. "That's Meat Junkie turf. They ain't gonna like that."

"That, Sting, is their problem. We're looking at an all-out battle." Wasp lifted his eyes to his assembled soldiers. "Kid gloves are off, chummers."

Sting still looked uneasy, and I sensed a tension between her and Wasp that ran deeper than a mere disagreement over this little outing. I could not help but wonder if these two apparent rivals had once been lovers. "The kid gloves might be off, Wasp, but the Meat Junkies are tight with the Emerald Dogs. They can easily bring in more firepower than we can. Keno and Dark might be bringing in the Eastsiders, but will that be enough? Besides, the turf you want covers Bob's Cartage and Freight, and we know the yakuza have designs on them. Is there anything you ain't telling us?"

Her voice trailed off as Wasp's nostrils flared. "The yaks ain't in on this play. It's just us."

In Wasp's words and Sting's reaction to them, I sensed another point of contention between them. It looked as though Sting wanted to depose Wasp, and judging by Wasp's anger, the battle for succession would intensify relatively soon. More important, I also gained the impression that someone or some corp was yanking Wasp's chain and Sting did not like it.

"Just us, huh? Just our blood, you mean." Sting spat on the ground. "Are they paying us by the pint this time? When are you going to learn that those corporators think pitting one gang against another is a real economical means of metahuman birth control!"

The remark slashed him, but before Wasp could reply, I broke in. "I was never given to believe that the Ancients danced to a corporator's tune."

Wasp wheeled on me, giving full vent to his fury. "Who the frag cares what you believe? You're not part of this gang, so you don't stand for drek, got it?"

Sting stabbed a finger razor down through the map. "Well, I am a member of this gang, and I think this deal stinks. You better have a good plan for this 'consolidation,' Wasp, because I'm sick of blood being shed just so another Stuffer Shack can spring up on some street corner."

"I do have a plan, Sting, one that should make even you happy." He pointed at the intersection of Republican and Dexter on the map. "We link up here with the Eastsiders and then sweep down through the neighborhood. We take out pockets of resistance and move on. We just roll 'em up."

Despite the nods of assent from the gathered elves, Sting seemed unconvinced. "And what happens after we clear one block and move on to the next? The Meat Junkies will pour back in and occupy our building from the rear. Stupid plan, Wasp."

"Got a better one?"

"Yeah. We start at the north end of Aurora and the Eastsiders start at Denny Way. We work toward the middle and squeeze the Meat Junkies out."

Wasp shook his head. "Now that we've heard from the Custer Military Academy..."

"Pig!" Sting's hand convulsed, shredding the map. "You know that your plan leaves us open to an attack by the Emerald Dogs!"

"The Emerald Dogs are not a factor!" Wasp bared his teeth in a feral snarl. "With our firepower the Meat Junkies will die quick," he growled, magical energy arcing from his left hand to his right. "This is not a protracted war, it's a lightning assault. In quick, and force them out. Bang, done!"

"That's what you said the last time we tangled with the Tigers, but your corporator's intelligence was hosed, and we got gnawed real good." Sting swept her hair back from her face and I saw the ragged scar that ran from her left eye to her pointed ear. "I remember that frag-up every day. And now with this new plan of yours, the only thing that's going to get done is the Ancients!"

"That was different and you know it, Sting!"

"Do I? Have the corpgeeks cut your puppet strings?"

As Sting drew in a breath to continue her tirade, I sampled the gang's mood and knew my moment had arrived. I coughed lightly and placed my hands palm-down on the table. "If you will forgive an uninitiated outsider making a suggestion..."

Surprised that I'd spoken up again, Wasp and Sting both glared at me.

"I would point out that caution against dividing your strength is well-advised when considering a battle, quick or long. On the other hand, having mobile flanking elements able to react to threats is also undisputably wise."

"Thanks for the flash from the front," Wasp sneered, provoking new laughter among his compatriots. "Now that we've heard from the Moronic Majority..."

"Wait!" The edge in my voice silenced the laughter, but not the tension that spawned it. "I have an idea. As you will recall Virgil admonishing the Romans, all that is necessary to win this conflict is to 'subdue the arrogant.'" I started to explain that with the sniper rifle in my pack, I could easily eliminate the leader of the Meat Junkies with a single, through-and-through gunshot wound to the head. I knew that the Meat Junkies would be disorganized and powerless without a head man. They would be impotent until another strong leader arose among them, and that would be a painful process. Before I could unfold my plan, Wasp cut me off.

"Drek! Dandelion talk and chip-dreams!" Wasp's anger gathered like a thunderhead. "I don't know this Virgil fellow—didn't catch his simsense show—but he don't know squat about battles in the sprawl. Neither do you. We've got one to fight tonight, and we ain't got time to nursemaid some greenie from the forests. All I can do is give you your first lesson: I run the Ancients. I do the thinking! I do the planning!"

"And we do the bleeding," Sting's comment sank in to the hilt and brought Wasp up short. Sting glanced at me. "I don't know what this Sears biker has in mind, and I don't care, but I do want some flexibility in this plan of yours. We have to be able to cover our backs in case the Emerald Dogs or Meat Junkies show us more than you guesstimate they've got."

Wasp stared from Sting to me and back. "Fine, you want a reactionary force? Great. You, Pearl, Tiny, and the greenie. Pick out another half-dozen people, and you're it. We hit a hard point, you take it out. You happy?"

Sting took the minor concession, and with a sly grin, turned it into a major victory. "I'll be happy if we don't have to save your butt too many times. Fresh perspectives and other plans will keep us alive, Wasp."

"Then let's hope that if you are needed, you do succeed." Wasp turned from the table and pointed back to where our bikes waited. "Mount up, brothers and sisters. Tonight we remind the city that we do not tolerate intrusions into our turf."

A general war whoop filled the warehouse, but I did not allow it to distract me. I saw Wasp watching me out the corner of his eye, and I knew he had quickly assessed my role in settling



the dispute between him and Sting. Whether by accident or design, I had mediated between them for the briefest of moments, assuming a position of power. Draping an arm around Pearl's shoulder, Wasp whispered into his ear.

I smiled slightly, but knew I'd have to be careful. Who would detect malice in an accidental shooting during a rumble? A quick push from cover and I would make a perfect target for some Meat Junkie. If that was the game and those were the rules, I was more than willing to play.

Knowing my Ranger Arms sniper rifle would not be much use in the close combat I anticipated, I drew an Ingram from the Ancients' armory as well as enough clips to last me well into the next century. As the deafening roar of motorcycles filled the warehouse, I joined up with Sting, Pearl, and the rest of our task force. Tiny, the other elf designated to join us, looked big enough—and ugly enough—to have been the result of an unholy union between elf and troll.

As I rode up and swung in beside him, he folded his arms across his chest. "You got a name, chummer?"

I shrugged in an easy, almost friendly manner. "In the Tir, I was known as Alejandro Kylisearn, but among you, having a colorful nom de guerre is the way things are done." I stopped there, my voice betraying a dilettante's enthusiasm for a sinfully sinister adventure.

Tiny's face screwed up in confusion. "You need a street name."

"My thought precisely. I was thinking I would call myself..."

My voice faded to nothing as Tiny vehemently shook his head. "You can't name yourself. Only the leader can give you a name."

Pearl pulled up on my right, sandwiching me between him and Tiny. "I think, for now, we'll call you Greenie."

I graced him with a plastic smile. "You have no idea how that makes me feel, Pearl."

Further discourse with him was cut off as the lead elements headed out of the warehouse. We brought up the rear and I let Pearl's bike slide in ahead of mine. Tiny, for reasons only he could fathom, had obviously decided he would be my "pal." He joined me at the back of the pack. As we rode from the warehouse, a huge door slowly descended, shutting up the building.

Seattle's streets, laid out in a motley confusion of grids blanketing countless hills, glowed neon pink beneath sodium lights. The day's earlier misting of rain and wisps of fog drifting in from the Sound gave the sprawl a sweaty, steamy feel. The tall, dark buildings closed in tighter than the redwoods of the Tir and I felt much the alien in this stone landscape.

As we headed down a hill, I saw the whole leather and steel line of Ancients writhing through the streets like a snake. Pedestrians froze like frightened deer in the glare of our headlights, or scrambled off into the haven of dark alleys. Normal citizens looked out from upper-story windows, exposing only their eyes and the tops of their heads. They believed themselves safe this time, but I could taste the fear on the wind.

In Seattle, the Ancients are regarded not so much as a biker gang, but as a force of nature.

Wasp swung us east to pick up the Eastsiders, then headed us off west, down Republican. The addition of the Eastsiders increased our forces by roughly half. From the hardware bristling on the Ancients' bikes and bodies, I judged that we were as well-equipped as most private armies, though I doubted we had the discipline and tactical training to be as effective.

Yet, depending on Wasp's performance as a battle-leader, I might revise my assessment of the Ancients. Many a leader who is not adept at politics is more than capable in a firefight. Though Sting had raised objections to past plans and assaults, the very fact of Wasp's continued leadership of the group suggested abilities I had yet to see.

As we reached the northern perimeter of the area we were to conquer, Wasp issued orders in a commanding voice. He had half his people dismount to act as shock troops, while the rest split into two groups. One group shot over to Aurora, and the other set off down Dexter. The mobile pincers would isolate the first block, from Republican to Harrison, while the others would clean it out.

That may have been the plan, but the Meat Junkies wasted no time raising objections. Pouring into the disputed area on Thomas Street, they formed up on Dexter on the other side of the monorail line. Their foot soldiers were arrayed behind two heavily armored trucks and a phalanx of riders. From what I could see, they outnumbered us, but their weaponry could not match ours. This mixed group of humans and grunges was, nevertheless, not about to give up their turf without a nasty battle.

A loudspeaker mounted on one of the trucks spewed a guttural curse that could only have come from the throat of an ork. "Dandelion wine gonna run in the streets if you Ancients ain't cleared out in a minute."

In response, we remounted our bikes. Wasp turned to shake his head at Sting. "No, you and your team stand down. It was your wish. You stay on your feet and watch our asses."

"But—"

"No buts, Sting. It was your call. Now live with it." Wasp dropped onto the seat of his Harley and raised his right hand. He let it fall, and like an electrical switch, it jolted power through the Ancients. Their motorcycles screaming like captive beasts, the gang surged into battle.

The Meat Junkies also charged forward. As the two lines closed, one Ancient sighted a LAW rocket against the lead truck. It burned a fiery course through the night, but missed its target.

The missile struck a bike and scattered it into flaming debris, but did nothing to slow the onrushing war-wagon. Sparks glanced from the truck's armored front as Ancients sought to stop it with small-arms fire. The truck shrugged off their bullets like raindrops off the back of a rhino.

The first truck blasted into and through the Ancients line, plastering one bike and rider like a bug on its front grill. Another bike exploded as a wheel rolled over its teardrop gas tank, and that set the truck's tires ablaze. Ancients scattered from in front of the truck, then turned their weapons against it, stitching holes across the vehicle's poorly armored aft section.

The truck's mate never even made it to the Ancients' line.

Wasp slung his bike around and laid it down as gently as he could. As he raised his hands, golden energy surrounded them with a magical nimbus. A sorcerous bolt of energy shot from his hands to skewer the armor plate on the driver's side of the cab. A second later, as the truck began to drift, a LAW rocket struck it in the offside wheel well, blowing flaming rubber chunks all over Dexter. The truck's fender dug into the street, then the whole war-wagon pitched up in a somersault with a half-twist. It came down hard, flattening its back before the gas tank exploded and sent up a column of flame taller than the surrounding buildings.

Sting turned her attention to the first truck as the Meat Junkies boiled out of it, guns spitting bullets as fast as the shooters could feed them clips. Many of the Junkies hit the

ground and didn't get up, but enough had kevlar-lined clothes to keep them in the fray beyond the first couple of exchanges.

Sting's HK227 submachine gun steadily lipped flame. Instead of burning clips with careless abandon, Sting picked her shots with deadly accuracy. When the passenger door opened on the cab, an ork started to swing down, but jerked to a stop as three red holes opened in his chest. He slumped to the ground.

Midway down Dexter, the Ancients scythed through the Meat Junkie line. Bikes tangled as the two forces met head-on. Men and metal careened madly through the air as more than one Meat Junkie slid his bike into the Ancients. Like Cossacks driving their warhorses through peasant hordes, Ancients vaulted their bikes up over their foes, crushing Meat Junkies beneath them. Some Ancients did not survive the kamikaze tactics, but the gaps opened in the Meat Junkie lines grinned back at us like jack-o'-lantern smiles.

Wasp pumped magical assault after magical assault into the Meat Junkie forces. The fireballs turned grunges into votive candles, while more magic darts savaged Junkie bikers. Two other magickers joined Wasp in using magic to augment our physical weapons, but his tactical and strategic strikes were the most telling. He alone kept the small groups of Meat Junkies scattered and unable to mount a counteroffensive.

A heavy hand at my back pushed me forward, stumbling. I ducked and rolled, coming up with my Ingram ready to shoot whoever had touched me, but I kept my finger off the trigger. Tiny reeled back, twin holes ripped through his right shoulder, then tipped back over his own bike.

Concrete chips and lead splatter stung my face and hands as I leaped back behind my own bike. The shots had come from an upstairs window in the building across the way, and looking up, I caught a glimpse of a leather-faced grunge ducking back from the window. "Sting, up there! Ork sniper."

She gave me a wild smile. "Waiting for a hunting license? Go get him."

I kicked Pearl. "Come with me."

"Me?" Pearl snorted. "In your dreams, Greenie."

Sting turned on him. "Go with him, Pearl. We'll cover you."

I snagged my pack from my bike and looped one strap over my left shoulder. "On three?"

Sting nodded. "One, two, three, go!"

I sprinted forward, then cut to the left as the sniper reappeared in the window. A fusillade chewed up the window casing and the bricks around it, forcing him back quickly. Though the sniper could not have gotten more than a brief look at the scene below, I had no doubt he knew we were coming after him. Pearl matched my speed as we hit the sidewalk, but I stopped and let him vault up the brownstone's stairs all by his lonesome. When no gunfire materialized to cut him down, I ran up and entered the foyer two steps behind him.

What might once have been a fine, single-family dwelling was now divided and subdivided into so many living units that it was more like a kennel than an apartment house. The place reeked of urine, cordite, and decay, while faded paint flaked off the walls like dead skin. A fresh stream of blood running from the doorway to a body at the base of the stairs pointed out the final resting place of one of the Meat Junkies in the truck.

I ran to crouch by his body, then scanned up the stairs to the first landing. I gave Pearl an "all-clear" nod that sent him sprinting up to where the second flight began. He signaled me to come up, but I hesitated an instant to be sure the grunge at

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my feet was truly dead. Pulling off his mask of rat-skin and chicken-flesh, I felt for a carotid pulse and found none.

Reaching Pearl's side, I motioned for him to head up to the next landing. He balked and insisted I go. I slipped my right arm through the pack's strap, firmly anchoring it to my back. Peering into the Ingram's open bolt, I saw bullets ready to be fired. I cautiously mounted the stairs.

Sweat started at my temples and rolled relentlessly down my cheeks as, step by step, I headed up. Unlike the first flight, these stairs opened onto a corridor that led back the length of the building. Any of the ramshackle doors could pop open, disgorging a whole gang of Meat Junkies. Making it worse was the fact that I had to divide my concentration between what might lurk above and wondering whether Pearl was about to shoot me in the back. It did nothing to bolster my confidence.

I bobbed my head up above floor level, then ducked down again as quickly as I could. I had seen nothing to suggest a trap, but the gunfire and explosions from outside provided enough competition that it was hard to be certain I had not missed something. I took another quick look, then took two more steps.

Again I saw nothing.

I had just turned to wave Pearl forward when the bullet hit me in the backpack. The impact tossed me across the stairway and bounced me off the railing on the far side. I hit hard and rebounded out of control. I dropped my Ingram, which clattered its way back down the stairs, me tumbling after it.

The sound of clomping steps rushing toward me and the salty taste of blood in my mouth made me panic. Adrenaline coursed through my body like lightning through a computer.

Though my last somersault landed me flat on my back on the landing, I knew immediately what I had to do to avoid death.

My fist closed on the Ingram as the grunge appeared at the top of the stairs. Shoving the gun in his direction, I tightened down on the trigger. I made no attempt to fight the recoil, but just let it drag the gun upward. The bullets first tore into the stairs less than two meters below him, then sliced him open from groin to forehead.

Pearl looked over at me. "Blood in your mouth. Not good. He must have gotten you bad."

"Dolt!" I spat and rose to a kneeling position. "The case was designed to protect what it contains from bullets and bombs. Kissing the rail put blood in my mouth." I ejected the Ingram's empty clip and slapped a new one home. "Go!"

Seeing that my slow movements had gotten me shot, Pearl apparently decided that speed was the only way to outwit the orks in the building. This worked beautifully for traversing my stairs again and then the next flight, but on the landing between the second and third floors, Pearl found himself trapped by the ork sniper.

Pearl yelled for me to help him, but I hesitated. I'd seen the happy look on his face when he thought the ork downstairs had mortally wounded me. If I let the sniper kill him, what would I lose but a watchdog? Then I thought a bit more. I would also lose my bait.

From my position on the lower stairwell, I determined that the ork had to be just inside the doorway of the apartment to the left of the stairs. With Pearl's shrieks of terror echoing in my ears, I retreated and shot the lock from that apartment's mate on the



floor below. Darting inside, I saw a woman and her two wide-eyed gutterkin children huddled on the floor. I motioned them to silence.

I answered the next burst of fire from above with one of my own. The Ingram's bullets tunneled up through plasterboard and plywood, covering the ceiling with power burns. I heard a thump from above, then ducked back out of the doorway before the blood raining down could touch me.

I sprinted up past a cringing Pearl and secured the third floor. I stepped over the ork's body, then stooped to pick up his AK-97 assault rifle. Crossing to the window the sniper had used, I shrugged off my pack and studied the situation below. While doing so, I unbuckled the flap on my pack.

The fortunes of war seemed to have shifted in the Ancients' favor. The Meat Junkies, reinforced by two more war-wagons, had managed to pull two or three groups of their people together behind a makeshift barricade. The Ancients concentrated their fire and magic on that formation, confident that the Meat Junkies would pull out once they could regroup.

Pearl drifted toward the window, but I pulled him back from it. "Idiot, get down. Do you want to get shot?"

"No."

"Good. Now, go get me the sniper's body. Strip off his ammo harness and give me the AK clips."

"Why?"

I looked at him. "If you want us to win this little battle, do it."

He set about his grisly task as I popped open the case. Its stainless steel exterior showed a dented hole from where the bullet had hit, but the kevlar lining had caught the slug before it could damage my rifle or me. I pulled the rifle body from the foam pocket securing it, checked it quickly for any problems, then reached for the barrel.

As I screwed the SM-3's barrel to the body of the rifle, I caught my first glimpse of a massive ork goading the Meat Junkies on to great acts of heroics. Seeing him brandishing twin Uzis, the plan Wasp had not allowed me to share flashed to mind again. The trucks were just over three hundred meters away, an easy shot with this gun and scope.

Down below, I saw Tiny up and moving again. He lumbered forward, his AK-97 smoking as he stabbed it into the face of a Meat Junkie, then pulled the trigger. Yet even as he voiced a cry of triumph, I saw another Meat Junkie let slip the leash of a barghest. Its unnerving yelp made Tiny hesitate, and in that moment of weakness, the infernal canine leaped for him, fangs bared and eyes as red as the fires of hell.

My brain instantly calculated the odds that I could bring the beast down before it killed Tiny, and the calculation said the man would die first. If he did not it was because, moving from the shadows, Sting intercepted the barghest. The curved blades protruding from the back of her right hand sliced clean through the nightmare-hound. It slewed around and tried to snap at her just as its two halves were flying a meter or more apart.

"I got the ork, Greenie." His ammo harness landed at my feet. "What do I do with him?"

I nodded to the wall on the other side of the window. "Just stand him up there."

"But he's dead. He'll fall down."

"So hold him up."

Snapping the rifle's bipod into place, I looked up at the dead grunge Pearl was supporting. "Too bad you did not choose a more secure position from which to snipe, my friend. Right

idea, wrong address, I believe they say." I pulled the collapsible stock into position and locked it down, then mounted the scope.

The flanking attack, led by Sting and Tiny, nibbled away at a Junkie position, centimeter by centimeter. One Junkie stuck the muzzle of his gun out and tightened down on the trigger. As his random fire punched a line of holes across Sting's chest, the elf went down. I feared the worst for Wasp's rival, then I saw her roll to her feet and dive back behind cover. A second or two later, she was moving forward, albeit slower than before. The kevlar lining of her leather jacket must have saved her life.

The battle was by no means over and I wanted to make my contribution to the war effort.

"What are you doing?"

I slapped a clip of .655-caliber bullets into the sniper rifle and rested the bipod on the lip of the window. "That's the Meat Junkie leader down there. If I take him down, they're done."

"Wiz, Greenie," Pearl murmured reverently.

I smiled. One gunshot and the gang would be leaderless. One gunshot and my position within the Ancients would be assured.

"Subdue the arrogant," I recalled the High Prince quoting Virgil as he exiled me for attempting to overthrow him. I settled the cross hairs on my target. I took up the slack in the trigger. "Subdue the arrogant, I shall," I breathed, stroking the trigger.

Pearl's jaw dropped. "What you did, you..."

I swung the sniper rifle around and jerked the trigger. Pearl smashed flat back against the wall at the center of a gory sunburst, then flopped forward onto his slack-jawed face.

The ork started to slide toward me. I filled my left hand with the Ingram and triggered a full clip, blasting him out through the window. His body slowly arced over and landed headfirst on the steps, then rolled to the sidewalk. Stunned, Ancients looked up at me and then off toward the center of the battlefield.

The 900-grain bullet had taken Wasp in the bridge of the nose and blown what passed for his brains out through a gaping exit wound. The Ancients' magical assault stopped abruptly and the fighting slowed as if Wasp alone had powered it with his sorcery.

I appeared in the window and brandished the sniper rifle. "You want a sniper, Meat Junkies?" I screamed like a madman. "I give you a sniper!"

My first two shots reached the Meat Junkies' stunned leader before he could even think to find cover. The first clipped him in the left bicep, whipping him around, with only his jacket keeping the severed limb anywhere close to his body. The next bullet punched into his right hip, coring him from flank to flank. The force of the second shot tossed him like a doll and he rolled to a stop in the gutter.

The Meat Junkies, leaderless and confused, crumbled and retreated. Sting shouted sharp commands, directing Ancient outriders to chase the Junkies from our territory. From my position, I played guardian angel for her, picking off stragglers who wanted to make their mark by killing her. By battle's end, the Ancients knew who their new leader was and I approved their selection.

For the time being, anyway.

Before the High Prince cast me out of Tir Tairngire, he asked if I had anything to say in my defense. "Better to reign in hell, than to serve in heav'n," I quoted from Milton. And reign I shall, one way or another, in this hell of the sprawl.

INTRODUCTION

Elven Fire is a roleplaying adventure set in the world of Shadowrun.

The year is 2053. Advances in technology are astonishing, with humans able to merge with computers and travel through that electronic netherworld of data known as the Matrix. Even more astonishing is the return of magic. Elves, dwarfs, dragons, orks, and trolls have reassumed their true forms, while megacorporations (rather than superpowers) rule much of the world. Moving through it all like whispers in the night are the shadowrunners. No one admits their existence, but no one else can do their secret work.

This adventure takes place in the shadows and back alleys of Seattle's urban sprawl. The vast sprawl includes the original city of Seattle and the surrounding sixteen hundred square miles on the eastern shore of Puget Sound. Yet even this vast megaplex is but an enclave set amid even larger states ruled by Native American nations and other sovereign states of metahumans and Awakened beings.

GAMEMASTERING NOTES

Elven Fire uses a loose decision-tree format that allows the players' team to arrive at the same encounter via different routes, depending on the choices they make. It is quite possible that the players will not roleplay all the encounters included here.

Except for sections designated as **Player Handouts**, all materials in this book are for the gamemaster's eyes only. Before playing this adventure, the players and gamemaster need to be familiar with the basic **Shadowrun** rules. The gamemaster must also have a thorough grasp of the adventure.

Players may use any of the character archetypes listed in the **Shadowrun** rules or in the various supplements to **Shadowrun**, or they may generate their own characters.

The players' team needs a good balance of investigative, combative, and magically skilled characters. Because this adventure requires almost no decking, a decker character is not essential. The players can always hire an NPC decker if they need to get information from the Matrix.

Elven Fire combines several approaches in presenting the encounters. Some encounters are designed and described in detail. Others merely set the scene and remain open-ended. Hints for gamemastering the various situations are included with the individual chapters that make up the adventure.

Elven Fire requires more gamemaster discretion than most **Shadowrun** adventures, especially in the areas of interpersonal and social-group interaction. Depending on how the player characters handle themselves in certain situations, certain NPCs and groups may react differently. The gamemaster will always want to encourage good roleplaying, but he can always allow a player to fall back on an appropriate skill if he or she cannot come up with the right words.

PLAY BALANCE AND DISCRETIONARY POWER

Because of the nature of the **Shadowrun** game system, and specifically, its character-generation and advancement system, there exists no abstract scale for rating the levels of the opposing parties in a combat situation. Only the individual gamemaster knows and understands the true capabilities and weaknesses of the particular shadowrunning team that will participate in this adventure. As always, the gamemaster is free to make any changes in character statistics and level of opposition to properly balance the combat encounter for that particular team.

The same holds true for the adventure as a whole. It is impossible to prefabricate an adventure that is ideally suited to every group of **Shadowrun** players and gamemasters. The function of this adventure is to provide the best possible framework for player and gamemaster enjoyment. Again, the gamemaster is free to make any changes necessary to maximize enjoyment.

MAKING SUCCESS TESTS

During the course of **Elven Fire**, the players will make a number of Unresisted Success Tests using a skill and a given target number. These Success Tests are indicated by the name of the appropriate skill and the target number. For example, a Stealth (4) Test refers to an Unresisted Stealth Success Test with a Target Number of 4.

SUCCESS TABLES

At times, the gamemaster will use success tables to determine how much information the players receive. Each success table lists different information for different numbers of die roll successes. Rolling a high number of successes always reveals the information for the lower numbers of successes as well. For example, a character rolling three successes would learn the information for three successes as well as the information for both one and two successes.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Along with the **Shadowrun** rules and the **Sprawl Sites** sourcebook, **Elven Fire** includes everything needed to run the adventure. The **Street Samurai Catalog**, **The Grimoire**, and the **Seattle Sourcebook** would be helpful, but are not required. Before the start of play, the gamemaster should read through the adventure carefully, paying particular attention to the sequence and timing of events. Some important plot developments will not become apparent to the players until well into the adventure, but the gamemaster will have to lay the groundwork early on. He can do that best by being familiar with the entire story line.

The written adventure tries to cover all the most likely, and even some of the more improbable, ideas that the players might come up with while roleplaying the adventure. But, as every good gamemaster knows, players always seem to propose at

INTRODUCTION

least one idea that the gamemaster did not anticipate. The **Seattle Sourcebook** and **Sprawl Sites** can help the gamemaster create special encounters for characters who stray off the beaten path of the adventure.

The adventure begins with **Drive-By**, in which the player characters are victims of a random, drive-by shooting that has become so common in Seattle as intergang warfare has escalated. From there, the team is recruited by a member of Lone Star Security to investigate the growing gang violence and to take steps to stop it before the city is forced to take drastic action that may lead to an even more volatile situation.

The adventure consists of a series of encounters that advances the player characters toward their goal. Each encounter is divided into three parts, entitled **Tell It to Them Straight**, **Behind the Scenes**, and **Debugging**.

