



Faces in the Crowd

VOLUME ONE | VILLAINS

an **A|STATE** supplement

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Faces in the Crowd

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About This Book

This is the first in a series of books detailing NPCs for use in games of a|state. Each character comes with an illustration, description, stats and adventure possibilities. We hope that you will find these useful in your games and we'd like to hear your opinions on this book, and on what types of NPCs you would like to see in future books in this series.

Please write to us at the Contested Ground Studios forums.

Ratings

The Villains have been rated from 1 to 5 in nastiness, each point marked with a skull. Briefly the ratings are as follows.

- ☠ Nasty, but not a large-scale or lingering problem.
- ☠☠ Repellent. A villain who cannot be summarily dismissed or ignored.
- ☠☠☠ Foul. A long-term foe who will dog the Player Characters for some time.
- ☠☠☠☠ Dangerous. A far-reaching and devastating enemy who will pose an ongoing problem.
- ☠☠☠☠☠ Horrific. A stain on The City that will haunt all who cross them. A persistent, lingering menace.





Nugent boote

Age: 43

Height/Build: 5' 7"/Skinny

Eye/Hair Colour: Blue/Brown

Occupation: Travelling freakshow owner

Affiliations: None

"Roll up, roll up! Laydeez an gennelmen! Yes, yes, yes! Witness the mazing, astounding, travelling Compendium of Wonders! Brought to you by...me! Mr Nugent Boote! Come for the freaks, stay for the amazing stunts! Performed by freaks!"

Nugent Boote is a man with a dream. Sadly, that dream has never been realised as his 'big break' as an actor never materialised. Despite hundreds of auditions, attempts at one man shows and even impromptu street theatre, Boote was destined never to tread the boards in anything other than an amateur capacity.

He did, however, fall in with a travelling attraction known as The Compendium of Wonders. Frustrated in his attempts to become a thespian (and at people constantly mishearing his intended profession), he became a barker for this mobile freakshow and gallery of the odd. When Old Mrs Scuggins (the proprietor of the Compendium) passed away, Boote managed, by dint of underhanded political manoeuvring and playing various people off against one another, to gain control of the enterprise and become owner and operator. He now sees himself as a forward-looking impresario in charge of a great artistic endeavour. Most people view him as a small-time showboater, petty crook and self-righteous bully with ideas above his station.

Physically, Boote is not an impressive man. Sallow of skin and dull of eye, his only really outstanding feature is his hectoring tone of voice and ability to attract a crowd. His built up shoes and massive stovepipe hat are worn to increase his stature and give him standing as befits his elevated station in life. Most notably, he is missing his entire left hand. This is the result of a belief that his sharpshooting skills were better than they really were and, perhaps most devastatingly, a belief that the homemade sparklock he was using in an act wouldn't actually blow up in his hand. The near-fatal detonation of the capacitors removed his hand and took Boote nearly to the point of death. Ever since the unfortunate sparklock accident, he has refused to touch a sparklock (he hates the sight of the things) and

has never again attempted his much-vaunted trick shot routine. Not that this prevents him forcing some of his performers into taking part in acts that are dangerous and possibly even life threatening. His claim that he "Wouldn't put anyone through anything he hasn't been through himself" has become something of a mantra to justify increasingly bizarre and cruel attractions.

Overall, Boote is a man puffed up with his own sense of self-importance. He genuinely believes that he is engaging in the actors' art by yelling his wares to shuffling crowds. He is obsequious to his social betters (as he perceives them) and somewhat disdainful of the 'common folk'. His fawning over actors, playwrights and those involved in the theatre is legendary to the point of embarrassment. Casually mention that you once took part in a travelling production of 'Thirteen Days In A Skiff' or 'Folly and Felicity', and he will be all over you like a bad case of Dockers Rash.

Boote is, to put not too fine a point on it, a bully. He cares little for those who work under him, seeing them as merely a means of making a quick shilling. He forces his labourers, freaks and performers to live and work in awful conditions. His attitude towards those in his care who have physical deformities is nothing short of callous. He looks down on them as sub-human monsters, beating them with his cane and lashing them with his tongue. Few people have ever developed a friendship with this man, a not unsurprising consequence of his mean nature and conniving attitude.

adventure nugget

The travelling freakshow run by the nefarious Nugent Boote has arrived in the PCs' part of The City. The Compendium of Wonders brings entertainment for all, hijinks aplenty and, of course, a whole host of problems.

The word on the street, at first, is that the Compendium is the place for everyone to go, from excitable children to weary octogenarians. Boote's show has good attendances in the first week and tales spread of the fabulous freaks and entertainments on display. Then the initial buzz starts to fade and the complaints start to accumulate: theft, assault, petty crime, and stories of the abuse of the freaks in the show itself. The locals are getting restless and trusted residents and worthies go to the PCs about it. More directly the PCs may find themselves victims of a crime that can be traced back to the Compendium. It is left up to the PCs to investigate the claims and either restore some sanity to the situation or go and sort it out themselves.



Stats, Skills and Equipment

Whatever the PCs end up doing, they will surely at some point come into contact with the unpleasant Mr Boote. He will wheedle, berate, scold, entreaty and befriend the characters as he feels is appropriate to the situation. But no matter what they end up doing, they will eventually incur his boundless wrath, and be on the receiving end of a furious tongue-lashing. Naturally, his boys are on hand to protect him from any physical abuse that the PCs may wish to send his way. How they react to this is up to the PCs, and what those reactions lead to.

Possibilities

1) The freak show is, of course, responsible for the increase in crime in the local area but in more ways than are at first apparent. It is not the poor, oppressed freaks that are responsible for the crime wave, it is the various barkers, showmen and hired hands who are the ones causing the trouble. They always seek to augment their meagre incomes with whatever they can pocket and always try to pin the blame on the most unfortunate of the freaks kept captive by the show, or local criminals. They have a nice little scheme going and they will not be best pleased if anyone tries to put an end to their supplementary remuneration.

2) The freak show isn't wholly responsible for the increase in crime but a shadowy troupe of crooks who follow the Compendium are. They trail along behind the barges of the show, lazily following its progress along the canals. When the show pitches up in a new burgh, they set about robbing and importuning under cover of the excitement generated by the arrival of Boote and his acts. Invariably, the show gets blamed, Boote loses his temper, abuses the freaks and leaves the burgh in a state of high dudgeon.

3) The freak show most certainly isn't responsible for all of the trouble, it is local crooks who have used its arrival to indulge in a bit of a crime spree. However, what the characters do discover is the appalling treatment meted out to the freaks by Boote and his sadistic assistants. Forced to live in inhuman conditions and debase themselves for the entertainment of slaving throngs, their lives are nothing but squalor and misery. Although they are kept sequestered away from prying eyes, should anyone get close to them they will beseech friendly faces for assistance, for escape, and for shelter. Despite their horrific deformities and incapacities, they are fellow men and women who at least deserve dignity, respect and a life free from the exploitative ways of Boote and his kind.

Stats

AGL: 40	AWR: 60
DEX: 30	INT: 55
HLT: 40	PER: 60
STR: 40	WIL: 65

Skills

Act	50
Commerce (spoken)	60
Common (read & write)	70
Criminal Culture	60
Economics	60
Fast Talk	70
Folklore	40
Negotiation	65
Persuasion	60
Pistol	55
Sneak	40
Unarmed Combat	30
Hook	10

Equipment

- Cane
- Frock coat
- Hook (affixed to arm)

Boote's Boys

Boote is a sick, twisted figure and he probably would be no more than a perverted curiosity were it not for his deformed inner cadre of thugs, Boote's Boys, who protect him and allow him to continue his villainous ways.

