

GURPS® Horror/Autoduel®

**ZOMBIE TOWN
U.S.A.**



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

GURPS Horror/Autoduel

ZOMBIETOWN U.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION

This is a *GURPS Horror* adventure that can be played either in the present day or in the 21st-century world of *GURPS Autoduel*. Those with both sets of rules and a desire to spring something different on their players are encouraged to go for the *Autoduel* version. It'll get those duellists out of their cars!

The adventure is intended for three to five player characters of about 100 points each. Useful skills include all the spy and social skills, combat skills (including Demolitions), and high-tech scientific skills, as well as physical skills like Acrobatics and Climbing. *Autoduel* PC vehicles should be about \$15,000 each with a maximum of four vehicles for the whole party. Dependable ranged weapons are also advised.

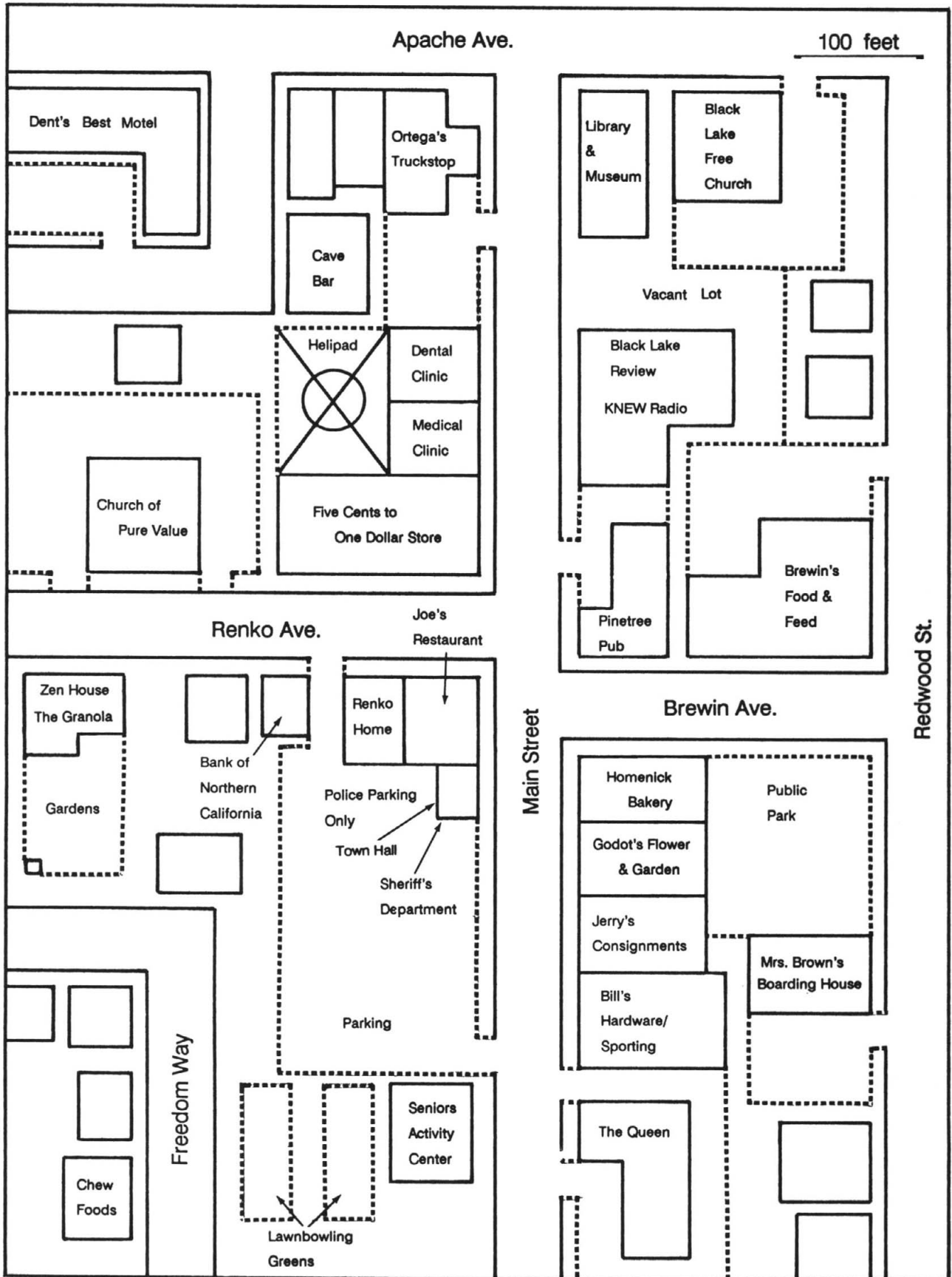
This adventure has a lot of detail; it includes many maps and floor plans as well as lots of non-player characters. You should be very familiar with the setting, the townfolk and the genre options *before* you begin to play. To facilitate this, Chapter 1 is a guide to the town of Black Lake. Chapter 2 briefs you on running the adventure using *GURPS Autoduel*.

You should also decide which NPCs will play the important roles — the rivals, the love-interests, the allies, those who exist only to deliver that crucial bit of information, and so on. A complete index to NPCs is in the sidebar.

Black Lake, as described, has enough oddball characters to do justice to a world-class funny farm. The type of characters you choose as “stars” will affect the tone of the adventure, and the extent to which your unique group of players will enjoy themselves.

In addition, Black Lake is intended to be used more than once. There is a lot more mystery and evil in this small town than your players can handle in the adventure detailed here. New scenario and adventure ideas will suggest themselves, but for further adventure ideas see the GM Notes on p. 64.

Black Lake, California



1

THE GUIDEBOOK

As with most small towns, the hub of Black Lake is Main Street. The majority of businesses are within two blocks either side of it, and it's the primary road in and out of town. Listed here are the businesses, organizations and characters that the PCs will encounter during their stay in Black Lake. Not all of them will be used in the direct plot, however, they can be useful as red herrings, alternative plots or to provide some color.

Life in a Small Town

The PCs will discover several things about small towns.

First, this is not Manhattan. The pace of daily life will be slow and laid back, following the rhythms of nature more than those of the clock. (A traffic jam in Black Lake usually means that Doc Basset's car broke down on Main Street.)

Second, the people will be friendly to visitors — this is small-town America, after all. They'll also be politely curious about the place where the characters come from. They will be unimpressed, however, with flashiness, rudeness or unconventional styles of behavior and dress. And no small-town dweller will tolerate a city visitor's snobbish criticism of that town. PCs must be careful — things like driving their autos down the main street at high speed will extremely annoy the residents and cause them to be deeply suspicious of the PCs' moral character.

Third, everyone knows everyone in a small town. The gossip networks in Black Lake rival the best intelligence-gathering capabilities of the FBI and the CIA. Any social faux pas (or any kindly act) performed by a character will affect that character's reaction rolls with the townsfolk. The gossip found in the cafes and bars is also a good way for the GM to pass information to the players about recent events or town politics. In conclusion, if the PCs behave themselves, refrain from being snobs and beware of the power of gossip, they can expect little trouble in Black Lake — for a while, that is.

Autoduel: The same applies in the future, with the addition that any obvious outlaw types will not live to see dawn unless they leave the town's limits before nightfall.

Norman Barstow, Motel Manager

Age 29; Short black hair, small brown eyes, 6' 1", 160 lbs.

ST 10, DX 12, IQ 13, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantage: Night Vision.

Disadvantages: Major Delusion (Mother is alive and well and living in the basement); Sense of Duty (to Mother); Split Personality.

Skills: Merchant-13; Disguise-14; Professional Skill (Taxidermy)-15; Knife-13.

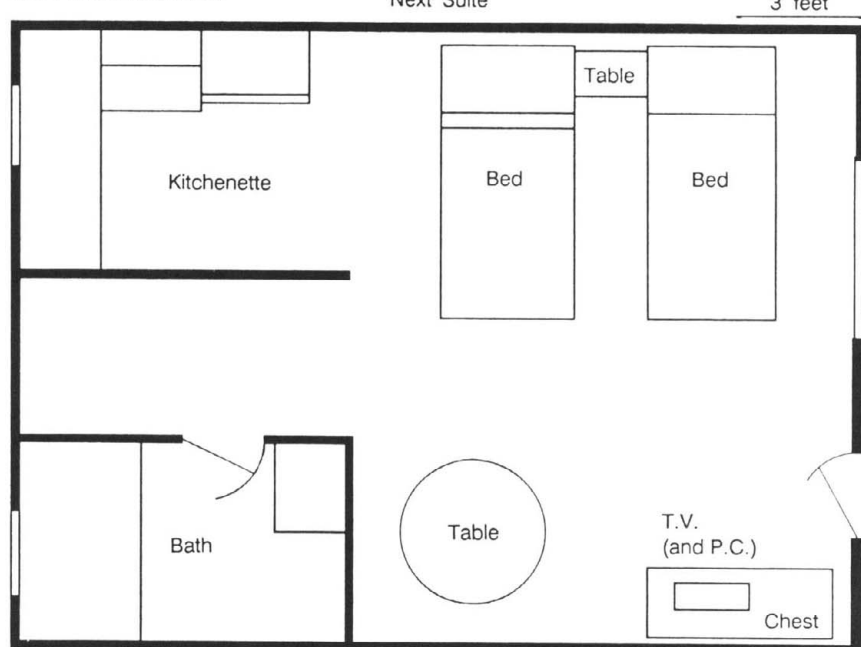
Where to Stay in Black Lake

Dent's Best Motel

Dent's is the best because it's singular — the only motel in town and the only one Dent owns. This one-story building houses six suites plus an office and living quarters for the manager. On the porch in front of the manager's office is a rocking chair, a sleeping dog named Snoozy and a Coke machine. Each suite is like a small cabin featuring two double beds, a kitchenette, phone, television (with satellite movies) and bath. Exterior walls are DR 4, HT 20; interior walls, DR 2, HT 10; and interior doors, DR 1, HT 8. The decor suggests 1955, but the rooms are comfortable and clean. Suites are \$30 a night, parking included. A floor plan of a typical room is illustrated.

Autoduel: The motel is the same structure as above, and the rooms are laid out exactly the same. During the Food Riot years, a stone wall was erected around the motel perimeter and the walls of the motel themselves were reinforced with fire-retardant material. Currently, the exterior walls are DR 10, HT 20; interior walls, DR 5, HT 12; and interior doors, DR 2, HT 10. The outer wall is DR 8, HT 20 and has one main cast-iron gate (DR 5, HT 10). Entrance to the motel compound is obtained by inserting a magnetic-striped card into a feeder at car level just outside the gate. Each guest is issued a card with their room key. The motel is DR 10, HT 35. The doors on each suite are DR 5, HT 14. Each room now includes a personal computer. Snoozy V currently occupies the porch.