Tell It to Them Straight is read aloud to the players. It creates a mood by describing the setting from the characters' point of view. Any important non-player character (NPC) dialogue is also given here. The gamemaster may need to adapt the text to reflect the previous choices by the shadowrunners. Special instructions to the gamemaster are printed in **boldface** type.

Behind the Scenes tells the gamemaster what is happening in each encounter as well as giving the possible direction of events. Information the players can discover, any relevant NPC information, and consequences of player actions are also noted. If a map is needed to play the encounter, it is included in this section. Non-player character stats needed to roleplay the section are usually included here as well, though in some cases, the gamemaster may be directed to existing archetype or contact statistics in either the **Shadowrun** rules, **Street Samurai Catalog**, or the **Sprawl Sites** sourcebook. This section may also include hints and suggestions for handling the encounter.

Debugging gives the gamemaster suggestions on how to get the game back on track if things go too far wrong. The suggestions are just that, however. The gamemaster may use any convenient device to steer the characters back to the main plot line.

Several special sections at the end of the book gather together essential information needed throughout the course of the adventure. The **Legwork** section provides rumors and information about various people, places, and things that the runners can obtain from their contacts. **Cast of Shadows** gives vital statistics and background information on important NPCs that appear in the adventure. **Picking Up the Pieces** lists the Karma awards the player characters receive for completing the adventure, plus any major and minor changes in their lives that will occur as a result of their involvement in the adventure. The **Player Handouts** provide information of use to the players, and a set of newspaper printouts lets the players know how the success or failure of their run affected the world (or their small part of it) and also hints at upcoming events.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Throughout this adventure, the specter of a time limit hangs over the runners. Everything they hear on the streets and in the news implies that forty-eight hours from the start of the adventure the Metroplex Guard will come rolling out of Fort Lewis. Though this may be technically true, the gamemaster need not hold to a strict forty-eight hour launch-time. The players, of course, need not know this. As the deadline approaches the gamemaster should drop hints, through street rumors and media, that the Guards are gearing up.

Player Handout 1 is given to the runners at the start of the adventure. Give them **Player Handout 8** at the twenty-four hour mark, and **Player Handout 9** at the thirty-six hour mark. These handouts serve variously as clues to the mystery, as timekeepers, and as hints of things to come if the runners do not succeed.

See **Picking Up the Pieces** if the runners fail to beat the deadline, flexible as it is.

The opponents in this adventure are unique characters with distinct personality traits. The gamemaster must read and absorb the individual descriptions carefully so that he can play each one convincingly.

The object of the game is for the gamemaster and players to have fun, not to get bogged down in statistics and rules. Keep the action fast and furious. When the gamemaster needs to make a decision, he'll usually be better off making a quick call on the spot to keep things going rather than calling a halt to search the rulebooks for a specific answer. The tension and excitement should be nonstop, leading to a final showdown.

JAPANESE NAMES

In **Elven Fire** the names of Japanese characters are written in Romanized form (given name, then family name) rather than in the traditional Japanese form of family name followed by given name. We follow this system because it is the one most familiar to non-Japanese. Though the character is referred to as Mamoru Ino in **Elven Fire**, he would traditionally be known as Ino Mamoru among the Japanese.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

The story of **Elven Fire** began a few years ago in the Tir Tairngire capital when a failed coup against the Tir High Prince left conspirator Alejandro Kylisearn high and dry. After the coup was aborted in its early stages, Lord Kylisearn's co-conspirators betrayed him, serving him up as the sacrificial lamb. Judging him guilty, the High Prince publicly sentenced Kylisearn to life in the deepest dungeon. In reality, however, the High Prince secretly banished Kylisearn to Seattle into the custody of Matthew Baelym, also known as Wasp, leader of the Ancients street gang. The High Prince knew that eventually those who opposed him would make a move against the Ancients, the Prince's long-time source of information and influence in Seattle. Though Kylisearn was not aware of the scheme, the High Prince planned to have Kylisearn (who has no love for his back-stabbing comrades) in place inside the Ancients to resist his enemies. Kylisearn had been in Seattle only a few days before he had assassinated Wasp, ascended to second-in-command of the Ancients, and assumed the name of Green Lucifer.

Time passed, and the conspirators decided that it was time to make another move against the High Prince. The Ancients would be one of their first targets. Though the street gang still had the High Prince's favor, the Ancients had fallen out of favor with the equivalent of the Tir's foreign intelligence service because of Wasp's, and then his successor Sting's, attempts to diversify the Ancients' power base into more traditional, mercenary, concerns. It was the plotters' intention to replace the Ancients in Seattle with another organization that would serve a similar function, but be loyal to the High Prince's enemies.

To that end, Shim Bright, an agent of the Tir and a loyal son of the opposition, was instructed to bring about the Ancients'

INTRODUCTION



downfall in a manner that would completely discredit them. Bright's plan was to start a war between the Ancients and their rivals in Seattle, leaving the dirty work to their enemies. The simple but effective plan had worked many times in history. Bright himself is an excellent covert operative, regularly consulted by Lone Star Security and the City of Seattle because of his position as a respected independent authority on elven affairs. He's been remarkably successful at intelligence-gathering. What he is not, however, is an expert at controlling other agents.

To put his plan into operation, Bright first recruited a local shadowrunner, a marginally skilled individual named St. John. Bright also requested that his Tir masters provide him with a special combat operative to handle most of the wetwork involved. The Tir sent Michael Dumont, a captured and re-educated shadowrunner familiar with Seattle's streets and outfitted with the best cyberware money could buy. Though Dumont was also beginning to show some signs of psychological instability, it was not believed that it was not cause for major concern. That probably would have been true had Bright not attempted to alter Dumont's programming to increase his control over the mercenary. Bright's efforts, Dumont's fragile psychological balance, and the stress of being plunged again into the dangers of the city all combined to slide Dumont into a volatile state.

In Seattle, Bright, St. John, and Dumont began laying the groundwork for the destruction of the Ancients. Bright knew of at least two Ancients that might be useful—peripheral members dissatisfied with the gang's current activities. Using information they provided and information Bright could get from his own contacts, he would orchestrate the creation of a fictitious Ancients splinter group: Elven Fire. Elven Fire, set up as a group of extreme radicals, would begin attacking the Ancients' enemies. Angered, those enemies would retaliate by striking back directly at the Ancients. With so many enemies arrayed against them, the Ancients would surely fall.

Problems arose immediately. Deciding to start small and simple, Bright ordered an "Elven Fire" hit against a gang known as the Nova Rich. Composed of rich, bored elves and humans, the Nova Rich were a gang whose particular image Bright despised.

They would make the perfect training target for Elven Fire. When St. John insisted he could more than handle the attack personally, Bright handed over the actual planning and execution to the runner. St. John's plan was flawed from the start, however, because he misinterpreted the information his contacts had fed him concerning the whereabouts of the Nova Rich. Informed that the Nova Rich would be holding a secret meeting at a local club called The Jump House, St. John assumed it to be a gang meeting. Elven Fire moved into action.

As it turned out, it was not the Nova Rich gang who were present at The Jump House, but instead one of its leaders, known as Baron, who was privately meeting with Alejandro Kylisearn, alias Green Lucifer, second-in-command of the Ancients. The attack went down, Baron and some innocents were killed, and Green Lucifer just barely escaped with his hide intact. For all intents and purposes, Elven Fire had taken its first public action and tried to assassinate one of the Ancients' leaders.

This did not sit well with Bright. Matters had escalated too quickly. Instead of the Ancients being concerned merely with a possible internal splinter group, now they knew someone was out to get them. Totally dissatisfied with St. John's handling of the mission, Bright paid him off and reassumed responsibility.

The attacks continued and the threat against the Ancients increased. What little support they had dwindled, as did the flow of black-market weapons and supplies from Tir Tairngire as the High Prince's opposition fed him lies about the Ancients.

Meanwhile, the chaos of gang violence spread throughout Seattle. Taking their cue from the Ancients and their rivals, other gangs began to declare their own mini-wars. The violence was an unparalleled opportunity to resolve all kinds of disputes with blood.

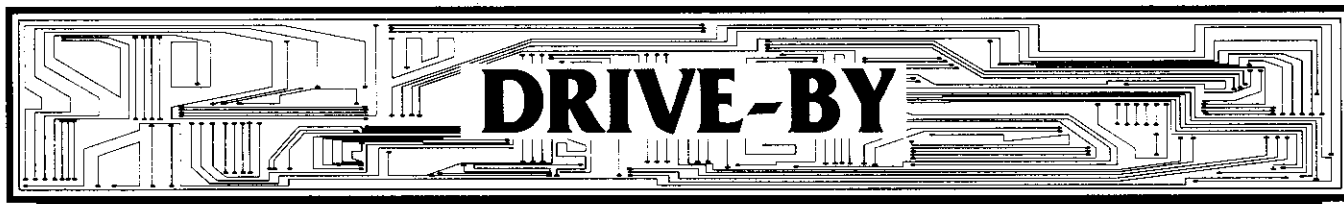
Lone Star officials immediately saw that they would never be able to maintain the peace if the trend continued. William Loudon, regional director of Lone Star, went to Governor Schultz to request that the Metroplex Guard be mobilized to maintain order. Activation of the Guard would introduce a quasi-military force into the already volatile situation in Seattle. The results could be devastating.

As the adventure begins, Bright has learned that St. John intends to sell what he knows of Bright and the Ancients to the yakuza, an organization that seems to know just what to do with the right information. Bright dispatches Dumont to kill St. John, but Dumont exceeds his orders and kills the yakuza present as well. The yakuza do not take kindly to such actions.

Koren Thark, a veteran detective with Lone Star's Gang Division, senses that there is more to the situation than meets the eye. When he brings his suspicions to his superiors at Lone Star, all he gets for his trouble is a rebuke. Obviously this is gang warfare. Obviously the only way to stop the gangs is to take them on, head-on, once and for all.

Thark believes this will only lead to mass death and destruction. To stop this, he uses a Lone Star discretionary funds account to hire shadowrunners to look into the situation. He sees it as his, and Seattle's, only choice.

The runners' investigation leads them down many paths. They must find St. John's missing girlfriend, a bored rich girl whose father has put a bounty on her head. They must track down numerous leads on the streets as they track down Elven Fire. Meetings with both the yakuza and the Ancients are possible, leading to final confrontations with Michael Dumont and Shim Bright.



TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Is that the sun? You and the other runners look up in amazement as faint shafts of light bravely fight their way through the gloomy overcast. People on the street simply step around you, noticing nothing, their gazes glued intently to the ground. Sun in Seattle. That's a new one for the vids—

Suddenly, reality intrudes; reality in the form of two carloads of punks who've decided they're going to attack the particular section of street where you're standing. As you turn, they lean out of their car windows and open fire.

Yup, the sunlight was too good to be true.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This scene is intended purely as a setup for the rest of **Elven Fire**. Before this scene occurs, possibly even at the end of the last adventure, the gamemaster should show the runners **Player Handout 1**, which recreates a newscast by local Seattle station KTXS. Following that, this encounter should occur, and then the events described in **A Lone Star**, page 15.


The opposition in this fight, six would-be gangers (they're not even worthy of the term "ganger," so they'll just be referred to as punks), are meat. Grist for the violence mill. Their whole reason for being here is to show how bad things have gotten in Seattle.

Drive-by shootings, not uncommon in Seattle, usually have some purpose, some identifiable target for the violence. Usually a specific person or location is that target. The desired results are fear, death, and/or destruction.

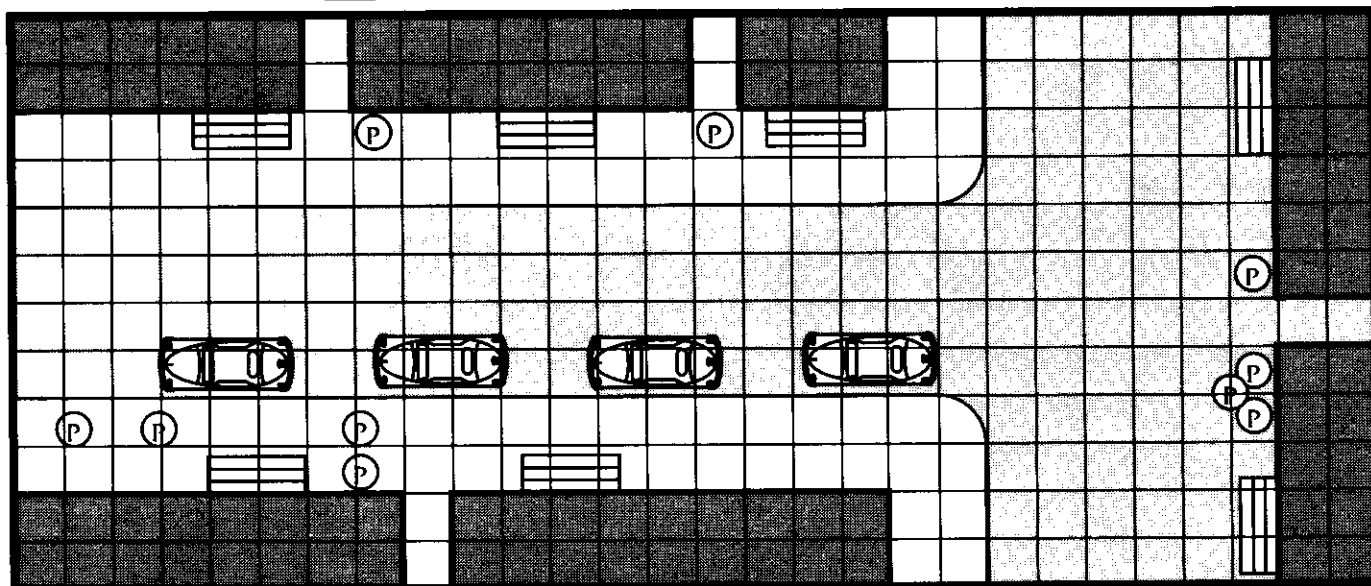
These punks aren't that complex; their only purpose is violence. They have no specific target in mind, they just want to shoot up some sidewalk. They don't care who's there, as long as someone is. Since the gang warfare began, the violence level in Seattle has risen to such a pitch that few care anymore. Violence has become so routine to these punks that it has no meaning. It's just something they do, like taking out the garbage.

Use the street map provided here, placing the runners on it as shown. The **Tell It To Them Straight** given here is obviously tongue in cheek, so the gamemaster will have to invent a more plausible reason for the runners' presence on the scene of the drive-by shooting. Perhaps they're going to meet someone about a job. Or are returning from a similar meeting. The

Street Map

 = 2 Meters

 = Pedestrian



DRIVE-BY

gamemaster should tie the encounter into some other event in his current **Shadowrun** campaign.

The punks' vehicles initially follow the path shown by the large arrow. The cars are in a line, each vehicle carrying three punks. Seated in the rear of each car, two punks from each vehicle open fire on the runners. One from each car leans out the window next to them, while his partner slides out the far window and shoots over the roof of the car. The vehicles remain on the block for one Combat Turn. If not stopped, they will get away at the end of the turn.

Because the punks aren't being particularly stealthy or subtle (though, admittedly, hurling racial slurs just before they open fire *is* their idea of subtle), each player character makes a Reaction (3) Test. The result gives the maximum number of actions the character may take that turn. If the result is greater than the number of actions the character receives from Initiative, so be it. If it is less, the characters lose their earlier actions in favor of the later ones. If a character was entitled to, say, three actions, but only rolled two successes, he loses his first action, but may take actions two and three as they occur normally in the Initiative sequence. Shadowrunners being shadowrunners, they will probably completely outclass their opposition.

PUNKS (6)

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	M	R	Armor
3	3	3	2	2	2	6	—	2	1/1

Initiative: 2 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 2; Defense (Unarmed) 3; Dodge 3

Skills: Armed Combat 2; Car 2; Etiquette (Street) 1; Firearms 3; Unarmed Combat 3

Gear: Armor Vest (damaged) (1/1); two punks carry Defiance T-250s (Shotgun, 5 (magazine), 4M3, w/5 extra rounds) and the rest carry Uzi IIIs [SMG, 16 (clip), 4M3, w/2 extra clips]; all also pack Browning Max-Powers [Heavy Pistol, 8 (clip), 4M2, w/8 extra rounds]

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

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CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

DRIVE-BY CARS (2)

Ford Americar (Damaged)

Handling	Speed	Body	Armor	Signature	Pilot
4	40/120	2	0	3	0
Seating: Twin front/back bucket seats				Access: 2 standard	
Economy: 50 km per liter				Fuel: IC/30 liters	
Storage: 5 CF					

VEHICLE CONDITION MONITOR									
L	M	S	DESTR.						

VEHICLE CONDITION MONITOR									
L	M	S	DESTR.						

These two cars have seen better days, and they look it.

The punks are just that. They aren't agents of some criminal mastermind sent to assassinate the runners. They aren't an elite combat team from some large anonymous corporation sent after the runners for training. They aren't even muggers. They're just punks. And any amount of truth-detection, similar hypersense spell, or plain old interrogation will reveal that. The runners may find it hard to believe (and they probably won't), but they were the targets of random violence.

Chances are the punks get in a few shots before being taken down, and odds are those shots don't even scratch the runners. So be it. Once the fight is done, however, regardless of whether the punks are strewn aimlessly about the street or dangling from an escaping vehicle, it's sheer mayhem.

The first, immediate effect is panic. The pedestrians run, frantically seeking whatever cover they might find. Well, some of them do. Those that do not have been shot. If the punks get off any rounds, they have hit some pedestrians, who are laying on the sidewalk, bleeding. Some may even be dead. That decision is left to the gamemaster.

The purpose here is to show the player characters the effects of this kind of violence. They may have walked away unscathed, but others have not. The average person, without medical aid, quickly dies from the average bullet wound. Some shots, and two or three repeated hits, usually kill instantly. And this kind of violence has broken out all over Seattle.

The player characters can choose to handle the situation as they wish. It will be some time before an over-extended Lone Star arrives on the scene, let alone any kind of emergency medical assistance. These are real people: they can't afford DocWagon.

The runners should be allowed to escape, unharassed. Potential arrest has nothing to do with this scene.

Go now to the next section, **A Lone Star**.

DEBUGGING

If the runners get geeked by a pack of punks like these, they don't deserve to play this adventure. Go to Character Generation. Go directly to Character Generation. Do not pass Go. Do not collect 200¥.



A LONE STAR

BEHIND THE SCENES

SETTING IT UP

This section occurs a short time after the events depicted in **Drive-By**, the previous section.

This encounter does not contain the usual **Tell It To Them Straight** section because it is the gamemaster who decides how to integrate this adventure into his current **Shadowrun** campaign. Much relies on the shadowrunners' past relationship with Lone Star Security. Whether the runners are friendly, neutral, or hostile to Lone Star (or vice versa) is the main factor determining how the gamemaster will handle the introduction to **Elven Fire**.

Much of the story of **Elven Fire** revolves around the character of Koren Thark, a troll detective attached to the Street Affairs Division (Metahuman Gangs Division) of Lone Star Security. Thark is deeply disturbed by the recent outbreak of gang violence in Seattle, and believes that something more than a simple "turf war" has provoked it. Compounding the problem is Lone Star's corporate decision that the conflict is warfare and should be treated as such. The mobilization of Lone Star's forces and William Loudon's (Division Head of Lone Star Seattle) personal request to Governor Schultz of Seattle that she mobilize the Metroplex Guard to "contain" the violence has Thark fearful that the situation will escalate into open warfare on the streets of Seattle.

Thark has expressed his concerns to his superiors officially and unofficially, and has been publicly and privately reprimanded for questioning the company's stand. This is how it came to be that he has decided to put his career in jeopardy by using certain discretionary funds at his disposal to hire talent outside Lone Star to investigate the situation. He's going to break every code in the book and hire shadowrunners.

If the team that participates in this adventure has had a fairly friendly recent history with Lone Star, no particularly outstanding Wants and Warrants (especially those with the red neon Shoot on Sight! marker), Thark's approach is fairly direct. He uses normal channels to contact the runners, specifically a fixer (or some other contact) of their acquaintance, and sets up a meet. The runners are to set the time and place, and the fixer will then relay the information back to Thark. See **Thark's Pitch**, below.

If the shadowrunners have not had the best of relationships with Lone Star, Thark uses a less direct method of contacting the runners. He gets in touch with them through Father William Roe, a Lutheran minister who runs a youth shelter in Redmond. The gamemaster should introduce Roe as an old acquaintance of one of the player characters, though not necessarily someone that character has spoken with in some time. See **Shelter Me**, immediately below.

Shelter Me

The initial contact comes through a street kid named Wiser (why-zer) who, if nothing more, is familiar by sight to at least one of the runners. Wiser tells the runners that Roe wishes to speak with them at the shelter that evening. If asked, Wiser will "guarantee" that there's money in meeting with Roe. Wiser will also lead the runners to the shelter if asked.

Use the Policlub Meeting Hall, p. 32, **Sprawl Sites** for the general floor plan of the shelter. The main area is subdivided into numerous, curtain-partitioned cubical/sleep areas where kids can crash for the night. Father Roe uses the office in the upper left-hand corner, leaving the upper right-hand room to Whisper, the near-mute ork custodian/guardian of the shelter. Whisper, so named for his manner of speech, is always there and uses the room for sleeping and as his office of sorts. If needed, use the **Ork Mercenary** archetype, p. 41, **Shadowrun**, for Whisper. If pushed, his principal weapons are his fists, and then, in descending order of preference, a handy billy club (STR + 1M2 Stun) or an antique AK-47 (treat as an AK-97) assault rifle he keeps hidden in his room.

At any one time, there are 2D6 Street Kids (p. 119, **Sprawl Sites**) in the shelter. Most are harmless, but others have an attitude or some reason for hostility. The gamemaster can make as much or as little of their presence as desired. If the runners are overt about their presence and occupation, some of the more adventuresome kids may become intrigued.

The actual meeting between the runners and Father Roe (if necessary, use the Store Owner Contact, p. 119, **Sprawl Sites** for the good father) can go any number of ways, depending on the runners' attitudes and the gamemaster's discretion. Father Roe, trusting in Thark, may welcome the runners warmly, or else he may view them as criminals who symbolize the hopeless future of many of the street kids he shelters. Regardless, Roe's plea to the runners focuses on the plight of the street kids and the fact that the ongoing street violence threatens to draw the kids in, either as innocent victims or as recruits to fill out the depleted ranks of the gangs. If the runners respond to his altruism, Father Roe feels heartened, and introduces Koren Thark (though not immediately by name) as someone who shares their concern. If they respond negatively to Roe's plea, or with any degree of cynicism, the minister introduces Thark (again not immediately by name) as a human being who understands the value of community and choices.

In either case, once Thark has been introduced, go to **Thark's Pitch**, immediately following.

Thark's Pitch

For Koren Thark's game statistics and notes about his appearance and manner, see **Cast Of Shadows**, p. 54 of this book.

Thark comes to any meeting with the runners in plainclothes and lightly armed, leaving the Mossberg CMDT home. He makes no attempt to conceal his identity, though. The gamemaster may wish to have the players make an Etiquette Test to see if they recognize Thark as he steps out of Whisper's room. Consult the table below for the result.

RECOGNIZING THARK

Skills (Target): Etiquette (Law Enforcement) (3); (Street) (5); All Others (8)

Successes	Result
0	Uh, a troll, and a mean-looking one at that...
1	Hmm, this troll looks familiar, but you don't think he's in your end of the biz...
3	Lone Star. That's where you've seen him. He's with Lone Star.
4+	Koren Thark is his name. Works in the gang division.

If the runners take sudden, hostile action, Thark immediately announces himself at their mercy, attempts to defuse the situation by loudly claiming that he *needs*, not just *wants*, to hire them. If things did begin to drift out of hand, this may bring them under control. If not, the gamemaster may want to use Father Roe and/or the street kids present to calm the situation.

Thark's pitch is direct, and is presented here in first person, narrative form. Gamemasters can read it verbatim, use the text as inspiration, or ignore it completely, as they see fit. If the player characters use any kind of truth-detecting or similar hypersense spell on Thark, it reveals that he truly and deeply believes what he says.

"Kind of ironic, isn't it? My contract with the Star has almost as many clauses about upholding the law and following the rules and regulations of the company as there are trideo stations, and yet here I am. Just so you understand how much what I am about to tell you means to me, I want to make sure you know that I will lose my job if Lone Star finds out I'm doing this.

"I suppose you've noticed the increase in gang violence recently. It's pretty hard not to. Just a few hours ago, the Fetid Vikings machine-gunned a choir practice in Bellevue because the younger sister of one of the leaders of the Leopard Hearts was there. Our sources say the hit was in retaliation for a Leopard hit against the father of one of the Vikings—they're killing families now. Somebody down at the Star joked that maybe that meant there was nobody left in the gangs to kill. I don't think so.

"I think it means things are going to get real bad. Blood bad. Something out there's snapped, and now this sprawl is in trouble. Word in the Star is that corporate went to Governor Schultz and requested she mobilize the Metroplex Guard to deal with the situation. If that happens, the sprawl ends up as a series of DMZs, downtown militarized zones, as targets for control. The Metros would move in, the gangs would decide drek was drek, and Seattle becomes a war zone. If any of you remember '39, trust me—the Night of Rage will look like a footnote to what will happen here.

"But here's my point. You're asking, why us? The answer's simple. The brass at the Star are stupid and blind. Yeah, yeah, nothin' new to you chummers, eh? Well, they say this is just gang violence, and because most gang members are SINless, no one of value will go missing when the drek hits the fan. One more dead ganger is nothing to cry about.

"Me, I think there's something else going on. I think it's deeper than a gang war. It might be gang-related, but it's more than party boys uncorking and hunting colors. I think somebody's pushing buttons and watching the fireworks. And if that's the case, then a blood bath may be exactly what they're looking for.

"It's all got something to do within someone, or some group, who call themselves "Elven Fire." Over the last two and a half months or so, this Elven Fire has claimed a series of hits and attacks all across Seattle. It all started with the fire bombing of The Jump House, a Bellevue hangout for local richies. The words "Elven Fire" were found scrawled on a wall nearby. A week later, a decker lifted spirits knows how much nuyen from the secret Matrix account of a numbers setup run by a Redmond Seoupa Ring. He left behind a calling card: a dumb frame in the form of an elf wearing the green and black Ancients colors, wreathed in flame.

"After that incident, representatives of the NewsNet corporation contacted us, saying that just before The Jump House bombing, they'd found a message in their computer system calling for the city to be purified by the searing heat of an Elven Fire. They'd dismissed it as a prank.

"Then the gang hits started. First, it was smaller gangs being hit on their own turf or in their hangouts by elves in Ancients colors, and the words "Elven Fire" always connected somehow. The Star started getting concerned.

"About three weeks ago, Elven Fire began to hit the big gangs. Long-time Ancients rivals the Meat Junkies, the Tigers, and the Emerald Dogs made the list, but the Red Rovers, the 405 Hellhounds, and even the Halloweeners and the Black Rains have been hit. That's when the earlier hits started making sense. The Jump House was one of the hangouts for a local Bellevue gang called the Nova Rich, mostly a bunch of spoiled rich kids who use mommy and daddy's clout to stay out of jail for the drek they pull. The Star didn't make the connection right away, because the Nova Rich themselves weren't around for the first hit, though their leader, "Baron," allegedly was at The Jump House incognito.

"The numbers-ring hit was probably aimed at the gang backing the operation, the Leather Devils.