AGL: 40	AWR: 60
DEX: 30	INT: 55
HLT: 40	PER: 60
STR: 40	WIL: 65

Skills

Armed Combat	50	Drinking	50
Unarmed Combat	50		

Gear

Boatman's Hook, Club or other sharpened implement, Shabby clothes.



valentin brady 1



Valentin brady ☠☠

Age: 32

Height/Build: 6' 2"/Muscular

Eye/Hair Colour: Green/Shaven headed

Occupation: Thug

Affiliations: None

"Jus' 'and over all yer cash! What? I dunno, all of it. What? Change for the ferry? I dunno mate, I dunno. Oh, go on then. Here's a shilling. Now get away with ye!"

Some criminals in The City are blessed with outstanding reserves of native cunning. Others rejoice in superior intelligence, whilst some are uncannily charismatic. Valentin Brady has none of these qualities. A singularly stupid and bloody-minded man, he lacks anything approaching education or intellectual capability. An illiterate simpleton, he would have wasted away and been forgotten long ago if it were not for his singular determination and total lack of anything approaching fear or remorse.

As many people know, the Hohler Gang is the controlling force in Mire End. They have an iron grip on criminal activity and take grim exception to those who try their hand at freelance thieving, prostitution and peddling. Unfortunately, Brady is just too fundamentally stupid to realise how dangerous his position is and cheerfully carries on burglarising, mugging, threatening and intimidating with gleeful abandon.

One of the strange things is that no matter how hard the Hohlers try to take him out, he always seems to recover and come back stronger than ever. Despite numerous shootings, knifings, beatings and attempted drownings, Brady just seems too monstrously thick to actually realise when he is dead. There is a constant amazement in Mire End that he is still walking, talking and breathing. Some view him as a folk hero of sorts; a bulwark against the excesses of the Hohlers, a man grimly determined to stand up for himself. In truth, he is neither better nor worse than Garsey Hatchett and his men. Speaking of Garsey Hatchett...

Garsey Hatchett despises Valentin Brady with a passion that runs deep. He sees him a challenge to his authority, cocking a snook at his criminal empire. Given that Hatchett is a psychotic sadist of the worst kind, this

would normally mean a one way trip to the bottom of the Green Canal. Unlike many others who have crossed his path, Brady is still around. Which infuriates Hatchett even more and causes no end of amusement for ordinary Mire Enders, who secretly love seeing the skeletal Hohler Gang boss agitated out of his mind.

Physically, Valentin Brady is quite an imposing figure, his stature only increased by the incongruous top hat that he affects. Carved into his chest is the word 'UNSCARRED', a rather ironic slogan for a man such as him to be sporting. Needless to say, he is not in an intellectual position to appreciate the irony and simply had an associate write it there because he liked the look of the word (he doesn't even know what it means due to his lack of any kind of literacy). His broad shoulders and muscular arms are most often seen power a crude club into the head or torso of his latest unfortunate victim, usually with terminal results.

In the final analysis, Brady is something of a lonely individual. He has no friends and few long-term associates. He would like to think that he has something of an acquaintance with Janus Kripitsch and Jane Card, who view him with a form of affection, albeit affection laced with distaste over his choice of career and methods of earning his keep.

All in all, Brady would be more than happy to settle down and raise a family. The only trouble for him in this regard is actually working out how to go about doing this and what to do when he actually gets there.

adventure nugget

Brady has taken his feud with the Hohler Gang in Mire End to another level. Recently he came upon information linking the Third Church Home For Unwanted Children with the Hohler Gang crew of Garsey Hatchett. Incensed at this seeming betrayal by Father Herbert, who Brady has given money to in the past, he has taken bloody revenge upon the orphanage.

Last night he ran amok in the Home with his club battering and crippling as many of the little children that he could get his hands on. He was most vocal in his denouncements of it being a 'Hohler breeding ground' and a 'nursery for Wastrels Lot'.



Valentin Brady 9

Luckily for Father Guy Herbert, he was out at a soup kitchen when the attack happened. Whether this was coincidence or whether he got an inside tip from the Hohler Gang about an imminent rampage is anyone's guess.

Naturally there will be a number of ways that the PCs will be dragged into resolving this situation. The whole affair is messily wrapped up in the fact that Brady often opposes the Hohler Gang's excesses in the Burgh, and that the relationship between the Gang and the Home could open up a whole can of worms across Mire End.

Possibilities

1) Garsey Hatchett himself wants the PCs to sort out Brady, and is willing to give them any help he can. Of course, anything that would help Garsey should give the PCs pause for thought before acting on it. Indeed, if they were to take Brady out of the equation it would remove someone that currently torments Hatchett on a daily basis. And that is probably not desirable for Mire End in the long run. Still, surely Brady's wanton act cannot be left to go unpunished?

2) Father Herbert feels that he can persuade Brady it was all a big misunderstanding and enlists the help of the PCs to track him down and arrange a 'clear the air' meeting. Certainly, Valentin is short of intellect and the charismatic priest could be the very fellow to talk the thug around. But why is Herbert so interested in smoothing things over with Brady? Surely even the good Father must want some sort of revenge taken on Brady for his brutal and callous attack? And what about the underlying information that someone fed to Brady. Was that a leak from the Hohlers, Herbert or some other third party? And if it is true what does this mean for the Home's relationship with the PCs?

3) Brady is just an out of control thug who has gone off the deep end. Tomorrow, if the PCs cannot stop him, he is planning an attack on the Soup Kitchens. Then the Railway Shanties and on to Redberry Park. He has enlisted a small group of like-minded idiots to help him in his plan for a 'clearing out' of Hohler influence on the burgh. It is going to be bloody unless the PCs can intervene.

Stats, Skills and Equipment

Stats

AGL:	45	AWR:	55
DEX:	40	INT:	35
HLT:	45	PER:	40
STR:	70	WIL:	60

Skills

Armed Combat	60
Club	+30
Criminal Culture	65
Drinking	70
Persuasion	40
Intimidation	+20
Pistol	50
Thrown Weapon	40
Knife	+10
Unarmed Combat	60
Grapple	+15
Punch	+20

Equipment

Big club
2 throwing knives
Small sparklock pistol
Top hat





Kerwyn Broadbarn



Age: 36

Height/Build: 6' 1"/Elegantly slim

Eye/Hair Colour: Sparkling blue/Brown

Occupation: Gang boss

Affiliations: The Hohler Gang

"Well, that is indeed unfortunate. Yes, I know you're sorry. Yes, I realise you've been trying your best. Yes, wife and four kids. Yes, yes, heard it all before. Now do be a kind chap and hurry up and drown, I have a recital to attend."

A slim, elegant man in well-tailored clothes, Broadbarn affects the air of a cultured, well-bred man of leisure. This leads to one rather obvious question: why is he breaking kneecaps in Folly Hills for a living? Queries such as this aside, he is a ruthlessly efficient gangster and holds the Hohler Gang members in Folly Hills in a grip of iron.

Broadbarn leads the so-called Four Fingers Crew, one of the most feared and respected Hohler Gang groups in the entire city. They acquired their somewhat incongruous name from their habit of removing a finger from anyone who has displeased them. This digit removal always takes place before any other form of vengeance, such as tying an individual up and throwing them into a canal to drown. All members of the gang carry massive, black iron scissors. However, Broadbarn (being a man of refined tastes and elevated demeanour) prefers to carry a slim pair of highly polished, very sharp scissors. Most of the time, he is disinclined to actually use them, preferring to rely on one of his pugnacious lieutenants to carry out his dirty work.