MOTEL SUITE



Mrs. Brown's Boarding House

Mrs. Agatha Brown, an attractive middle-aged woman, owns and runs this well-kept, three-story Victorian house. The main floor of the house is divided into her living quarters, the kitchen, library/common room for the lodgers and the dining room. Each of the top two floors has four rental rooms, furnished with antiques — a single bed, desk, bookcase and reading chair. There is a pay phone located in the entrance hallway. The basement contains a large food cellar, a wine cellar with a few unexpectedly fine vintages, and a room for the steam heating system (containing one or two very hot exposed pipes). It also holds the most obvious evidence of Mrs. Brown's secret hobby — the door to *that* chamber is DR 6, HT 20, and requires a Lockpicking roll at -6 to open.

Rooms are \$20 per night with breakfast, \$125 a week with breakfast, and \$500 a month with breakfast. Lunch and dinner may be purchased in the dining room, which Mrs. Brown opens to the public for those meals (see p. 7.) Boarders staying more than five days are required to put down a damage deposit of \$50. The floor plan of Mrs. Brown's house is shown below. At the time of the party's arrival in Black Lake, Mrs. Brown will have two lodgers — the girls who Mrs. Brown employs.

Autoduel: Because Black Lake has rarely been attacked, this building has survived unfortified. The local council considers it something of a firetrap, and



Mrs. Agatha Brown

Age 51; Silver hair, pale blue eyes, slim and fit, fashionably dressed; 5' 6", 125 lbs.

ST 9, DX 13, IQ 14, HT 11.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Wealth (Comfortable); Telepathy, Power 10; Appearance (Attractive).

Disadvantages: Age; Megalomania.

Quirks: Likes antiques; Thinks Town Council is a waste of her time; Likes to enslave young girls for her various plots.

Skills: Cooking-15; Fast-Talk-12; Psychology-15; Savoir-Faire-13; Telesend-15; Telereceive-15; Telecontrol-14.

Languages: English-14; French-14; Spanish-13.

Equipment: Kitchen utensils; Library on Psychology and Psychic phenomena; Strap; Handcuffs.

Hangouts: Her house; occasionally, the Pinetree Pub.

Mrs. Brown appears charming, easy-going and talented on the outside. On the inside, she is a demented psi who uses her talents to enslave people for her own ends. She doesn't have world conquest or anything like that in mind — she just wants to make other people's lives miserable. She especially likes to control young girls whom she gets secretly from area cycle gangs and rogues. When she's finished with the girls, she discreetly sells them off to the highest bidder. People in Black Lake have no idea this goes on. They admire Mrs. Brown for running a "halfway house" for troubled teenagers. A dangerous opponent! She is not armed, but her waitress-maids will defend her with knives and clubs.

Autoduel: Mrs. Brown is not armed, but her girls are: .357 pistol for each in a secret location in the house. She relies on several criminal types (whom she controls) to kidnap young females from the dreg neighborhoods of southern California. Give her Sex Appeal if you think this will help her deal with the PCs.

is putting pressure on Mrs. Brown to fortify and/or fireproof the building. The building itself is DR 3, HT 40. Each room now includes a phone and computer.

Mabel Blakely, Waitress

Age 49; Copper hair, green eyes (all fake), 6', 200 lbs.

ST 11, DX 9, IQ 9, HT 11.

Speed 5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantage: Toughness (DR 2).

Disadvantage: Fat.

Quirk: Dislikes strangers.

Skills: Brawling-12; Cooking-9.

Equipment: Rolling pin (treat as light club).

Pete the Punker Watkins

Age 14; Shellacked purple hair, dilated brown eyes, 5' 9", 150 lbs, dressed in standard punker fashion.

ST 8, DX 10, IQ 12, HT 9.

Speed 4.75; Move 4.

Dodge 4.

Disadvantage: Addiction (various "soft" drugs).

Skills: Brawling-14; Chemistry-14; Computer Operation-18; Knife-15; Powerboat-11.

Equipment: Small knife; Home drug lab.

Joe Renko

Age 46; Black hair, unshaven, green eyes; 6', 165 lbs.

ST 13, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 13.

Basic Speed 6.25; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Absolute Direction; Acute Vision +1; Toughness (DR 1).

Disadvantages: Appearance (Unattractive); Stubbornness; Impulsiveness.

Quirks: Believes all young people should spend time in the woods; In love with Pasha Lee, Mrs. Brown (poor sod), and Marjorie Goldblum; Hates cars and modern mechanical items.

Skills: Area Knowledge-15; Axe/Mace-13; Axe Throwing-12; Brawling-12; Cooking-13; Guns (rifle)-15; Survival (woodlands)-13; Tracking-14.

Languages: English-10.

Equipment: Camping and survival gear; Large knife; Hatchet; .30 rifle; 12-gauge shotgun.

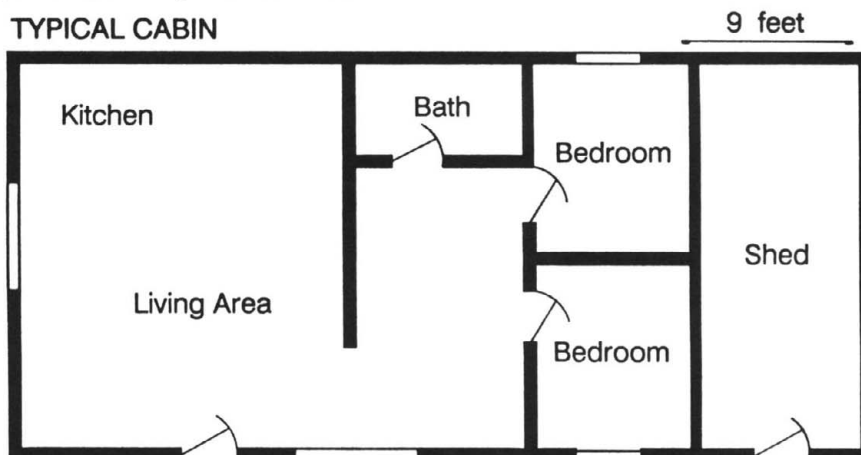
Hangouts: His restaurant; Pinetree Pub; The woods.

(continued on the next page)

Assorted Cabins Around the Lake

Scattered around the lake itself are a dozen or so cabins. Most are privately owned but rented out to visitors while their owners are away. The rental of these cabins is handled through the town hall (ask Dent's secretary, Velda, for help). Prices on these cabins run from \$50 to \$500 a night, depending on the size and quality of the cabin. They range from typical shacks to huge rugged houses. A typical cabin is illustrated below. Exterior walls are DR 6, HT 30; interior walls DR 2, HT 15 and all doors are DR 3, HT 15. Each cabin comes with phone and television, and some are connected via an alarm system with the Sheriff's office.

Autoduel: In the world of 2038, isolated cabins are not always the most desirable form of accommodation. The smaller ones have by this time been burnt down or bombed to pieces. The larger ones have been fortified (DR 10, HT 40 is typical), and *all* cabins are connected by computer and voice link to the Sheriff's office and to Laker Control (see p. 21). Most also feature 10' high perimeter walls (DR 4, HT 60), controlled entrances (i.e. heavy metal gate doors, DR 10, HT 25), security cameras, exterior floodlights and fortified garages for vehicles. One or two have heavy weapons, such as machine gun turrets, built into the perimeter walls.



Where to Eat in Black Lake

The Queen

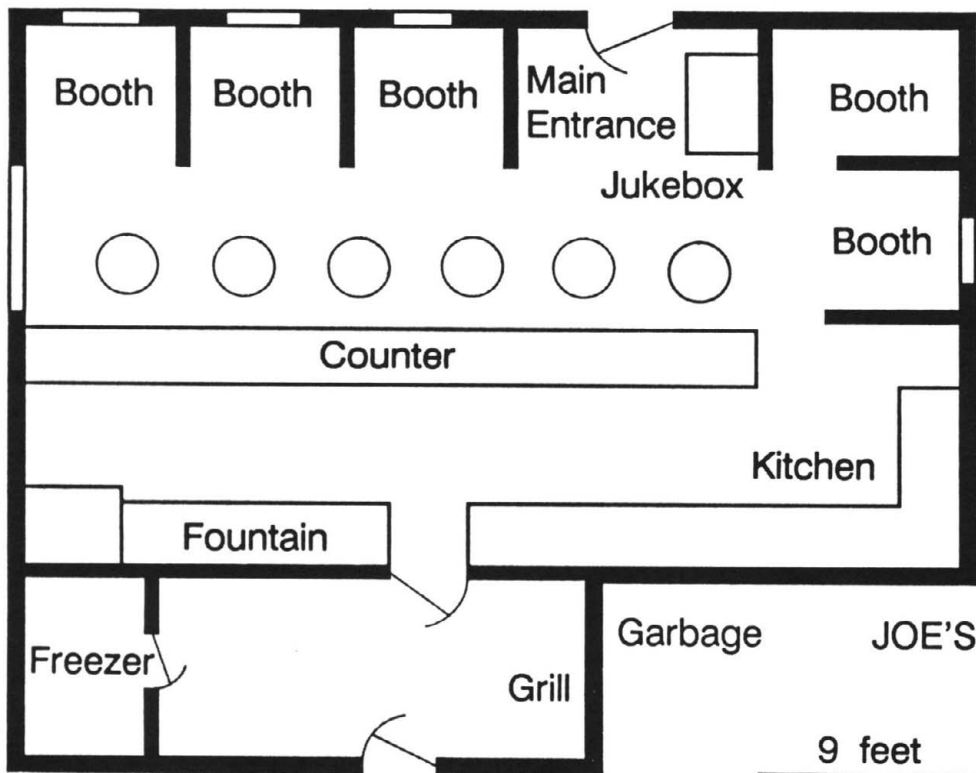
The Queen serves hamburgers, every greasy form of food known to man and an assortment of frozen dairy products. One can eat in the small cafe (six tables, usually clean) or drive by the take-out window for service. Behind the counter works Mabel Blakely. Pete Watkins, a local punker, cooks in the back where he's also known to smoke certain illegals.

Autoduel: Yes, it survived. Fifty years hence, the food and the dairy products are synthetic, but nobody seems to have noticed the change. The Queen now has a fortified takeout window with bullet-proof glass (DR 3, HT 10) and mechanical arms to hand the patrons their food. The walls of the restaurant itself are DR 10, HT 25.

Typical patrons: anyone under 16, Dent, anyone who wants solid food after 8 p.m., the Shards, Uncle Ortega, Jane Hall, Codhead Ed Conroe.

Joe's Restaurant

Joe's is the typical small-town cafe serving typical small-town fare. The



Joe Renko
(Continued)

Joe Renko loves the outdoors and this love will keep him in Black Lake forever. And he's good at roughing it out in the woods. Joe heads up the local Boy Scout troop and likes to take his boys out on an expedition at least once a month. He's a good person to hire as a guide to find your way around the forests surrounding the town.

Autoduel: Joe wears body armor during emergencies, armed as above with the addition of two explosive grenades. Joe is a ground fighter and does not know how to drive a car. His troop is part of the Scout Commando Corps and an integral part of the town's defense (see *Adding Autoduel*, p. 20).

wallpaper is an off-yellow; the floor and table tops, arborite; and there is paint-by-number "art" on the walls. A scratchy radio, perched on a high corner shelf, plays the local radio station. There are five booths seating six people each and a grill out back. Meals range from \$1.99 for the lunch special to \$8 for the Blue Plate special. Owner Joe Renko works in the kitchen and usually has one waitress on duty. Joe's is a popular coffee spot for the locals and a good place to find out what's going on in the town. The restaurant closes all day Monday, every evening after 8 p.m., and from 3 to 4 p.m. daily.