"The Ancients claim that they are not Elven Fire. Some of the smaller gangs either believe them, or are holding back out of fear and respect. The bigger gangs have been hitting back at the Ancients pretty hard, though, and getting badly bruised in the process. Spirits know where it comes from, but the Ancients can roll out some pretty heavy ordnance when they want.

"The problem is that this mess isn't restricted to the Ancients. Other gangs have taken the situation as a "go" sign to wage their own mini-wars. I guess they figure the Star's too busy dealing with the big problem to come after them, and they're right.

"As I said, something about this feels wrong to me, but, until last night, I didn't have any real clues as to what it was. Last night a local runner wannabee named St. John had a meeting with some "business associates" at a dive called the Witches' Circle in Loveland. We think the business associates were local yaks. Anyway, St. John, his girlfriend, and his six "business associates" were sitting at a corner table when this real noticeable guy walks in; tall, big build, short white hair, elfen. He's wearing Ancients'

colors. Before anyone can even blink, he whips out an SMG and hoses St. John's table. He empties the clip, then flips a card that reads, "Even those the authorities fear are not spared the heat of the Elven Fire." Then he's gone. St. John's geeked, and so are the yaks, but it looks like his girlfriend, who goes by the name Lucinda Tangier, got away. She may have been hit, but we're not sure.

"This hit matches the standard M.O. for an Elven Fire hit, but this time we got pictures. One of our snitches was drinking in the club, and he happened to be looking the right way and recording with his headware video system when the elf opened fire. He sold us the recording, and we ran it through analysis.

"There's only about a twenty-some odd percent chance the shooter was actually an elf. That, plus the fact that he moved so fraggin' fast, convinces me something's up. The Ancients may field the best hardware, but they've never been known to go in for cyberware.

"I hope my conclusion is obvious. I have access to discretionary funds at Lone Star, and I want to use them to hire you. The Star expects blood from this situation, and like the elf said on the news tonight, blood is what they're going to get, regardless of the reasons. If the Metroplex Guards roll out, you can kiss this city goodbye, because most of the gangs will forget about their usual enemies to take on the Guards. To the gangs, it becomes a straight us-against-them situation, streets against the Star and the city. It'll be flat-out war, plain and simple. And people are gonna die.

"People who are friends of mine, friends of yours. And they're not going to die because they're wearing some gang color or a Guard BDU. They'll die because they were there when the drek hit the fan. 'Collateral damage' is what the military guys call it. I call it a fancy term for the death of innocent bystanders.

"If the Guard rolls out, it'll be like Manila, Austin, Port Elizabeth, or Beirut way back when, and I don't want to see that happen.

"And that's why I want to hire you—to make sure it doesn't. I don't care if you do it for humanitarian reasons, the money, because it'll be bad for biz, or frag knows why. I only care that you do it. I'm offering 20,000 nuyen each up front, plus injury expenses if you agree right now, and another 20,000 nuyen each if you produce sufficient evidence of a conspiracy, or someone outside the Ancients orchestrating events—something I can bring to the Star that'll change the way they're handling this.

"That's my offer. Can we deal?"

Make negotiations with Thark using the standard Negotiation Test. Make Opposed Negotiation Tests against Willpower for the runners' principal negotiator and for Thark. The character generating the most net successes can add 5 percent to the total nuyen offered.

Gamemasters may also use outstanding Lone Star warrants for the player characters in the negotiations. Thark can "lose" the records of certain crimes from the Lone Star computer in exchange for the runners' cooperation, but this option requires an additional Negotiation Test between the parties. This time, any net successes generated for the runners means Thark takes care of one warrant for one runner per success. Any net successes generated by Thark simply mean that the runners cannot convince him to alter the Star's records.

Once negotiations are complete, Thark hands the runners a chip containing copies of the information he has gathered to date, plus the video taken at the Witches' Circle. See the following section, **The Datachip**. The chip also contains a



private direct telecom number for Thark and the address of an electronic mailbox where the runners can drop data.

Thark also offers the runners access to Lone Star's databases. If the runners need a specific piece of information, he can check Lone Star's computers for the information, but these searches will take some time. Consult **Legwork**, p. 43, for more information.

Thark insists that the runners report their progress to him every six hours, either by calling him direct or by dropping something into the electronic mailbox. If more than twelve hours pass before he hears from them, Thark comes looking for them. Thark knows it is only a matter of time before the governor calls in the Guard, and he wants to use the frequent reports to constantly update Lone Star experts with information for additional evaluation. His position and rank guarantee that the additional analysis will take place, and he hopes that sooner, rather than later, someone else will be convinced that there's more going on with the gang war than meets the eye.

Thark does not mention Bright at the initial meeting with the runners, but may start referring to the analyst by name once Bright starts feeding him misinformation. (See **Thark and Bright**, below.) Until the runners somehow prove a connection, however, Thark has complete faith in Bright's analysis, and may get discouraged when the investigation seems to go nowhere.

The Datachip

The first item on Thark's datachip is a trideo image of the words "Elven Fire" scrawled at one of the hit scenes (see **Player Handout 2**). Then two other images appear; the first is St. John's missing girlfriend, Lucinda Tangier, and the second is the hitman at the Witches' Circle. Both are enlarged, computer-enhanced still frames from the video recording (see **Player Handout 3**). A copy of the actual video from the Witches' Circle follows. The recording begins as the assassin, apparently an elf dressed in the Ancients' colors with a flash of red, opens fire on St. John's table. He is standing only a half-dozen meters away from his target, and is holding an SMG straight out, rock-steady, with one arm. He empties a full clip into St. John and the yaks with professional accuracy. The woman at the table, Lucinda Tangier, falls away from the table and to the floor, out of view. She remains out of view for the remainder of the recording. The hitman quickly ejects the now-empty clip from the weapon, apparently by cybernetic command, then jams a full clip into place, grabbing the falling empty clip from the air. He takes a step forward, reaches into his long coat, pulls out an index-card-sized piece of paper, and flips it onto St. John's body. Then, in a blur, he turns and is gone. The recording ends.

Any shadowrunner can guess that the assassin was using a smartgun, and probably had some degree of reflex enhancement. The runners also find an additional clue on the video, and it is a big one. One of the player characters recognizes the hitman as Michael Dumont, though at this stage of the adventure the runner cannot remember Dumont's name or how he knows him. The gamemaster can determine which of the player characters might logically know or have heard of Dumont (a mercenary is more likely to know him, and so on) or can assign the connection randomly. See **Legwork**, p. 48, for information on Dumont. The runners recognizing Dumont can be used as one control on the speed of the adventure; the earlier the runners develop the lead to Dumont, the faster the whole adventure goes.

The fourth item on the chip is Thark's personal telecom number (his wristphone) as well as a Downtown Seattle LTG and box number that acts as his electronic mailbox.

The runners may begin the investigation as they see fit. Certain obvious channels of inquiry include the following:

- Hit the streets and see who knows what. Gather rumors, word on the Ancients or Elven Fire, and the location of Lucinda Tangier. Go to **Legwork**, p. 42.
- Investigate the Witches' Circle. Go to **Witches' Brew**, p. 19.
- Contact the Ancients directly. Go to **Ancient Words**, p. 23.
- Talk to the yakuza of Loveland. Go to **Behind the Screens**, p. 27.

THARK AND BRIGHT

Though not immediately pertinent, Koren Thark's relationship with Shim Bright should be clarified in the gamemaster's mind for roleplaying purposes. Bright acts as an out-of-house Counsel on Elven Affairs for Lone Star (primarily for the Meta-human Affairs division, and so Thark has worked with him a great deal) and for the Governor's Office on Metahuman Affairs. He is a well-known and respected figure in Seattle politics, and is expected to one day enter politics.

Shim Bright is also a covert agent for one of the lords of Tir Tairngire. He has orders to destroy the Ancients, and to replace their organization with a similar organization connected with the High Prince's opposition. Allied with the High Prince and the current ruling faction, he has acted as an agent for the intelligence

arm of Tir Tairngire for many years, though his loyalties lie with the High Prince's opposition.

When Thark begins turning up odd information, such as Dumont's history, the Ancients' backing, weapons shipments over the border, and St. John's claims of working with a highly placed elven city official, he approaches Bright. Thark will be circumspect, but Bright quickly recognizes the nature of Thark's investigation. As a spy, Bright's first thought is to feed misinformation to the runners through Thark.

The first piece of misinformation Bright passes is that the Ancients are not backed by Tir Tairngire. Bright tells Thark that the rumor of Tir Tairngire backing was started early in the Ancients' history to discourage opposition. Bright says the Ancients are a street gang, pure and simple.

Bright also tells Thark that he's previously heard the term "Elven Fire" as one of the proposed names for the Ancients back when the gang was forming. Elven Fire clearly belongs to the Ancients, and using that name for an operation is obviously an inside joke.

Bright claims to have heard nothing of a "re-education" facility in Tir Tairngire, and gravely doubts its existence. Bright assures Thark that the Tir's political and social climate would not allow such a facility to exist.

Bright also dismisses St. John's claims of working with an elven city official as "criminal boasting."

Having fed Thark the misinformation he feels is necessary, Bright begins to get nervous. His plan to destroy the Ancients has somehow resulted in all-out gang war, and the mobilization of the Metroplex Guard will make it extremely difficult to carry out his assignment, replacing the Ancients with a new organization. He does not like the direction the situation has taken.

If Thark at any time reports that the runners have met with the leaders of the Ancients and learned anything of value, especially anything that contradicts the misinformation Bright gave him, Bright panics and orders hits on Thark and the runners. If the situation calls for it, see **Interdiction**, p. 33. If the situation continues to deteriorate, Bright will attempt to return to Tir Tairngire. See **Bright Shining Lies**, p. 38, for more information.

DEBUGGING

As with the start of most adventures, the biggest thing that can go wrong in this section is that the player characters decide not to take the job. In that case, Thark will leave the shelter and let the offer stand. The runners can get in touch with him if they change their minds.

The gamemaster can encourage the player characters to change their minds by showing them the continuing degeneration of the situation in Seattle. The random violence experienced in **Drive-By** happens more and more frequently, not only to the runners themselves, but to people they know and possibly even care for. Maybe some of them don't survive.

Eventually, the Metroplex Guard rolls out and Seattle becomes the war zone Thark predicted. By then, though, it will be too late. The runners will have the unique task of trying to make a yen in a combat zone. The new world-view for Seattle certainly makes an interesting background for future adventures.

The runners may also decide to try to conduct the investigation on their own, without Thark's help. In that case, the events of **Elven Fire** take place in pretty much the same manner, except that the player characters do not have access to information from Lone Star.

WITCHES' BREW

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Yup, there it is, the Witches' Circle. You can see the neon sign blocks away. Wait a minnit; neon sign? Yup, and a line. Yeah, this place is famous now. Everybody wants to get in.

Flashing your best mess-with-me-and-you'll-be-famous-too smile, you push past the tourists and approach the door. There, an aging ork dressed up like a Halloween shadowrunner scowls at you, blinks, then blanches as fear begins to set in.

"Can I help you?" he asks politely.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The Witches' Circle club was on its way out, but the very public death of St. John has brought it back to life again. The single large room of the club is filled with large tables that serve as mini-bars, seating roughly a dozen customers each. At one end of the room is a small stage, and an equally small dance floor stands in front of it for those who look for that amenity. The indirect lighting casts strange shadows across the customers' faces, and the combination of minimal floor lighting and an artificial fog shrouds the club in perpetual gloom.

The almost rustic appearance covers a fairly sophisticated operation. The audio system is state-of-the-art, though, unlike larger clubs, the Witches' Circle has none of the usual video and lighting systems to back it up. Simon Johnson, the club's owner, owns the entire building. Over the years he has changed the decor and atmosphere periodically to appeal to the public's changing tastes.

Following St. John's death, Johnson feared he would lose what little business he had. Soon after the murder, however, he noticed customers lining up prior to the club's official opening time. As always accommodating the public's somewhat gruesome tastes, Johnson began opening up earlier and closing later. The table where St. John died has been roped off, and stands as a grim tourist attraction.

The customers treat the runners' arrival as part of the club's ambiance, and pay them scant attention. The staff, however, is properly nervous. Thorton, the ork bouncer at the front door, tries to keep the player characters out, but will let them past if pushed. Once inside, the runners are promptly greeted by the hostess, who introduces herself as Shannon and shows them to a booth (or multiple booths, as needed). The runners can question her right away or wait for another opportunity.

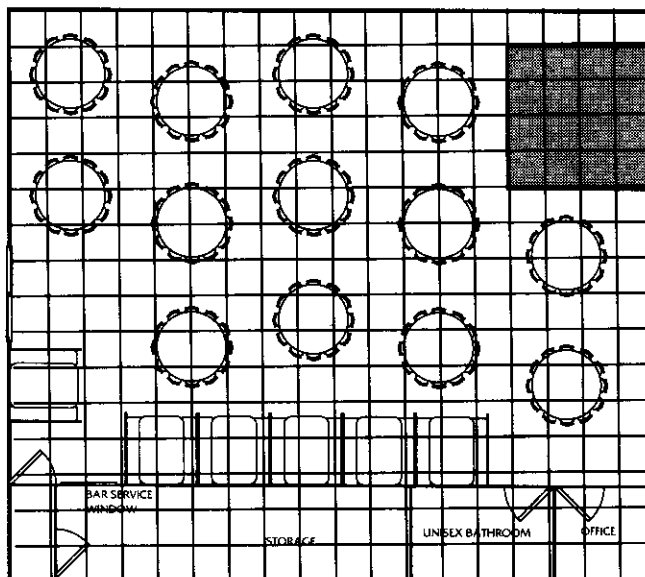
For the staff at the Witches' Circle use the Pedestrian Archetype, p. 116, **Sprawl Sites**, with no special skills or abilities. If questioned about St. John's death, the staff responds with the version of events presented in the media, with no deviation. If the runners press for more information, the employees retreat, obviously nervous but unwilling or unable to add anything to their stories.

Eventually, whether the runners ask for him directly or because they continue to question his employees, Simon Johnson approaches the group and requests that the runners accompany him to his office. If the runners seem to suspect foul play, Johnson laughs openly and says, "Though I'm sure there's a connection between St. John's death and my current fiscal good health, I think continuing that particular business strategy might end up being bad for my personal health."

Johnson uses the Club Owner Contact, p. 106, **Sprawl Sites**. He is not accompanied by a bodyguard, but most of his staff have their fingers on Lone Star PANICBUTTONs.

Back in his office, Johnson immediately questions the runners about why they are asking about St. John's death. Depending on their answer and how they treat him, Johnson may help the player characters. He knows the yakuza are looking for Lucinda Tangier and that keeping her hidden is dangerous for him, but he also knows that Lucinda needs more help than he alone can give her. If the runners look like they are willing to help Tangier on any level, Johnson will lead them to her. The only other information he has matches what the runners already know.

Johnson does not know that the Whispering Nights yakuza clan have bugged his office with a Rating 3 wireless microphone. If any of the runners conduct an electronic sweep of the



THE WITCHES
CIRCLE

□ = 1 meter
○ = Tables surrounded by 10-12 seats

WITCHES' BREW

room, make an Opposed Success Test pitting the rating of the detection device against the rating of the bug. If the detection device generates more successes, the bug is discovered. If the bug ties or generates more successes than the detection device, the bug remains hidden. If detected, the bug can be deactivated without any real effort.

If the bug remains active, the Whispering Nights quickly send members of the Tigers gang to the Witches' Circle. Because the yakuza routinely station several members of the gang nearby, they arrive in a few moments. They are in position to follow the player characters when they leave the club, and will tail the team to their destination, whether or not Johnson takes them to Lucinda Tangier.

If Johnson does not take the runners to Tangier, they have missed their chance to connect with her, and she does not reappear in the story. The gamemaster can decide her ultimate fate. She could be captured by the yakuza, making her a pawn in any negotiations the runners have if they deal with the Whispering Nights.

LUCKY LUCINDA

If Johnson decides to lead the runners to Tangier, he takes them out the back entrance of the club and down the rear alley. About fifty meters down the alley is an abandoned-looking warehouse that Johnson also owns. Leading the runners inside, he calls out, "Lucinda, I have some people with me I think you should talk to." A few moments later, Lucinda Tangier steps out of the shadows. She is immediately recognizable as the woman from Thark's chip. For her game statistics and description, see p. 57, **Cast of Shadows**.

Lucinda Tangier, born Lucinda Mari Adler, is the daughter of Owen T. Adler, the single-cast plastic furniture magnate of Bellevue. Tired of dealing with people who only liked her because of her money or her father, she took to visiting the Barrens and playing at being a SINless member of society. Soon after she began her forays into the Barrens, she met a down-and-out runner named St. John. Immediately smitten, she began to

spend more and more time with him. Her love was truly blind, and she never noticed St. John's illegal activities.

A short time ago, he became unusually agitated, then began trying to lay low. Tangier found the cloak-and-dagger act "wiz" at first, but quickly grew tired of microwaving snacks and renting simsense chips. Just as she was getting ready to put her foot down, St. John announced that all his problems had been solved and he was back in the biz. He invited Lucinda to dress to impress and come watch him cut a deal. Excited by the prospect of observing a business meeting, just like she used to do with her father, Lucinda did as he asked. She was impressed by the Witches' Circle, but unprepared for the sudden violence. Distraught from the experience, she now seeks revenge for her lover's death, or, at the very least, an understanding of St. John's assassination.

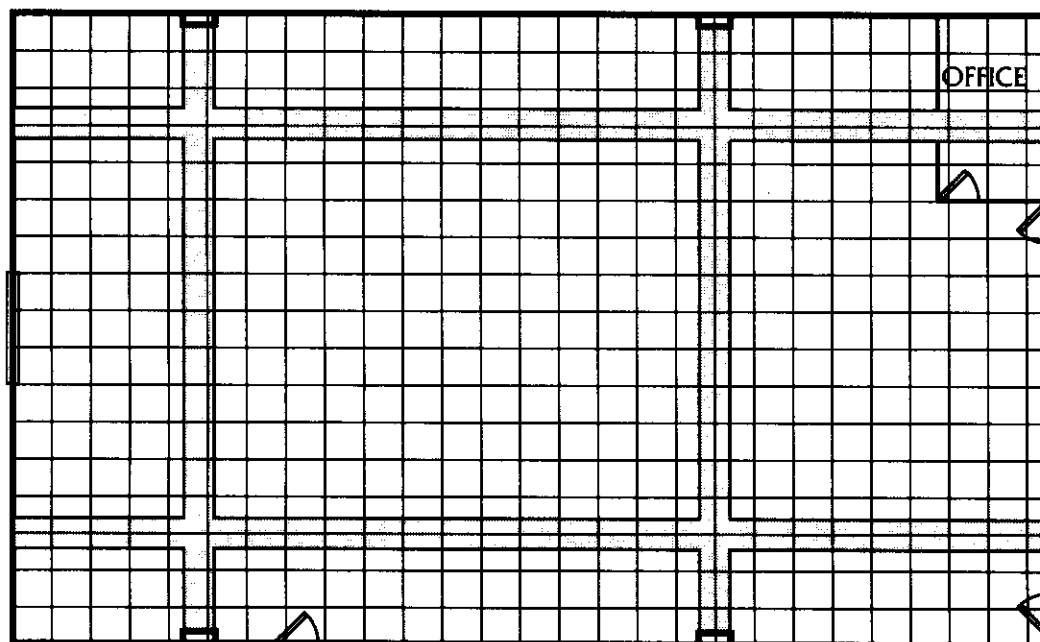
At this point in the adventure, the player characters may or may not know about the reward Adler Plastics is offering for the return of Lucinda Mari Adler or that the yakuza are also looking for her. Tangier refuses to go home, and certainly doesn't want anything to do with the yakuza. Her single-minded purpose is to find out about St. John's death. She will use bribery, coercion, and even force to stop the runners from turning her over to either party. If they insist on trying, she attempts to escape. Simon Johnson will help her.

If properly questioned, Tangier will tell the runners all she knows about St. John and the meet. Following are pertinent pieces of information she can reveal.

- She knows that St. John, prior to his having to "lay low," was dealing with a highly placed elven official connected with the city government. St. John never identified the official or his job. He did reveal that he "did special jobs" for the official.

- The beginning of St. John's "low-profile" period corresponds with the hit on The Jump House. This particular piece of information may be difficult to obtain, as Tangier is unaware of The Jump House hit and will not tie the hit to St. John going into hiding. She says he went to ground about two and a half months ago.

- Just before St. John began to lay low, Lucinda remembers



WAREHOUSE
MAP

- = Catwalk
- = Ladder Access
- = 1 meter

WITCHES' BREW



overhearing a telecom call during which St. John repeatedly said, "I didn't know he was there! How was I supposed to know he was there?"

•A few days ago, when he was arranging the meeting with the yakuza (Tangier did not know they were yakuza until after St. John's death), St. John had told her, "I'm out of my cocoon, squeeze. I'm doing a deal for some secrets, some ancient secrets." (St. John was particularly pleased with that pun.) He never had the chance to tell the yakuza the reason for the meet, and so they have no knowledge of his connection to the Ancients.)

•At the moment the hit occurred, St. John glanced up, and Lucinda thinks that just for a moment, just before the bullets hit, there was a look of recognition in his eyes.

•She caught only a glimpse of the killer, but describes him as "Cold, like someone dead. He didn't care what he was doing. There was only death in his eyes." If questioned about the race of the assassin, she quickly says "human," and even if confronted with photos of the killer (which shake her up) that show obvious superficial elven features, she insists he was human, and repeats "Cold like the dead." (If any of the runners assense her and make a Perception (6) Test, they discover that Lucinda Mari Adler is magically active, though untrained. In that moment of peak emotional stress, she reflexively assensed the killer.)

•The morning after his death, St. John's apartment was ransacked by unknown intruders and then sealed by Lone Star. Tangier is certain that any files St. John may have kept are long gone.

The above information should be extracted from Tangier during the course of conversation, if the player characters ask the right questions. A benevolent gamemaster may lead the questioning somewhat to ensure that certain pieces of information are revealed.

In the meantime, the Tigers are moving in. They attempt to ambush the people in the warehouse, grab Tangier, and take her to the Whispering Nights. (None of the Tigers could overhear any of Tangier's conversation with the runners.) The gamemaster will have to handle the situation based on the defensive measures, if any, the runners used to defend or guard the warehouse while they talked to Tangier. The Tigers will attempt to surround the player characters, and then engage them in hand-to-hand combat.

TIGER LEADER

B	Q	S	C	I	W	M	E	R	Armor
4 (6)	4	4 (6)	2	2	4	6	6	3 (5)	2/1

Initiative: 3 (5) + 2D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 6; Defense (Unarmed) 6; Dodge 4

Skills: Armed Combat 6; Athletics 5; Etiquette (Street) 3; Etiquette (Yakuza) 5; Firearms 6; Interrogation 2; Stealth 6; Throwing Weapons 6; Unarmed Combat 6

Adept Powers: Automatic Successes (Unarmed Combat) 2; Body +2; Killing Hands (Str[M1]); Reaction +1; Strength +2

Gear: Armor Vest (2/1); Browning Max-Power [Heavy Pistol, 8 (clip), 4M4, w/30 rounds of explosive ammo]; 4 Shuriken (3L1); Staff (6M2 Stun, +2 Reach)

CONDITION MONITOR			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MENTAL			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PHYSICAL			
L	M	S	D/UNC

WITCHES' BREW

TIGER GANG MEMBERS (6)

B **Q** **S** **C** **I** **W** **M** **E** **R** **Armor**
 4 5 3 3 3 3 — 6 4 2/1

Initiative: 4 + 2D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 4; Defense (Unarmed) 5; Dodge 5

Skills: Armed Combat 4; Athletics 3; Etiquette (Street) 2; Firearms 3; Stealth 3; Throwing Weapons 3; Unarmed Combat 5

Gear: Armor Vest (2/1); Browning Max-Power [Heavy Pistol, 8 (clip), 4M4, w/12 rounds of explosive ammo]; 4 Shuriken; Staff

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
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The Tigers are not on a death mission. They will fall back if outmatched, attempting to kill any members of their group they are unable to get clear. They have no information, only orders to find Lucinda Tangier and bring her to the lords of the Whispering Nights. They know their punishment for failure will be one hundred lashes in the presence of their master.

If the Tigers capture Tangier, they basically ignore the runners. The runners should be able to figure out that the Tigers work for the yakuza. Reaching that conclusion should give the team a push toward finding the Whispering Nights' base of operations. The location can easily be learned by asking Koren

Thark or by simply asking around in Loveland. If the runners attempt to pick up information on the streets of Loveland, have them make an Etiquette (Street) 4 Test. Go to **Behind the Screens**, p. 27.

If the runners drive the Tigers off, they can deal with Tangier however they wish. Johnson, now frightened for his own life, will not protect her any longer. If the runners also choose not to protect her, she disappears into the night and from the story, unless the gamemaster inserts her into some future encounter. If the runners decide to protect her, the yakuza continue to look for her, unless events suggest a different direction for the adventure. The gamemaster can base his decision on the runners' activities and the outcome of encounters such as those detailed in **Behind the Screens**, p. 27. At six-hour intervals in the story, the gamemaster should roll 2D6. If the result is a 5 or less, the yaks have discovered Tangier's hiding place, and will send a second group of Tigers to capture her, identical to those in this section. The gamemaster continues to make the roll every six hours until she is captured or until events indicate a different direction, again, at the gamemaster's discretion. The gamemaster may use a higher or lower target number based on how well the runners have hidden Tangier.

Once the team has decided what to do with Tangier and dealt with the Tigers, go to **Ancient Words**, **Behind the Screens**, or **Plastic Magnate**, which follow. The direction the adventure takes from here depends on the actions the runners have taken so far.

DEBUGGING

The worst that could go wrong so early in the adventure is that the runners get the snot kicked out of them by the Tigers. Because the Tigers prefer fighting the old-fashioned way, hand to hand, the runners should come out of any fight with nothing worse than a few bruises, though the Tiger leader seems more powerful. If the player characters get no information from Tangier, they may still be able to get the same information from **Legwork**.



ANCIENT WORDS

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Use the following *Tell It To Them Straight* section in conjunction with the section *Getting There*.

This is the time and the place. The streets are quiet, or at least as quiet as they get these days. The sporadic echoes of distant gunfire alternate with the occasional wail of a siren or the rotor chop of a helicopter.

Down the street a large, powerful motorcycle rounds the corner. Its driver, wearing leathers of green and black, stares at you as she brings the bike to a stop. She waits.

You roll forward, and she swings the bike around to lead you. You follow, and a few blocks later more Ancients join into formation with you, and soon, still more. What started as a small, quiet group has become an army of black, green, and steel leading you through the streets of Seattle. Occasionally, two or three bikes break from the pack in pursuit of someone, or something, you did not see.

Eventually, the elven army leads you to the Tacoma waterfront, past warehouses and storage facilities, then through the gates of a dock. The dock is empty, and the woman leads you down the slip.

The army does not follow. It looks as though some members are still present, protecting and defending the area, but most have continued on their way, probably back to their posts elsewhere in Tacoma's streets. The sounds of their engines fade into the distance.

Down the dock ahead of you wait three cycles and their dismounted riders.

BEHIND THE SCENES

SETTING IT UP

A number of paths could lead the runners to a meeting with the Ancients. A few are discussed below, but other possibilities could just as easily arise.

Runner's Contact

One or more of the runners may already have an existing relationship with the Ancients. If so, arranging for an audience with their leadership will be relatively easy. The gamemaster should alter events accordingly. From the time the runners request an audience, a meeting can be arranged in 2D6 divided by 2 hours.

Regardless of any existing relationship the runners have with the Ancients, Green Lucifer is reluctant to discuss his history prior to his joining the Ancients.