Growing up on the grimy streets of the burgh, Broadbarn ran with several gangs in his youth, carrying out all manner of minor and major crimes. Eventually, he graduated into fully-fledged membership of the local crew and from then on in, his path was set. The then leaders of the gang appreciated his sly intelligence but failed to see the cunning and avaricious gleam in his eye. Within a few years, the old guard were dispatched to the canals and Broadbarn was in complete control. Nowadays, nobody even remembers the name of the old crew or who its leaders were. Their names have vanished from memory, erased by a harsh new order.

Always clad in the finest of clothes, Broadbarn's bowler hat is spotless, his trousers well pressed and his fingernails immaculately clean and well manicured. Nobody would dare to suggest that he cuts something of a foppish figure as he proceeds through the impoverished streets of Folly Hills, surrounded by a posse of his thuggish yes-men. He has a taste for the finest food a drink, something you could never tell from his slim, well-toned figure. He also appreciates the fine arts, enjoying an eclectic range of string music and choral works.

He is also a man who very rarely loses his temper, being possessed of an ineffable calm and overwhelming self-assurance. It goes without saying that those who have experienced his rare rages are seldom in a position to give a first hand account of the experience. Such is his grip on power that even crews from neighbouring burghs feel compelled to pay tribute to the Four Fingers Crew. It is said that Broadbarn is one of the few of whom mad Garsey Hatchett in Mire End is truly afraid. Even that particular mad dog knows a bigger, fiercer beast when he sees one.

With his coterie of loyal soldiers and (by the standards of the area) amazing wealth and influence, local people can see no end to the Broadbarn era. And, to be honest, they can think of worse criminals to have as boss in the burgh. Broadbarn does not terrorise or oppress, he merely suggests or implies. Those who do not follow his wishes are given a very swift and object lesson on deference and humility, lessons which permeate out to others, smoothing the path for future dealings.

Never forget, though, that underneath that veneer is a thoroughly foul character who will think of nothing but revenge and punishment on any do-gooder who meddle with his criminal activities. And he has the influence to spread his ill far and wide.

ADVENTURE NUGGET

It was a reasonably nice day in Folly Hills when the body was found. One of the local councillors, pierced on a fish hook in the middle of his office, one finger removed from each hand. The next day came two more bodies, two more local dignitaries murdered in their homes, the local provost captain and the owner of the biggest grocery store in the area, again a finger cut off on each hand. The provosts suspect Broadbarn, his signature is all over it, at least that is how it looks on the surface.



There should be a strong reason for the PCs to be dragged into this, as Broadbarn is a big fish in the local area. Perhaps one of the murdered men was a friend of the PCs, or they are friendly with the local provosts, or maybe they just have an overwhelming need to help and a grudge with Mr Broadbarn? For whatever reason the PCs get involved in investigating this spate of killings, getting to the bottom of them and finding out what has happened. First stop would be Broadbarn, you would think, but he has been missing for the last few days...

Possibilities

1) Broadbarn, or a very senior member of his crew, has finally snapped and has begun to kill indiscriminately. This monster is willing to kill anyone and anything for the mildest indiscretion and the chase will be hindered by the Hohler oath of silence. Indeed, anyone who might be a witness will be less inclined to come forward when anyone that speaks to the PCs becomes another victim within hours. Broadbarn, as it happens, turns up shortly thereafter claiming he was away from the burgh on 'private business' and, suspiciously, he has a watertight alibi for at least a few of the killings.

2) Broadbarn and the Hohlers have nothing to do with these killings at all. A loan shark had set up a scam involving all the people killed. There are still a few who owe the shark money that he has not reached yet, perhaps they will be able to help the PCs solve these crimes. In any event, using Broadbarn as cover was a foolhardy plan, and the increased provost presence in the area has caused Broadbarn to go underground for a few days. If Broadbarn can be cleared of these crimes he will be more hospitable towards the PCs than usual.

More importantly for Kerwyn, though, is finding out who has placed all this unnecessary attention his way. Should the PCs answer this question then he may even forgive a debt or two.

3) Broadbarn isn't doing the killings himself but he is behind the killings. He is clearing the way for a new political order in Folly Hills. One that is more under his control than the present regime. And what better way to clear himself of any involvement than to frame himself for the crime and then get the PCs to clear his good name? Always thinking ahead, that's Mr Broadbarn.

Stats, Skills and Equipment

Stats

AGL:	60	AWR:	60
DEX:	55	INT:	55
HLT:	60	PER:	70
STR:	50	WIL:	70

Skills

Armed Combat	50
Scissors	+20
Bribery	70
Common (read & write)	75
Criminal Culture	80
Culture (rad & write)	55
Culture (spoken)	65
Fast Talk	70
Law	50
Negotiation	75
Persuasion	70
Intimidation	+20
Pickpocket	55
Pistol	60
Shadow	60
Sneak	60
Unarmed Combat	50

Equipment

Bowler hat
Expensive watch
Medium Cartridge Revolver
Scissors
Well tailored coat





Julianna Cross

Age: 33

Height/Build: 5'8"/ Dumpy

Eye/Hair Colour: Brown/Brown

Occupation: Housewife

Affiliations: None

'What are you talking about? A murder? Oh my, I don't know what you mean. Now where are my darlings...'

When she was a skinny, weak thirteen-year-old, something happened to Julianna Cross that shaped the rest of her life. Living in a tenement in Hangside she had little access to places to play and like many of her peers the streets and canal sides became her playground. She was a lonely, quiet child, with few friends, but other than her lack of close companions she seemed completely ordinary. In truth however even at that young age she was becoming dangerously unstable. Emotionally unable to connect to other people, Cross was becoming increasingly insular and uncommunicative, feelings stemming from the sense of powerlessness she constantly fought. That, however, was about to change.

While playing down a deserted backstreet Julianna stumbled across a recently mugged man. He had been stabbed but the attackers had fled; he was lying on his back, the knife still in the wound and though conscious he was unable to move. Approaching the man Cross felt a strange detachment, as if she watched another acting through her. Cautiously she knelt by the man and put her hand on the knife, evincing a groan from the victim. Surprised at the reaction, she repeated the action, gently pushing and pulling at the knife, listening to the sounds of agony the man made as he stared at her with his pleading eyes. She felt a rush of elation surging through her. This was power, this was power! She toyed with him for over an hour before he died.

Since that time Cross has adjusted well to life in Hangside and is now a respected member of the community. She has three children, two boys and a girl, and a good-for-nothing, work shy husband she continually berates. None know Julianna's secret, the way she found to shake of the powerless feelings that have plagued her life. Whenever she can safely do so without any danger of suspicion, Cross kills. She will kill anyone, stranger, close friend,

woman, man, child. Anyone. It is only through these acts that she feels she is able to connect with society.

To any who meet her Cross she comes across as a perfectly ordinary, if rather bossy matriarch. Stout and steady, her brown eyes have a mothering cast to them which immediately calms frightened children and scares unruly ones. Her face is open and honest, and her manner easy and friendly. She clearly loves her family and blends well into the general background of City life. There are only two instances in which she could become truly dangerous to others - either when she is put in a position where she could kill without danger to herself or fear of discovery, or if she thought someone had discovered her secret. Then that unfortunate person would indeed discover the true nature of Julianna's soul.