Autoduel: Joe keeps a supply of shotguns and gas masks for all his patrons in case of trouble. The restaurant serves as a staging area for the Lakers. The building is DR 9, HT 35.

Typical patrons: Dent, Sheriff Muldoon and her deputies, the town council, Velda, Doc Basset, Barbara Fram, Joe Renko, Jesus, Maria and Uncle Ortega, Wiley Kiley, Malcolm Fraser, Nelson Tambo, Bill O'Keefe, Alice Johnson, Alfredo Pagliacci, Maggie Brewin, Eve Kosnowski, Josef Homencik.

Mrs. Brown's Boarding House

Mrs. Brown opens her dining room to the public for lunch and dinner. The meals are cooked by Mrs. Brown herself and are elegant as well as delicious. Mrs. Brown is a charming hostess, ably helped by *strangely* quiet waitress-maids. Prices for dinners run from \$10 to \$50 per person. Reservations are required.

Autoduel: One of the few places in town to boast real food, but prices are high. Expect to pay up to \$300 for one night of algae-free food. The waitress-maids, says Mrs. Brown, are waifs that she helped rescue from southern



Californian dregs. (See *Mrs. Brown's Boarding House*, p. 5, for house stats.)

Typical patrons: Dent, rich visitors (or visitors wanting a decent meal), Lisa Bellechamps, Barbara Fram, Alfredo Pagliacci, Sydney Jonathan.

**Jerry Low,
Pinetree Pub Owner
(AADA Chapter President)**

Age 42; Oriental, straight black hair, obsidian eyes, 5' 7", 155 lbs.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Reputation (Pub owner, +1); Wealth (Comfortable).

Disadvantages: Berserk; Dependents (wife, daughter).

Quirk: Plays the tuba in the pub during happy hours.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-12; Driving (car)-16; Guns (shotgun)-13; Merchant-14; Musical Instrument (tuba)-8.

Language: English-10.

Equipment: Shotgun (hidden under the bar); One badly-tuned tuba.

Autoduel: Add Reputation (AADA chapter president, +1); Quirk: Wants to remain AADA chapter president; Gunner (rocket launcher)-15. He wears body armor and carries a Blastmaster in a side holster. He drives a standard Magnum MicroDuellist (p. A38).

Ben McKinley

Age 40; Dark, thinning hair, blue eyes, pale skin, 5' 9", 150 lbs. Dresses in tartan plaids.

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 12.

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantage: Danger Sense.

Disadvantages: Cowardice; Fanaticism (Health Food).

Quirk: Puts up a bold front.

Skills: Acting-10; Cooking-14; Driving (car)-12; Musical Instrument (bagpipes)-13.

Equipment: Bagpipes; Scimitar (which he does not know how to use but brandishes anyway).

Autoduel: Add Guns (SMG)-12. McKinley wears a flak jacket and carries an Uzi with one clip only. During Laker combat drills or real fights he always disappears just when things begin to heat up. He returns full of tales about his "exploits" once calm has been restored.

The Granola

Ben McKinley, a Scottish immigrant, runs this health-centered cafe. Situated in the basement of Zen House, it is very small, seating ten people maximum. The prices range from "your choice of donation" to \$10. The fare is a mixture of Eastern, vegetarian and Scottish food. The Granola is probably the only place where one can see Scotch and tofu on the same menu. An experience.

Autoduel: This is where the local ARF cell holds its meetings. See the Zen House (p. 12) for a more complete description. Walls are DR 12, HT 40 (fortified on the inside).

Typical patrons: Deputy Amber Lane, members of Zen House, curious tourists, visiting ARF operatives, Simpson Godot, Nelson Tambo, Dent.

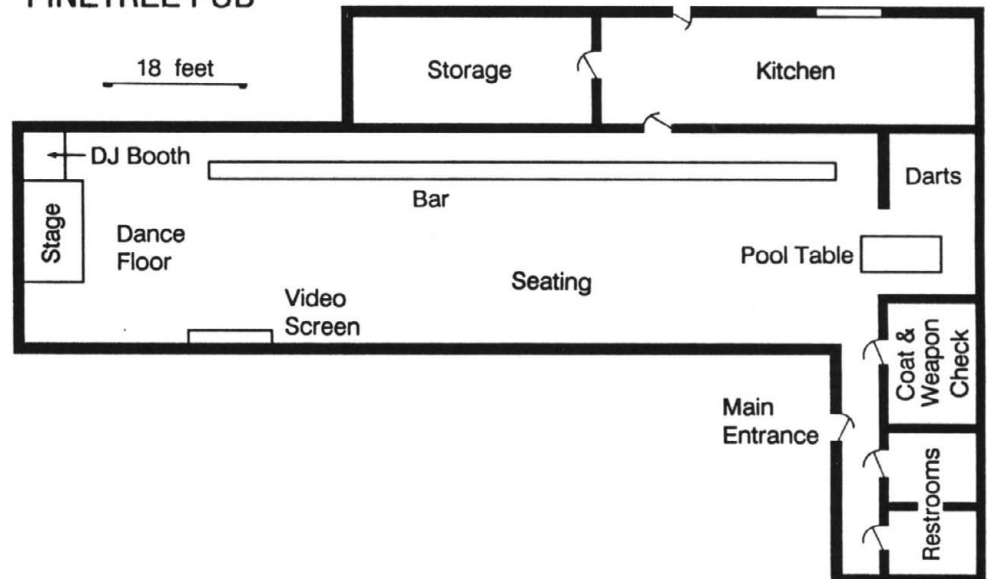
Where to Drink in Black Lake

Pinetree Pub

This quaint, one-story neighborhood pub is of ordinary construction and appearance. Frequented by the locals and friendly to outsiders, the Pinetree is neither seedy nor posh. The Pinetree is the liquid counterpart to Joe's Restaurant. When Joe's closes, people come here. It features ordinary decor with cheap, imitation knotty-pine walls. It contains a bar, a dozen round tables, a pool table, a gaming area for darts, sports memorabilia, a giant video screen, a disc jockey booth with accompanying canned music, a small stage, and a small dance floor. The Pinetree is owned by Jerry Low who takes great pride in the respectability his establishment has earned. Fights or rowdiness are not tolerated. The Pinetree is *the* place in town for local live music.

Autoduel: The Pinetree is the local AADA chapter's hangout, and most of the patrons of the pub are also autoduellers. The sports memorabilia on the walls have been updated to include current autoduellers trophies and photos of great arena battles. This pub is also the favorite hangout of the Sheriff as well as her deputies and the Lakers (this is where they do their recruiting). Low enforces

PINETREE PUB



the no-fighting rules in 2038 also. He has installed an electronic detection system at the main entrance, and vigorously enforces a weapons check. The Pinetree is fortified with DR 15, HT 25 walls. There are exterior security cameras and floodlights for the parking lot.

Typical patrons: Almost anyone in town can be found at the Pinetree, especially on Saturday night; during the week, the Lakers.

The Cave Bar

The Cave is a shabby, windowless, little place just on the north side of town. Inside it is dark, smelly and smokey. There is a bar, a few battered long tables, video games, a pool table and a small stage. On the walls are Nazi mementoes, uncouth pictures and stains of undetermined origins. This is the place to go to practice unarmed combat skills. Prices for liquor are quite cheap, and a stripper performs three shows on Saturday evening. The Cave is owned and run by Vic the Knife, the leader of the Shards (see sidebar).

Autoduel: Basically the same, except it is fortified for its own protection. DR 13, HT 30.

Typical patrons: the Shards, visiting bikers, notorious truckers, curious tourists, Codhead Ed (when he falls off the wagon), Malcolm Fraser, Pete the Punker, Nurse Jane Hall and Dent (incognito, he thinks) on Saturday night.

Where to Shop in Black Lake

The Black Lake Five Cents to One Dollar Store

In the 1980s, the title of the store is a quaint joke. Good luck in finding anything for five cents, let alone for a dollar. While this is a small-town department store, it is the main shopping destination for the inhabitants of Black Lake. If someone wants or needs something more specialized, they must try the other specialty shops in Black Lake or travel to Redding or Eureka.

The Five Cents to One Dollar Store contains most of the items families need such as hardware supplies; sporting, hunting (including rifles and shotguns), and fishing gear; work clothes and safety equipment; basic family clothing; household appliances; kitchenware; fabric and sewing supplies; televisions and stereos; pets and pet supplies; and toys. The store has one main floor at ground level and a basement where toys and sporting goods are located. The interior is plain and overly-lit by fluorescent lights. Mac, the pet department mascot bird, often greets customers as they approach him. Service is friendly but not terribly quick. Prices are 5% above average. Employees appreciate the fair treatment and good wages paid by owner Fuzzy Dent.

Autoduel: In 2038, the store boasts a modest computer section. Luxury items (such as imported clothing) are unavailable, and a number of the everyday items are made in basement workshops throughout the town. The store is well fortified: DR 14, HT 50. The roof has several armored firing platforms (DR 10, HT 10) for snipers and machine gunners. Prices are 15% above normal. In Autoduel America with its deflationary economy, five cents means more than it did in 1988.

Bill's Hardware and Sporting Goods

Owner Bill O'Keefe has a good supply of hunting, fishing, and camping gear. A large stuffed grizzly bear dominates the corner of this one-story, two-room building. Bill claims he bagged it himself. However, no one really believes him since grizzlies have not been seen in California for years. Prices at the store

Vic the Knife

Age 51; Black hair and scraggly beard, 5' 7", 165 lbs. Dresses in tattered, greasy leather.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 14, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Charisma +2; Combat Reflexes; Toughness (DR 2); Voice, +2.

Disadvantages: Addiction (drugs); Age; Odious Personal Habit (Does not bathe).

Quirk: Feels the pure writer must be an outcast.

Skills: Artist-14; Computer Operation-12; Cooking-12; Driving (car)-12; Gambling-13; Guns (pistol)-13; Knife-13; Knife Throwing-12; Motorcycle-14; Writing-16.

Languages: English-15; Spanish-13; German-13; Latin-12.

Equipment: Harley Davidson; Leather clothing; Large knife; .45 automatic.

Vic is an enigma. He is the leader of the local biker gang, the Shards (see below), and the owner of the Cave Bar, which serves as the focal point of Black Lake under-culture. Vic is also an eloquent writer (his nickname refers to his ironic and pointed writing style). The author of the much-acclaimed *A Field Guide to Women's Breasts*, Vic's pure-form (and drug-aided) poems have found their way into major literary publications across the country. *Review* reporter Sydney Jonathan (see p. 15) cannot stand Vic — the feeling is mutual.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (machine gun)-13. Vic's bike is a standard Hawk (p. A40).