Indirect Request

If, during the course of their investigation, the player characters talk with a member of the Ancients concerning recent events, they may be invited to come and speak with the Ancients' leadership. As indicated in *Legwork*, p. 42, this will happen only if the player characters make a successful contact with a member of the gang. From this initial discussion, it will take 1D6 + 4 hours to arrange the meeting.

Direct Request

The runners may attempt to contact the Ancients directly. To have their request for a meet taken seriously, one of the runners must make an Etiquette (Street) (4) Test after making the contact. If that player character is an elf, subtract 1 point from the target number. If the Etiquette Test is successful, a meeting can be arranged in 2D6 + 4 hours, minus the number of successes generated in the Etiquette (Street) Test.

If the runner fails the test, the contacted Ancient will report the contact to the gang. If contact with the Ancients is necessary later in the adventure, the gamemaster can say that the Ancients have been mulling over the runners' request and have finally decided to meet with them.

GETTING THERE

Once contact is made, a meeting time (determined by the method of contact) and place (Highland and Terry, near Lake Union) is set. Assuming the runners make the meet, a lone female Ancients member arrives, as described in *Tell It To Them Straight*, above. She leads the runners through Seattle, gathering more and more Ancients along the way, until the pack arrives at the Tacoma docks. To add more atmosphere to the trip from downtown Seattle to the Tacoma docks, the gamemaster can use the description of the Ancients riding to face the Meat Junkies from the prologue story that opens this adventure.

After escorting the runners to the docks, the Ancients' "army" breaks up, the members returning to their tasks of protecting elven and Ancients concerns elsewhere in the city. A token force remains to protect the dock's access. This force first spots the oncoming Meat Junkie attack and engages them first.

THE MEETING

Waiting on the dock are three Ancients: the gang leader Sting, her second-in-command Green Lucifer, and another highly placed member named Falchion, who recently appeared in a newscast interview. Viper, the woman who met the runners, leads them down the dock and then dismounts along with them. Introductions are made all around.

Green Lucifer leads the discussion. His first question is why the runners requested the meet. The runners must persuade the Ancients that the gang can help stop the violence, and that to one degree or another, both groups are on the same side. Green Lucifer is skeptical and suspicious, but Sting listens to what the runners have to say. The runners should not try to meet with the Ancients until they have learned some relevant information concerning the situation, however.

The gamemaster can play the Ancients' attitudes and reactions based on the information the runners supply. Following is what each of the members present knows and believes.

Sting

Sting believes Elven Fire to be a splinter group of Ancients members who, for some reason, object to the direction the Ancients have taken of late. She believes the opposition began even before she took over leadership from Wasp and that it is related to the Ancients' mercenary activities and the weakening of ties with Tir Tairngire. Sting has attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to rebuild the gang's relationship with the Tir. (She does not know that the cabal of the High Prince's enemies has been feeding him false information about the Ancients' activities. The High Prince is also angry about the gang's mercenary activities and the fact that Green Lucifer rose so quickly to such a high position.)

Sting has made numerous attempts to parley with Elven Fire, but has been unable to contact them. She cannot understand why Elven Fire would declare open warfare against the Ancients. She believes Elven Fire's membership to be exclusively elven, led by two or three known former Ancients, plus many Ancients still hidden within the gang's ranks.

If the runners challenge her theories about Elven Fire, she demands proof of their charges. As the player characters describe events that clearly connect Elven Fire to forces outside the Ancients, Sting becomes increasingly and visibly confused.

Green Lucifer

Green Lucifer suspects what is really going on, but realizes he cannot reveal that knowledge without giving away his own activities. He believes the Ancients' current problems are a result of his presence and activities, but that the Elven Fire faction is unrelated to his plans, having developed spontaneously, though now with backing from the Tir. He does not know that Elven Fire is almost entirely a creation of Shim Bright and his Tir masters.

Green Lucifer was present at The Jump House meeting with Mitchell "Baron" Corbin, leader of the Nova Rich, when St. John and Dumont hit the club. The only two people who were aware of Green Lucifer and Corbin's presence were killed in the attack. (Remember, St. John hosed up. He had no idea Green Lucifer would be at the club, believing it was the site of a meeting of members of the Nova Rich gang.) Green Lucifer and Sting believe that the Jump House attack, which was the first Elven Fire incident, was aimed at Green Lucifer as part of an effort to assassinate the Ancients' leadership. They assume that Elven Fire widened their activities following that botched attempt, in an effort to get the other Seattle gangs to do their dirty work for them.

Green Lucifer also lives with the constant fear that members of Elven Fire somehow know it was he who killed Wasp during the fight with the Meat Junkies. It would be easy to come

to that conclusion; the clue has been there all along. Wasp was killed by a higher-caliber round than the AK-97 used by the Meat Junkies' sniper. Green Lucifer uses a high-caliber Ranger Arms SM-3 sniper rifle. No one bothered to do wound analysis on Wasp, however, assuming that it was a burst from the assault rifle that cut him down. Lone Star certainly does not care.

Green Lucifer will be stunned if the runners present evidence that one of the Elven Fire killers was a human. If he sees the picture of Michael Dumont at the Witches' Circle, he will remember seeing Dumont at The Jump House. Above all it is this information that propels the Ancients into an alliance with the runners.

Viper and Falchion

Both Viper and Falchion are street soldiers. Though they do what they are told within the structure of the Ancients' organization, they are independent thinkers. Falchion's loyalties to Sting and Green Lucifer run deeper than Viper's, who is newer to the gang. Both listen carefully to the arguments presented by the runners and to the replies and counter-arguments presented by Sting and Green Lucifer.

Neither Ancient takes any action at this time, but they remember what was said and may, if the time and situation are right, pass that information on to other members of the gang, especially any part of the exchange that seems to threaten the gang as a whole. The gamemaster can use Viper and Falchion to create political intrigue within the Ancients as a later part of this adventure or in the future.

Viper and Falchion use the same stats as the Ancients Soldier listed below.

Elven Fire

If the runners hint that they know anything at all about Elven Fire, especially if they indicate a belief or suspicion that Elven Fire is a rival power group, either internal or external to the Ancients, the mood changes. Sting begins to cross-examine the player characters about what they know, and Green Lucifer begins to curse violently in Elvish, calling numerous and detailed curses down on Elven Fire.

Assuming the runners play their cards correctly, Sting and Green Lucifer admit to what they know about what is going on. (Green Lucifer, unless pressed with incredibly damning information about his background, sticks to the straight, public story, however.)

Elven Fire is in fact a rival power faction to the Ancients, apparently made up of some former members as well as some still-current members who are keeping their true sentiments a secret. The Ancients know the identity of two or three of Elven Fire's members, but have been unable to locate them. Two and one-half months ago, Elven Fire attempted to kill Green Lucifer at The Jump Room. No one outside of the gang, except for a few now-dead Nova Rich, knew he was there, so the hit had to have been an inside job.

Following their failure, Elven Fire expanded their actions in an effort to get the Ancients' rival gangs to do their dirty work. Sting and Green Lucifer figure that Elven Fire's plan is to destroy the Ancients' organization, then move in, pick up the pieces, and secure new treaties and agreements with the other gangs. The Ancients' leadership consider this scheme to be naive and foolish, for it can only lead to city-wide violence.

ANCIENT WORDS

Elven Fire's recent hit against the yakuza is in some ways a smarter move and in other ways the dumbest move they've made so far. The yaks will definitely come down hard on the Ancients, giving the gang its toughest fight to date. If the yaks win, the Ancients are history, and someone else will walk in and pick up the pieces. The head Seattle yakuza clan, the Dungeness Crabs, may not appreciate that, however, and would likely subject the newcomers to constant harassment. (It was only St. John that Shim Bright sent Michael Dumont to silence. He never intended to involve the yakuza, though at the moment it may not have been such a bad outcome.)

The Ancients fear the climactic gang war that is brewing, and are certainly concerned about the growing threat of the Metroplex Guard. The last thing the Ancients want is a city under martial law, even if martial law creates a temporary halt to inter-gang hostilities. Sting will deal with the runners if their offer of help seems genuine, and especially if they bring the Ancients valuable information. Because of his private concerns, Green Lucifer is less cooperative.

Green Lucifer suggests that the runners continue their investigation, remaining in constant contact with him. (He hopes this arrangement will allow him to intercept any information they turn up about him.) Sting agrees with this plan.

See **Cast of Shadows**, p. 55, for game statistics for Sting and Green Lucifer.

MEAT JUNKIES ATTACK

The Meat Junkies attack near the end of the runners' meeting with Sting and Green Lucifer or at a point where the tone has been set and the negotiations can easily be resumed after the resolution of the fight. The first warning comes when one of the Ancients' guards posted on the upper level yells down into the dock, "MEAT JUNKIES!", followed immediately by the sound of weapons fire.

The Meat Junkies, tipped off by The Ragers, their sometime-allies on the Tacoma docks, (see **Seattle Sourcebook**, p. 74) have come after the Ancients in force, hoping to surprise them at a big meeting or parley. Twenty Meat Junkies show up, fifteen on foot and five on motorcycles. The group is an even mix of humans and orks.

Defending the Ancients are the four gangers in the dry dock, Sting, Green Lucifer (who is not carrying his SM-3), Falchion, and Viper. All have immediate access to the bikes on which they rode in. Seven other Ancients also defend the dock, all mounted; two of them are mages. They are above the dry dock, and meet the Meat Junkie onslaught as best they can.

The runners are there as well, and may assist the Ancients, fight for the Junkies, or make any other move they choose.

Four Meat Junkies, split into two teams of one ork and one human, are operating as LMG teams. The lead Meat Junkie (human in Team A and ork in Team B) has a Gunnery 2. The second Meat Junkie in each team is carrying the box of 300 belt ammunition. The lead Meat Junkies are each carrying a heavy metal shield and firing from behind it. The shield reduces their Quickness by 2, but gives them 5 extra points of Ballistic Armor and 8 extra points of Impact.

The large-scale map at the back of this book shows the placement of the Meat Junkies at the beginning of the attack, as well as the starting defensive positions of the Ancients.

Ancients Soldier (5)

B	Q	S	C	I	W	M	E	R	Armor
4	6	4	3	3	4	—	6	4	4/2

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 6; Defense (Unarmed) 4; Dodge 6

Skills: Armed Combat 6; Athletics 3; Etiquette (Street) 4; Firearms 5; Stealth 3; Throwing Weapons 3; Unarmed Combat 4

Gear: Beretta Model 101T [Light Pistol, 10 (clip), 3M2, w/30 extra rounds]; 2 Flash Grenades, Honda Viking; Lined Coat (4/2); 1 Smoke Grenade; Uzi III [SMG, 16 (clip), 4M3, w/3 extra clips, Laser Sight]

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
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L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

Ancients Mage (2)

B	Q	S	C	I	W	M	E	R	Armor
4	3	2	3	4	5	6	6	3	3/0

Initiative: 3 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Astral (Defense) as skill; Astral (Dodge) 4; Astral (Magic) 6; Defense (Armed) 1; Defense (Unarmed) 2; Dodge 3

Skills: Conjuring 3; Etiquette (Street) 2; Firearms 3; Magic Theory 4; Sorcery 6; Stealth 3; Unarmed Combat 2

Spells: Heal Moderate Wounds 4; Mana Bolt 4; Powerball 6; Stun Missile 3

Gear: Armor Clothing (3/0); Honda Viking; 2 Smoke Grenades; Uzi III [SMG, 16 (clip), 4M3, w/3 extra clips, Laser Sight]

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

ANCIENT WORDS



(Human) Meat Junkie (10)

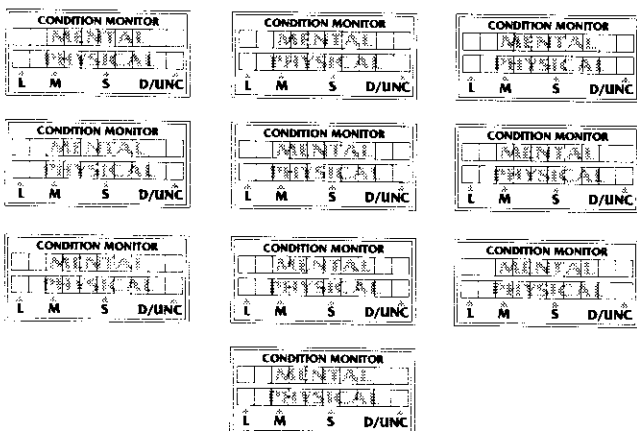
B Q S C I W M E R Armor
3 4 3 2 2 3 — 6 3 2/1

Initiative: 3 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 3; Defense (Unarmed) 4; Dodge 4

Skills: Armed Combat 3; Etiquette (Street) 2; Firearms 3; Unarmed Combat 4

Gear: Armor Vest (2/1); Beretta 101Ts or equivalent [Light Pistol, 10 (clip), 3M2, w/20 extra rounds]; seven have Mossberg CMTs [Shotgun, 5 (magazine), 5M3, w/24 extra rounds]; three have HK227s [SMG, 20 (clip), 5M3, w/40 extra rounds]. Three are riding Harley Scorpions.



(Ork) Meat Junkie (10)

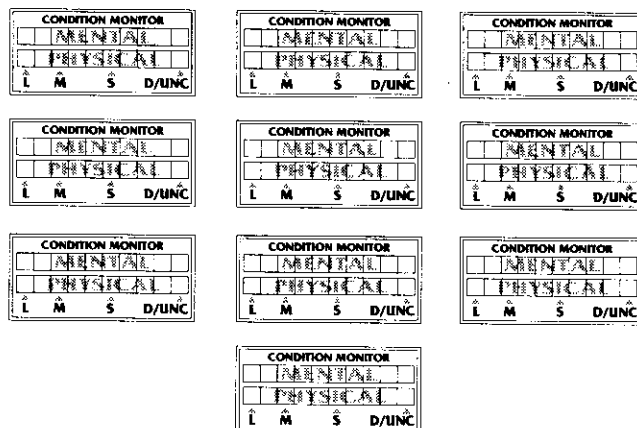
B Q S C I W M E R Armor
6 3 5 2 2 3 — 6 2 2/1

Initiative: 2 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 3; Defense (Unarmed) 3; Dodge 3

Skills: Armed Combat 3; Etiquette (Street) 2; Firearms 3; Unarmed Combat 3

Gear: Armor Vest (2/1); Beretta 101Ts or equivalent [Light Pistol, 10 (clip), 3M2, w/20 extra rounds]; seven have Mossberg CMTs [Shotgun, 5 (magazine), 5M3, w/24 extra rounds]; three have HK227s [SMG, 20 (clip), 5M3, w/40 extra rounds]. Two are riding Harley Scorpions.



USING DMZ

This encounter is well-suited to the quick-and-dirty combat system of **DMZ**, the man-to-man combat board game set in the world of **Shadowrun**. Consult **Integrating DMZ**, p. 58 of this book.

If **DMZ** is not available, reduce the number of combatants involved in this encounter to a manageable level.

DEBUGGING

The runners could hose this part of the adventure if they cannot carry off their dealings with the Ancients with aplomb. The player characters can solve the problem without the Ancients' assistance, but the gang's help will make certain plot elements clearer. The gamemaster can shift the Ancients' attitude toward the runners as more information develops.

Though it is unlikely the Meat Junkies will get the best of the fight because the runners' high-powered presence should tip the balance far in the Ancients' favor, the player characters should be smart enough to withdraw in the unlikely event that does start to happen. Hey, Puget Sound may be polluted, but it sure beats getting your head shot full of lead.

Just to add a little spice to the runners' lives, and to slip a little wedge of fear into their hearts, clearly visible out in the Sound is the UCAS aircraft carrier *Koontz*, arriving from the Pacific Theater of operations. As the carrier moves through Puget Sound, it conducts repeated, heavy-duty air operations off the flight deck. Aircraft of all types—conventional, VTOL, and rotorcraft—are seen launching and landing. Many seem to be ferrying back and forth to Fort Lewis, home of the Metroplex Guard.

BEHIND THE SCREENS

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Use the following *Tell It To Them Straight* section in conjunction with *Getting There* in this section.

Your eyes open wide in surprise.

They lead you into the storefront of a building that's run-down in a way that's typical for almost any other street in Loveland. It's a small cafe full of tables where customers sit eating and drinking, while a single, bustling waitress tries to serve them all at once. Only the waitress, an older Asian woman, glances up as you enter, but only to see if you want a table. One look at your escort is all the answer she needs.

You move through a door, out of the main dining area but not into the kitchen. The hall leads past more doors that you assume open into offices, then comes to a stop before an impressive wooden door. Your guide raps once on the door, and waits. Your practiced eyes pick out at least one camera and associated sensor gear recessed into the ceiling. A moment later the door opens and you walk through—

—into Japan. Beyond the door is a courtyard open to the sky. A red stone path winds through a tranquil rock garden to wooden steps and a porch directly across from where you're standing. The garden is meticulously tended, all the greenery in luxurious full bloom. Long vines hang down almost to head-height from overhead baskets overflowing with delicate purple flowers. Your guide steps aside and indicates that you should cross the courtyard.

On the far side of the garden, a young Japanese man in dark glasses and a suit steps through a sliding door and stands waiting for you.

You cross the courtyard to the young man, who bows once to each of you, obviously expecting you to return the courtesy.

"Welcome," he says.

BEHIND THE SCENES

SETTING IT UP

A number of paths could lead the runners to a meeting with the yakuza. A few are described below, but the meeting could just as easily be arranged in a number of other ways.

Runner's Contact

One or more of the runners may already have an existing relationship with the yakuza. If so, gaining an audience with their leadership may not pose much of a problem, and the gamemaster can alter events accordingly. From the time the request is made, a meeting can be arranged in $2D6$ divided by 2 (round down) hours.

The gamemaster must keep in mind that the Loveland Whispering Nights are but one of the many yakuza clans operating in and around Seattle.

Indirect Request

If, during the course of their investigation, the runners speak with a member of the yakuza concerning recent events, they may be invited to come and speak with the Whispering Nights leadership. As indicated in *Legwork*, p. 42, this will happen only if the player characters make a very successful contact with a member of the Whispering Nights. The Whispering Nights is the only yakuza clan operating the Loveland area. It will take $1D6 + 2$ hours to arrange a meeting following the initial contact.

Direct Request

The player characters could try to contact the Whispering Nights directly. The request will not be taken seriously unless one of the runners makes a successful Etiquette (Street) (4) Test after contacting a member of the clan. If that character has yakuza connections, subtract 1 point from the target number. If the Etiquette Test succeeds, a meeting can be arranged in $2D6 + 4$ hours, minus the number of successes from the Etiquette (Street) Test. (If the player character has Etiquette (Yakuza) Skill, he makes the test against a Target Number 3.)

If the runner fails to make a successful Etiquette Test, the contacted yakuza will report the contact with the runners to the clan. If contact with the Whispering Nights is needed later in the adventure, the gamemaster can easily bring them in by saying that the yakuza have been mulling over the runners' request and have finally decided to meet with them.

GETTING THERE

Once the runners contact the yakuza, a meeting time (as determined by one of the above sections) and place (somewhere near Loveland, gamemaster's discretion) is set. The runners are met by an Asian youth, probably in his mid- or late teens, dressed in jeans, cowboy boots, a western-style shirt, and wearing an old Seattle Supersonics jacket, a current Seahawks baseball-style cap, and fashionable, dark, wraparound sunglasses. He will identify himself only as "Tok." Tok leads the player characters to the Whispering Nights, the Loveland yakuza clan. Read *Tell It To Them Straight*, above, to the runners.

THE MEETING

The young man who awaits the runners on the far side of the courtyard is Mamoru Ino, third son of Toshihiro Ino, *oyabun* of the Whispering Nights clan. He greets the runners cordially, apologizing that only three runners may enter to speak with the *oyabun*. The runners may choose which three. He also invites

the characters entering the house to leave any unnecessary weapons on the porch. (He does not *demand* that the runners disarm, but instead gives them a chance to behave according to a code of etiquette that would apply to the yakuza or to any other similar group in this situation.) This is the first of several tests. The gamemaster notes which weapons are left in the care of the other runners, and which remain hidden on the characters attending the meeting.

Mamoru Ino

B **Q** **S** **C** **I** **W** **M** **E** **R** **Armor**
4 5 4 4 4 4 — 6 4 3/1

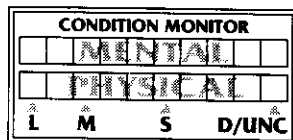
Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 4; Defense (Unarmed) 3; Dodge 5

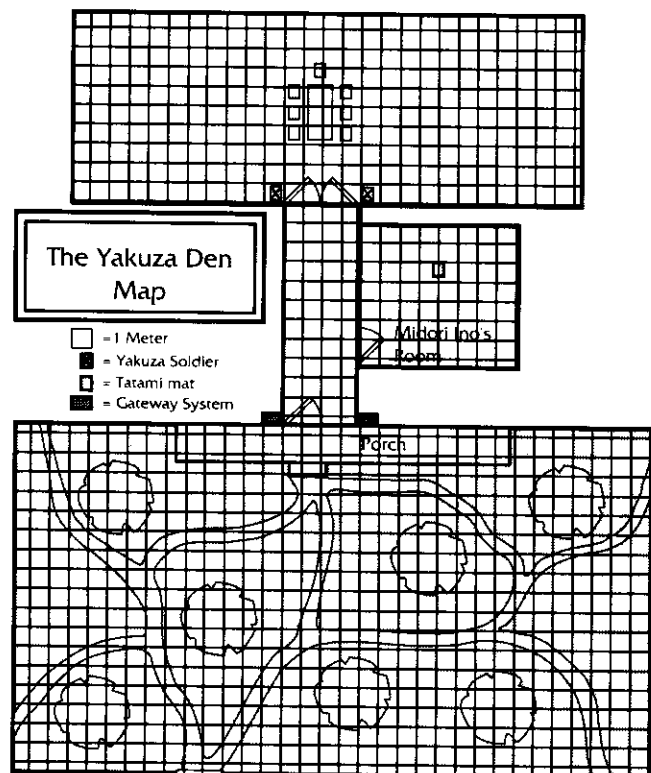
Skills: Armed Combat 4; Etiquette (Street) 2; Etiquette (Yakuza) 4; Firearms 4; Negotiation 3; Unarmed Combat 3

Special Skills: Business Management 3; Economics 3

Gear: Beretta 200ST [Light Pistol, 26 (clip), 3M2, w/2 extra clips, Laser Sight, Single-burst Capable]; Level 2 Form-Fitting Body Armor (3/1)



Once the preliminaries are over, Ino re-enters the house through the rice-paper screen door, removes his shoes, and puts on a pair of slippers from a row of them just inside the door. This is the second test. If any of the player characters attempts to attend the meeting wearing street shoes, Ino asks that they



remove them, according to custom. The yakuza will judge the player characters on how much of a fuss the runners make about removing their shoes, and if Ino even has to ask.

The latticework screens that make up the sides of the hall hide a sophisticated weapon- and cyberware-detection system. It is a Gateway III system, described in the **Shadowrun** adventure **Harlequin**. The rules for the system, slightly expanded, are reprinted here for convenience.

Gateway System III

The Gateway III system can detect both concealed weapons and cyberware. Against weapons, including cyberweapons, the system has a Rating 6. Against cyberware, it has a Rating 3. To detect a weapon, the gamemaster rolls six dice against the Concealment Rating of the weapon. Concealment Ratings appear in the equipment table at the back of the **Street Samurai Catalog** for players who do not already have the values listed on their character record sheets.

To calculate the "concealability" of cyberware, subtract the Essence Cost from 6, round up, and double the number. The result is the Concealability Rating of the cyberware, with the exception of cyberweapons, for which the result is not doubled. For heavily biotech-based cyberware such as Muscle Replacement, Boosted Reflexes, and Retinal Duplication, the results are **tripled** instead of doubled. True bioware is not detectable by Gateway or any other current non-intrusive system.

The number of successes generated in the Detection Test determines how much information the Gateway system reveals about an item.

Successes	Result
0	Item is not detected.
1	Item is detected only as a "positive" result that does not reveal its classification.
2	The item's classification is known, but not its type (for example, Heavy Pistol, but not Ares Predator).
3	The type of item is known, but no further details are revealed (for example, Ares Predator II, Redstone Survival Knife, Thermographic Vision System).
4+	The scan reveals everything but the item's serial number (for example, number of bullets in the chamber, presence of smartgun link, notches in knife's hilt).

The yakuza monitoring the Gateway system passes the results of the scan to those in the meeting room. The gamemaster should make a note of the cyberware present, but he will not use that knowledge unless a cyberweapon's presence was not discovered. If the runners are still carrying concealed weapons, the yakuza may accuse the runners of disrespect.

Ino leads the runners down the hall. Halfway to the meeting room, they pass an open door screen. Sitting on a *tatami* mat inside the otherwise bare room is a young Japanese woman, Midori Ino, the *oyabun's* only daughter. She is wearing a traditional gown with modern styling in the current fashion, and is listening to a recording of traditional Japanese music on an

expensive pocket chip-player that sits at her left knee. The opaque coloring of her eyes indicates that she is blind. Unless the runners speak to her or make a move in her direction, she continues to stare at the wall in front of her as they pass.

Midori Ino

B **Q** **S** **C** **I** **W** **M** **E** **R** **Armor**
2 5 2 5 5 5 9 6 5 2/0

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Astral Defense (as skill); Astral (Dodge) 5; Astral (Magic) 10; Defense (Armed) 3; Defense (Unarmed) 4; Dodge 5; Magic 10

Skills: Armed Combat 3; Conjuring 6; Etiquette (Street) 1; Etiquette (Yakuza) 5; Firearms 2; Magic Theory 5; Negotiation 4; Sorcery 7; Unarmed Combat 4

Spells: Entertainment 3; Fire Bolt 5; Heal M Wound 3; Influence 9; Mana Bolt 6; Oxygenate 4; Personal Anti-Bullet Barrier 5; Personal Anti-Spell Barrier 6; Personal Clairvoyance, No Range 3; Personal Combat Sense 3; Personal Detect Enemies (Extended); Power Missile 7; Stabilize 4; Stun Touch 9

Level of Initiation: 3 (Way of the Whispering Nights)

Special Skills: Popular Dance 5; Ritual Dance 6 (Centering Skill)

Gear: Level 1 Form-Fitting Body Armor (2/0); Knife (1L1); Power Focus 3

CONDITION MONITOR				
MENTAL				
PHYSICAL				
L	M	S	D/UNC	

Though blind, Midori Ino is a powerful mage schooled in the Japanese arts. She is assensing the runners astrally as they walk by, as any runner could discover by assensing her. If any of the runners do commit the faux pas of pausing to assense Midori, her astral form gives the runner a sly grin and shakes its head. She is not blind in astral space and is obviously using a number of spells currently. The runners cannot tell, however, that those spells are Personal Clairvoyance, No Range, to replace her eyesight, and a custom-designed Mind Speech spell she is using to inform her father of the assensing results.

As the runners reach the end of the hallway, a set of double-sliding screens open to reveal the meeting room beyond. In the room are the *oyabun*, Toshihiro Ino, his first lieutenant, Willy Chen, his first son, Hoshiro (who shares equal power with Chen), two yakuza soldiers, and Robert Ejima, warlord of the Tigers of the Neon Jungle.