Julianna is a wicked killer, dangerous, hidden and unpredictable. But she is a localised problem and so not as dangerous as some of the other villains...for the moment.

adventure nugget

Someone killed Somerset Vallain. He was found two days ago, shoved into a fish grinder used to make a glue-like paste from old fish bones. It was not unusual to see Vallain at the factory, he repaired the grinders for a living, and maybe he did just slip. But why was the machine on? How could he slip so far into the machine? And who made the muddy footprint behind the body?

Rumours are spreading thick and fast - there is a murderer about in Hangside. His family are distraught, and it's all his wife's friend Julianna Cross can do to calm her down. The locals want an answer and they'll look to anyone for help. Cue the players.

Whether Julianna committed the murder or not is up the GM, but either way she's worried. People are snooping around asking questions, and she's terrified that they will uncover further killings she's worked so hard to hide. So the only thing she can do is keep going - if she can get rid of these investigators, then maybe she'll be free.

Note that Cross may best be used as a villain if she escapes initial exposure by the played characters, and then stalks them to keep their silence on what they have learned while in Hangside.



Possibilities

1) Digging around, the players are likely to uncover a host of interesting facts. Apparently, several people have died in the neighbourhood over the last few years. All seemingly unconnected accidents or suicides. They do have one connection though that has escaped notice, they all knew the Cross family. Could there be something more to this than meets the eye?

2) Cross has stolen stuff from every person she's ever killed. In her humble abode, there is a stash of goods belonging to the deceased. Should the characters discover this, Cross will pretend to break down in tears and attempt to cover up her greater crimes by admitting she's been buying stolen goods. She'll make up a name and attempt to obfuscate, all the while planning to do away with the characters.

3) With a bunch of at least semi-competent characters appearing on the scene, Cross has decided that her time in Hangside has come to an end and makes a terrified escape. This will immediately be obvious and lead to a chase far from Hangside in search of the deranged killer.

Stats, Skills and Equipment

Stats

AGL: 45	AWR: 55
DEX: 60	INT: 60
HLT: 50	PER: 60
STR: 40	WIL: 60

Skills

Act	70
Armed Combat	40
Knife	+20
Common (read & write)	40
Cooking	70
Fast Talk	70
Folklore	70
First Aid	60
Hide	55
Oration	65
Persuasion	60
Shadow	50

Equipment

- Cheap, rough clothes
- Comb
- Knife
- Old pocket watch





brooke fegelein ☠☠☠☠

Age: Unknown, perhaps early 40s
Height/Build: 6' 6"/Very thin
Eye/Hair Colour: Grey/Grey
Occupation: Grauschjager officer
Affiliations: Trilhoeven

"You have committed a crime against the Company. I have been sent to administer your punishment. You will now die."

As feared as Trilhoeven's grey-clad Grauschjager may be, there are always some figures in any organization who go beyond the levels of horror accorded to others. One such man is Gruppenkommandant Brooke Fegelein, one of the most senior members of the spectral cadre that is the Grauschjager.

Prodigiously tall and skeletally thin, Fegelein bears an uncanny resemblance to a walking corpse, an emaciated collection of bone, sinew and dried-out flesh. His face, rather unsurprisingly, reminds most people of a dead skull with parchment white skin stretched across its angular bones. Few would wish to stare in to those dead, grey eyes, totally devoid of anything approaching human emotion. His slim, delicate hands have been responsible for more suffering and death than most people would care to contemplate.

Clad in the simple uniform of the Grauschjager, there are few outwards signs of the man's status within the organization. Badges of rank and gold braid are notable by their absence, only the winged iron badge of Trilhoeven stands out amongst the commonplace, dull monotony.

Fegelein is truly one of those rare people who are totally and utterly disconnected from the rest of mankind. Never once has he displayed anything that could be said to resemble emotion, humanity or even a passing interest in events. Every action is carried out with the same blank disinterest. Fegelein takes no joy from his work, he exists only to serve the macrocorporation and its edicts. If a superior were to instruct him to place a gun to his head and end his life, he would carry out that order without hesitation.

Even within the rarified circles of the Grauschjager, an organization with a dark and mysterious history, the actions of Fegelein are spoken about with guarded awe. His absolute dedication to the cause, his total disregard for others has become a byword for the brutality and harshness of the Grauschjager. If this man is assigned to a task,

then you can be sure that Trilhoeven intend that task be carried through with utter ruthlessness. An intriguing folklore has grown up around the man, weaving an aura of mysticism and legend about this darkest of figures.

Some events serve to define the legend, such as the infamous Ditchling Spout Works Strike. When low paid employees in the iron works at Ditchling Spout went on strike in protest at the appalling working conditions, Trilhoeven was momentarily at a loss. The sit-in shut down the works and caused substantial worry for many executives. Negotiations broke down almost immediately due to intransigence on both sides and tempers were becoming increasingly frayed. Eventually, Trilhoeven ordered Fegelein to resolve the situation as soon as possible. Rounding up local people, he had them brick and board up entrances, exits, widows and vents into the main building the strikers were occupying. Then he gassed the strikers, killing every single one of the 569 men and women occupying the building. He then ordered the locals to clear the building of bodies and to start work immediately to get production re-started. Since then, strikes at Trilhoeven works have been few and far between.

GMs Note: Under no circumstances should the characters ever actually meet Fegelein. It is unlikely in the extreme that they would survive such an encounter. His name should be used as a threat rather than any indication that he will actually be around. The merest mention of his name and reputation should be enough to cause fear and alarm in all but the most stupid individuals.

adventure nugget

Crossing swords with Brooke Fegelein is something that should be done with extreme caution. This relentless brute will be a formidable ongoing foe for any group of PCs that happens to catch his attention. And they can come to his attention in the most unlikely of ways.

The PCs have been trying to find a little girl who has gone missing. It is this kind of good-natured act that causes them to become embroiled with the dreaded Grauschjager. The little girl is called Popka and was last seen wearing a bright red coat - the PCs even have a drawing or lithograph of her to aid them in tracking her down. It seems most likely that she has been abducted for working in a factory, or perhaps by nefarious filth peddlers of the sickiest order. In any case the exact nature of her abduction will soon be lost to The City itself.



The PCs successfully track Popka and her abductors to a dishevelled railway shanty. Cresting over the embankment there is a horrid, fatty stench. Burnt flesh and melted bone fills the nostrils. Between the banks, on a disused railway siding, is a pile of clothes from perhaps 30 or 40 people. In the drab pile of oily, grey rags a bright red coat can be seen. Nearby the dying embers of what was a wooden hut burn slowly. It has been burnt to the ground with many people inside, an atrocity of the worst order. Whoever has stolen Popka has met a gruesome end here.

Possibilities

1) Popka is not dead. She has been taken by Trilhoeven and will be inducted into their ways. If they do not save her she will grow up in awe of Fegelein and be a miserable brute in years to come. Maybe the PCs will meet her in the future as she immolates the poor and the unpure, or gasses striking workers in the name of Trilhoeven. Locals will be able to describe the soldiers that did this and the description of Fegelein will be quite clear, he is an unmistakable figure. Tracking them from here will be a difficult task but there is a chance that the PCs can still save Popka. Though in doing so they will make themselves an ongoing target for the excesses of Fegelein.

2) Popka is dead. Some of those who saw the scene from afar will describe the criminals, shanty dwellers and a little girl being stripped and forced into the wooden hut. And then their subsequent murder at the hands of the Trilhoeven soldiers. The locals will be incensed at their own impotence to stop the crime. They will beseech the players to take revenge upon Trilhoeven and Fegelein in particular, who they see as the main culprit. He singled the little girl out when one of the criminals tried to send her to safety, and made sure that she was most definitely in the hut when it burned. Should the PCs choose not to follow up on this they will make many enemies in the shanties across The City as word spreads of their complicity in this tragedy.