The Shards

The Shards are Vic's "young men," his dedicated followers. These three "toughs" ride bikes through the town at high speed, stay up late and get "pure stinkin'" drunk. But they are relatively harmless as bike gangs go. Each is ST 12, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 12. All their driving and fighting skills are at 11. They are armed with baseball bats and knives. Each drives a Harley Davidson that is in poor working condition.

Autoduel: Each Shard has Gunner (machine gun)-12. Each drives a Road-Miser (p. A40). The gang never fights any of the duellists in town and is not considered a threat. They are not members of the militia.

Bill O'Keefe, Storeowner

Age 51; Faded brown hair, brown eyes, ruddy complexion, 6' 1", 180 lbs.

ST 14, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 12.

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Disadvantages: Dependents (wife, three children); Phobia (necrophobia).

Quirk: Likes to tell tall tales.

Skills: Armoury (guns)-14; Bard-9; Blacksmith-13; Demolition-13; Driving (car)-12; Guns (rifle)-12, (pistol)-10; Tracking-12.

Equipment: .30 rifle (20 rounds on his person, unlimited supply in his store); a dozen and a half sticks of dynamite locked in a strongbox in his store.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (recoilless rifle)-14. O'Keefe drives a standard Joseph Special (p.A38). He wears body armor. In addition to the dynamite, Bill's store has a half dozen of each type of grenade and three limpet mines.

Eve Kosnowski, Storeowner

Age 38; Mousy brown hair, dark brown eyes, 5' 2", 130 lbs. Efficient, but pleasingly plump.

ST 9, DX 12, IQ 15, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Appearance (Attractive); Danger Sense.

Disadvantage: Dependents (three children).

Quirk: Can't get over husband's death.

Skills: Artist-17; Calligraphy-15; Driving (car)-14; Economics-16; Merchant-17.

Languages: English-18; French-15.

Autoduel: Add Vow (To get the butchers who killed her husband). Add Gunner (machine gun)-16, (rocket launcher)-15; Guns (pistol)-15. She wears body armor and owns a .45 Colt. An AADA member, she is currently developing a relationship with Simpson Godot.

Simpson Godot, Flower Shop Owner and Video Artist

Age 44; Thin, ascetic-looking blond, blue eyes, delicate hands, 6', 150 lbs.

ST 10, DX 14, IQ 18, HT 11.

Basic Speed 6.25; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Acute Vision +5; Appearance (attractive).

Disadvantage: Dependent (one son, age 11).

Quirk: Works slowly.

Skills: Artist (video technology)-25; Computer Ops-20; Computer Programming-20; Merchant-16; Writing-19.

Languages: English-18; Japanese-15.

Equipment: Hi-tech studio.

Autoduel: Add Guns (pistol)-16. Simpson owns a .22 pistol.



are 5% above average. However, Bill offers a free cup of coffee to his customers.

Autoduel: Bill has some mining supplies and some military-type explosives, but not much and he doesn't advertise it. The explosives are kept in the back room under lock and key. The sporting goods also include some automatic weapons and ammunition. The store walls are DR 9, HT 17.

Jerry's Consignments

This is an all-purpose thrift shop run by Eve Kosnowski. Jerry, for whom the store is named, was her husband. He died some years ago.

This small one-story building is a second-hand goods warehouse. Used clothing is stuffed on dress racks while appliances, furniture, sporting goods and toys are stacked in a loose association on shelves and tables. All goods are sold on consignment basis. While Eve requires that the items be in working condition, she does have a "parts department" where non-working items can be broken down for usable parts. She takes 20 percent of the selling price on all consigned items as her fee.

Autoduel: This type of store has increased in importance, especially for a semi-isolated town like Black Lake. In addition to the used items mentioned above, Eve keeps a supply of weapons and computer parts. The building is DR 6, HT 16.

Godot's Flower and Garden Shop

Simpson Godot, a video production artist of national fame, is Black Lake's resident celebrity, though most of the town does not quite understand just why Godot is famous. Some think he writes plays, others whisper about video porn. In addition, to selling cut flowers and flower arrangements, Godot sells gardening supplies. His service is slow, but friendly.

Autoduel: Even in dire times, people buy flowers. The gardening side of the store includes hydroponic technology that many in Black Lake depend upon for their daily food supply. The rich techno-elites that run the world greatly appreciate Godot's video art in 2038. The store is DR 9, HT 20.

Fish and Tackle Shack

This is a real shack situated by the lake. Its proprietor, Codhead Ed Conroe, is a former counterculture outlaw who has mellowed out. He now spends a contemplative life by the water. He sells and rents all basic fishing gear as well as rowboats, at the shack. His hours of operation are 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. However, he frequents the Zen House, particularly on slow afternoons, so his hours are irregular. Since he lives in the back rooms of the shack, if he's in, he'll answer the bell.

Autoduel: Fortified, but not excessively (DR 3, HT 15). Ed seems relatively unconcerned with the threat of attack. He does have movement sensors placed in his boats — any attempt to move them without his permission will sound an audible alarm in the shack. An Electronics (security system)-2 roll is needed to circumvent the sensors. Codhead Ed is a full-time member of Zen House.

Brewin's Foods and Feed

Owned by Maggie Brewin, BFF is a grocery store with three checkout counters, a produce section, canned goods and a small meat section. In the summer, BFF features a lot of southern Californian produce at prices that can't be beat. Brewin also allows a farmer's market next to her store where some of the local hobby farms can sell their goods. At the rear of the store is a garden, farm and feed center. Prices range from 10% above average for canned or prepared goods to 5% below average for fresh produce.

Autoduel: Grocery stores have a harder time coping in this era. Most of the prepared foods are bland algae-derivatives. But for those who don't have private hydroponic systems, BFF is a lifesaver for vegetables and fruit. BFF also has a problem with local cyclists cutting wheelies in the parking lot. The store is DR 15, HT 40 (better than average armor for grocery stores). Two armed guards are on continual patrol. The guards are outfitted like typical Church of Pure Values troopers (see p. 44).

Homencik's Bakery

Run by Josef Homencik, it features the best baked goods from Redding to Eureka. Josef's East European delicacies are a favourite in Black Lake. Some people don't like Josef because they believe he beats his wife, while others believe it's the other way around. The building is a small, one-story building with retail area and kitchen.

Autoduel: Baking, as a profession, basically disappeared after the Blight. Algae-based baked substitutes have not proven popular, but Josef has proven himself an expert at shipping in rare supplies of un-Blighted grain to produce real bread. The FBI is watching him because of this ability. His store is protected by a home-made security system with cooperation from the Black Lake Sheriff's Department in exchange for free bread. The store is a virtual mini-fortress: DR 15, HT 30, several firing ports.

Chew Foods

This is a late-night corner store which is the only place to get groceries or snacks after 6 p.m. when Brewin's closes down. It is run by Adrian and Sarah Chew and family. Chew Foods is a local kids' hangout due to its small video arcade. Prices run 15% above average.

Autoduel: Americans would curl up and die without a solid institution like the corner store. To dissuade marauding bikers, Chew Foods is fortified (DR 10, HT 30) and a local staging point for the Lakers. But the streets of Black Lake are

Codhead Ed Conroe, Fishing Shack Owner

Age 42; Salt-and-pepper hair, unkempt beard, brown eyes, 6' 1", 180 lbs. Early thrift shop dresser.

ST 13, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 12.

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantage: Toughness (DR 2).

Disadvantage: Pacifism (self-defense only).

Quirk: Wants to forget his past.

Skills: Boating-14; Brawling-15; Calligraphy-15; First-Aid-14; Guns (pistol)-15; Motorcycle (light)-17; Powerboat-13.

Equipment: .357 Magnum; Leather jacket and boots; Swiss Army knife; First Aid kit; Several boats.

Autoduel: Gunner (machine gun)-16. He rides a RoadMiser; however, the machine gun doesn't work and he's never bothered to fix it. He is a reluctant Laker.

Maggie Brewin, Store Owner

Age 51, Dark hair and eyes, 5' 7", 160 lbs., matronly.

ST 10, DX 10, IQ 12, HT 12.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Reputation (Wealthy businesswoman, +2); Wealth (Wealthy).

Disadvantage: Stubbornness.

Quirks: Determined to be mayor; Dislikes Dent.

Skills: Administration-15; Driving (car)-12; Politics-15.

Autoduel: Add First-Aid-15. Brewin is a non-combatant and helps out by dressing wounds in the clinic.

Josef Homencik, Baker and Zombie Father

Age 51, Sparse sandy hair, weathered face, black eyes, 6' 1", 220 lbs.

ST 13, DX 11, IQ 9, HT 14.

Basic Speed 6.25; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Disadvantages: Dependent (wife); Fat.

Quirk: Speaks English with a heavy Polish accent.

Skills: Driving (car)-12; Guns (pistol)-12; Professional skill (baking)-18.

Languages: English-8; Polish-9.

Equipment: one .38 revolver.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (rocket launcher)-13. Homencik wears Kevlar armor and uses a Colt .45. He drives a compact Buzz Bomb and is an AADA member.

fairly safe at night, so customers even feel free to walk to Chew Foods. The video arcade has been updated to include the only micro-arcade in town — it's not just kids that spend their time here.

Where to Pray

Adrian and Sarah Chew

Each is: Age 43, Oriental, black hair, sparkling black eyes, tend to dress similarly, 5', 5", 145 lbs.

ST 9, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Disadvantages: Dependents (two children).

Quirk: Extremely courteous and warm.

Skills: Merchant-12; Driving (car)-11.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (machine gun)-13. Each wears a flak jacket and steel helmet. They are stalwart Lakers, jointly crewing a tripod-mounted machine gun.

Deputy Amber Lane

Age 37; Blonde hair, blue eyes, 5' 9", 150 lbs.

ST 12, DX 13, IQ 11, HT 11.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Alertness +1; Legal Enforcement Powers; Patron (Black Lake, appears on 9 or less).

Disadvantages: Duty to Black Lake (Demanded on 10 or less); Enemy (FBI, appears on 9 or less).

Skills: Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-11; Guns (pistol)-14, (shotgun)-14; Driving (car)-13; Karate-16; Judo-14; Politics-11; Shortsword-14; Theology (Zen)-11.

Language: English-11.

Equipment: Standard issue; Oriental shortsword (carries with her on duty).

Amber Lane is an enthusiast of Eastern thought and combat. She runs Zen House as a labor of love. She hates the establishment, and uses Zen House as a haven for anti-government activists and terrorist operatives on the lam. She is being hunted by the FBI and may have to move soon.

Autoduel: Add Duty to ARF (Demanded on 9 or less); Gunner (machine gun)-14.