Toshihiro Ino

B **Q** **S** **C** **I** **W** **M** **E** **R** **Armor**
2 3 3 5 6 5 — 6 4 3/1

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 4; Defense (Unarmed) 4; Dodge 3

Skills: Armed Combat 4; Etiquette (Street) 5; Etiquette (Yakuza) 8; Firearms 5; Leadership 5; Negotiation 5; Unarmed Combat 4

Special Skills: Business Management 6; Economics 5

Gear: Level 2 Form-Fitting Body Armor (3/1)

CONDITION MONITOR				
MENTAL				
PHYSICAL				
L	M	S	D/UNC	



BEHIND THE SCREENS

Willy Chen

B Q S C I W M E R Armor
2 2 2 4 6 4 — 6 4 3/1

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 4; Defense (Unarmed) 3; Dodge 5

Skills: Armed Combat 3; Etiquette (Street) 6; Etiquette (Yakuza) 6; Firearms 2; Negotiation 6; Unarmed Combat 6

Gear: Level 2 Form-Fitting Body Armor (3/1)

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

Hoshiro Ino

B Q S C I W M E R Armor
5 4 4 3 4 5 — 6 4 3/1

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 3; Defense (Unarmed) 3; Dodge 4

Skills: Armed Combat 3; Etiquette (Street) 3; Etiquette (Yakuza) 4; Firearms 3; Negotiation 4; Unarmed Combat 3

Special Skills: Business Management 2; Economics 4

Gear: Beretta 200ST [Light Pistol, 26 (clip), 3M2, w/2 extra clips, Laser Sight, Single-burst Capable]; Level 2 Form-Fitting Body Armor (3/1)

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

Yakuza Soldiers (2)

B Q S C I W M E R Armor
5 5 4 3 3 4 — 3.2 4 (6) 4/1

Initiative: 4 (6) + 3D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 6; Defense (Unarmed) 7; Dodge 5

Skills: Armed Combat 6; Athletics 3; Etiquette (Street) 3; Etiquette (Yakuza) 3; Firearms 7; Stealth 5; Unarmed Combat 7

Cyberware: Boosted Reflexes 3 (-2 Reaction, + 2D6 Initiative)

Gear: Ceska Black Scorpion [Light MP, 25 (clip), 3M4 (explosive ammo), w/two extra clips]; Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, 16 (clip), 6M4 (Firepower™ explosive ammo), w/two extra clips, Laser Sight]; Level 3 Form-Fitting Body Armor (4/1)

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

Robert Ejima

B Q S C I W M E R Armor
4 (8) 4 4 (7) 2 2 4 11 6 3 (7) 2/1

Initiative: 3 (7) + 3D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 6; Defense (Unarmed) 6; Dodge 4

Skills: Armed Combat 8; Athletics 5; Etiquette (Street) 5; Etiquette (Yakuza) 7; Firearms 6; Interrogation 5; Stealth 6; Throwing Weapons 6; Unarmed Combat 9

Adept Powers: Automatic Successes (Unarmed Combat) 2; Body +4; Killing Hands (Str[S1]); Reaction +2; Strength +3

Level of Initiation: 5 (Tigers of the Neon Jungle)

Gear: Armor Vest (2/1); Browning Max-Power [Heavy Pistol, 30 (clip), 4M4, with 30 rounds of explosive ammo]

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

The room's furnishings are traditional Japanese, with floor mats adjacent to low tables. Ino will indicate where the runners should sit, escort them to their places, then sit next to his older brother, two seats away from his father on the right-hand side of the table. Chen and Ejima are seated at the *oyabun*'s left. The two soldiers stand near the door.

When the runners are comfortably seated, Hoshiro signals for the serving of tea. During tea, the yakuza and the runners speak cordially for an hour about everything under the sun except the matter at hand. The Japanese consider it improper to rush headlong into business matters. Such discussions can wait until all the participants are properly relaxed and refreshed. Any attempts by the player characters to push the conversation into business means they fail their third test.

The gamemaster will judge how the runners perform in each test, and use the results to determine the yakuza's attitude, respectful or condescending, toward the player characters.

Yakuza Attitudes

The yakuza know very little about the current gang situation, beyond the fact that a gunman wearing Ancients colors killed six of their men and the shadowrunner with whom they were meeting at the Witches' Circle. Hoshiro Ino has been urging swift and just retribution against the Ancients, while Willy Chen argues that current city-wide events and the uncharacteristic nature of the attack call for further study. Ejima has volunteered to bring the *oyabun* Sting's head in a basket, but Ino has politely declined, for now. Mamoru and Midori have no say in the matter. The *oyabun* has also been receiving pressure from Kim Marsau, *oyabun* of the Marsau Clan, Puyallup's senior and most powerful yakuza group, and from Hanzo Shotozumi, *oyabun* of Seattle's Dungeness Crab clan. Those organizations are not asking for a blood bath, but want the Whispering Nights to resolve the matter and restore the face lost at the Witches' Circle.

This is the atmosphere that prompted the yakuza to meet with the runners. Ino is willing to listen to them, as long as they show respect for his position. Any intentional or unintentional show of disrespect, however subtle, creates a sudden and dramatic increase of tension in the room (much to Ejima's delight.) A second show of disrespect ends the meeting, and the runners are shown the door under the fierce glare of Mamoru and the two yak soldiers.



Robert Ejima may already hold a grudge against the runners because of conflicts the runners may have had with Tiger gang members, especially for any situation involving Lucinda Tangier. (See **Witches' Brew**, p. 19, for more information.) The *oyabun* will be displeased by any conflict between the player characters and the Tigers, but does not make an issue of it. Privately, he is glad to see the Tigers taught humility, even if by *ronin* shadowrunners. Ejima is obviously and possibly vocally upset by any conflict between the groups, and may provoke the *oyabun* to reprimand him for making too many derogatory comments to the runners.

Information relevant to the matter piques the interest of the *oyabun*. If the runners try to be cagey, receiving information without giving any in return, the meeting ends quickly. If they are willing to reveal information that sheds doubt on the "elvenness" of the Witches' Circle assassin, further information regarding Michael Dumont, word of the Ancients' schism, and even information about St. John's activities prior to his death, the *oyabun* is interested.

The yakuza are aware of a connection between St. John and a mercenary named Mike Dumont. They know nothing of Dumont beyond his name, but understand that prior to his approaching the yakuza for work, St. John fell out with Dumont, his former partner/associate. The yakuza attempted to track Dumont, hoping to find out more about St. John, but were unable to find him. They can place the time of the rift between the two men to approximately two and a half months ago (the time of The Jump House hit).

If the *oyabun* considers the evidence presented sufficient, he postpones yakuza retribution for 48 hours to avoid hurting the wrong parties. The delay angers Ejima, and Hoshiro expresses concern that it will give the Ancients time to marshal their defenses. The *oyabun* listens to their objections, but still remains with his decision to give the runners 48 hours to prove

that the Ancients are not to blame for the deaths of the Whispering Nights' soldiers.

The yakuza are also interested in the whereabouts of Lucinda Tangier, but simply for information. If they have already captured her, she is seated quietly in a corner of the room. The Whispering Nights do not need her, but do not know whether the runners want her. They are aware of Owen T. Adler's "finders fee," but consider the money negligible, though *nuyen* is *nuyen*. Lucinda Mari can be used as a negotiating point if needed.

The cooperation of the yakuza depends entirely on the attitudes of the runners. *Oyabun* Ino is suspicious enough of the events surrounding the Witches' Circle deaths to listen to alternative explanations, but if those explanations are presented by wise-mouth, disrespectful punks...

DEBUGGING

What should happen if the runners manage to so insult the yakuza that their deaths seem required? Gamemasters may wish to be lenient. *Oyabun* Ino is not a stupid man, and he understands that these shadowrunners are honorless, worthless beasts who would not know respect if it was tattooed on their foreheads. Nevertheless, he is willing to listen, because what the runners have to say may have value. If the team shows disrespect, have the meeting end on an abrupt, tense note, then let the runners know they are on the yakuza's *drek* list, there to remain until they redeem themselves (perhaps by proving the Ancients were not responsible for the Witches' Circle hit).

The **Shadowrun** game system is geared to player-character dominance, which is why it might not be the best to have the runners simply taken out back and beaten senseless, even though it may be what they deserve. Long-term penalties, in this case, work best.

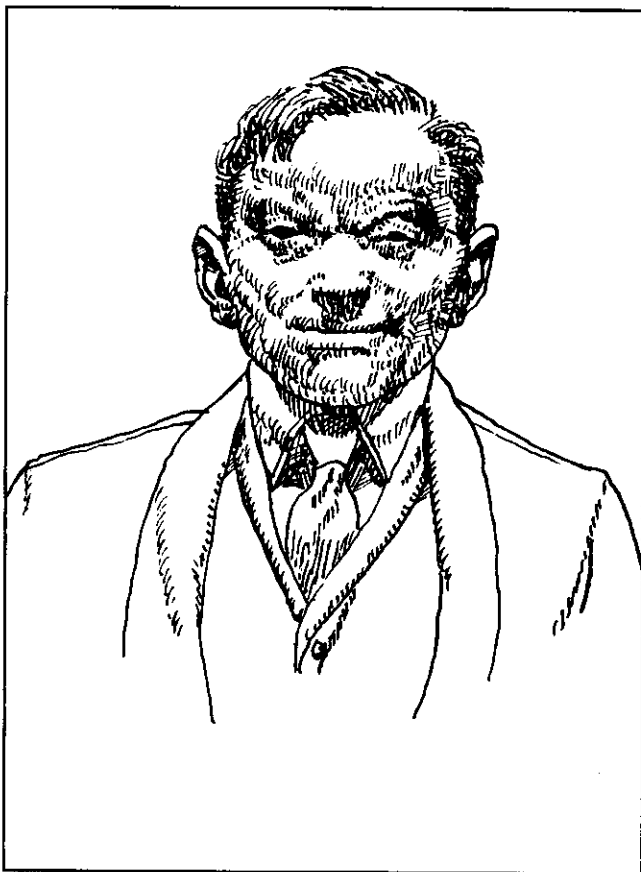
PLASTIC MAGNATE

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The receptionist looks as plastic as her chair, but she seems cordial enough, buzzing you right upstairs despite your scruffy appearance. Your ears pop as the elevator rushes up some seventy-odd floors to the top of the Adler Plastic Tower in Bellevue. The doors open, and a mountain of human flesh greets you. Almost three meters tall, and maybe half as wide, it smiles at you and says, "Moose."

Then, he (you think) turns and waves you into the hall as he adjusts the cuffs of his obviously custom-tailored silk suit. You advance down the white marble corridor, with "Moose" taking up the rear. Glancing back at him, you see he is still grinning.

Ahead of you, a harried-looking secretary rushes from her desk and opens the giant rosewood doors at the end of the corridor. "Mr. Adler will see you now," she says, pushing the doors open with one hand and her glasses back up the bridge of her nose with the other. "Thank you, Eleanor," rumbles the walking mountain behind you.



Beyond the doors is a huge corner office with a view of a small building and Puget Sound. Three things catch your eye in the stark white marble office. The first is the large, multi-system workout apparatus in one corner. The second is the huge smoked acrylic desk and the three plush plastic chairs that face it. The third is the dwarf...no, he's human, just short, coming around the desk to greet you, hand and arm outstretched.

"I'm Owen T. Adler," he booms in a voice twice as large as his body. "I understand you're gonna find my baby?"

BEHIND THE SCENES

Anyone expecting this to be a serious scene should leave now. In fact, this scene has no real purpose except to present an alternative means of cash flow in the form of the reward for locating Adler's daughter, Lucinda Mari. The reward is 50,000¥, certified, if Lucinda Mari is deposited on Daddy's doorstep. The reward is only 25,000¥ certified if the informants only produce her location. (Of course, Lucinda will object strenuously to either option.)

If the runners go to Adler directly from **Witches' Circle**, after discovering Tangier's real identity, they can get in to see Adler without any help. If they used **Legwork** to get to Adler, then they call a Mr. Johnson who sighs and tells them to go see Owen T. Adler. (None of this silly middle-man stuff for Owen T. Adler.)

Adler has absolutely no grasp of anything other than managing North America's number one supplier of single-cast plastic furniture. (For those who don't know, single-cast plastic furniture is cast in a single mold, intact, and not assembled from multiple pieces.) He will insist on hearing everything the runners have learned about his daughter, that pile of filth she's been hanging around with (Adler doesn't care about, or even acknowledge, St. John's death), and this gang-war thing that's been going on. If the runners really try to explain the intricacies of the situation, he gets confused.

If needed, use the Corporate Official Contact from page 107 of **Sprawl Sites** for Adler. Give "Moose" whatever stats he needs to be an effective foil. He's not a real character, just a bit player. He's inhumanly big, impossibly strong, but not, as you might think, incredibly stupid. He can, in fact, recite Milton's *Paradise Lost* in twelve languages. Go ahead, ask him.

DEBUGGING

Well, Moose may break all the runners in half. Oh, well.

If the gamemaster needs some inspiration for Moose, it might help to think of Owen T. Adler as an unholy merger of Danny DeVito and the character of Nathan Arizona, Sr. from the motion picture *Raising Arizona*. It's just a thought.)



TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

This is the place all right. You compare the weather-faded numbers on the building with the jotted note in your hand. You glance once up and down the litter-strewn street and see nothing unusual; just another night in the Bargain Basement, Redmond Barrrens. You look once more at the police tape cordoning off the area where, you understand, less than four hours ago, a few members of the Crimson Crush got geeked. The giant stains of ork blood overflow the taped area.

You approach the building, a multi-story tenement probably half-occupied by squatters. It's hard to tell. The building seems to have power, though, which is a good sign.

You enter the building and discover that the elevators haven't worked for a long time. You're not surprised. You begin the climb to the 17th floor.

You reach 17 and make your way through the debris-littered hallway toward apartment 17J. Ahead of you, an elven child bounces a ball against the wall opposite the doorway where he stands. Seeing you, he stops. A friendly grin begins to spread across his face, but then he's yanked back into the room by a woman, his mother, you guess, who doesn't like the looks of you. The door slams and you hear the sounds of multiple locks.

Somewhere, someone on the trideo laughs. Somewhere else a woman cries.

You reach 17J and push the half-ajar door completely open, discovering a single room, barely furnished except for a small trideo set tuned to the cable game show "Death or Taxes." Near it, half-facing you, sits a figure wrapped in an old blanket. He looks up as you enter.

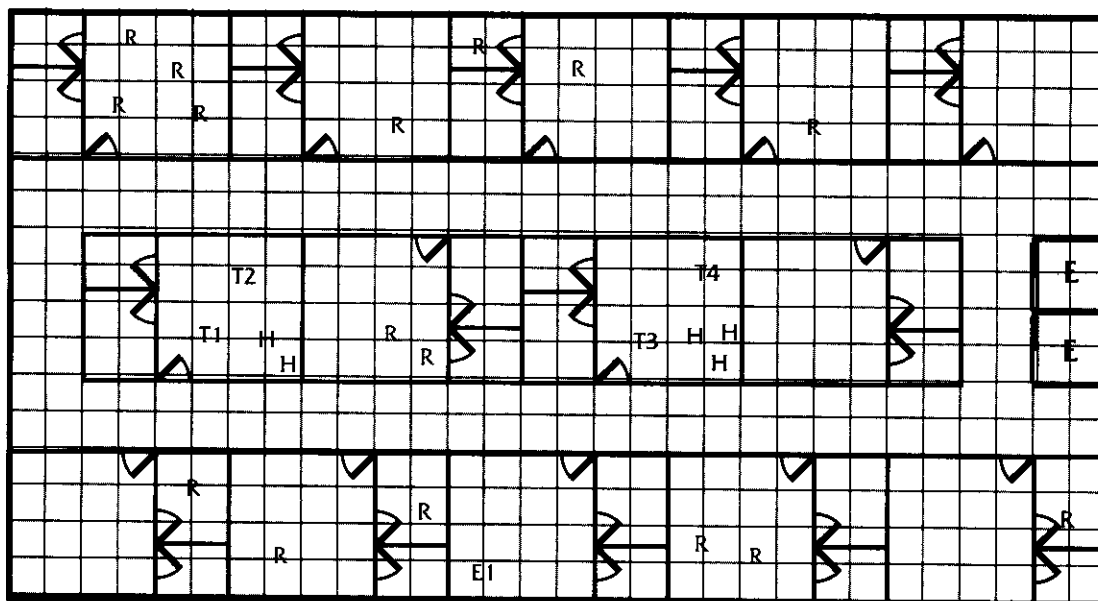
"I understand you're looking for Elven Fire," the man says. "You've found it."

The submachine gun under his blanket speaks volumes.

BEHIND THE SCENES

When Shim Bright panics, he feeds Koren Thark the false information that a former member of the Ancients, a ganger known as Half-Ace, might know something about Elven Fire. Half-Ace was one of the original Ancients and one of Wasp's most trusted aides until harsh words with Wasp and a losing fight with a semitrailer truck forced him out of the gang. Half-Ace lost both his legs to the truck, and had no luck with replacements because his body rejected everything he tried.

That much is true. What Bright doesn't tell Thark is that Half-Ace is dead, an early victim of Bright's attempts to learn secret,



□ = 1 meter

T = Thug
R = Resident
H = Hostage
E = Elevator

THE AMBUSH
TENEMENT

INTERDICTION

privileged information about the Ancients. Bright also tells Thark that he remembers Half-Ace once bragging that he knew something about Wasp that nobody—including those in the Tir—would want known. Half-Ace's raving may contain some truth; after all, he did have a falling out. According to Bright's "records," Half-Ace is currently living in a tenement in the Bargain Basement section of Redmond, and Bright can provide the address.

If the runners check this information, they find nothing to contradict Bright's statement, mainly because word has not really gotten around about Half-Ace's demise.

Six ambushers are waiting for the runners (and Thark, if he's with them) in the tenement. Two are "Elven Fire" Ancients, one of them a mage, and the other four are common street thugs dressed to look like Ancients.

Ancients Soldier (2)

B	Q	S	C	I	W	M	E	R	Armor
4	6	4	3	3	4	—	6	4	4/2

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 6; Defense (Unarmed) 4; Dodge 6

Skills: Armed Combat 6; Athletics 3; Etiquette (Street) 4; Firearms 5; Stealth 3; Throwing Weapons 3; Unarmed Combat 4

Gear: Beretta Model 101T [Light Pistol, 10 (clip), 3M2, w/30 extra rounds]; 2 Flash Grenades, Lined Coat (4/2); 1 Smoke Grenade; Uzi III [SMG, 16 (clip), 4M3, w/3 extra clips, Laser Sight]

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC		L	M	S	D/UNC	

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC		L	M	S	D/UNC	

Ancients Mage

B	Q	S	C	I	W	M	E	R	Armor
4	3	2	3	4	5	6	6	3	5/3

Initiative: 3 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Astral (Defense) as skill; Astral (Dodge) 4; Astral (Magic) 9; Defense (Armed) 3; Defense (Unarmed) 3; Dodge 3

Skills: Armed Combat 3; Conjuring 6; Etiquette (Street) 3; Firearms 3; Magic Theory 4; Sorcery 7; Stealth 3; Unarmed Combat 3

Spells: Armor 4; Clairvoyance 4; Heal Moderate Wounds 4; Mana Bolt 4; Powerball 6; Stun Missile 5

Gear: Armor Jacket (5/3); Honda Viking Motorcycle; Power Focus (2); 2 Smoke Grenades; Uzi III [SMG, 16 (clip), 4M3, w/3 extra clips, Laser Sight]; Weapon Focus (2)

Spirits: 1 Fire Elemental (Force 5); 1 Air Elemental (Force 5); 1 Watcher (Force 3)

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC		L	M	S	D/UNC	

Elven Street Thug (4)

B	Q	S	C	I	W	M	E	R	Armor
5	6	4	3	3	3	—	5.7	4	2/1

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 4; Defense (Unarmed) 5; Dodge 5

Skills: Armed Combat 5; Etiquette (Street) 4; Firearms 3; Stealth 3; Throwing Weapons 3; Unarmed Combat 5

Cyberware: Hand Razors (2L2); Low-Light Eyes

Gear: Armor Vest (2/1); two have AK-97s [SMG, 22 (clip), 4M3, w/2 extra clips] and two have Enfield AS7s [Shotgun, 10 (clip), 4M5, w/20 extra rounds exploding ammo (these are slug rounds, no spread)]

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC		L	M	S	D/UNC	

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC		L	M	S	D/UNC	

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC		L	M	S	D/UNC	

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC		L	M	S	D/UNC	

Michael Dumont is not involved in the ambush.

The character waiting in the apartment is one of the "Elven Fire" Ancients. The rest of the ambushers, with the exception of the mage, are in the nearby apartments, either by themselves or with residents they are holding hostage. Before the runners arrive the ambushers were warned that the location might be scouted astrally, and were instructed to create an environment that seems as natural as possible. The ambushers will sit playing cards, wear robes or wrap themselves in blankets, sit in bed under the covers, and so on, so that any casual astral scout will see what he or she expects to see. Some of the nearby apartments contain families who have been warned to sit still and remain quiet. They obey, but they are agitated, and an astral scout might notice this. However, almost everyone in the tenement is jittery because of the hours-old gang killings out front. This is part of Bright's plan to emotionally charge the residents of the area to conceal the presence of his gunmen.

When the gunman in the apartment designated E1 (for Elf 1) on the map opens fire, the others burst from their positions and attack. The mage is hidden across the street waiting for the others to start shooting. On that signal, he launches across the street in astral form to the apartment, flanked by his pair of elementals, a Force 5 Fire Elemental and a Force 5 Air Elemental, leaving his "guard dog" Force 3 Watcher to protect his body. The mage attacks only from astral space, hitting spell locks, foci, and spirits where possible. His two attack elementals manifest and attack physically.

Should things go poorly, the thugs, indicated by T1 through T4 on the map, take hostages. The Ancients soldier does not. Use the Pedestrian (Elven), p. 116, **Sprawl Sites**, for any hostages.

The ambushing team's goal is not to capture or threaten the runners, but to kill them.



THE AFTERMATH

Spirits willing, the runners live.

When the battle is over, several items of note may come to light. Hopefully, the runners realize they have been set up. The runners can talk to the surviving tenants and learn that four months ago, just before Half-Ace (whom they knew as Nick) disappeared, a very snazzily dressed elf driving a Westwind with a rude, talking alarm came to visit. The two had an argument, then the well-dressed elf left in a huff. Two days later Half-Ace vanished. A few hours ago, the current tenants of Half-Ace's old apartment were roused and relocated to other apartments, and the ambushers moved in.

If interrogated, the thugs know next to nothing. They were hired, dressed in dumb clothes, and told to take out whatever drek showed up at the apartment. That is all they know. They were hired by Elf 1, an Ancients soldier by the name of Vandal. If both the Ancients are killed, then one of the surviving thugs has been to the bottling factory where Dumont is hiding, and reports seeing a "burly elf" there. He recognizes Dumont's picture.

Vandal and Tirade, the mage, both know Bright, though not by that name. To them, he is known as "Rook." The only place they have ever met Rook is at the closed Renton soft drink bottling plant. Under interrogation, Vandal and Tirade reveal that Rook's plan was to take down Sting and Green Lucifer for polluting the Ancients by diversifying, then replace the Ancients with a new gang under his own leadership. They do not know what the new gang will be called, but know that it will not be Elven Fire. Elven Fire is simply a front for the hits Bright ordered to provoke trouble for the Ancients. They do not know, though Dumont does, that Bright's activities are supported by the Tir.

Vandal and Tirade also admit to having met and assisted Michael Dumont in a number of Elven Fire attacks. They are frightened of Dumont, and believe the cyberware and other implants in his body have thrown off his neurochemistry and induced schizophrenia. Dumont has gotten worse recently. They tell the runners that St. John was supposed to be the only target at the Witches' Circle, but Dumont killed the yaks because he saw them as "the common foe." They tell the runners that Dumont uses that phrase often, but they do not know what he means. See **Maze Mind**, p. 36, for more information.

They can also confirm that "Rook" drives a '51 Eurocar Westwind.

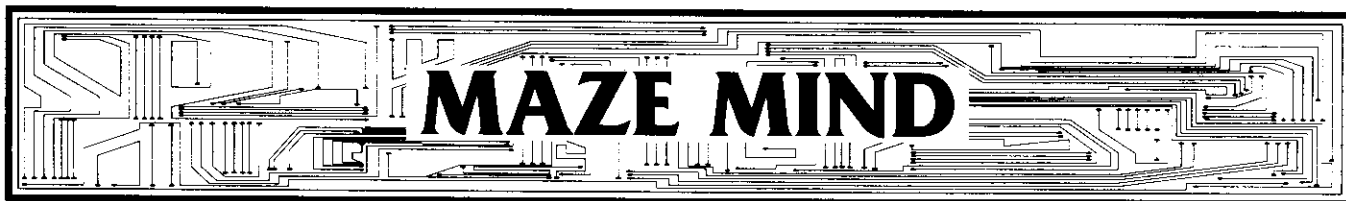
If Thark is present at the ambush, he realizes that Bright is not on the level. The runners also suspect Bright. This realization stuns him. If the runners go directly to the bottling plant, Thark remains behind until he can steel himself to go after Bright. See **Bright Shining Lies**, p. 38, for more information.

At this point, the runners can do more legwork if they choose (see **Legwork**), go after Dumont at the bottling factory (see **Maze Mind**), or go for Bright (see **Bright Shining Lies**.)

DEBUGGING

The gamemaster should keep a careful eye on this combat, as it could prove deadly to the runners. He may have to manipulate the numbers to ensure a satisfactory conclusion.

If none of the ambushers survive, the gamemaster should plant a clue on one of the bodies, preferably one of the Ancients, that leads to the bottling plant. This could be a pocket full of out-of-date bottle caps or something similar.



TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The building is enormous, and seems to have been closed for many months. There is no fence, in fact, no security at all to speak of. With nothing to prevent you from approaching the building, you do.

A quick check of the building's perimeter tells you that none of the doors are locked, though all are closed and most show signs of recent use. You suspect that it doesn't matter which door you choose to enter; what you seek is waiting deep within.

Inside, the building is a maze of machinery. Some of it, nearly two stories tall, seems grossly out of proportion to its function. You wonder just how large a machine must be to pour carbonated syrup into a plastic container.

Something moves. A rat leaps from machine to machine, splashing through the water where it streams down from the ceiling. The exterior drains have obviously failed; water has accumulated on the roof and finally broken through. Now it pours down everywhere from high above, running off the many levels of catwalks to wash over the machinery below. The air smells of rust.

You look around, but can find no floor plan or source of power. There is only what little light seeps in, the water, the rats, the maze of machinery, and what waits beyond...

If the building is scouted astrally, read the following:

The building is dark and astrally dormant, a maze of dark, impassive machinery. Things live here, small things that scuttle and scurry. The metal impedes you, making it difficult to scout properly. Even your astral eyes have difficulty making out the twists and turns of the equipment.

You soar to the ceiling and look down on the maze. Even from that vantage point, it is difficult to see; the many levels of catwalks block your sight. But you can see that there is something down there. Something alive and waiting.

You sense no magic.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The production and bottling plant is a virtual maze. No clear path runs from any one point to any other. Crosswalks and catwalks cut everywhere, sometimes even through and between the machinery. In an effort to minimize costs and maximize space, the builder created a hell that mimics Michael Dumont's mind.

No map of the plant is provided with this adventure. It is an archetypal place, a dark maze, an underworld that must be traveled to reach the journey's end. The soaring ceiling seems higher than it is, the darkness of the hidden places deeper than it should, and the ubiquitously dripping water cold and biting.

Throughout the plant, the runners encounter fragments of Michael Dumont's mind. Scrawled in seemingly random places are phrases and snatches of thought: Have I been born yet?...Heart-Night...Question the subject. Rook is my angel...My soul defiled...Cancer of the mind...Every child cries...Rook says kill.

In other places are colored chalk sketches that have run and faded in the water. A few are still clearly visible and horrifying.