3) It is unclear whether Popka is alive or dead. However, some Trilhoeven soldiers will see the PCs sniffing around the scene and attempt to move them on. This confrontation will be reported back to the Gruppenkommandant who will take great pleasure in hounding them from now on. Fegelein will send his soldiers on a seemingly personal vendetta against the PCs for daring to snoop about one of his 'cleansing activities.' While they may never learn the exact fate of Popka, what is certain is that they will be in the thick of a feud with one of the most dangerous villains in The City.

Stats, Skills and Equipment

Stats

AGL: 60	AWR: 75
DEX: 80	INT: 60
HLT: 70	PER: 10
STR: 60	WIL: 90

Skills

Armed Combat	80
Nightstick	+40
Bureaucracy	70
Climbing	60
Free Climbing	+20
Command	80
Commerce (spoken)	70
Common (read & write)	80
Cryptology	70
Culture (spoken)	70
Hide	90
Investigation	80
Lockpick	80
Persuasion	70
Intimidation	+30
Pistol	90
Shadow	90
Sneak	90
Tactics	80
Unarmed Combat	85

Equipment

- Electric torch (hitech)
- Grauschjager padded coat
- Grauschjager uniform (counts as armour clothing)
- Lockpick set
- 2x Trilhoeven GP-013 Pistols
- Nightstick
- Utility knife





temperance fellskate

Age: 23

Height/Build: 5'5" / Slender

Eye/Hair Colour: Brown/Black

Occupation: Agitator

Affiliations: None

'What? Did he say they'd do nothing. That 'ain't right is it girls, that 'ain't right at all...'

Temperance is a woman of the people. She oozes confidence on the streets, easily slotting right into any company in the poorer parts of The City, even in notoriously partisan areas like Hangside. She has literally hundreds of acquaintances and is one of those people that everyone seems to know, a cheerful and casual soul who has the uncanny ability to put people at ease. In short she is 'one of us'. Her slender, slouching frame has been spotted all over The City, her casual habit of sweeping the hair from her eyes and smiling frequently being a fairly common sight. However, Fellskate isn't quite what she appears.

For all her life Fellskate has been an agitator. This began as a game in her youth. After finding that she could easily fit into crowds and social groups, she began to take malicious pleasure in the spreading of gossip. As she grew up this 'hobby' grew with her, until she found herself regularly inciting people to commit various unlawful or unnecessary acts just for her enjoyment. It was then only a small step to become a 'professional', selling her services to the highest bidder.

If you want someone bad-mouthed about the burgh, Fellskate is your best bet. If you want an angry mob to stone a 'criminal' despite the lack of hard evidence, Fellskate can have it arranged. She truly takes pleasure in manipulating people and even when she is without a paying job she is still out and about, spreading her lies and mistruths, sowing the seeds of bad feeling.

Fellskate is not someone to cross; she wields considerable power in her own unpleasant way. She fears no one because she knows she can find or invent dirt on everyone. The only people she is afraid of are those organisations that are immune to her lies, such as the gangs. These thugs are held in so little regard that her rumours are likely to

cause little upset. Physically unimposing, she is also passionately afraid of violence. In short if you upset Fellskate you just better make sure that you find some way to ensure her silence, otherwise she'll wriggle away and begin to mention your name, you know, just in passing...

Another point to note is that her looks and personality ensure she has an enviable list of people willing to stick up for her and defend her honour, should the Player Characters wish to cast doubt upon her intentions.

adventure nugget

Somehow, the players have got on Fellskate's bad side. The reason for this could be worked into a preceding adventure, perhaps they stole something from her or one of her friends, or maybe they started a fight and she got caught in the middle. Perhaps she just doesn't like the look of them. For whatever reason, she has taken a dislike to them without them even knowing.

Things start going bad for the players. People are giving them funny looks, even funnier than usual. Whispers are spreading and some of their old associates won't talk to them. In short, Fellskate has been up to her usual tricks.

How this situation develops is very much up to the GM - Fellskate's rumour could be anything from a nuisance or minor distraction all the way up to potentially deadly accusation. The actual nature of the rumour is also best suited to the GM to decide, based upon the actions and attitudes of the players. Perhaps people think they are thieves (probably true), or abusers, perhaps they are thought to have gang connections.

Anything is possible. As suspicion of the players spirals deeper and deeper, the one thread that seems to connect everything will be the presence of Fellskate, always hanging around the scene when ever there is a confrontation. She likes to watch the effects of her words, and that might just be her undoing...

Possibilities

1) Fellskate is shadowing the characters and they will eventually get the feeling that someone is constantly watching them. She is, however, quite adept at keeping out of sight and with everything else going on, the PCs will gradually



feel more and more paranoid about their situation. Should they manage to work out who is following them, Fellskate will hurriedly attempt to run away...

2) Someone has hired Fellskate to start spreading rumours about the characters. Who this person might be is up to the GM. In all likelihood, it could be someone that they have managed to piss off during a previous adventure. Whoever it turns out to be, Fellskate will do her utmost to fulfill her 'contract'.

3) Finally, it could be possible that Fellskate isn't actually responsible for any of the rumours, she just happens to be around. However, reputation and whispered accusations will point to Fellskate being the culprit. Being falsely accused will really annoy her and lead to her... starting vicious rumours about the characters.

Stats, Skills and Equipment

Stats

AGL: 60	AWR: 50
DEX: 50	INT: 55
HLT: 40	PER: 65
STR: 40	WIL: 55

Skills

Act	70
Common (read & write)	60
Criminal Culture	55
Diplomacy	50
Fast Talk	60
Forgery	55
Investigation	60
Negotiation	60
Oration	70
Persuasion	70
Running	50
Shadow	45
Sneak	45

Equipment

- Average clothes
- Cheap boots
- Fishoil lamp
- Goggles
- Notepad and pencil





Audrey Gannon ☠☠☠

Age: 33

Height/Build: 5' 6"/Slender

Eye/Hair Colour: Blue/Black

Occupation: Misinformation expert and professional sadist

Affiliations: Sideband, but pretty is now pretty much loyal to her own agenda

"Psssst! Yes, you! Have you heard? No? That man down the street, well, hasn't he been a naughty boy! Quiet, nice chap, you say? Heavens no! You haven't heard? Well let me enlighten you..."

Without a doubt, Audrey Gannon is a gleeful, malicious sadist. Not content with spreading misinformation for the dubious ends of her employers, she now spends her time spreading fear, alarm and mistrust for her own personal satisfaction and enjoyment. Few people in The City can take as much delight in ruining the lives of others as Audrey Gannon.

A slim, bespectacled woman, Gannon grew up and thrived in the macrocorporate culture of Sideband Media. A precocious child, her intellect was unquestioned, even though her moral development lagged somewhat behind her capacity to use her brain. Tagged (as so many are, only to be discarded further down the line) by Sideband as an individual to watch, her formidable intellectual skills were put to good use in the shadowy world of misinformation and manipulation. Her rapid-fire mind and ability to see several moves ahead endowed her with the mental toolkit required by the company to obfuscate and confuse the competition.

However, like many manipulators and observers, she found herself being drawn closer and closer to her subject. In this case, the subject was the entire City. Her manipulations became more devious and cruel, intended not just to create a smokescreen around the activities of Sideband, but also to hurt and demean ordinary people. Gradually, she slipped from working for the company to working for her own ends.