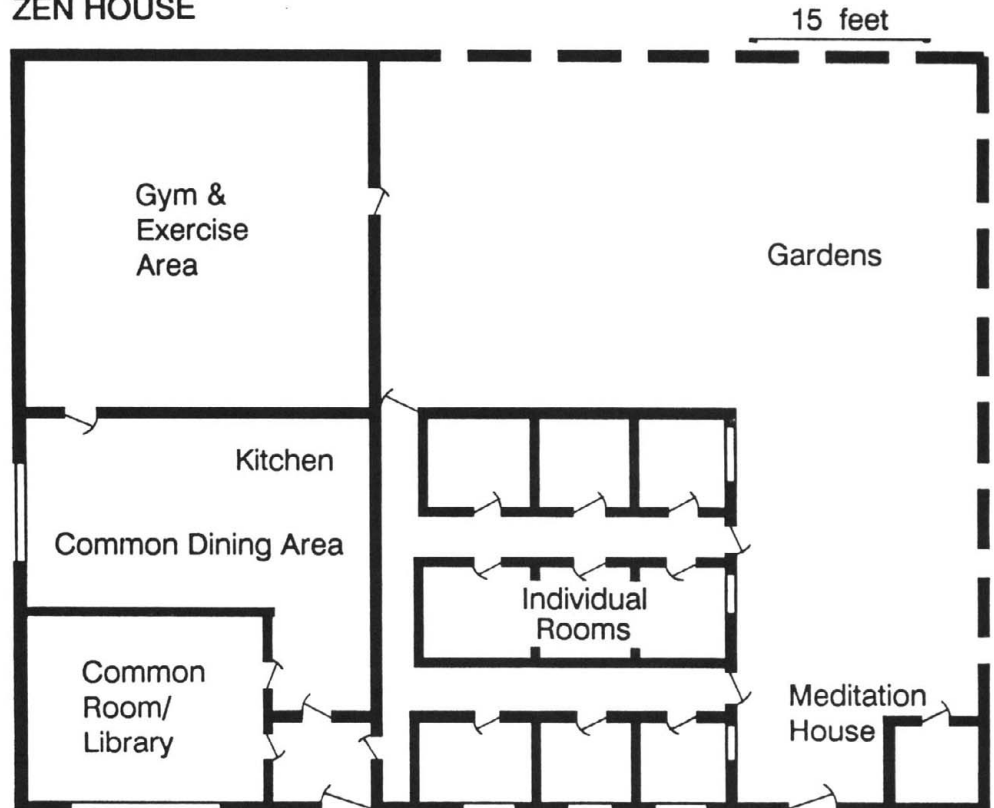


Zen House

California is a breeding ground for many small diverse religious and pseudo-philosophical groups or cults. Zen House in Black Lake is a typical example. The House is a cooperative commune run by Deputy Amber Lane, who organizes sessions on Eastern philosophy and martial arts. The members of the House constantly change and come from a variety of backgrounds. Some are simply penniless drifters, others are concerned with seeking a deeper relationship with Mother Planet, while others have come seeking purification from past guilt or because they are disgusted with modern society. It costs nothing to stay at Zen House — only a willingness to help out in its gardens and in the kitchen. Its financial costs are met by donations from its wealthier patrons.

Autoduel: The building is DR 10, HT 30.

ZEN HOUSE



Church of Pure Values

This church emphasizes clean living, the sinfulness of smoking, dancing, and rock music, traditional family values, and the bearing of arms for personal defense. It has approximately 100 members in Black Lake and is a strong force in the town for conservative politics and beliefs. Its building has a main sanctuary (which converts into a gym), a kitchen area, an office, and a basement for Sunday school classes. Jim Fisher is the pastor of the congregation. He loves to preach about the coming Armageddon and the Great Tribulation and publicly claims to have received several visions on the subject.

Autoduel: The bearing of arms is even more important than in the past. Every year the local church sends their best autoduellist to the annual Arms of the Elect, a non-AADA-sanctioned tournament at the Divine Wrath Park in Wisconsin. Many people deride the Church of Pure Values for its concentration on “family values”. The social forces of the 21st-century have produced an infinite variety of family types which go beyond the patriarchal model.

Black Lake Free Church

The “free” in the title refers to the church’s theology, not the absence of a collection plate. GMs are encouraged to read the *GURPS Autoduel* description for the background of this liberal-minded Protestant church. The origin of the present-day church will be different but the structure and beliefs will be the same.

Autoduel: The turn of the century produced a crisis in Christendom. Seeing the world fall apart around them, many in the evangelical wing fully expected the return of Christ in the year 2,000. Unfortunately, Christ stayed away, causing a crisis of faith among apocalyptic-minded believers. One of the many consequences of this crisis was the growth of the reformist “post-apocalyptic free evangelical movement.” It retained many of the outward forms of the traditional evangelicals, but adopted a liberal theology which focused on bringing heavenly justice to earth. Conservative critics called the movement a 21st-century rehash of the former century’s social gospel. Free church members dislike autoduelling, combat sports and vigilante organizations. Some are avid supporters of EDSEL; however, most are not opposed to self-defense, including participation in town militias. Free church members will shoot back, but they will always try “to understand” their target.

A typical free church is autonomously organized and belongs to a Network of similar churches. The Network is for the sharing of ideas and occasional coordinated political action and has no authority over the governance of any individual church. Each church is run by a senior committee which chooses, by consensus, a chair who serves as pastor. Chairs serve one-year terms. The Black Lake Church has about 65 members and meets in the Seniors Activity Hall once a week. The current chair of the Black Lake Free Church is Alice Johnson.

Where to Get Your Car Fixed

Ortega’s Garage

This would be the best place in town even if it weren’t the only one. Jesus Ortega is the best mechanic along Route 299 — he’s also blind. He can fix most things on his own, but sometimes requires the sight of his daughter, Maria, and his hired hand “Uncle” (who has a terrible stuttering problem). A local maxim goes, “Jesus saves,” meaning his garage can fix almost anything. Delivery trucks always stop here even if just for a quick check-up. The truck stop can fix

Deputy Christine Canyon

Age 41; Brown hair and eyes, 5’ 10”, 200 lbs.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 1.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Legal Enforcement Powers; Patron (Black Lake, appears on 9 or less).

Disadvantages: Fat; Duty to Black Lake (Demanded on 10 or less); Major Delusion (I was an ostrich in four of my five most recent lives).

Quirk: Wants to be Sheriff.

Skills: Guns (pistol)-14, (shotgun)-14; Driving (car)-13; Professional Skill (Law Enforcement)-14; Shortsword (nightstick)-13; Armoury (guns)-12; Computer Operation-12; Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-11. Languages: English-12; Spanish-11.

Equipment: Standard issue.

Deputy Canyon is bothered by her weight. She constantly seeks unusual New Age methods to become slimmer, but the most her treatments have gained her is a hang-up about the quality of her past lives. She feels that she could do a better job as Sheriff than Muldoon, and is thinking of running in the next election on the Brewin slate.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (recoilless rifle)-14.

Alice Johnson, Free Church Chair

Age 25; Strawberry blonde, green eyes, chubby but smartly dressed, 5’ 1”, 125 lbs.

ST 8, DX 12, IQ 14, HT 11.

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantage: Charisma +3.

Disadvantages: Epilepsy; Dependents (two children).

Quirks: Loathes Church of Pure Values; will aid in any plot against that church.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-17; Diplomacy-15; Leadership-18; Pilot (small helicopter)-15; Theology-20.

Autoduel: Add Guns (pistol)-10. She carries a Colt .45.

Ortega's Garage

Jesus Ortega

Age 46; Hispanic, 5' 4", 140 lbs.
Dressed in oily grease-monkey overalls.
ST 9, DX 14, IQ 12, HT 10.
Basic Speed 6; Move 6.
Dodge 6.

Advantages: Acute Hearing +1;
Eidetic Memory (20 points).

Disadvantages: Blindness (-6 to all combat skills); Dependent (daughter Maria).

Quirk: Believes in socialism and one-world government.

Skills: Blacksmith-13; Engineer (vehicles)-17; Judo-15; Mechanic (automobile engine)-17; Politics-12.

Languages: English-11; Spanish-12.

Equipment: Complete set of good automobile tools.

Jesus is described in the main text. He is also known for his passionate belief in socialism and the need for world federalism. He gives a 10% discount to anyone from another country as a sign of international fraternity.

Autoduel: Add Armoury (vehicular weapons)-16, (vehicular armor)-16.

Maria Ortega

Age 18; Hispanic, 5' 5", 125 lbs.
Usually dressed in sweats.
ST 9, DX 13, IQ 12, HT 12.
Basic Speed 6.25; Move 6.
Dodge 6.

Advantages: Appearance (Attractive); Intuition.

Disadvantage: Stubbornness.

Quirk: Torn between devotion to her father and her desire to leave Black Lake to pursue a career in the sciences.

Skills: Astronomy-13; Computer Operation-13; Computer Programming-12; Mechanic (automobile engines)-14; Mathematics-14; Nuclear Physics-11.

Languages: English-12; Spanish-10; Greek-10; Latin-9.

Equipment: Calculator; Telescope. She also has a personal computer at home.

Uncle

Age about 36; 6' 5", 200 lbs.
ST 16, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 12.
Basic Speed 6; Move 6.
Dodge 6.

Advantage: High Pain Threshold.

Disadvantage: Stuttering.

Quirks: Devoted to Jesus Ortega; A member of the Church of Pure Values; Never speaks.

Skills: Carpentry-13; Brawling-12; Guns (rifle)-13; Mechanic (car engines)-13; Survival (woodlands)-13; Tracking-12.

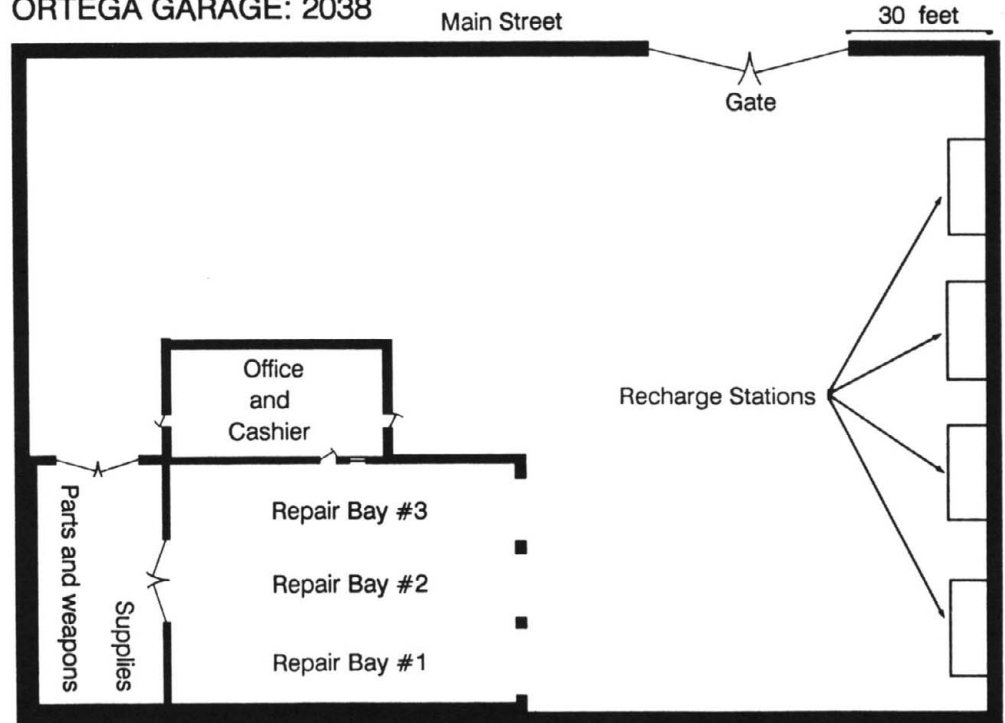
Language: English-11.