One is a small sketch, stunningly executed, of a woman in a wedding dress. The face has been smeared away.

Another is a drawing of a standing man. Maybe Dumont? Water pours outward from his ears, his mouth, and the holes that were his eyes.

Still another is a towering image. A divine figure, an angel wreathed in flame, reaches down from heaven and holds an infant's head under the water. The infant struggles. (Though the runners do not know it yet, the angel's face is Shim Bright's.)

The gamemaster should feel free to add other words, phrases, or images to the above list for the runners to find as they search for Dumont.

The runners can advance through the machinery as one unit or else divide into separate teams. They can only move through the building two ways; on the ground or across the catwalks. The player characters' path will probably make no difference, but they should state which path they will travel.

The gamemaster should lead the characters through the machine maze for several minutes, building as much atmosphere as possible. The players then make Perception (5) Tests for their characters. The character with the highest number of successes spots a booby trap just as it goes off. It does not matter where the character is or if the character is with a group. Each character in the group then makes a Reaction (4) Test, including the character who generated the most successes on the Perception Test. All members of the group are subjected to an explosion of 6M2 intensity, but may subtract the result of their Reaction Test from the Power of the blast before making their Damage Resistance Tests.

The runners continue to advance, though a bit more slowly and carefully. After they have walked for a short while longer, all players make another Perception (5) Test. This time, the character with the least number of successes trips the trap. All characters who tie for the honor of the lowest number of successes trip a trap. Those nearest the booby trap must make a Reaction (4) Test. This blast is also 6M2, but successes from the Reaction Test reduce the Power of the blast.

This time, as the runners pick themselves up, Dumont attacks. He strikes at the largest group of runners from a position somewhere nearby in the machine maze, opening fire with an assault rifle. He fires at as many targets as possible. To determine if his ambush is successful, make a Perception (5) Test for each runner. Roll normally for Initiative. The result of the Perception Test is the maximum number of Actions that character may take

that turn. If any Actions are lost, they are lost from the beginning of the turn. For example, if a character generated two successes, but the Initiative gave the character Actions on segments 28, 21, 14, and 7, the character can only take the Actions on 14 and 7. He has lost the Actions available earliest in the turn. Dumont makes all his Actions normally.

A cat and mouse game between Dumont and the runners ensues. He expends his first Action firing on them, then ducks away into the maze. The runners can chase him or else wait until he returns and suffer the surprise attack all over again.

If the player characters choose to chase Dumont, use the following system.

Make Opposed Tests for each character who chases Dumont as that character declares his or her intention to go after Dumont. The player may choose to make either an Opposed Tracking or Reaction Test against Dumont's Reaction. The side that generates more net successes, Dumont or the player character, has the advantage over the other in that Action. The player character must have the advantage in order to make an attack of any kind. Losing the advantage means that the opponent automatically has the advantage in his next Action. Characters who wish to move to hand-to-hand range for an attack add +2 to their target numbers, while characters who wish to make an indirect attack, using a hand grenade or a damaging manipulation spell, for instance, subtract -2 from their target numbers. Each attempt to gain advantage over a character within a turn reduces the target number for additional tests against that character by -2, at the same time increasing that character's target number by +2. For example, if a player character has attempted to gain advantage over Dumont in a turn, the next player character to attempt to gain advantage over Dumont in that same turn reduces his Target Number -2, regardless of whether the first character's attempt was successful or not. Dumont increases his target number by +2.

Once the chase is in progress, Dumont can also expend an Action to attempt to gain advantage over the runners. If the runners are clustered in a group, resolve Dumont's Opposed Reaction or Tracking Test against the character with the lowest Reaction.

The gamemaster should roleplay Dumont's paranoia and schizophrenia as increasing during the chase through the maze. By the end of the fight, let it be obvious that Dumont is not in his right mind. He babbles about eradicating the foe, all of Rook's instructions, orders he has received from the High Prince, the elven ideal, Rook's great plan, the grandeur of the Tir nobility parading in their finery, and so on. The most important thing he babbles on about is Bright's true plan. Dumont knows that Bright is loyal to the Tir High Prince's opposition. He also knows that the Ancients' downfall has been orchestrated by the Prince's opposition to weaken his physical influence in Seattle. The gamemaster should mix these relevant disclosures, with an equal part of pop-culture mass-media ("Nerps—California Style!") in a continuous, stream-of-consciousness delivery.

It is impossible to reach Dumont's mind except by one of two tacks. If any of the runners claim to represent the Tir High Prince, Dumont grows confused and must add +2 to all his target numbers. Also, if the player character who originally identified Dumont attempts to reason with him, Dumont must make a Willpower (5) Test. If he succeeds in the Willpower Test, he continues on as he was, but it is obvious to the runners that something reached him because he hesitated for just an instant.



If he fails the Willpower Test, he begins to break down. Each successive failure adds 1 to all his target numbers, and he loses his next Action. The runner must expend all his Actions reasoning with Dumont, and must speak to him of things relevant to their past or to current events.

When Dumont has failed the Willpower Test three times, he breaks down completely. He does not know where he is or who he is. The runner who knows him may continue to talk to him, and as he does, Dumont must make Willpower (8) Tests until one is successful, at which point he calms down. His mind is gone; in the body of a killer is the mind of a small, lost boy.

DEBUGGING

The gamemaster should adjust Michael Dumont's statistics (see **Cast of Shadows**, p. 52) as needed to properly balance this encounter. The key here, however, is numbers. Once the maximum number of runners begins hunting Dumont, the target numbers of the player characters taking their Actions late in the turn begin to fall as Dumont's rise. Assuming the runners survive, the numbers will eventually begin to shift in their favor.

If the runners are not already on the trail of Shim Bright, or even if they are, they find a picture of Bright torn from a datafax in one of Dumont's pockets. Written on the back in a childlike scrawl is the word "Rook." Thark, of course, recognizes the image. With the picture, the runners should have little difficulty learning where Shim Bright lives. If they go to Thark first, he knows. See **Bright Shining Lies** for more information.

Dumont alive, or his dead body, in addition to the other information turned up by the runners, is enough to stop the yakuza retaliation and, if brought in by Thark, shift Lone Star's thinking. See **Picking Up the Pieces**, p. 61.

BRIGHT SHINING LIES

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

When the runners reach Bright's house, read the following:

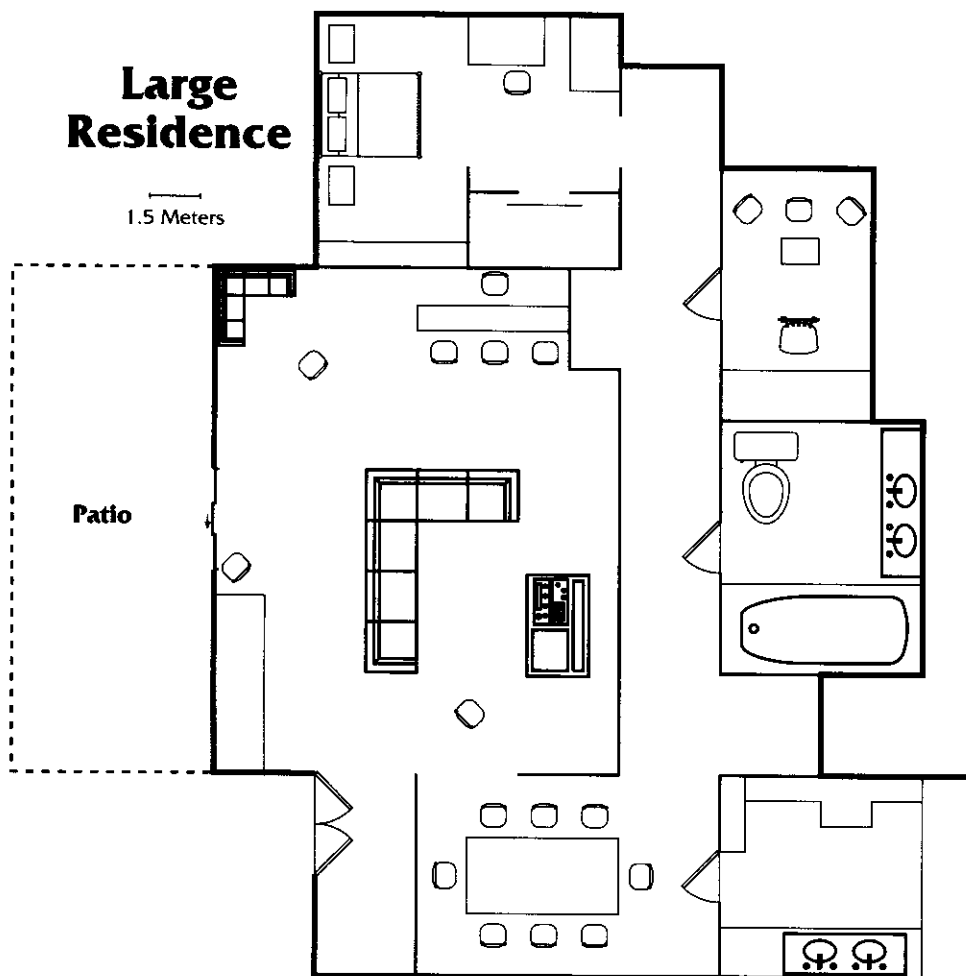
The address you ferreted out is correct, and beyond the low stone wall that edges the property you see Shim Bright's home. It is small, expensive, and well-maintained. A 2051 Eurocar Westwind sits in the driveway.

Nothing moves except a few leaves stirred by the wind...and a dark shape lying under the table on the patio. You guess that it's a dog, but from here it's impossible to tell.

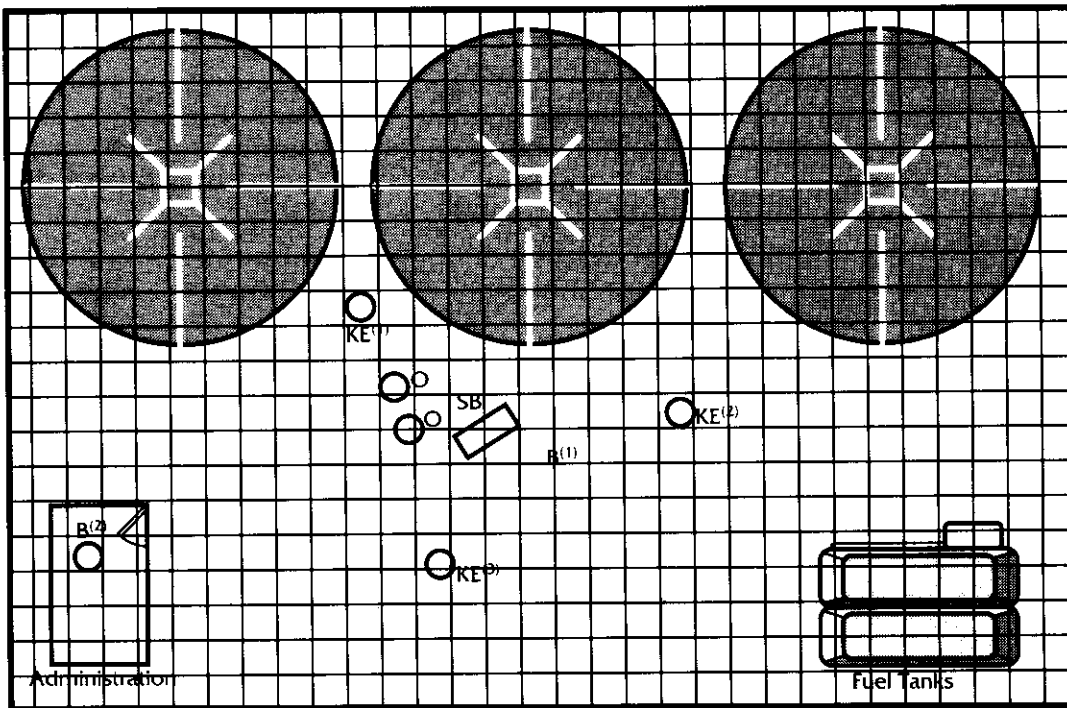
When the runners get to the hellfield, read the following:

You round the corner of the house and see the hellfield. It is not very big, probably only capable of handling three helicopters or tilt-rotor aircraft. The landing pads are bare at the moment, but you can make out a small crowd of people standing near the pads and around a white sedan showing some corporate markings. It's hard to tell at this distance, but the people seem to be arguing, or at least having a heated discussion. Ringing that group, facing outward, are three security guards protecting the area. Even from here you know them by their stance and uniform as Knight Errant.

In the distance you hear the sound of an approaching aircraft.



BRIGHT SHINING LIES



HELIFIELD MAP

- SB = Shim Bright
- B = Bodyguard
- KE = Knight-Errant Guard
- O = Official
- = 2 meters
- ▭ = Bright's Westwind

BEHIND THE SCENES

Shim Bright is attempting to flee Seattle. By the time the runners reach his home, he has already departed for the nearby helipad. Fortunately for the runners, he is experiencing some delays.

Bright's home is a large residence as described on page 34 of **Sprawl Sites** and reproduced here. It is a large, single-dwelling home in the Hunt's Point section of Bellevue. The security is minimal, as Bright relies on his guards and the neighborhood's AAA rating to keep him and his property safe.

Bright's Westwind is parked in the driveway, left behind to make anyone who comes to the house believe that he is still there. Two trained guard dogs protect the grounds. Fortunately for the runners, the dogs are neither paranormal nor cyber-enhanced.

The house has no other security.

Bright leaves no clues, papers, or chips in his house that even hint at what he is doing. While not the best at what he does, he does know his business.

Guard Dogs (2)

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R	Attacks
3	4x4	3	—	2/4	2	6	4	4M2

Initiative: 4 + 1D6

Abilities: Stealth 4

Notes: Both dogs are trained to attack silently and without warning.

CONDITION MONITOR			
MENTAL			
PHYSICAL			
L	M	S	D/UNC

CONDITION MONITOR			
MENTAL			
PHYSICAL			
L	M	S	D/UNC

KOREN THARK

Thark should be part of the final encounter with Bright. If the runners learn of Bright via **Interdiction**, then Thark has either gone ahead of them to Bright while they went after Dumont, or is with them if they went directly after Bright.

If Thark went on ahead, the runners find him at Bright's home, near dead after being beaten and shot by Bright's goons. They left him for dead, but the old troll is tougher than they thought. At the gamemaster's discretion, Thark might require a healing spell from one of the runners to be able to tell them where Bright has gone.

If Thark arrives with the runners, then Bright has already fled to the helifield. The only clue that his residence yields regarding his whereabouts is on the telecom. The "message waiting" light is flashing; when triggered, it replays a video recording sent from the nearby helifield informing Mr. Bright that, due to weather conditions, the aircraft he requested would be twenty minutes late. The runners have just enough time to get to the helifield before Bright's transport arrives.

THE HELIFIELD

The helifield, so-called because it serves a dual role as a field for helicopters and tilt-rotor aircraft, is only a few minutes by recklessly speeding vehicle from Bright's home. A small field with only three landing points, the helifield has a small depot for refueling and an administrative building housing a local-scale radar system.

The runners arrive while Bright is still waiting for his aircraft. One of his bodyguards is out on the tarmac with him, adjacent to the Westwind, and the other is in the administrative building. The three Knight Errant guards have set up a security perimeter around Bright and one of the landing points. Bright contracted the additional personal protection within the last few hours, fearing that his Tir bodyguards might not be able to handle the runners.

BRIGHT SHINING LIES

Knight Errant Security Guards (3)

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R	Armor
4	4	4	3	3	4	5	3	5/3

Initiative: 3 + 2D6

Dice Pools: Defense (Armed) 3; Defense (Unarmed) 4; Dodge 4

Skills: Armed Combat 3; Car 3; Etiquette (Corporate) 3; Firearms 4; Throwing 3; Unarmed Combat 4

Special Skills: Security Procedures 3

Cyberware: Boosted Reflexes 1; Smartgun Link

Gear: 2 Airfoil IPE Concussion Grenades (SM3 Stun); Ares Predator II [Heavy Pistol, 15 (clip), 6M2, two w/extra clips, Built-in Smartgun Link]; Armor Jacket (5/3); H&K MP5-TX [SMG, 20 (clip), 4M3, two w/extra clips, Built-in Smartgun Link]

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

CONDITION MONITOR									
MENTAL									
PHYSICAL									
L	M	S	D/UNC						

Part of Bright's delay is being caused by two officials from the heli-field. (This is a small field that offers them very few chances to legitimately exercise their authority, so they tend to make the most of each opportunity.) They are requesting additional information on Bright's hastily filed flight plan from the field to Salish-Shidhe territory. Their problem is that the flight plan lists no destination. Bright, naturally, does not want to reveal his ultimate destination. The officials are questioning Bright closely. They have also contacted the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) concerning the problem, and are awaiting a response. In the meantime, they intend to allow Bright's aircraft to land once it arrives, but deny it permission to take off again. They also called Lone Star for assistance; they will respond, but consider this complaint a very low priority.



The runners do not know why Bright has been delayed, but they can see enough to know that the heli-field officials are involved. They may choose to hold tight and wait to see what develops or to take advantage of the situation and go right in after Bright. The runners may also have been spotted as they arrived. Cover is scarce between the road and the heli-field, and so if the player characters declared they were racing to the heli-field, the Knight Errant guards will see them and immediately move to defend Bright against them. The bodyguard with Bright also shifts to meet the threat, and the bodyguard in the building breaks out his sniper rifle and trains it on the runners. This sudden flurry of activity makes the field officials very nervous, and the Knight Errant guards call for back-up.

If the runners plunge right in and fight, see the next section, **Shoot First**, below. If they hang back and discuss tactics for a few minutes, go to **Talk First** instead.

Shoot First

If the runners rush right in, they must fight it out. Midway through the battle, a Federated Boeing Commuter tilt-wing aircraft wings in low over the treetops, but immediately backs off to a safe distance and hovers. It carries no weapons or armor, and its pilot has no desire to get in close until the lead stops flying. The pilot will attempt to pick up Bright from a hot landing zone only if it looks like Bright's people have an advantage of some sort, or are at least holding off attacks for the moment. If the runners are using any heavy weapons or magic, the aircraft remains aloft. Ten Combat Turns after its arrival, the Commuter will depart, leaving Bright behind. Orders are orders.

Federated Boeing Commuter

Handling	Speed	Body	Armor	Signature	APilot
5	140/420	3	0	3	3

Seating: 2 + 15 bucket seats

Access: 1 + 1 standard

Economy: 2.5 km/per liter*

Fuel: IC/750 liters

Storage: 10 CF storage + 30 CF cargo

Landing/Takeoff Profile: VTOL/STOL

*VTOL Economy 0.5 km/liter

VEHICLE CONDITION MONITOR									
L	M	S	DESTR.						

If the runners need reinforcements to avoid getting geeked, the gamemaster has two options. If the situation is really going downhill, he can use both. One option is to have Green Lucifer arrive. He has been conducting his own investigation, or perhaps the runners have been keeping him up-to-date on theirs. In either case, he wants very much to be in on the final confrontation, if for no other reason than to keep track of his own loose ends. An able warrior, Lucifer can offer valuable assistance even if he never reveals his magical abilities. He might decide to sneak in some extra muscle by bringing a pair of elementals to take on Bright's elementals. If questioned, Lucifer can always claim they were "sent by a friend."

The gamemaster can use Lone Star as a second source of back-up. The runners may have called them themselves after finding Thark in a pool of his own blood, or the cops could simply be the team responding to the call from the heli-field officials. Koren Thark may have placed a call to his headquarters from Bright's home. Regardless of the means for getting them there,

if the runners need help, a contingent of Lone Star cops (see p. 171, **Shadowrun**) can show up in sufficient strength to aid the runners. If the Star does show, it could make for an interesting situation, as they will be there ostensibly to maintain the peace, not to take out Bright. The Knight Errant guards will definitely avoid engaging Lone Star officers.

If Green Lucifer is present, Shim Bright will get a good look at him and finally recognize him. He is shocked at first, then rage twists his features as pieces begin to fall into place. Bright shouts "Kylisearn! You're dead! You're supposed to be dead!" and attacks in a desperate attempt to kill Green Lucifer. Naturally, several different parties open up on him, but Bright should live long enough to gurgle, "He's a smart old bastard, eh Kylisearn...he said you were dead. Who'da thought he didn't mean it literally...enemy of my enemy and all that, I guess. Not quite the crown you were expecting, eh?" Given the chance, Green Lucifer puts a bullet into him, ending his rambling death speech.

Talk First

If the runners wait a few minutes to size up the situation, after a brief stand-off Bright motions for one or two who look like the group's leaders to approach. When they near the vehicle, the Knight Errant guards eye them suspiciously and ask them to drop any obvious weapons. The guards will not let the runners pass if they refuse this request. One of the guards will turn and cover the runners as they pass.

Bright explains his version of the situation to them: he claims Salish-Shidhe diplomatic immunity (which is supported by forged papers), and says he is leaving Seattle. The runners can do nothing to stop him. At the moment, he is experiencing some misunderstanding about his flight plan, but the Salish-Shidhe embassy is clearing that up with the Seattle FAA and he should be departing shortly. (This is a surprise to the heli-field officials, but all the guns around persuade them not to argue.)

Bright's only goal is to delay the runners long enough for his ride to come, which it will a few moments later. If no lead is flying, the Commuter lands on the center pad. The noise it makes as it lands is underscored by another noise: Green Lucifer arriving on his motorcycle. Lucifer has come for the same reasons explained in **Shoot First**, above. He cruises up to the tense Knight Errant guards. They look at Bright to check his reaction to the new arrival, but he only looks perplexed and concerned by the presence of a member of the Ancients (the second-in-command, by the cut of his mohawk). Upon reaching the guard, Lucifer parks and dismounts, and without being asked, unslings his SMG and unholsters his pistol, leaving both on the tarmac. He then approaches the runners and looks to them for an explanation.

Now Bright recognizes him. "Kylisearn....," he says softly, looking skyward and then back at Lucifer. "The High Prince said you were dead, the crafty old bastard. But then again, who better to guard the sheep from the wolves than another wolf?" Green Lucifer's only comment is "Did I know you?", which he directs at Bright.

The finale can shape up a few different ways, and the gamemaster should be alert for clues in the runners' actions that might direct the adventure's conclusion. The elements that have come together are listed below. In what order these occur, if at all, should be based on the runners' actions.

•Bright's only thought is to leave. He knows his forged Salish-Shidhe papers will not hold up if checked.

•The bodyguard in the administration building is keeping his sniper rifle trained on the runners through the window. Bright worked out a hand-signal system with this bodyguard, and has managed to indicate that Green Lucifer is to be the first target if a fight breaks out. If the situation takes too long to develop, and Bright is risking losing his ride, he may simply have Lucifer shot and then attempt to flee in the ensuing chaos. In this case, Lucifer goes down for the count, seriously wounded. Knight Errant will still defend Bright, but with a little less enthusiasm, because it certainly looks like Bright provoked the fight, and their contract is only to defend him; he did not take a full-aspect combat contract. Because Bright is attempting to flee, he will not be immediately involved in the fight, giving the runners less opposition.

•Green Lucifer knows Bright is from the Tir, though he does not know exactly who he is. Lucifer will mention this if the information is required.

•The Commuter has Tir Tairngire registration markings. Any character who makes a successful Pilot (3) Test notices this.

•Bright clearly referred to a "High Prince," which is a distinctively Tir term, not Salish-Shidhe.

•Lone Star will definitely arrive. Whether or not it shows up in force in response to a call from the runners or Thark depends on the player characters' actions and the gamemaster's discretion.

The gamemaster will have to put together all these pieces, plus the players' actions as matters draw to a close at the heli-field. In the end, a scene, something like that which ended **Shoot First**, should take place between Bright and Lucifer, ending with Lucifer's final, violent punctuation. (Remember to have him pick up a gun at some point.)

If the runners question Green Lucifer about the events surrounding this adventure, he has little to say. He will admit, if asked, that he used to have both friends and enemies back in the Tir, and this chain of events was a result of some coming back to haunt him: Someone in one of the Tir's golden halls decided that the Ancients had outlived their usefulness. Shim Bright and Elven Fire were to be the agents of their destruction. Green Lucifer will not elaborate on this statement, and asks the runners to let it drop. With Bright dead, and Michael Dumont's body as proof of the tangle of deceptions that set in motion the gang violence, all parties concerned have calmed down enough to stop the escalating warfare as Seattle begins a slow return to normal.

In fact, Lucifer has realized the implications of Bright's words, and thus the truth. His exile to Seattle to the custody of the Ancients was done in secret by the High Prince. Knowing that Lucifer's former allies, those who betrayed him, would someday make a play against the Ancients for their territory, the High Prince planted Lucifer in the gang, secure in the knowledge that he would fight any efforts to eliminate the gang. These events did not come to pass according to anyone's plan, but that is what happens in games of men and nations.

DEBUGGING

Because this is primarily a combat encounter, the gamemaster's main concern is balancing the fight. Green Lucifer and Lone Star's arrivals as reinforcements should help even out the battle.

If Bright escapes, he will likely be seen again. Even if he dies, someone much like him will surely rise in his place.

See **Picking Up The Pieces**, p. 61, for more information on the conclusion of the adventure.

LEGWORK

To follow up on or discover clues in this adventure, the player characters need to investigate people, places, and situations. One of the best ways for runners to get the information they need is through their contacts. This section provides success tables containing information available to the runners from their sources.

A success test using Street or Corporate Etiquette, Target Number 4, typically serves to find out what a contact does or does not know. The amount of information available from the contact depends on the number of successes the player achieves. Characters who achieve more than one success gain all the information available to all previous levels of success.

The gamemaster should try to make the player character's interaction with his contact consist of more than a few abstract die rolls. Play out the meeting in full: contacts are characters with their own lives, points of view, and needs, not simply spigots of information to be turned on and off automatically.

The player character rolls a number of dice equal to his Etiquette Skill to determine what information the contact knows and is willing to impart. Once the number of successes is determined, the gamemaster can roleplay the encounter with the appropriate information level in mind. Meetings should be tailored to the "personality" of specific contacts. Some will prefer a straightforward meet in a specific place, while others will only feel comfortable with elaborate forms of information exchange.

Contacts are generally considered trustworthy, as long as the runners play it safe. A player character should never compromise his contact. Are the contact's ties stronger to his group or to the runner? A good runner never tests those ties by placing his contact in a position where he must choose.

Dealing with a contact is a two-way street. Those gamemasters who need a base-line value to determine fees for information can use a formula of multiplying the contact's Skill Rating in his or her most appropriate Etiquette by how many successes the player rolled in his Etiquette Test. Multiply that total by the total of the contact's Charisma and Intelligence. Then multiply that final value by 10. The result is in nuyen. Gamemasters will, of course, adjust the base result to reflect the actual contact involved. Normal Negotiation procedures apply to determine the final payment for the information.