Through a cunning series of ruses and deceits, Gannon has managed to procure for herself a position with no higher

oversight, where her tasks for the company occupy only a fraction of her time and she is at liberty to indulge her own sadistic desires. She occupies a black hole in the Sideband structure, a hole in which she is comfortable sitting.

But what is it that Audrey Gannon does, exactly? In the simplest terms, she makes things up. She invents stories, news items, fake intelligence, rumours and scandal. This is an ordinary and effective part of the Sideband misinformation effort, but Gannon has gone much further than anyone else. She takes personal pleasure in seeing the effects of her actions, a sadistic delight in the misery it is in her power to cause. Nowadays, she does not so much create confusion for the company, as create misery for thousands of people.

Intelligence flows in to the Cathedral, home of Sideband. Gannon is one of the people who sifts through the river of information and selects relevant bits and pieces to act upon. But she goes much further. Unlike others in her dubious profession, she now ventures out beyond the walls of the Cathedral to spread rumour in person, adopting one of many personae she has created for this exact purpose. She has caused gang wars, incited riots, brewed family feuds and caused the imprisonment of hundreds of innocents. And the associated deaths too.

And, amid the emotional and physical carnage she causes, Gannon laughs through it all. However, she treads a very narrow line. Her nocturnal venturing out into The City carries with it the scent of danger. There is always the possibility that she will be discovered, her well-camouflaged trail exposed by someone equally as intelligent as her. She knows in her own mind that there are people out there who already suspect outside involvement in seemingly unconnected events. And within her festers a hatred of those people who would expose her. She knows who they are: the Losfinders. Her fear is gradually metamorphosing into a dangerous psychosis that will lead her down a path even more deadly than the one she already treads.

adventure nugget

GM Note: This adventure nugget is particularly suited to PC groups who have strong ties to one particular area and its people. It's quite heavily focussed on the fact the PCs will care enough about the place they live to actually do something to avert the impending catastrophe.



Stats, Skills and Equipment

The PCs suddenly find that the area in which they live has become the target for hatred from outsiders. Locals are being pelted with stones or having rubbish thrown at them, children are getting into an increasing number of fights and the level of animosity displayed to people from the area by those who live around them has increased by a marked amount.

This is all down to the sinister manipulations of Audrey Gannon, although the PCs could never possible know this at first. She has been planting rumours, stories and innuendo in TV programmes, papers and on the streets, just to see how much damage she can do.

Possibilities

1) Gannon's angle is that the area in which the PCs live is riddled with child abusers and kidnappers who are responsible for every missing or harmed child over the past few years. Not making any distinction between the seemingly guilty and the seemingly innocent, Gannon's campaign of misinformation has worked surprisingly well. Things are heading towards an-all out confrontation. If the characters live in an area within the TCMA, for example, outsiders will be trying to get the Provosts to carry out mass arrests and locals will be attempting to get the Provosts to stop all this nonsense. The characters are caught in the middle and must do something before the place is torn apart.

2) This particular possibility relies on the fact that all the areas near to where the characters live are extremely distrustful of the macrocorporates. Gannon's spurious rumours centre on the accusation that the locals of the PCs area have made a deal with one of the macrocorps to start up operations in their area. This is caused a lot of dissatisfaction and annoyance, something only exacerbated by the confused attitude of the locals. Defusing this situation and getting to the bottom of things would be a good idea, especially before one of the macrocorps hears of this and starts taking an interest...

3) Gannon has this time gone for the simple route: she's spread rumours that the area is home to some sort of virulent disease. A nice simple way to cause the maximum amount of pain, misery and anguish. As with the two possibilities above, the situation will be made even worse by the fact that the locals have no clues why everybody suddenly hates them! If the characters can get to the heart of the problem, they will be hailed as heroes. Then again, should they solve any of the possibilities, Audrey Gannon may start taking a very personal interest in them...

Stats

AGL:	50	AWR:	65
DEX:	55	INT:	70
HLT:	50	PER:	55
STR:	35	WIL:	65

Skills

Act	75
Bribery	55
Bureaucracy	70
Commerce (read & write)	80
Commerce (spoken)	80
Common (read & write)	90
Cryptology	65
Culture (spoken)	80
Culture (read & write)	80
Disguise	75
Forgery	65
Investigation	75
Negotiation	70
Persuasion	80
Sneak	60

Equipment

- Automapper
- Disguise kit
- Expensive suits or cheap clothes, depending on what she is doing at the time
- Hitech camera
- Nanoscale dingin
- Spectacles





'Uncle' clement Swift ☠

Age: Unknown, appears in his early 40s.
Height/Build: Short/Thin
Eye/Hair colour: Brown/Dirty black
Occupation: Apparently mildly insane altruist, actually gang leader
Affiliations: None

'Hey girl, you hurt? Someone bin hurtin' you? Listen, come with me. I'll look after ya. Got me a place see, plenty of others like you. You'll see, Swift will see ya alright.'

To all appearances Swift is a grubby, middle-aged man with a benevolent streak a mile wide. Taken to long, rambling monologues and irreverent and unintelligible mutterings, Swift is considered borderline insane by most he comes into contact with. Known to all as 'Uncle Swift', he takes in what he occasionally refers to as 'broken wimmen' from the streets of The City and gives them a home. And in the dilapidate alleys of Hangside there are plenty of beaten, abused and angry women who flock to Swift. Granted not much of a home, his tenement block in Hangside is crumbling and overrun with scurfs, but compared to life at the canal side it's certainly a step up. Women of all ages and from all parts of The City can be found with Uncle Swift, quite how he manages to feed them is a mystery to most people, not that any particularly care.

During the day the women follow him around, and at any sign of danger they cling to his arms for safety. Apart from being the butt of a few jokes in the pubs for his 'harem', Swift is ignored for the most part, just another sad case of a good man driven over the edge by City sickness. The women seem unnaturally belligerent when approached by other men and so are generally left with Swift.

However, under Swift's kind exterior lurks a truly twisted and malevolent individual. In reality Swift isn't a kindly and benevolent 'Uncle' set to help the lost women of The City, he in fact recruits girls into 'Swift's gang'. Working with his two 'associates' Harry Tar and Sally Meech (who never leave the tenement), Swift takes the women he picks up on the street and perverts them, twisting minds made fragile by their abused existences into things of hate. Working on the fears and hopes of these unfortunates and with not a little physical persuasion courtesy of Tar, Swift turns women into killers whose only salvation lies in obeying their 'Uncle'.

Swift has two rules about his business - never to get involved with gangs, and never to let his secret out. He usually hires his gang's services to Macrocorporate or moderately powerful individuals, those to whom his secret is of little real interest and therefore little immediate worth. The women themselves are efficient killers and are fiercely loyal to Swift, so far none have ever given anybody reason to doubt the old man's cover. When dealing with clients Swift works through middlemen, keeping his distance and therefore hands clean (relatively speaking) at all times. The Hangsiders do not know of Swift's activities but would be very keen to close him down (fatally) if they ever discovered his secret. Swift is however afforded some protection from the prying of the other gangs by the natural security of Hangside. Once the women become too old to work efficiently, Swift 'moves them on'. As far as the locals are concerned this is to a Third Church Workhouse in Folly Hills, in reality the destination is far less savoury.

The only person Swift allows to see the women on a regular basis is the street healer Myra Longburn, who helps to keep the killers in relatively good health. Swift tolerates her presence from time to time for the sake of keeping his gang at 'operating efficiency', but if he thought she perceived the reality of his altruism he would have no qualms about having her killed. For the women however Myra represents a dream-like figure of purity and even love, an angel in the darkness of Swift's reign. She is perhaps the only person who could test Swift's control over his charges.