Equipment: .22 rifle; Tools.

any vehicle up to the big rigs. Repair prices are 15% above average, but the workmanship is second to none.

Autoduel: Jesus and company can fix any weapon, but they have few supplies for lasers or anything larger than a recoilless rifle. If you can provide a scavenged part, though, Jesus will install it. The truck stop is heavily fortified (DR 15, HT 50) and forms one of the defensive anchors of the main street. There is a 15' high outside wall (DR 8, HT 50), topped with barbed wire surrounding the main building, parking areas and the Recharge Stations. The entry gates are DR 6, HT 40 each. Ortega has also fortified the metal doors to the Repair Bays (DR 4, HT 20 each). Doors to the supply areas are DR 6, HT 30.

ORTEGA GARAGE: 2038



Media in Black Lake

The Black Lake Review

Black Lake is a one-paper town. The Review is published once a week and is about eight to twelve pages long. Almost all the news is local in content, ranging from gossip to town council shenanigans to items from the elementary school. The librarian, Alfredo Pagliacci (see p. 18), has a literary column in it. The letters to the editor section is always lively. Editorially, the Review is determined to see Brewin win the next election for Mayor. The paper is owned and edited by Barbara Fram, whose interviewing style includes constantly interrupting the person she is interviewing. She has faced three libel suits since she took over the paper. The Review employs one reporter, Sydney Jonathan. The Review is also notorious for frequent typos.

Autoduel: The Review is accessed electronically via home computer. Printed copies are available at the Review office for those without a computer. The office is DR 6, HT 15.

KNEW Radio

KNEW is a low-power automated station owned by out of town interests. It plays easy listening, light jazz and New Age electronic music. There is very lit-

tle local content in the programming, aside from twice-daily newscasts, and the station runs less advertising than it should to turn a profit for its owners. The station employs Sydney Jonathan part-time to prepare and read the newscasts and monitor the equipment. With his newspaper salary, he needs the extra work.

Autoduel: The computer automation is very sophisticated. Computer synthesized voices and instruments are used, and once a week the station computer airs a concert of its own original material. Jonathan still does the news.

Services

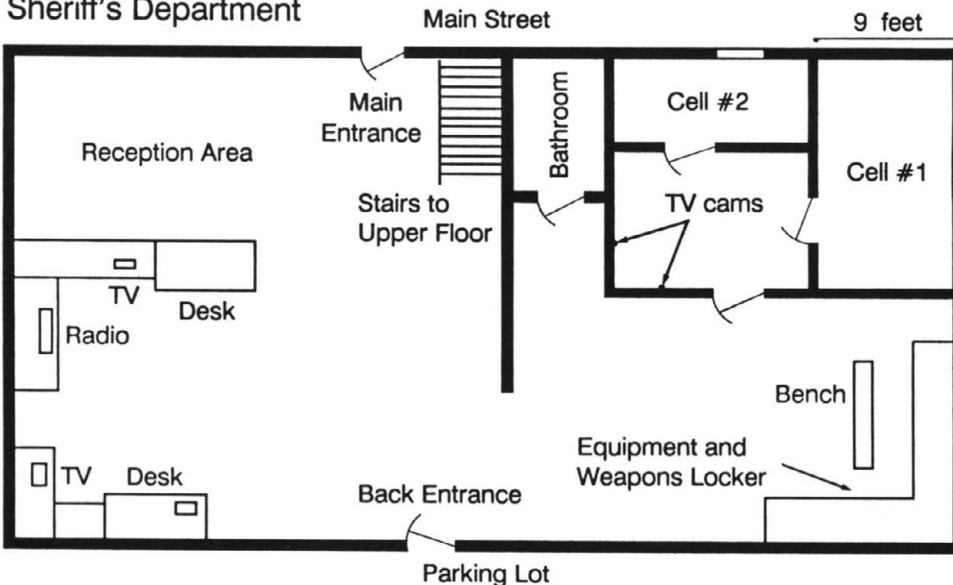
Black Lake Sheriff's Department

The Black Lake Sheriff's Department is composed of one full-time Sheriff, elected during town council elections, and four deputies hired by the Sheriff. (The fourth deputy is currently on vacation in New Mexico.) One of the five will always be on duty — patrolling in a vehicle or on foot, and one in the office. The Department is housed on the first floor of the Town Hall building (see floorplan). Work space is divided into one main work area with desks and computer terminals, two two-person cells (which they don't mind overcrowding) and a weapons locker. The Department owns one police cruiser and a 4 X 4 truck. Standard personal equipment for the Department includes a .38 pistol and six extra rounds, pump shotgun and eight extra rounds, handcuffs, walkie-talkie, flashlight, billy club and uniform.

Autoduel: The Department has an important role in the town's military defense. The Sheriff heads the town militia; for more information, see *Adding Autoduel*, p. 20.

The Department's vehicles include one standard police cruiser and one off-road police van (p. 23). Note that the van carries identical weapons to the cruiser, in the name of standardization. The Department's offices are part of Fortress Town Hall (DR 15, HT 35) and feature one exterior dual machine-gun emplacement. The cells are heavier (PD 10, DR 20 for the bars) and feature tear-gas bombs that will go off if the doors are opened without entering the proper code in the door lock (Electronics (Security Systems)-4 to crack). Each cell also has a video camera hooked up to television monitors in the office and both Department vehicles. One of the cameras does not work (Electronics (Communications) -5 to notice), but the Sheriff and her deputies never bother to tell prisoners this fact. Personal equipment has been upgraded to include Kevlar armor, tear-gas grenades, Amex shotguns, .357 Magnums and double ammunition.

Sheriff's Department



Sydney Jonathan, Review Reporter

Age 24; Blond hair, blue eyes, 5' 9", 150 lbs. Very well dressed.

ST 10, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Appearance (Handsome); Wealth (Very Wealthy).

Disadvantages: Bad Temper; Laziness; Unusual background — "exiled" to Black Lake by his father for sins committed while at Oxford.

Quirk: Can't stand Black Lake or its inhabitants.

Skills: Carousing-14; Gambling-12; History-14; Literature-14; Writing-13.

Languages: English-12; French-10; Spanish-9; German-11; Latin-9.

Jonathan is a modern-day remittance man. He was naughty while studying at Oxford, so his dominating father decided to send him into exile in small-town USA. Jonathan cannot see how being forced to live in this hellhole is a humane form of punishment. He does not try to escape, partly because he lives under the shadow of his father, and partly because it is a very real possibility that his father has planted agents in the town to make sure he stays there. He also wants to stay in his father's will. He has taken on two jobs to pay for his accumulating gambling debts. He drives an expensive European sports car and lives at Mrs. Brown's house.

Autoduel: Add Driving (car)-14; Guns (SMG)-15; Gunner (rocket launcher)-15, (laser)-15, (machine gun)-14. He drives a red Laser Flamberge. Jonathan can take on just about any duellist in town, but he's trying hard to stay out of any fights so he won't get in any major trouble. He wears improved body armor and carries an Uzi with three extra clips. He was pressured into joining the Lakers, but thinks they are a collection of beer-drinking morons.

Barbara Fram, Review Editor and Owner

Age 32; Black, with corn-rowed hair, 5' 9", 150 lbs. Usually wears a business suit.

ST 10, DX 11, IQ 13, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantage: Intuition.

Quirk: Wants to see Brewin as mayor of Black Lake.

Skills: Administration-13; Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-15; Computer Operation-15; Detect Lies-16; Driving (car)-11; Judo-11; Writing-15.

Equipment: Note pad and pen; tape recorder; camera.

Autoduel: Add Guns (rifle)-13. Fram wears body armor and carries an M26A2. She is a prominent Laker.

Jane Hall, Nurse

Age 28; Light brown hair, brown eyes, large build, 5' 11", 170 lbs.

ST 12, DX 10, IQ 11, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantage: High Pain Threshold.

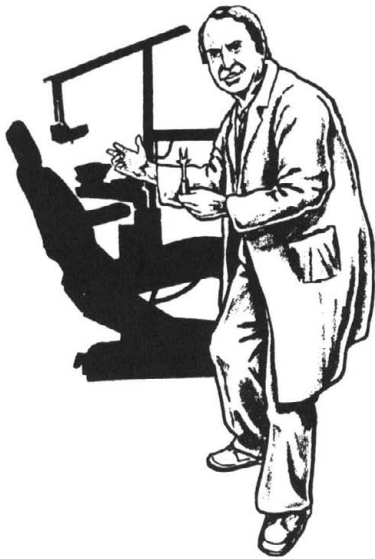
Disadvantages: Appearance (Unattractive); Odious Personal Habit (coughs on patients).

Quirk: Has little sympathy for the infirm.

Skills: First Aid-16; Physiology-13; Knife-12.

Equipment: Scalpel (treat as small knife).

Autoduel: Add Driving (car)-11. She also carries a First Aid kit.



Malcolm Fraser, Dentist

Age 47; Obvious brown toupee, piercing brown eyes, 5' 8", 145 lbs., wears green clothes.

ST 9, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Disadvantages: Lecherousness; Sadism.

Quirk: Considers anaesthetic to be a pampered luxury.

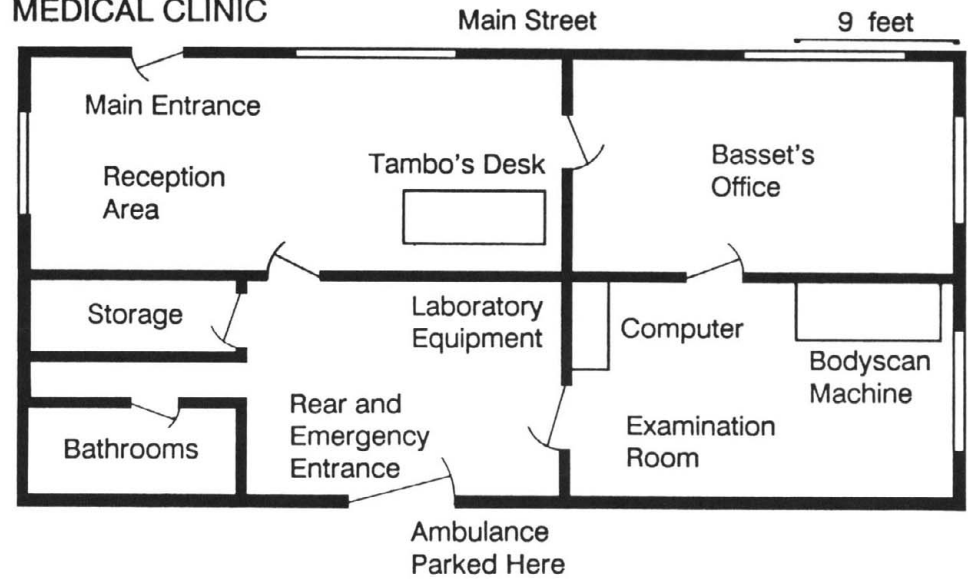
Skills: History (medieval torture methods)-18; Karate-14; Professional skill (dentistry)-15; Psychology-12; Sex Appeal-13.