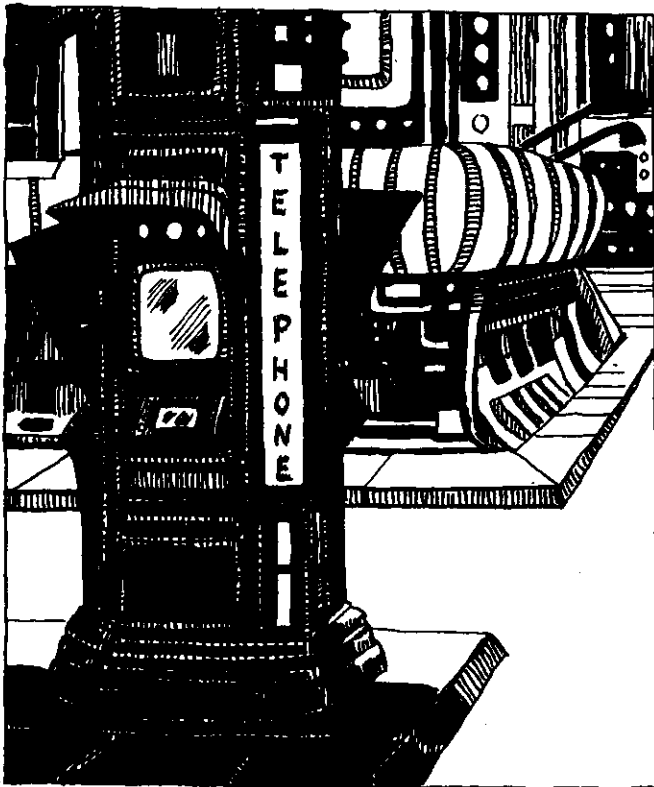
Runners may also ask their contacts to "check around," "keep their ear to the ground," or some other idiom describing generally listening for news. In such a case, the gamemaster makes an appropriate Etiquette Test for the contact at +2 against the Target Number given in the information table. If the Etiquette Test results in any successes, the contact reports the appropriate information to the runner in 2D6 hours, or at a time determined by the gamemaster. This is an excellent way for gamemasters to make sure that a certain piece of information makes it to the runners. The cost of this service is determined as if the contact had had access to the information initially.

The gamemaster can add another dimension to legwork by acknowledging that contacts are not always available at the convenience of the runners. Arrangements must be made before the actual meeting can take place. When a player character wants to meet with a contact, the gamemaster rolls 2D6, then multiplies the result by 30. The resulting Base Time is the number of minutes it will take to arrange the meeting with the contact. Players may elect to trade off successes from their Etiquette Test to reduce the time it takes to reach the contact, and so receive faster, but potentially less helpful, information. In this case, the gamemaster can have the player make the character's Etiquette Test at the time he announces his intention to meet with the contact. The player should also decide at that time how many successes he will trade off to reduce the waiting period. The Base Time value should be kept secret.

Deckers may also take an active role in acquiring general information. Many electronic information services exist in the era of *Shadowrun*—public, private, and secret—and these contain many gigapulses of data comprised of on-line conversations, rumors, stolen and dumped files, and the like. Deckers can create simple programs to search vast databases for key words and related terms, then download the information to their cyberdeck or Matrix-connected personal computer. Gamemasters should assume all deckers have such a program.

Virtually any information available in this section can be found in the Matrix, if one knows where to look and has the time. The Base Time for such a search is 2D6 hours. The decker makes a success test against his or her Etiquette (Matrix) Skill, or defaults to Intelligence on the Skill Web. The Target Number is the same as given on the information table. Hacking Pool dice may not be used to supplement this success test roll. Etiquette Test successes can be traded off to reduce the Base Time for receiving information. No effective Appropriate Contact restrictions can be applied to obtaining this information, though the player must indicate what kind of information sources he is searching. If the character is searching corporate-related databases, Corporate Contact information is appropriate. If the character is searching a street-level chat-line database, Street Contact information is appropriate.

A decker is limited in the number of subjects he can research simultaneously, based on his own abilities and the available time. The maximum number of searches that the decker can conduct at any one time is equal to half the character's Intelligence, rounded up. This base value assumes the decker does nothing else but sit and search, continually adjusting the search paths and parameters. If the character wishes to actively perform other activities, the gamemaster must decide how much time is taken up performing those other activities and adjust the base value accordingly.



LONE STAR RECORDS

Koren Thark can obtain certain pieces of information from Lone Star records. Following a request, it takes him 1D6 hours to obtain the information. He drops a data copy of the information in his electronic mailbox for the runners to retrieve at their convenience.

THE ANCIENTS

A synopsis of Lone Star's records regarding the Ancients is in **Player Handout 4**, page 65 of this book. Give this to the runners when they retrieve the information from Koren Thark's electronic mailbox.

ELVEN FIRE

See **Player Handout 5**, page 66 of this book.

LUCINDA TANGIER

See **Player Handout 6**, page 66 of this book.

ST. JOHN

Lone Star's records on St. John appear in **Player Handout 7**, page 66 of this book.

ELVEN AFFAIRS

If the runners request any information directly related to Tir Tairngire, that nation's relationship with the Ancients, or local elven politics, Thark will speak with Shim Bright, the independent elven affairs advisor to Lone Star and the City of Seattle. Bright is, of course, the principle button-pusher behind the gang violence (which has rapidly spiraled beyond his control.) See **Thark and Bright** in **A Lone Star**, p. 15.

HITTING THE STREETS

The runners will probably hit the streets at some point to obtain information. In this section, appropriate contacts include any archetypes with Street in their name, such as Street Mage, or any other contact in a position to know what is happening on the streets. In this adventure, fixers and Mr. Johnsons have a separate section.

GANGS

Information is available about the gangs directly involved in this adventure and about the Seattle street situation in general. Two tables are given for each area of information. Use the first table if the contact is not a member of the gang in question. Use the second table if the contact belongs to the gang in question.

The information in this section is only available through a gang member contact.

The Ancients

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 5)

Any non-Ancients Gang Member.

Successes	Result
0	"Look, drek-brain, I suggest you boost yourself out of here before somebody decides you'd be more attractive as road pizza."
1	"The pointies are finally showing their true colors. Frag if I know why they want to go to war with everybody, though."
2	"Yeah, I'm just surprised the blood bath is <i>outside</i> the gang. I hear there's been a lot of internal <i>sturm und drang</i> in that gang."
3+	"Hey, I figure there's a civil war of sorts going on among the Ancients, but who cares? The way things are goin', ain't gonna be much left of them soon anyways."

The Ancients

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Ancients Gang Member. (If the runner is an elf, use Target Number 3.)

Successes	Result
0	"What problems, chummer? We don't have any problems. We're the best the streets have to offer. Haven't ya seen the body count today?"
1	"All gangs have problems, okay? Let's just leave it at that. The Ancients are no different, but no outsider is gonna bring us down."
2	"Look, someone outside the gang is trying to frag us, and when we find out who it is, they're vapor. Chip truth."
3+	"What are you, some kinda reporter? Hey, relax, chummer, no insult intended. Look, you seem to know something about what's going on. Let me take you to the boss."

*If the runners obtain this information, go to **Ancient Words**, p. 23. Gamemasters can use this to get the runners into a meeting with the Ancients' leaders, even if the player characters fail to request it themselves.

Ancients Leadership

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)

Any non-Ancients Gang Member.

Successes Result

- | | |
|----|---|
| 0 | "Leadership? The Ancients ain't got no leadership. They just roll dice." |
| 1 | "What, right this minute? Who the frag knows who's in charge over there? Ever since the Meat Junkies aced Wasp, it's been up in the air." |
| 2 | "Some girl named Sting calls the shots. She was Wasp's lieutenant, but I think her second, a joker named Green Lucifer, has some say." |
| 3+ | "Yeah, Sting's in charge, but only because some of the others say so." |

Ancients Leadership

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Ancients Gang Member.

Successes Result

- | | |
|----|--|
| 0 | "Hey chummer, frag off, eh? Lunch break's over." |
| 1 | "Our enemies fear our leader. They have made many devious attempts at assassinating Sting and Green Lucifer. They have failed. They will always fail." |
| 2 | "Sting is of the streets. Her history is the streets. She knows them better than anyone else. Green Lucifer came to us from the Tir, and his knowledge and allies are useful." |
| 3+ | "These are trying times for us all, in more ways than you could know. Perhaps you should come and speak with our leaders, yes?" |

*If the runners make this contact, go to **Ancient Words**, p. 23. Gamemasters can use this to get the runners into a meeting with the Ancients leaders, even if the player characters fail to request it themselves.

Meat Junkies

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)

Any non-Meat Junkies Gang Member.

Successes Result

- | | |
|----|---|
| 0 | "Frag off and die, before somebody takes care of it for you." |
| 1 | "The Junkies have really had it with the Ancients. They're looking to nuke those pointies real good, real soon." |
| 2 | "The only thing that's stopped the Junkies from wiping out the Ancients so far is that the elves are only moving in force on the defensive, and that ain't like them. This Elven Fire drek has been more of a harassment than anything else." |
| 3+ | "The Junkies broke the truce you heard about on the news the other night. The Junkies are still riled, and hell could break loose any minute now." |

MEAT JUNKIES

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Meat Junkies Gang Member. (If the runner is an elf, use Target Number 3.)

Successes Result

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 0 | "Everyone knows the Ancients are takin' a dive, chummer. Where you been, in a BTL haze? Elven Fire? Who gives a drek?" |
| 1-2 | "Who cares about the Ancients? When we get through with them, they'll really know what it is to mess with the Meat Junkies. And nobody will even remember what their little civil war was about." |
| 3+ | "Even if we can't get the Ancients, we'll get all their little splinter gangs. Especially Elven Fire." |

The Tigers

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)

Any non-Tiger Gang Member.

Successes Result

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 0 | "Look, I'm sure somebody's mother is looking for you. Trip off." |
| 1-2 | "Chummer, the elves signed their own death warrants by hitting the yaks. That was mega-dumb. What I want to know is who'll get their territory when they're all dead?" |
| 3+ | "You got some info on Elven Fire or the Ancients? I suggest you go to the yaks, the Whispering Nights out in Loveland. They might just pay you, and they might even let you live." |

THE TIGERS

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 5)

Any Tiger Gang Member. (If the runner has yakuza connections, use Target Number 4.)

Successes Result

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 0 | "Kind is repaid in kind. You would do well to remember that." |
| 1-2 | "The elves have made their final mistake. Wise men would not call them friend." |
| 3+ | "You are interested? You know something about the Ancients and those who call themselves Elven Fire? Good, then I know someone you must speak with..." |

*If the runners make this contact, go to **Behind The Screens**, p. xx. Gamemasters can use this to get the runners into a meeting with the yakuza, even if the player characters fail to request it themselves. The runners may refuse to meet with the Whispering Nights, but the yakuza's interest may be piqued enough that they come looking for them...



Gangs and the Streets

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Gang Member.

Successes	Result
0	"Oh yeah, like you can believe the story about the streets anyone tells you these days."
1	"Chummer, my advice is to take a vacation. Visit someplace calm, like L.A. Here in Seattle, there's some nasty drek goin' down, and there's gonna be a mad scramble for the pieces when it's all over."
2	"Everybody's ready for war; weapons are all over the streets and practically free. If you're gunnin' for the Ancients, you get a discount."
3+	"Elven Fire, yeah I've seen them. I think they're a splinter of the Ancients. Drek-headed fanatics, if you ask me. Don't matter though, they're all gonna burn when the yaks go hunting."

RUMOR BAG

The general information about what is going down found in this section is available from non-gang, street contacts.

The Ancients

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any non-Gang Member street contact.

Successes	Result
0	"Like I'm gonna stick my nose into that biz."
1	"You know, the whole situation is strange. These hits don't follow the usual Ancients logic. A lot of them are in no way connected to current Ancients' territory and interests."
2	"Spirits in the sky, chummer—whose brain dreamed up hitting the yaks? The Ancients'll have enough trouble with the yak's boys, the Tigers, and the Meat Junkies. Why make things worse?"
3+	"Well, ya may not hafta wait too long before things go to squat. Word is the Ancients are splitting—seen groups of them shooting at each other."

Elven Fire

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any non-Gang Member street contact.

Successes	Result
0	"Whatcha mean, Elven Fire? It's the Ancients, chummer. That's obvious even to an ork."
1	"Elven Fire's gotta be the Ancients. Who else would it be?"
2	"A splinter in the thumb of old Seattle, <i>mon ami</i> . That's what we thinks."
3+	"Why, is, of course, the first question one asks. Different interests? Different plans? Different leaders? Different everything?"

Lucinda Tangler

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)

Any non-Gang Member street contact.

Successes	Result
0	"Hey, you want a joygirl? I can find you a joygirl..."
1-2	"Yeah, I hearda her somewheres....don't she hang around with some drekker who named himself after an apostle, or somethin'?"
3+	"Yeah, always seen her around that Witches' Circle place, even before she started drapin' herself over that St. John joker. I think she's chummer to somebody there."

St. John

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any non-Gang Member street contact.

Successes	Result
0	"I dunno, didn't somebody get his head on a platter or something?"
1-2	"What a loser. The guy couldn't put on his underwear without screwin' up. I heard he got some freelance from the Tir and boned it."
3+	"Yeah, he found out runnin' the shadows wasn't all simsense glory. Then he decides to take up with the Whispering Nights, and ba-bing, slab city."

Street Warfare

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any non-Gang Member street contact.

Successes	Result
0	"Just shut up and listen for a minnit, and you'll hear how bad it is."
1	"Used to be the Ancients had the best weapons, now I hear the Meat Junkies got their paws on some HMGs. Gawd help us all!"
2	"Look, the Ancients are about to go at it with both the Meat Junkies and the Tigers, who are backed by the yaks. Whaddya think's gonna happen?"
3+	"I hear this is the deal: if the Metroplex Guard rolls, everybody forgets the drek that's been going down and takes them on. Once the Guard's trashed, it's back to biz."

*This is misinformation. Actually, the Meat Junkies now have two LMGs.

The Witches' Circle

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any non-Gang Member street contact.

Successes	Result
0	"Witches' circle? No way, I'm not playing with that kinda drek after what happened last time. Gawd. Heh. Hum. Get lost, eh?"
1-2	"The Witches' Circle, oh yes. It's become the hot spot of Loveland. Frightful of people, so fascinated with death. The owner is certainly making the most of the incident."
3+	"You mean you haven't heard? The owner, Sam Johnson or something, roped off the booth where the yaks got hit, and he's been showing the stains and bullet holes. Shadowrunners won't go near the place now, but the tourist biz is up."

The Yakuza

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)

Any non-Gang Member street contact.

Successes	Result
0	"Ooh, the yakuza are my favorite people. Like I'm gonna rag on that bunch."
1	"It is definitely tiptoe-round-the-yaks time in Seattle. They ain't takin' no drek from nobody."
2	"I hear the Whispering Nights clan, the one whose soldiers got hit, has been getting grief from the big oyabun. Something about honor. I think you can figure it out from there."
3+	"Don't know if the yaks themselves are gonna make the moves, or if they're gonna use the Tigers. The Tigers are tied into the Dungeness Crab clan who run Seattle, but I hear they've been loaned to the Whispering Nights as soldiers. The yaks have them looking for the Tangier girl."



CORPORATE CONTACTS

Information from corporate sources is limited. Only a few pieces of information are to be had, but all of it is valuable.

THE ANCIENTS

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Corporate contact.

Successes	Result
0	"I'm sorry, but I don't know anything about that."
1	"It is our understanding that, under their old leadership, the Ancients had begun to diversify into more traditional military-mercenary work."
2	"There has been a recent change in leadership; their old leader, Wasp, was rendered faceless by a high-caliber slug during a face-off with the Meat Junkies. I understand that though the Ancients are continuing their current contract policy, it is the cause of some dissension within the ranks."
3+	"Yes, the boys in black and green have fallen out of favor with the powers that be in the Tir. Time to reevaluate the market, as we say. Unfortunately, most of the evaluating is being done with bullets. Bad for biz."

JOHNSONS AND FIXERS

Those who make the connections, the Mr. Johnsons and the Fixers, often know the most.

THE ANCIENTS

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Fixer or Mr. Johnson.

Successes	Result
0	"The Ancients? They're a street gang, aren't they?"
1	"Very interesting, the method they've chosen to expand their operation. I was about to line up some muscle work for them. Too bad."
2	"Their current leader, Sting, she's a smart one. I cannot understand how she could let this happen. Green Lucifer, her second-in-command, is the hothead."
3+	"I can't imagine their Tir connections being too happy about all this. Then again, I began hearing about relationship problems between the two groups many months ago, before all this started, so who knows."

ELVEN FIRE

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 5)

Any Fixer or Mr. Johnson.

Successes	Result
0	"I know only what the media says, don't ya know."
1	"It seems the Ancients have trouble on their hands. I understand they have been making some effort to put out the 'fire' themselves."
2	"Yes, Elven Fire. Whomever they are, their attacks have been quite, shall we say, well-placed? Some of the execution has been sloppy, but all hits involved specific targets at a particular place at a particular time."
3+	"The Ancients have recently made some local weapons purchases, which is unusual for them, considering their long-standing Tir backing. I have also heard, though, that weapons are still coming across the border. I cannot say who is receiving those shipments."

LUCINDA TANGIER

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Fixer or Mr. Johnson.

Successes	Result
0	"I don't know 'er. Should I?"
1	"Wasn't she the girlfriend of that fellow who got killed with the yaks at the Witches' Circle? I believe that is the only time I've heard of her."
2	"Yes, St. John's girlfriend. Expensive tastes; ex-corporate gone slumming, I expect. I understand the yakuza have the Tigers out looking for her."
3+	"A finder's fee has been posted for Ms. Tangier. I can give you the telecom number of the Johnson who is handling it. I understand it is corp money, and the sponsor would very much like to find her before the yaks do."

*If the runners make this contact, go to **Plastic Magnate**, page 32.

ST. JOHN

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Fixer or Mr. Johnson.

Successes	Result
0	"A dead shadowrunner, that's all I know."
1	"I knew of him. Certainly not first-string, not on anyone's list. He'd look competent enough starting out, but blow it by the end of the job."
2	"He stopped looking for work a few months ago, bragged about some Tir-connected work. I understand he botched it and had to lie low for a while. He just popped up again to work with the yaks, and that was that."
3+	"I heard his latest contract was with a local Tir agent who hired St. John to make arrangements for him. The fool bragged that the identity of the Tir agent would make you spit up last week's lunch."

ANCIENTS LEADERSHIP

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any Fixer or Mr. Johnson.

Successes	Result
0	"I know little of the gang's leadership, other than that it seemed marginally capable until now."
1	"Yes, the Ancients are led by a woman named Sting. She seems somewhat more clear-headed than her predecessor, but has continued his diversification policies."
2	"Green Lucifer is an enigma. He joined the Ancients just before Wasp was killed by the Meat Junkies. I have spoken with him on occasion; he appears to be keeping a fierce temper under control. He also does not seem to have been born on the streets."
3+	"I have heard rumblings that Green Lucifer had some hand in the change in power from Wasp to Sting, though I do not know what part he played."

REMEMBERING DUMONT

As stated in **A Lone Star**, one of the player characters involved in **Elven Fire** knows Michael Dumont from past experience. Gamemasters may wish to create some sort of history for Dumont and the character who recognizes him. Perhaps they worked together or maybe they were old friends, lovers, rivals, or enemies. Any additional roleplaying element added to the eventual confrontation between the runners and the deranged Dumont can only enhance the scene.

After seeing Dumont's image from the Witches' Circle hit, the character in question is plagued by the feeling that he (or she) knows Dumont, but cannot remember from where or when or even Dumont's name. When the player characters view Thark's chip, the player character who knows Dumont should make an Intelligence Test against a nonexistent Target Number. The gamemaster dutifully notes down the number rolled, then informs the player that he or she cannot quite remember the information, but is running the image through his (or her) mind. Should the player make an unusually successful Intelligence Test, the gamemaster may wish to make an additional irrelevant dice roll, note the result, and then tell the player that the character cannot remember.

Naturally, the player will insist on being allowed to make additional rolls. The gamemaster should not allow additional rolls unless a topic comes up, either as part of the **Elven Fire** story or as part of character-to-character conversation, that relates to how the runner in question knew Michael Dumont. The most obvious connection is the term "mercenary," which will be mentioned in connection with the Ancients. Dumont was a mercenary, and so if the runner is present when any conversation about the Ancients takes place, the character gets another chance to remember him. Likewise, if some reference is made to the secret background connection the gamemaster has created between Dumont and the runner, the character may make another Intelligence Test.

This time, the result of the test actually matters. The gamemaster should base the Target Number for the Intelligence Test on how strong is the reference. If it is simply the term "mercenary," the Target Number is 4, but a stronger, more direct reference should have a lower Target Number. Just one success allows the character to remember Michael Dumont.

When the runner remembers Dumont, the gamemaster can reveal that Michael Dumont was a mercenary who served a number of tours with a variety of corporate and national armies. At the time the player character knew Dumont, the man was a resourceful, stable professional who could be counted on in a crisis. The runner last heard of Dumont nearly four years ago, when the mercenary was on a mission into either NAN or Tir territory (the runner can't remember which). The mission went sour, and Dumont never returned from it.

Particularly adventurous gamemasters may want to run a very short flashback scene between Dumont and the runner who remembers him. Such a scene will strengthen the tie between the two and emphasize the change in Dumont's personality when the runners eventually meet him. A quick-and-dirty ambush in a primitive South American jungle is a good example of how to work this scene.

The runners will probably want to check further into the fate of Michael Dumont. Go to the following section, **Tracking Dumont**.

TRACKING DUMONT

Once the runners have Dumont's name, digging up information on him is relatively simple.

BACKGROUND

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any well-connected street contact, Fixer, Mercenary, or Mr. Johnson.

Successes	Result
0	"Hey, chummer, yer standin' in me shadow. Do ya mind?"
1	"Mike Dumont? Sure, I remember him. Real gung-ho type, but very reliable. Hell of a shot."
2	"Yeah, he never came back from a run into the Tir, if I remember right, back two, no four years or so. None of the team came back."
3+	"I remember hearing a rumor, back a year or so, that somebody'd turned up evidence of a camp of some kind in the Tir where the elves were holding 'agents of foreign powers' who had infiltrated the country. Somebody said they saw Mike Dumont there, but he got transferred out to some military installation near the CFS border. That's the last I heard."*

*The runners may follow up on this clue and learn about the Tir facility in question. They may also get a hint that Dumont may be less than sane. Consult the next success table.

TIR TAIRNGIRE INSTALLATION

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 8)

Any contact with Tir Tairngire connections, any contact associated with a military, civilian, or corporate intelligence or multi-national security agency.

Successes	Result
0	"What? No, haven't heard of anything like that."
1	"Sure, I've heard there's a facility there. Not really sure if it's military, though."
2	"Yeah, I know it. It's one of those places people in the biz don't like to talk about. High level, intense interrogation kinda stuff."
3+	"Yes, The House, I believe they call it. Think-tank for military intelligence or whatever the drek they have that does the same job. I understand they also do 're-education' on a limited basis. Most of the poor SOBs who go through it end up losing it eventually, even with the magic they use."

LOCATION

If the runners are showing people their picture of Michael Dumont, use the target number indicated. If they are only talking to people who knew him or using a verbal description, double the Target Number to 8.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any well-connected street contact, Fixer, Mercenary, or Mr. Johnson.

Successes	Result
0	"Wadda I look like, a mage or somethin'?"
1-2	"Geez, yeah, kinda familiar, like maybe Renton? Dunno."
3+	"Sure, sure, sure...wait...uh, zombie kinda joker. Sure I seen him—wandering around near the Maple Valley mall. There's an old soda pop factory near there I think I saw him go into."*

*Go to **Maze Mind**, page 36, if the runners pursue this clue.

SHIM BRIGHT

Depending on Thark's references to Shim Bright, a smart runner may at some point want to investigate the elf known by that name.

The public database simply confirms that Bright is a highly regarded consultant and analyst on elven affairs for both Lone Star and the City of Seattle. The rest of the file reads like, and is, PR hype.

On the streets, however, additional information may be available.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 4)

Any political contact, Metahuman Rights Activist, Mr. Johnson, or Reporter.

Successes	Result
0	"Geez, with that name, gotta be an elf, right?"
1	"Yeah, elven social analyst, right? Saw him on that news show 'Chet Chit-Chat.' Arrogant joker, but seemed to know what he was talking about."
2	"He spends a lot of time telling people why other people do things the way they do on the streets without ever having been there himself. I'll bet he bows toward Tir Tairngire every noon."
3+	"I remember him from way back, maybe a decade ago or so when he first made a name for himself. I remember hearing a rumor at the time that he was connected to the Tir government. Never heard anymore about it, though."

CAST OF SHADOWS



10-5531

MICHAEL DUMONT

CONDITION MONITOR									
		MENTAL							
		PHYSICAL							
L	M			S				D/UNC	

CAST OF SHADOWS



KOREN THARK

Koren Thark is a good cop, usually. He's not perfect, and is sometimes bothered by that fact. Born human, he goblinized with much of mankind in 2021, and as a result has a normal human life span instead of the truncated one usually associated with trolls. He's seen a lot of water pass under the bridge, as it were, and has been pleased with the progress made in racial justice and equality since the Night of Rage. Optimistic, he sees the possibility for an upswing in social conditions over the next decade, spurred by corporate learning centers and community investment.

This gang war could change all that. In days, the work of decades past and yet to come could be shattered, including countless lives lost. Equally frightening for him is Lone Star's reaction. Thark has always known the organization had its weaknesses, but Lone Star's response to this crisis has left him frightened and bitter. He knows he is throwing away his career if caught, and doesn't care. The need is too great.

The eventual revelation of Bright's involvement will shatter him. He trusted Bright and believed him an ally. If the runners do not stop him, Thark will go after Bright on his own.

Koren Thark is of average height and build for a troll, and shows an uncharacteristic graying and reduction of his hairline. He has bright blue eyes and an expressive face. His manner is simple, direct, and impassioned.

Attributes

Body: 6 (8)
 Quickness: 3
 Strength: 6
 Charisma: 3
 Intelligence: 4
 Willpower: 3
 Essence: 5
 Reaction: 3

Initiative: 3 + 2D6

Dice Pools

Defense (Armed): 3
 Defense (Unarmed): 3
 Dodge: 3

Skills

Armed Combat: 3
 Athletics: 2
 Car: 3
 Etiquette (Street): 3
 Firearms: 7
 Unarmed Combat: 3

Special Skills

Police Procedures: 4

Cyberware

Boosted Reflexes: 1
 Smartgun Link

Gear

Colt Manhunter [Heavy Pistol, 6M2, 16 (clip), w/3 clips of Firepower™ ammo, Smartgun Link]
 Lined Coat (4/2)
 Portable Phone

Notes:

Authority on Lone Star and general police matters



STING

Sting is a child of Seattle's streets. Born and raised there, she knows the Elven District and most of the city as well as any. Rejected by her parents, she found solace, education, and a home in the streets. She believes strongly in its freedoms and its codes.

As leader of the Ancients Sting has attempted to solidify it as an organization, but has met resistance from those gang members who also opposed the similar policies of Wasp, the gang's previous leader. Never close politically or socially to the Tir, she has done nothing to heal the rifts that have been developing between the Ancients and the elven nation. In truth, she has little use for the Tir and what it stands for—or at least what she believes it stands for. She has even less use for their meddling. As the Tir connections become more and more apparent, she grows angrier and angrier. That is another reason Green Lucifer wishes to keep his past a secret.

Sting is slightly above average in height and of the typical light build for her kind. She wears her copper-colored hair long and loose, but can quickly braid it if the going looks tough. She is dominant and aggressive, using her image and appearance as weapons. Augmenting her tough dress is the gleam of her Opticon™ cybereyes and canine implants.