ADVENTURE NUGGET

Whilst out and about in the burgh of Hangside, the players stumbled across something not superficially out of the ordinary - a man being attacked on a deserted street by an unknown assailant. However it is clear from the ferocity of the attack that the perpetrator is not some common thug but is well trained in the art of committing violence. As the players watch the scene, or before they can rush in (if they are so inclined), the attacker notices them and looks up. It is a young woman with a pale face, reddish hair and an ugly scar running from left ear to chin. Finishing her victim with a long, thin blade she quickly makes an escape, disappearing with practised ease into the streets.

Possibilities

1) The dead man is Robert Thinscape, a local (and vocal) businessman. Owner of a fish-oil concern on the canal side, and was well respected in the community.



Recently, he has been running a campaign to clear up the burgh and remove some of the poorer housing, touting his plans to all who would listen. As part of his scheme he hoped to raise funds to knock down a particularly unpleasant set of tenements and replace them with newer housing. These are the very tenements where Swift and his gang live. This apparently heartless act (all those defenceless women) has raised a bit of an outcry and so Thinscape has suggested moving the women into some local Third Church buildings under the care of the local priest.

Needless to say, Swift was not pleased that this plan seemed to be gaining local support, and in a rare moment of panic he despatched one of his 'girls' to silence Thinscape. If he finds out there were witnesses, he may decide even more drastic actions are required... This adventure could lead the players to uncover the secret of Swift's activities, and maybe even to close him down. Of course, his various employers might find such an eventuality to their disadvantage and decide to act on his behalf. Tracing the girl to Swift's will require some local information, no simple job for outsiders in the insular community of Hangside.

2) The victim is young man named Jamethon Folley. he has been having a rather torrid love affair with one of Swift's girls and Swift has taken violent exception to this. Dispatching one of his other girls to "sort him out", Folley has ended up dead.

Swift isn't exactly pleased about this, as he only wanted Folley roughed up enough to discourage him. Now his former lover is asking questions and Uncle Clement is running out of answers. In addition to this, strangers have started asking questions about the killing and things could all start going a bit wrong for Swift and his girls.

3) The final possibility is rather more morally problematic for the players. The dead man was a well-known local pimp who was attempting to entice the girl into joining his trade. Obviously, she wasn't entirely keen on this plan and violently attacked the man.

Ordinarily, this wouldn't be too much of a problem, but the pimp had powerful friends and the killing can only serve to draw attention to Swift's activities. So, he's decided that he will eventually need to dispose of the girl and try to remedy the situation. The girl in question isn't stupid and sees which way the wind is blowing.

So, how will the characters resolving this tricky and morally troubling situation?

Stats, Skills and Equipment

Stats

AGL:	50	AWR:	65
DEX:	55	INT:	55
HLT:	45	PER:	60
STR:	55	WIL:	55

Skills

Armed Combat	40
Cosh	+10
Bribery	65
Common (read & write)	45
Criminal Culture	70
Economics	60
Fast Talk	75
Folklore	65
Longarm	40
Shotgun	+15
Negotiation	75
Persuasion	70
Intimidation	+20
Seduction	+10
Pickpocket	65
Unarmed Combat	55

Equipment

Clockwork generator
Cosh
Fishoil lamp
Money belt
Sparklock blunderbuss





Vari the sword ☹☹☹

Age: Indeterminate

Height/Build: 5' 8"/Svelte

Eye/Hair Colour: Green/Shaven

Occupation: Gang enforcer

Affiliations: The Third Syndicate

"Don't fuck with the sword."

Vari is a Ghostfighter gone horribly wrong. In days gone by she followed a strict code of honour, a professional etiquette similar to many of her kind throughout The City. Then it all changed. Her world fell apart when the rich trader from Long Pond whom she had been employed to guard was brutally slain by the Hohler Gang. Her professional reputation in tatters, she found herself living on the streets, fighting in cruel bloodsports to earn enough for a rancid fish or a greasy dog leg. One thing that she never lost, however, was her hatred for the Hohler Gang.

On the edge of starvation, riddled with parasites and having sold her precious sword for a few pence, she was 'rescued' by Darrien Elbury, a ranking and influential member of the Third Syndicate. Looking through the grime and filth, Elbury could see a woman he could mould into a tool for his own ends. Personally nursing her back to health, making her strong again, inculcating her with the ethos of the Third Syndicate, he gave Vari new purpose.

Now, years later, Vari is the strong right arm of Elbury, killing people at his command, dishing out terrible vengeance in the name of the Syndicate. Her entirely appropriate nickname comes from her weapon of choice; a shining, impressive, astoundingly sharp sword that she wields with unerring accuracy. Few in the Syndicate would be foolish enough to challenge her in single combat, such is her determination and skill. Like a select band of fighters in The City, she has established a legend in her own lifetime, a mystique and a folklore all her own. She is whispered about in the same breath as Jane Card of Mire End and the fearsome Johnny Two Hammers.

A svelte woman of reasonably indeterminate age, Vari always wears deep black make-up round her almond shaped eyes. Her face, arms and torso are covered with fine white tattoos made up of swirling shapes and strange

creatures. When not held firmly in her hands, her famous sword is slung across her back, ready to be whipped out as soon as she feels threatened or uncomfortable.

Vari is most certainly on her way up within the Syndicate. Her strict adherence to orders and her unrivalled effectiveness as an enforcer makes her the ideal soldier. Her well-known hatred of the Hohler Gang has, at times, led to her going off on a rampage of her own. If the target were anything other than the despised Hohlers, her bosses may take a dim view of such freelance butchery. However, when it's related to their arch enemies, they tend to turn a blind eye to her outbursts of violence. The Hohler gang have a standing reward of £500 for the first man or woman to bring them the head of Vari the Sword. So far all those who have tried have failed miserably and paid with their lives. Seasoned Ghostfighters and hardened assassins have all met the same fate; decapitated with that singing blade.

However, only Vari knows her true age and she realises that she can't remain on top for long. One day someone harder, younger and faster will beat her to the draw and end her life as she has ended the lives of so many others. Hence her desire to climb the ranks of the Third Syndicate, to reach a position of power and influence where she is protected by the clandestine organisation of the gang. And everyone knows she will either get there, or die trying.

adventure nugget

Incidental to the major thread of whatever game the PCs happen to be involved in, they have managed to incur the wrath of Vari the Sword. Rumours are circulating that the PCs have, in some way, managed to annoy this fearsome warrior enough that she is on a mission to hunt them down and kill them. This is generally considered not to be a good thing.

People have already started avoiding the characters, shopkeepers deny them, service, old friends look at them strangely and children taunt them in the street. As the days pass, this all becomes more and more annoying and discomforting, as nothing seems to actually be happening.

This really should play on the characters nerves. Are they the victims of a hoax? Do they have anything to worry about? Is a savage killer really after them? And if she is,



Stats, Skills and Equipment

then why? If the characters have any associations at all with the Hohler Gang, then this may be reason enough for them to think that the Hohlers have somehow set them up to take a fall. On the other hand, the merest association with that criminal organisation may be enough to trigger a bloodbath.

Possibilities

1) It's all a bit of local gossip about a relatively famous person that has got completely out of hand. Local fishwives and rumour-merchants have exploded the initial snippet to huge proportions, making it seem like the characters are at the very centre of a substantial criminal vendetta. It will actually take a lot of work to convince people otherwise and rumours will still be hanging around long after the furore has died down.