Languages: English-13; French-12.

Equipment: various dental drills and cutting pieces.

Autoduel: Add Driving (car)-14; Gunner (laser)-15; Guns (rifle)-15. Also add quirk: likes to wound enemies before finishing them off. Wears improved body armor, carries an M26A2, and drives his specially-built Drill. He is an AADA member.

MEDICAL CLINIC



Black Lake Medical Clinic

Owned and run by Dr. Willy Basset. Additional staffers include Nelson Tambo, the receptionist and ambulance driver, and Nurse Jane Hall. The clinic is equipped for general practice, emergency treatment, minor surgery, and outpatient care. Serious cases, either emergency or surgical, are either driven in the ambulance or helicoptered to nearby Redding. Patients are picked up at the helipad outside the clinic.

Autoduel: The clinic is able to handle more serious cases thanks to surgery-assist and diagnostic computers (+2 to Surgery, +1 to Diagnostic, or -4 for both if not trained to work in computer-aided medicine). Video links are also available with any hospital in North America — Basset prefers to contact friends of his in San Francisco for advice. The clinic is DR 10, HT 40. The ambulance's stats are given on p. 24.

Dental Clinic

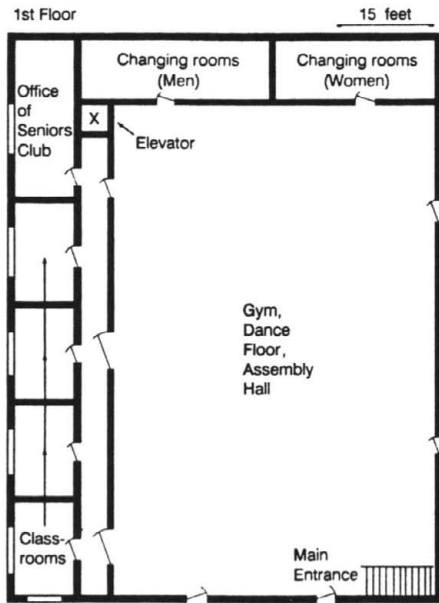
Malcolm Fraser is the local dentist, and he's a very strange man. He makes anaesthetic an option, is always full of lore about medieval torture practices, and is something of a lecher. Fraser's office is adjacent to the medical clinic.

Autoduel: Advanced technology has eliminated much of the pain associated with dentistry, but Fraser has been known to slip while using his laser drill.

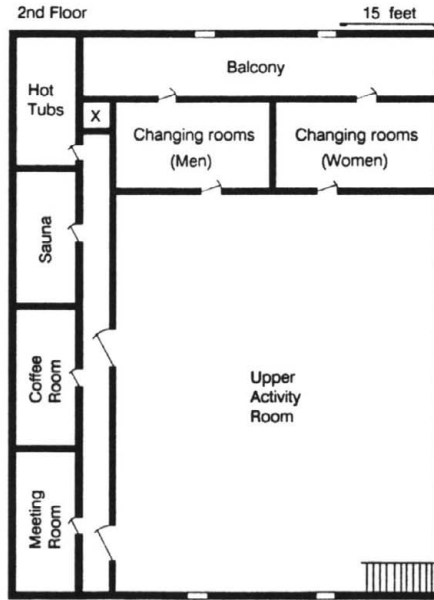
Bank of Northern California

This small bank is part of a popular chain of financial institutions. The bank manager, Lisa Bellechamps, is an important figure in Black Lake if only because she's the one who gets to turn down all the loan applicants. The bank features two tellers, safety deposit boxes, and a 24-hour banking machine which is networked into all the major cash and credit card systems in North America. The safe for this bank is very well protected; let's hope your players have no secret fantasies about bank robbery.

Autoduel: This little bank is extensively computerized; tellers have become obsolete since most banking is done at home by personal computer. This branch is also hooked up to every other financial institution in North America. Only Bellechamps and one assistant work here, meeting customers face to face only.



SENIORS ACTIVITY CENTER



for safety deposits or to discuss loans (which are usually turned down). The bank is solidly armored (DR 18, HT 40) and features a computerized security system. The bank's alarm is hooked up to the Sheriff's Office. The bank responds, in turn, by paying part of the policing costs of Black Lake.

Seniors Activity Center

Black Lake is a wonderful little place in which to retire, and a sizable seniors community has grown up here. The Seniors are well organized and have constructed their own Activity Center which includes a meeting hall, lawnbowling green, sauna and hot tubs. The Center's hall is often rented out to other community groups. And if you want social or political success in Black Lake, it's not a good idea to cross the seniors. Their Lawn Bowling Club is powerful indeed. The Seniors are led by Wiley Kiley, an ex-National Guard colonel.

Autoduel: Yes, some people do manage to make it past age 50 in Autoduel America. Many of them retire in small havens of rest like Black Lake. Seniors in 2038 (and in Black Lake) tend to be well off, educated, and tough. In Black Lake the Seniors also run the Heavy Weapons Club. During North California's short-lived Secession, there was a minor battle in which 101st Airborne forces smashed a National Guard regiment. One of the defeated artillery units escaped to Black Lake where they buried their weapons before fleeing. A US Army platoon occupied the town for three weeks vainly searching for the guns, but left empty-handed. A year later, Colonel "Wiley" Kiley, the ex-National Guard officer in charge of the artillery unit, returned to Black Lake and dug up the weapons. They were incorporated into the town's defenses during the Food Riots and have become legendary along Route 299. Seniors practice weekly on the weapons, using computer-assisted simulators to avoid expending ammunition. The weapons are detailed in *Adding Autoduel*. The Center is DR 18, HT 60

Wiley Kiley, Senior Citizens' Activist

Age 71; White hair, black eyes, 5' 8", 150 lbs.

ST 10, DX 11, IQ 14, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Alertness +2; Combat Reflexes; Toughness (DR 1).

Disadvantages: Age; Bad Temper; Duty to Black Lake and to Senior Citizen's Club (on 15 or less).

Quirks: Likes to study books and films about General George S. Patton; Hums the theme music from the movie *Patton* while lawnbowling (or in a fight).

Skills: Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-13; Carousing-12; Demolition-13; Driving (car)-12, (tracked vehicle)-13; Fast-Draw (pistol)-12; Gunner (recoilless rifle)-15; (machine gun)-15; Guns (pistol)-13, (automatic weapons)-12; Lawnbowling-15; Leadership-14; Strategy-14; Tactics-15.

Equipment: .45 automatic (ivory handled) with two extra clips; M-16 semi-automatic with three extra clips; Military uniform (which he wears much of the time); Library of military and tactical manuals.

Wiley Kiley is another ex-Army resident in Black Lake. He gets along fairly well with the Sheriff, although his bad temper and her stubbornness often produce conflicts. Kiley is currently the de facto leader of the Black Lake Senior Citizen's Club and one of its best lawnbowlers. He distrusts strangers who like to poke around in Black Lake and make the older people nervous. He resents the presence of the DocuLife film crew.

Autoduel: Kiley heads up the artillery section of the town's defense. He is proud of his senior gunners' abilities. One day he hopes to see North California a separate state once more. He also wishes that he could meet a biker general like Rommel in battle. His assault rifle is an M26A2.

Lisa Bellechampes, Banker

Age 34; Ash-blonde hair, gray eyes, 5' 6", 140 lbs., fashionably dressed.

ST 9, DX 12, IQ 13, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Strong Will +2; Status 2.

Disadvantages: Miserliness; Dependents (husband, one child).

Quirk: Always carries walking stick.

Skills: Accounting-15; Computer Operation-14; Diplomacy-12; Driving (car)-11; Fencing-13.

Equipment: Foil hidden in walking stick (impaling 1-1); drives old jalopy.

Autoduel: Add Guns (pistol)-13. Lisa carries a .22 pistol with six extra rounds. Lisa is a Laker.



Alfredo Pagliacci, Librarian

Age 59; Gray hair, black eyes, 5' 3", 130 lbs. Dressed in Dickensian clothing. ST 9, DX 11, IQ 13, HT 10. Speed 5.25; Move 5. Dodge 5.

Advantage: Eidetic Memory (20 points).

Disadvantage: Overconfidence.

Quirk: What is silence compared to the joy of loud opera?

Skills: Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-16; Computer Operation-13; Guns (rifle)-12; History (Black Lake)-18; Research-17. Languages: English-13; Italian-13.

Equipment: portable CD player with lots of operas on CD; antique elephant gun (10 shells).

Autoduel: Pagliacci is a Laker and insists on using his old one-shot weapon despite the fact that the recoil nearly knocks him down.

and serves as the last bastion of defense in Black Lake should the perimeter be penetrated. The Heavy Weapons Club command post is located on the first floor, where the corner classroom used to be.

Library and Museum

Black Lake has a tiny library and museum located on the north side of town. Its collection is small and outdated, with one closet full of children's books and another discreetly stacked with "adult" material.

There are a few interesting historical documents (such as a newspaper archive) and some artifacts. Books can be ordered through an inter-library loan system and take about a week to arrive. The head librarian is Alfredo Pagliacci, an intellectual and bombastic man. His stereo in the library is constantly blaring out Italian operas: this is not a *quiet* library.

Autoduel: DR 7, HT 25. The collection is mostly computerized, with an available catalog of books that defies imagination. Books can be accessed via computer and home printer.

Black Lake

Black Lake is a small and unusually warm mountain lake fed by several streams and one river. It is also uncommonly deep; you cannot see the bottom further than 100 yards from shore. Its depth and the imagination of

the residents have produced various stories about a serpent or monster living in the lake. No physical evidence of the monster has ever been discovered. At most, the locals play up the story for the benefit of tourists. Meanwhile they swim and fish in the lake without a worry . . .

It is local practice to allow the public access to all beach areas, except for that area fronting the guarded estate. Boats can be tied up just about anywhere as long as you do not damage anyone else's dock or boats. Many people leave a small tip or pay a courtesy call on the owner of the dock at which they moor their boat.

The Mansion by the Lake

The largest private building in Black Lake sits on an estate occupying a large portion of prime lakefront property. The mansion and the estate are owned by a Midwestern medical company named Columbus Meditech. Rumor has it that it is used for either secret CM research, or secret CM debaucheries — Black Lake residents are divided over this point. Firm-minded security guards prowl the beachfront and the large landside wall. No one gets in. And no one from the estate ever comes into town.