Attributes

Body: 4
Quickness: 6
Strength: 3
Charisma: 6
Intelligence: 5
Willpower: 3
Essence: 5.3
Reaction: 5

Initiative: 5 + 2D6

Dice Pools

Defense (Armed): 7
Defense (Unarmed): 7
Dodge: 6

Skills

Armed Combat: 7
Athletics: 4
Bike: 6
Etiquette (Street): 5
Firearms: 6
Stealth: 4
Unarmed Combat: 7

Cyberware

Boosted Reflexes: 1
Retractable Razors (Improved Blades)

Gear

Armor Vest (2/1)
Harley Scorpion
HK227 [SMG, 5M3, 20 (clip), 2 extra clips, Laser Sight, Recoil Reduction 3]



GREEN LUCIFER

Alejandro Kyllsearn, now known as Green Lucifer, is a rebel with a cause: his own. He intends to rise to a position of prominence from which he can exact his vengeance on those of his former comrades who betrayed him to the Tir High Prince, and upon the Tir government itself. The long path to this end is unclear, but he intends to stage it from the city of Seattle, using the Ancients as his base.

He wishes no one to know the truth of his exile from the Tir. If questioned, he says that he was associated with an unpopular cause and chose exile over imprisonment. He attempts to downplay his life in the Tir as much as possible. Now, with the past seemingly back to haunt him, he is a nervous elf. To protect himself, he does everything possible to intercept any information the runners may learn about him. He has no qualms about removing the runners should they learn too much or become too much of a problem. Once the truth about Shim Bright and his goals begin to come out, Green Lucifer knows that Bright must be silenced before he can tell too much.

Kyllsearn, Green Lucifer, is slightly below average height and build for an elf, but what he lacks in stature he makes up for in presence. He tries to behave in a calculating manner, but his temper often gets the best of him. His eyes are gray, and his hair currently cut into a stylish purple and green mohawk that he privately despises.

He, like Bright, is secretly a mage. He has had less cause to display that talent, though on occasion he has been nearly pushed to it. Compared to the abilities of the runners and Bright, however, his are minor.

Attributes

Body: 4
Quickness: 7
Strength: 4
Charisma: 7
Intelligence: 6
Willpower: 5
Magic: 6
Essence: 6
Reaction: 6

Initiative: 6 + 1D6

Dice Pools

Astral (Defense): as skill
Astral (Dodge): 6
Astral (Magic): 7
Defense (Armed): 6
Defense (Unarmed): 8
Dodge: 7
Magic: 7

Spells

Combat
Mana Missile: 4
Powerball: 6

Cyberware

None

Gear

Ares Light Fire 70 [Light Pistol, 3M2, 16 (clip), 2 extra clips, Laser Sight]
Harley Scorpion
Lined Coat (4/1)
Ranger Arms SM-3 [Sniper, 6S2, 6 (magazine), 12 extra rounds]
Uzi III [SMG, 4M3, 16 (clip), w/2 extra clips, Laser Sight, Recoil Reduction 2]

Skills

Armed Combat: 6
Athletics: 7
Conjuring: 3
Enchanting: 3
Etiquette (Political): 4
Etiquette (Street): 3
Etiquette (Tir Tairngire): 6
Firearms: 8
Magical Theory: 2
Sorcery: 7
Stealth: 7
Unarmed Combat: 8

Special Skills

Language (Elvish/Spetheriel): 4

Detection
Personal Combat Sense: 3
Health
Heal Moderate Wounds: 4



LUCINDA TANGIER

Lucinda Mari Adler (nee Tangier) is rich, good-looking, rich, fairly intelligent, completely lacking in common sense, and rich (in that order). She hung around with St. John because of his image, but actually cared little for him or his life. What she cared for was the flash and the dash, and the little rush it all gave her.

His death changed her views, but she is still unsure how. Probably for the better, though only time will tell. She certainly does not want to return to her father and that life—at least not at the moment.

Lucinda Mari Adler is of average height and build, with short, stylish brunette hair and blue eyes. She dresses to the height of fashion and affects a street *patois* that's more than a little transparent.

Attributes

Body: 2
 Quickness: 3
 Strength: 3
 Charisma: 6
 Intelligence: 3
 Willpower: 3
 Magic: (6, untrained)
 Essence: 6
 Reaction: 3

Initiative: 3 + 1D6

Dice Pools

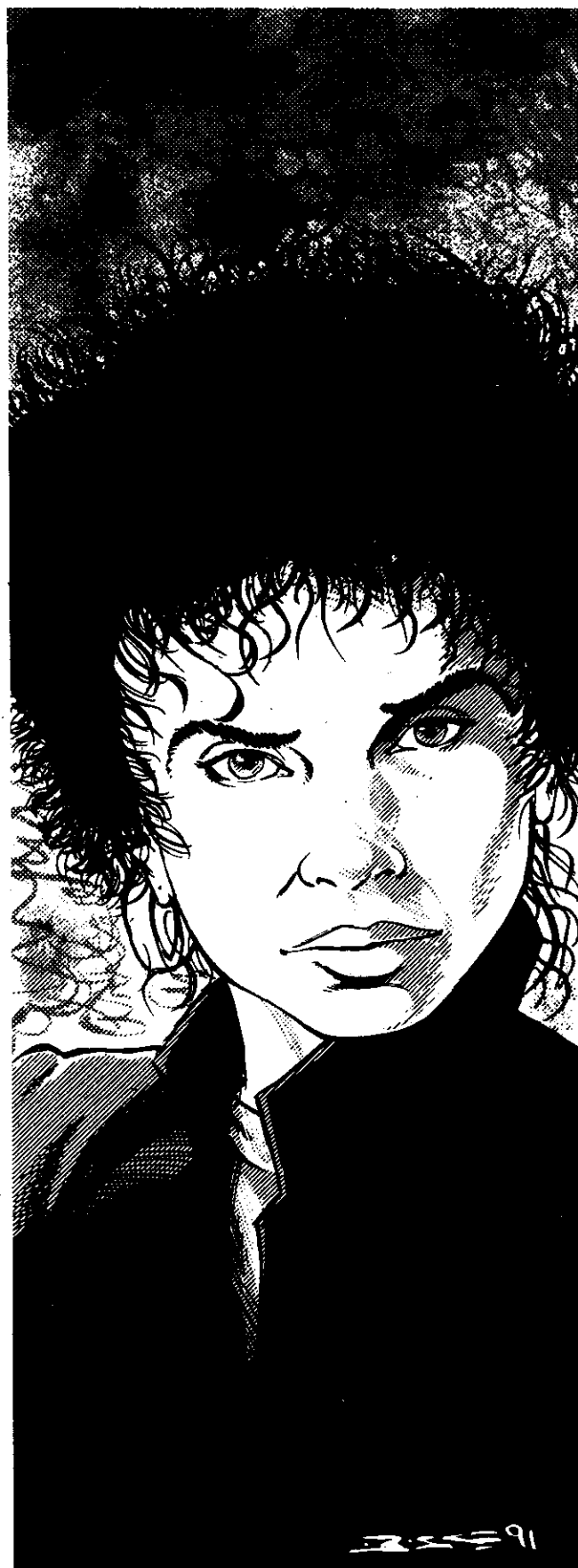
Defense (Armed): 1
 Defense (Unarmed): 2
 Dodge: 3

Skills

Unarmed Combat: 2

Gear

Tres Chic Clothing



INTEGRATING DMZ

The chapter **Ancient Words** portrays a gang fight involving dozens of participants. To resolve such a fight using the regular **Shadowrun** rules could take virtually days. For that reason, the **DMZ** game rules are recommended for resolving the combat quickly.

DMZ is a man-to-man combat board game set in the **Shadowrun** universe. It uses a simpler, faster game system to speed up combat. In turn, however, it is much bloodier. A

gamemaster must keep this in mind when using **DMZ** to resolve **Shadowrun** combats, especially among combatants of equal ability.

CHARACTERS

Following are **DMZ** statistics for the principal characters involved in the dock fight.

STING

Move/Fire Ratio: 2/3

	Armed		Unarmed	Firearms	Ranged	Sorcery	
Success Values:	17		21	12	12	—	
	Impact		Ballistic	Physical	Mana		
Defense Values:	10		11	4	3		
Weapons	Type	Ammo	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
HK227	SMG	3/7	4	22	20	18	16
HTH Success = 21			Damage = 2 Stun				
Notes: Armor Vest, Harley Scorpion							

GREEN LUCIFER

Move/Fire Ratio: 3/3

	Armed	Unarmed	Firearms	Ranged	Sorcery		
Success Values:	17	23	14	13	10		
	Impact	Ballistic	Physical	Mana			
Defense Values:	12	13	10	11			
Spells	Type	Force	Range	Damage	Success	Target	Drain
Decrease Reaction	P	3/1	LOS	NA	12/10	5	5/3
Heal Moderate Wounds	M	4/1	Touch	NA	13/10	Damage	4/1
Mana Missile	M	4/1	LOS	4/3	13/10	M	4/3
Powerball	Pa	6/1	LOS	4/2	15/10	P	6/4
Weapons	Type	Ammo	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
Light Fire (w/Laser)	Light	3/16	2	20	18	16	14
Ranger Arms SM-3	Sniper	3/6	4	28	26	24	22
Uzi III (w/Laser Sight)	SMG	3/5	4	22	20	18	16
HTH Success = 23		Damage = 2 Stun					
Notes: Harley Scorpion, Lined Coat							

INTEGRATING DMZ

ANCIENTS SOLDIER

Move/Fire Ratio: 3/3

	Armed	Unarmed	Firearms	Ranged	Sorcery		
Success Values:	17	19	11	15	—		
	Impact	Ballistic	Physical	Mana			
Defense Values:	11	13	4	5			
Weapons	Type	Ammo	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
Beretta Model 101T	Light	3/10	2	17	15	13	11
Uzi III (w/Laser Sight)	SMG	3/5	4	20	18	16	14
HTH Success = 19			Damage = 2 Stun				
Notes: (2) Flash Grenades, Honda Viking, Lined Coat, (1) Smoke Grenade							

ANCIENTS MAGE

Move/Fire Ratio: 3/3

	Armed	Unarmed	Firearms	Ranged	Sorcery		
Success Values:	10	15	9	9	9		
	Impact	Ballistic	Physical	Mana			
Defense Values:	7	8	10	11			
Spells	Type	Force	Range	Damage	Success	Target	Drain
Heal Moderate Wounds	M	4/1	Touch	NA	13/10	Damage	4/1
Mana Bolt	M	4/1	LOS	4/3	13/10	M	4/3
Powerball	Pa	6/1	LOS	4/2	15/10	P	6/4
Stun Missile	M	3/1	LOS	2/2 Stun	12/10	M	1/1
Weapons	Type	Ammo	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
Uzi III (w/Laser Sight)	SMG	3/5	4	20	18	16	14
HTH Success = 19			Damage = 2 Stun				
Notes: Armor Clothing, Honda Viking, (2) Smoke Grenades							

MEAT JUNKIE (HUMAN)

Move/Fire Ratio: 3/3

	Armed		Unarmed	Firearms	Ranged	Sorcery	
Success Values:	13		17	9	10	—	
	Impact		Ballistic	Physical	Mana		
Defense Values:	7		8	3	4		
Weapons	Type	Ammo	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
Beretta 101T	Light	3/10	2	15	13	11	9
and							
Mossberg CMTD	Shotgun	3/8	3	17	15	13	11
or							
HK227	SMG	3/7	4	19	17	15	13
HTH Success = 17			Damage = 2 Stun				
Notes: Armor Vest, Harley Scorpion							

MEAT JUNKIE (ORK)

Move/Fire Ratio: 3/3

		Armed	Unarmed	Firearms	Ranged	Sorcery	
Success Values:		15	19	9	9	—	
		Impact	Ballistic	Physical	Mana		
Defense Values:		9	10	6	3		
Weapons	Type	Ammo	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
Beretta 101T	Light	3/10	2	15	13	11	9
and							
Mossberg CMTD	Shotgun	3/8	3	17	15	13	11
or							
HK227	SMG	3/7	4	19	17	15	13
HTH Success = 19			Damage = 2 Stun				
Notes: Armor Clothing, Honda Viking, (2) Smoke Grenades							



VEHICLES

Following are statistics for the principal vehicles involved in the dock fight.

HARLEY SCORPION

Speed Multiple: 5 **Handling:** 18
Defensive, Normal: 18 **Armor:** 2 **Signature:** 3
Magic: 27

Notes: The gamemaster decides whether or not the motorcycles ridden by the gang members carry mounted weapons.

HONDA VIKING

Speed Multiple: 5 **Handling:** 18
Defensive, Normal: 20 **Armor:** 2 **Signature:** 3
Magic: 30

Notes: The gamemaster decides whether or not the motorcycles ridden by the gang members carry mounted weapons.

MAPS

See the **DMZ** map of the dock area on page 70. The area has been built using simple shapes so it can be easily re-created at the proper scale. Alternately, the gamemaster can have the page enlarged to 11 x 17 inches, which approximates the proper scale.

DMZ SYSTEM NOTES

The game statistics given above reflect changes made in the second printing of **DMZ**. Those changes are:

- Divide the Armor Ratings of all character armor by 2 and round down.

- Increase the distance a grenade can be thrown per MP by 1. Non-aerodynamic becomes 1 MP per 2 dots and aerodynamic becomes 1 MP per 3 dots.

PICKING UP THE PIECES

This section provides information the gamemaster can use to wrap up all the adventure's loose ends.

AFTEREFFECTS

Most of the potential aftereffects of **Elven Fire** have been dealt with in previous sections. An overview follows.

If the runners are able to supply Lone Star, and just as important, the yakuza, with evidence shedding enough doubt on the Ancients' responsibility for "Elven Fire," things begin to return to normal. Lone Star will back off from its aggressive position and try tactics geared more toward containment than confrontation. The yakuza will want as much information as the runners can provide in order to administer retribution to the correct parties. When the runners expose Elven Fire for what it is, the Ancients lose some face, but their rivals begin to back down. In approximately a week, things return to near normal. The runners end up with friends in the Ancients, possibly some respect from the yakuza, Koren Thark's thanks (and money), and appear on a long list of meddlers to be dealt with in Tir Tairngire.

If the runners fail, all hell breaks loose. Shortly after the end of the 48-hour deadline set by the yakuza, the Metroplex Guard rolls out. The gamemaster should handle the Guard as a military

unit as far as discipline and tactics. They are well-armed and field state-of-the-art support gear and ordnance. Much of the city increases to a AAA rating, per the security levels discussed on page 124 of **Sprawl Sites**. Everyday life in Seattle becomes very difficult. Inter-gang hostilities cease, at least to some degree, as they begin to wage war against the city.

How this affects the runners' lives is up to the gamemaster. Martial law should continue for some time in Seattle, providing an interesting setting for another adventure, at the very least.

KARMA

Award Karma to the group as follows:

Successfully dealing with the yakuza	4
Defeating Michael Dumont	4
Defeating Shim Bright	5
Down-scaling the gang war	5

Divide the points awarded evenly among the group. Drop any fractions.

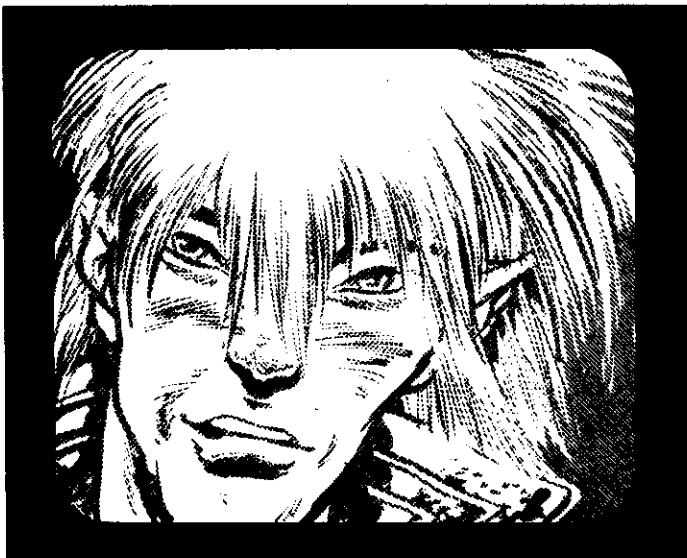
Individual Karma Points should be awarded at the gamemaster's discretion, but each character receives two Karma Points automatically just for surviving.



PLAYER HANDOUTS



PLAYER HANDOUT #1



"Violence wracked the Seattle metroplex for the fourth continuous day as intergang warfare claimed at least 22 more lives. Major flare-ups were reported in Snohomish near Shadow Lake, where the notorious go-gang the Blood Rumlbers clashed with their street rivals the Gothic Phantoms, resulting in the deaths of two Rumlbers and three passersby.

"In the Elven District, the Ancients greeted an apparent truce parley by their archrivals the Meat Junkies with a hail of gunfire and deadly magic that left three of the Junkies dead and two others hospitalized. Word on the street continues to point to the Ancients as one of the principal instigators of the current rash of Seattle gang violence.

"A member of the Ancients, giving his name only as Falchion, told one of our field crews that, quote, 'If blood is what they demand as tribute, then by god blood is what they shall get. We Ancients did not start this, but we will finish it. And when we do, the only colors not stained red will be ours.'

"Other gangs not directly involved with the Ancients seem to have taken their cue for violence from the elven gang's activities. Across Seattle, and even in some cases spreading into immediately neighboring Salish-Shidhe territory, gangs seem to be using the general atmosphere of chaos as an excuse to settle scores, reclaim or conquer turf, or simply strike fear into the hearts of those innocents around them.

"When finally reached for comment, Carol Lake, spokesperson for Lone Star Security, stated that the terms of Lone Star Security Services' contract with the metroplex of Seattle do not encompass prolonged violence on this scale. Ms. Lake also added that although Lone Star's local contracted assets were being pushed to the breaking point, Lone Star would continue to strive to maintain order within Seattle.

"Reports have also surfaced that Lone Star Seattle chief William Loudon has personally advised Governor Schultz to consider mobilizing the Metroplex Guard should Lone Star's efforts to control the violence fail. Lone Star has allegedly brought all Lone Star officers and employees onto active duty, canceling vacations, leaves of absence, and in some cases, retirements in order to bring their manpower up to the levels they believe necessary to take on the gangs head-to-head.

"Coming up, more on the gang violence in Loveland and John Whimmer tells us why today's air may be the best you're going to breath all year..."

PLAYER HANDOUT #2



PLAYER HANDOUT #3



LONE STAR DATA SERVICES

RESTRICTED INFORMATION

Search Criteria: > ANCIENTS, SYNOPSIS

Search Result:::::

THE ANCIENTS (LOCAL CHAPTER INFORMATION)

Classification

Street gang, with go-gang tendencies

Territory

Seattle metroplex limits; metahuman communities; elven district north-northeast of Denny Park

Interests

Weapons smuggling; mercenary activity; pro-elven/metahuman activity

Membership

Exclusively elven; principally male (est. 72%); believed to recruit Tir Tairngire political outcasts

Citywide membership unconfirmed at 100 to 150

Goals

Ancients' goals have always been obscure. The gang first appeared in Seattle shortly after the birth of Tir Tairngire, and the connection between the elven state and the Ancients has apparently always been strong, though covert. Interests seem to be primarily politically elven, though recent activity has taken a more neutral stance (see Leadership below).

Known Allies

No apparent traditional allies. Have provided assistance to elven gangs such as the Silent P's on occasion.

Known Enemies

Emerald Dogs: Conflict with the yakuza-backed gang seems to be primarily over Emerald Dog/yakuza involvement in elven communities.

Humanis Policlub: Harassment of the policlub has been long-standing

Meat Junkies: Conflict seems to be primarily turf-based in the vicinity of Denny Park

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Leadership

- Currently led by Sting (female), former lieutenant of previous leader, Wasp (male). Second-in-command is Green Lucifer (male).

- Previous leader Wasp killed in altercation with Meat Junkies approximately one year ago.

- Under Wasp, and continuing to a lesser degree under Sting, the Ancients have expanded their areas of involvement to include more traditional mercenary/muscle functions. There is some indication of internal dissent regarding this and the Ancients' association with Seattle's corporate structure.

Strength Evaluation

- The Ancients are extremely well-trained, both internally and externally. Capabilities sometimes approach those of a tactical military unit.

- The Ancients are well-known for their armaments, most of which are allegedly smuggled in from Tir Tairngire.

Colors

Black-blue and green

PLAYER HANDOUT #5

LONE STAR DATA SERVICES

RESTRICTED INFORMATION

Search Criteria: >ELVEN FIRE

Search Result:::::

Elven Fire

Name associated with twelve gang-related incidents over the last three months. Connection most often made through "Elven Fire" graffiti found near crime scene.

Witness identification and unsubstantiated street rumors connect "Elven Fire" with perpetrators garbed in Ancients street gang (see) colors.

One perpetrator image, from Witches' Circle incident, on file. See PH-AN-1276-AN for reference.

PLAYER HANDOUT #6

LONE STAR DATA SERVICES

RESTRICTED INFORMATION

Search Criteria: >TANGIER, LUCINDA

Search Result:::::

No data available

Previous records deleted by illegal system penetration.

PLAYER HANDOUT #7

LONE STAR DATA SERVICES

RESTRICTED INFORMATION

Search Criteria: >ST. JOHN, SYNOPSIS

Search Result:::::

Identity

Street Name only: legal name unknown.

Background

Local underworld figure with yakuza connections working the Loveland, Puyallup area. Strong connections with the Whispering Night clan of Loveland.

Arrests:

CRIMINAL WEAPONS POSSESSION [09-12-49] — Fined

CRIMINAL ARMOR POSSESSION [03-18-50] — Fined

RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT [04-22-51] — Fined

Current Status

Deceased; executed at Witches' Circle. Body cremated. No known next of kin.

PLAYER HANDOUT #8



"Hi there, and welcome to the news! With the gang violence situation worsening in Seattle, Governor Schultz today suspended all leaves for the Metroplex Guard and ordered all members of the Guard to report to Fort Lewis and their ready positions. No one from Fort Lewis, the Metroplex Guard, or the governor's media relations office would comment on the activation, though unofficial sources report that the governor intends to fully deploy the Guard if the situation does not improve.

"Tonight at eight: a round-table discussion with some of Seattle's top political and military advisors concerning the worsening street situation."

PLAYER HANDOUT #9



"Hi, good evening, and welcome to the news! Just moments ago, Governor Schultz ordered the Metroplex Guard out into the streets of Seattle in an effort to halt the ongoing gang violence. We'll have field camera reports from the streets where the Guard units are already—*(screen blasts to static, is replaced by the station logo, which remains on for hours...)*

TODAY'S HEADLINES:

INTERNATIONAL

- A Spirit Air jumbo jet crashed in the Andes mountains Monday morning, with 254 aboard. Rescuers have been unable to reach the remote spot, 200 km south of Machu Picchu, but spotter planes have seen signs of movement near the crash site.

METRO

- The British Royal Family visited Seattle yesterday, visiting the downtown area and conducting a formal inspection of Fort Lewis. Casualties were light, reported Fort Lewis Spokesman Master Sergeant Seamus LeGuinne. *For special photo section and casualty list, go to 14.*

BUSINESS

- The Spirit Air jet crash is only the latest, worst problem to face the charter airline, which specializes in taking pilgrims to holy sites.

ENTERTAINMENT

- Peggy's Playful Porkers have been packin' them in at Siegmund's nightclub downtown. Is it just a fluke, or does this signal a return of animal acts?

SPORTS

- Mariners owner Jerome Einsdorff once again denies rumors that the team may move to Oakland, California Free State. "If we get the changes we want in Kingdome management, we will happily stay here," Einsdorff told reporters.

EXPEDITION TRAGEDY

Walter G. Smith and Staff

MultiSource (Seattle) — A Seattle University research expedition returned in tragedy from Southeast Asia with only four of the original twelve-member team still alive. Team leader Dr. Walter Hunt refused to comment on the details of the trip and on the deaths of the team members. "It's all too soon, all too tragic," said Dr. Hunt. Unconfirmed reports from the university indicate that Dr. Hunt and his team ran afoul of a Vietnamese bandit king and had to be rescued. No other information was immediately forthcoming.

CAR EXPLODES DOWNTOWN

P. Daza

Local (Seattle)— One person was killed in a car explosion near a popular downtown nightspot late last evening. The car's owner, Ellen Donnelly, was killed instantly when her car, a Saab Dynamit, exploded as she turned the ignition outside the jazz club Matchstick's about 11:45 last night.

Lone Star Security reported that they believe that it was a professional assassination. Ms. Donnelly, reportedly with ties to underworld figures of the shadow market and other crime syndicates, was allegedly not a member of the private club. No explanation of her presence there has yet been given. Lone Star says they are investigating, but have no leads.

GANG WARFARE ABATES

T. A. Dowd

NewsNet (Seattle) — The sun rose over Seattle on the first day of apparent true calm that the violence-wracked city has seen in nearly a month. Lone Star Security reported overnight violence down 26 percent from the previous evening and down 71 percent from the previous week.

Lone Star Security spokesperson Carol Lake told NewsNet that much of the violence seems to have stemmed from the activities of a group calling itself "Elven Fire" and claiming to be part of the infamous Ancients street gang.

"Apparently," said Ms. Lake, "the entire 'Elven Fire' organization was a hoax aimed at breaking up the Ancients. Once the rest of the gangs found that out, they resented being duped and began to calm down. Fortunately, whatever 'Elven Fire' was, it's likely someone has taken care of them. Otherwise, the violence would still be continuing as the other gangs hunted them down."

Ms. Lake and Lone Star refused to comment on rampant street rumors linking "Elven Fire" with agents of Tir Tairngire. A spokesman for the Tir Tairngire embassy also refused comment.

GIANT GEODUCK FOUND

T. Gallagher

Local (Seattle) — A geoduck the size of a motorbike was found by boaters in the Puget Sound Sunday.

The shellfish measured 1.63 meters across at the widest part of the shell, with a neck .33 m long.

"We saw the neck, and thought it was an eel," said Roger Browning, who, along with Wendy Tancredi, hauled the geoduck ashore. "Then we thought it was a bizarre anemone attached to a rock, then we finally realized the rock was the biggest geoduck you ever want to see."

Dr. Carmela Cuomo, a marine biologist at Seattle University, said that preliminary investigation indicates that the geoduck, while abnormal, is not paranormal.

"It appears to be purely of the species *Panope generosa*," said Cuomo, "And very *generosa*, at that."

Cuomo said that she cannot be certain if the specimen is a normal species without running further tests on the mollusk's tissue, and the mollusk will have to be dead to collect sufficient tissue. She also declined to speculate how it got to be so big.

Browning and Tancredi would like to keep the gargantuan bivalve alive as long as possible. It is currently on display at Frank's Fish World, on Western Ave.

When the big mollusk goes to that great pond in the sky, Tancredi would like its shell to go to her alma mater, Evergreen College, whose mascot is the geoduck.

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CITY UNDER MARTIAL LAW

T. A. Dowd

NewsNet (Seattle) — Power was lost in the International District last night following a Metroplex Guard skirmish with gang elements. Metroplex Guard Captain Mickey Colton told a NewsNet reporter on the scene that his Guard unit, a platoon of eight men supported by an armored personnel carrier, was ambushed by a gang of wiz-kid mages.

Said Captain Colton, "The little bastards just jumped us, no warning, no nothing. Since they were just kids I told my men to hold their fire, then the APC went up and I thought, screw that."

Initial reports are that the power station was struck by a portable antivehicle missile fired by one of the Metroplex Guardsmen. Captain Colton, however, denied the report. "No way. One of the kids was on top of the station hurling energy, and then suddenly, wham, he blew himself up. I've heard of that happening, but I'd never seen it."

Elsewhere, the city struggled under its sixth day of martial law. Lone Star Security reported that the death toll for the period had reached 118 by midnight last night. Governor Schultz has scheduled a news conference for later this evening, where she will announce her request for federal assistance from UCAS President Alan Adams. Washington has allegedly been considering assigning the UCAN battlegroup around the nuclear aircraft carrier *Koontz* temporarily under the command of the Metroplex Guard.

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