2) It's a deliberate bit of tittle-tattle created by local elements whom the characters have pissed off in the past. Not wish to engage the PCs head on (they are far to cowardly), they have concocted this random tale in the hope that it will drive the PCs away. Any NPCs that the characters have managed to annoy or inconvenience in the past could be responsible for this occurrence. It's highly probable that the trouble can and will be traced back to them.

3) It's true, Vari the Sword IS after the characters! This is the worst possible outcome for all concerned and it all stems from another set of rumours. Again, someone that the characters have pissed off has started spreading tales about them and, as always, they have exploded far beyond the original titbits. Word has reached the ears of Vari that the PCs have been gathering information on her and supplying it to the Hohler Gang (if the PCs have any relations at all with the Gang, this will only lend credence to the rumour). This makes her quite, quite mad and she is on the warpath across The City to find and kill the PCs.

Oh dear.

Stats

AGL:	75	AWR:	80
DEX:	70	INT:	50
HLT:	40	PER:	35
STR:	45	WIL:	60

Skills

Armed Combat	70
Knife	+20
Sword	+30
Climbing	75
Criminal Culture	65
First Aid	60
Hide	80
Pistol	50
Running	75
Shadow	70
Sneak	80
Tactics	70
Unarmed Combat	65

Equipment

Grappling hook (small)
 Knife
 Lotech first aid kit
 Lotech rope
 Small sparklock pepperbox
 Sword





JOHNNY TWO HAMMERS

Age: Late 30s

Height/Build: 6' 7"/Massive

Eye/Hair colour: Very dark blue/shaven headed

Occupation: Mercenary killer

Affiliations: None

"It's hammer time."

There are some villains in The City whose reputation extends beyond mere thuggery and criminal behaviour. Some inspire fear and loathing, even amongst their own amoral and wicked kind. There are a few figures around whom an entire folklore has been woven; whose very name has become synonymous with brutality and savagery. One such figure is Johnny Two Hammers: thug, mercenary and killer.

A massive man, seemingly built on a scale greater than your average denizen of The City, Two Hammers stalks through his enemies like an avenging colossus covered in swirling tattoos, ragged scars and the dried blood of his victims. His eyes are hooded under a weighty brow, concealed pits of darkness surrounded by the lines and colours of his multifarious tattoos. His shaved head sports further inkings, swooping back from his temple to the rear of skull. Even those unaware of his reputation would immediately come to realise they are dealing with a man who cares little for human life.

And how did this man obtain his slightly risible nickname? The answer is entirely obvious and most likely unnecessary of explanation. His favoured weapons are the two large hammers with which he dispatches his victims, weapons with which he has acquired a level of skill and ability that even some Ghostfighters would be envious of. His trademark killing method involves smashing the poor victim's head between his hammers with a scything blow from each side, crushing their skull between the speeding lumps of iron. At other times, if he is required to let the victim know that he or she has infuriated someone they should really have avoided, Two Hammers will skilfully and savagely beat them all over the body, taking care to inflict maximum pain, whilst making sure that the target remains alive for the longest possible duration, fully aware of who is causing them such anguish.

Two Hammers knows allegiance to no one group, preferring to wander the southern burghs of The City, selling his services to those in need. He has worked for all the major gangs and syndicates at one time or another, a mercenary killer hiring out his fearsome legend for a few shillings a time. And even the most powerful criminal overlords are wary of double-crossing Johnny Two Hammers. Ever since the leader of a Hohler Gang crew in Fogwarren attempted to trick Two Hammers out of his due reward and set him up as the victim of another gang, nobody has even thought of betraying him. In revenge for this treachery, Two Hammers tore through the crew like a whirlwind, killing every member of the gang he could find, but reserving his true anger for the leader. It is said that Two Hammers beat him over a period of days, drawing out his agony, breaking his bones one by one. Then he left the paralysed, thoroughly broken Hohler Gang boss to die alone and in unremitting pain. Nobody now remembers the name of the gang boss, but everyone remembers the name of Johnny Two Hammers and the revenge that he took.

Johnny Two Hammers still talks the street of The City, his eponymous weapons in his hands, ready to dish out his own brand of brutal vengeance for a few dull coins. In the filthy of morass of criminality in the urban maze, Johnny Two Hammers stands tall, the very incarnation of the harsh stones and stinking water that make up this degraded metropolis.

ADVENTURE NUGGET

Local ne'er-dowell and thug of some repute, Mr Gerard Carnwath has suddenly acquired fame beyond his wildest imaginings. Feted across the burgh, with his notoriety spreading to neighbouring areas, the claim is that he has killed the famous Johnny Two Hammers in single combat.

This, of course, does not go down well with Johnny at all. He is very much in the best of health and does not take kindly to the bragging of Carnwath. So, how does this affect the PCs? Well, someone close to Carnwath has realised that Two Hammers is going to tear up the burgh to get to their friend. So they have spread the rumour that it was the PCs who put the word out about Carnwath killing Johnny. 'Gerard, himself, to be sure, would never suggest such a thing!' as they have been saying to anyone who would care to listen.



Johnny will deal with Carnwath in good time, but first of all he wants to make sure that everyone knows not to talk about him behind his back. And that begins with the PCs, or rather some of their best friends.

Last night Johnny apparently went and killed some of the PCs friends or contacts. It was messy and brutal and he has left a note supposedly explaining why he did it. He also notes that '...this is just the beginning - J2H'.

Possibilities

1) Carnwath is a liar and a braggart, and more importantly a coward. Right now he is trying all he can to get himself off the hook. He and his friends are behind the killings last night. They are trying all they can to push the PCs towards getting rid of Two Hammers. Then, they hope, they can get rid of the injured PCs in the aftermath. Of course, Carnwath and company haven't yet figured that Johnny might actually be a few steps ahead of them in this little game. It looks like the PCs are stuck in the middle with no easy way out and losing friends by the day.

2) It was indeed Johnny that killed all the friends and contacts. Perhaps he lured them to a meeting to 'clear the air' or he simply strode into the local bar and slaughtered all within. In any case he has started something that will rapidly get out of control. He doesn't want to directly confront the PCs yet. He is hoping that they will make an example of Carnwath and he can clear up anyone left standing at the end of it. Two Hammers is going to be a millstone around the PCs necks for some time to come.

3) Carnwath and Two Hammers are in cahoots. It is all an elaborate bluff to distract local attention from some scores that have to be settled for nefarious criminal groups. Under the cover of this 'feud' they will both be merrily causing carnage and collecting payment, without anyone thinking about who is actually being killed by the pair of them. By the time the 'feud' ends with both Carnwath and Two Hammers still very much alive there will be a new order in control of the burghs affected. The one fly in the ointment is the PCs. Neither Carnwath nor Two Hammers have considered that they may take offence at having close friends, relatives and contacts killed off.

Stats, Skills and Equipment

Stats

AGL: 60	AWR: 70
DEX: 50	INT: 50
HLT: 50	PER: 30
STR: 90	WIL: 75

Skills

Armed Combat	80
Hammers	+40
Criminal Culture	70
First Aid	65
Hide	60
Persuasion	50
Intimidation	+25
Sneak	60
Thrown Weapon	40
Hammers	+20
Tracking	75
Unarmed Combat	50
Grapple	+25
Punch	+25

Equipment

Dogskin butcher's apron
 Dogskin clothing
 Duffle bag
 Hammers (two of them, big ones at that)
 Pocket knife