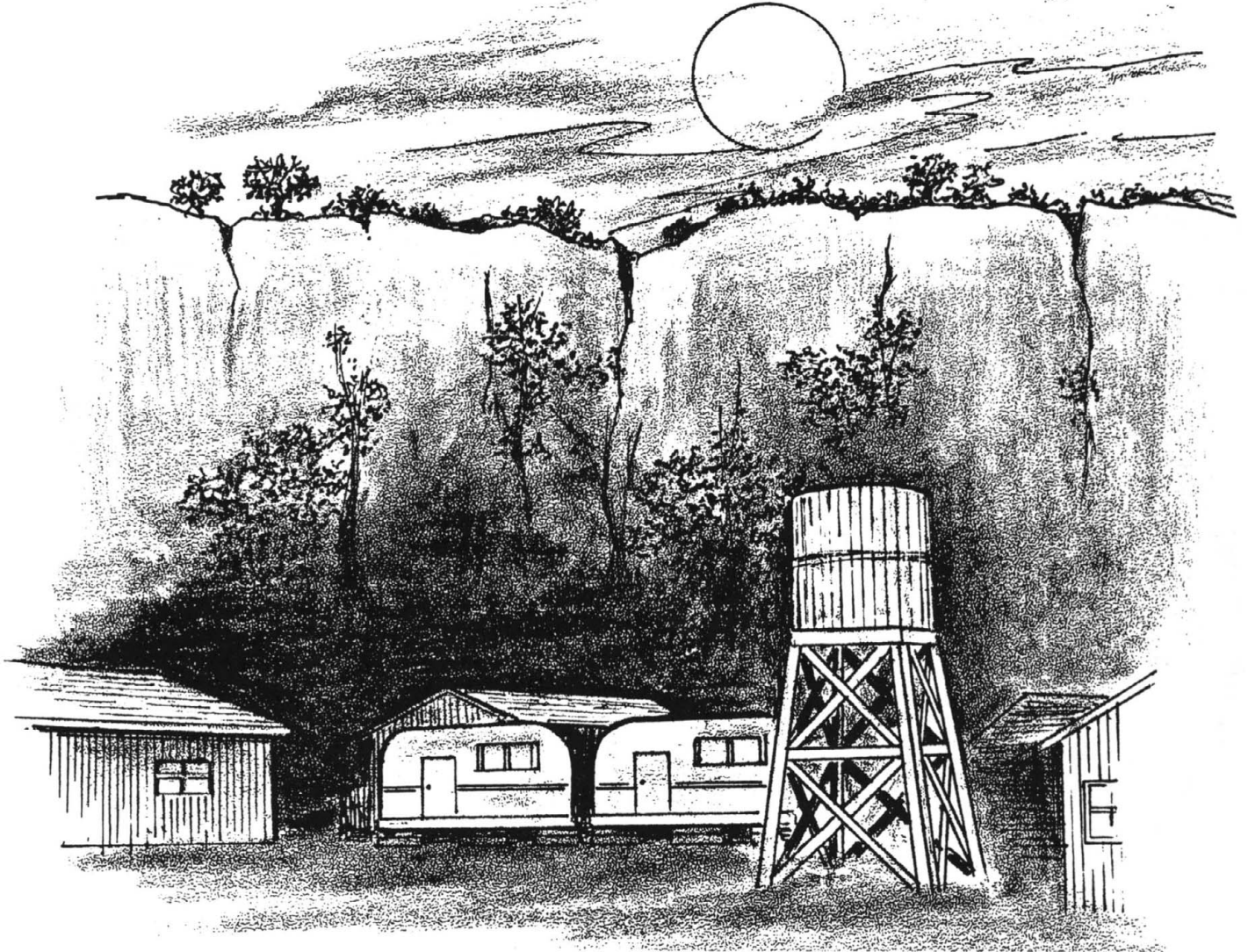
Local Logging

Logging and forestry maintenance is a common profession for the people of Black Lake.

In the summer there is also work in forest-fire fighting. The logging fields are some ten miles out of the town at the end of a wretched gravel road. Beware of logging trucks barreling down this road and even down the Black Lake turn-off.

The Mine

The mine was first opened during the great Rush of the nineteenth century in which Black Lake was born as a frontier boom town. The mine closed early in the twentieth century, but the tenacious inhabitants, so in love with the location, decided to hang on. They turned to forestry and tourism to make their livelihood, and after World War II, advertised the town as a retirement haven. Meanwhile the wooden shacks and shanties at the mine site rotted away, and the deserted



shafts themselves became the source for local folktales about criminal hideouts. Then, just a year and a half before this adventure takes place, a Los Angeles firm called ResourceCo purchased the land around the mine. They claimed that new mining technology would rejuvenate the barren lode and provide an economic boost to Black Lake. But ResourceCo alienated the good residents of Black Lake by cordoning off the site with chain-link fencing and bringing in out-of-town workers to do construction at the site. Furthermore the workers never once came into town to spend their money on lodging and food. Complaints by the Town Council to ResourceCo were met by promises of “jobs, jobs, jobs” when the mine finally re-opened. Recently, a few locals have begun work there, but are close-mouthed about what they do. Potential mayoral-candidate Brewin and *Review* editorials blamed Dent for the delay.

The mine is several miles to the northwest of the town at the end of a gravel road. It is surrounded by a chain-link fence. “NO TRESPASSING” signs are posted everywhere.

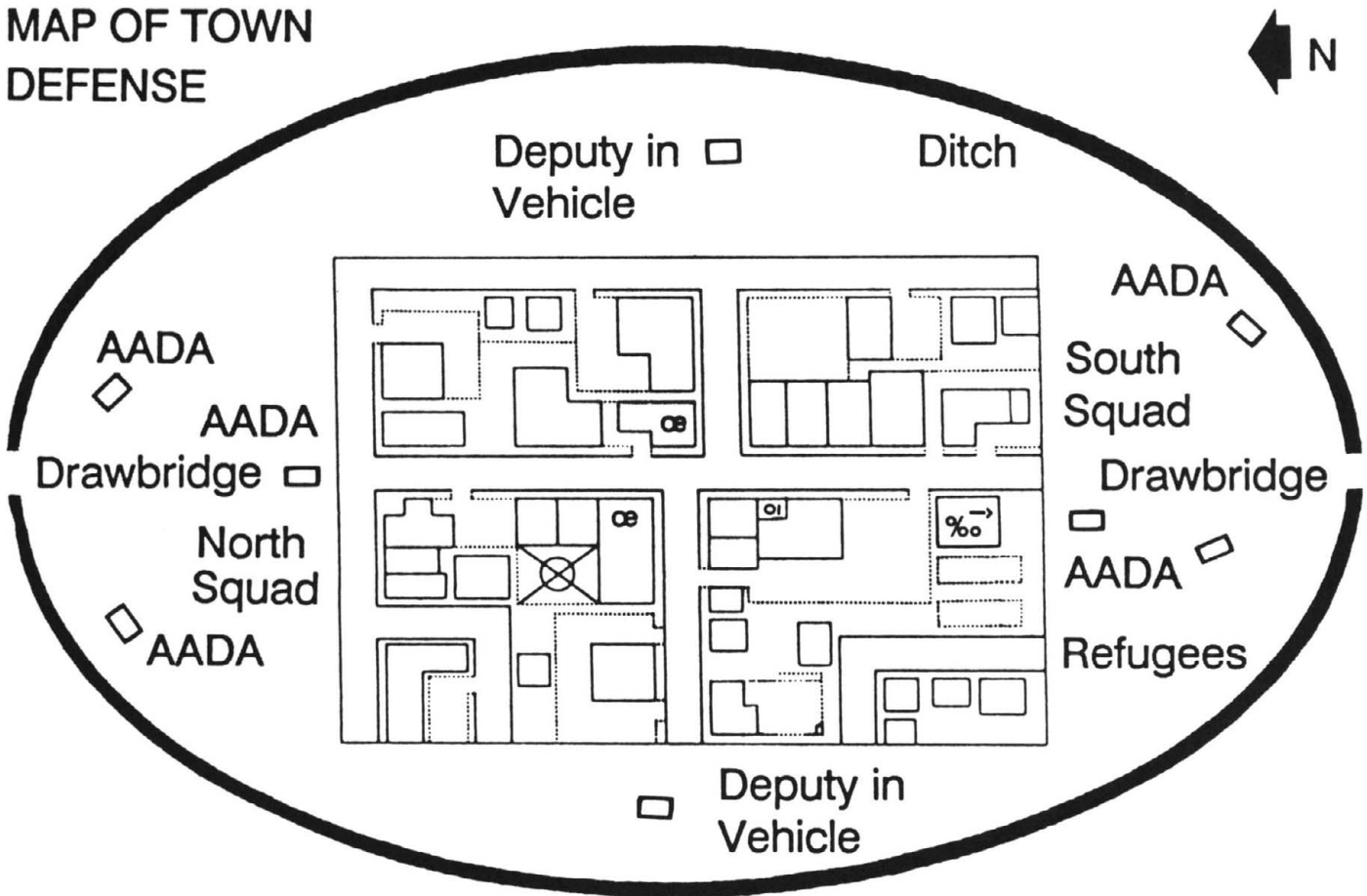
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ADDING AUTODUEL

Black Lake Town Defense

In 2038, any town that wants to remain a town has a defensive system or plan of some sort. Black Lake's version is the Black Lake Defensive Co-operative. The Defense Co-op, known informally as "The Lakers," has absolute authority in the town during emergencies. It is also responsible for the upkeep of the town's defenses between emergencies. Its funding comes from Town Council coffers (about 80% of the current Council budget), and from individual and business donations.

MAP OF TOWN DEFENSE



- ‰ Tank Gun
- ↑ Machine Gun
- ◻ Air Raid Siren
- ⊕ Recoilless Rifle

Physical Defenses

The town is surrounded by a ditch 4' deep and 10' wide. The inner lip of the ditch is about 3' higher than the outside lip; in theory, this is designed to make jumping the ditch harder for vehicles approaching from the outside. Any vehicle trying to cross the ditch must be going at least 30 mph and must make a Driving Skill roll to make the jump (-5 for an approach from the outside edge, -4 for an approach from the inside). A further Driving-4 roll is called for upon landing on either side of the ditch.

Mines are placed in a five-yard belt on either side of the ditch. These mines are rather old and unreliable, so there is a 1 in 3 chance that any square yard of

mines will not go off (roll once per square yard of mines crossed; roll even if that same section of mines has previously been crossed without exploding).

At the north and south ends of town, two metal drawbridges span the ditch. The north drawbridge is located just north of Ortega's Truckstop, while the south drawbridge is just south of the Seniors Activity Center. The drawbridges are actually small pieces of modified bridge-laying apparatus that were left, along with the guns, by the National Guard during their retreat from the U.S. Army. Each drawbridge is DR 15, HT 30.

It takes 20 seconds to raise and lower each bridge. The controls for the north drawbridge are located in Ortega's Truckstop. The controls for the south drawbridge are in the Seniors Activity Center. During the day, the bridges are down; as soon as it is dark, they are raised. During emergencies, the bridges are raised or lowered only at the direction of Laker Control.

Defense Co-operation Organization

Chain of Command

The mayor of Black Lake always defers to the sheriff during emergencies; the sheriff is the supreme commander of the town, and is referred to as "Laker Control." Under the sheriff are Wiley Kiley, commander of the Senior Citizens' Heavy Weapons Club; Jerry Low, commander of the Flying Lakers (the AADA contingent); Joe Renko, leader of the Scout Commando Troop; the individual NCOs of each squad; the deputies, who have independent assignments; and Doc Basset, head of the Medical Team. Should the sheriff be taken out of action, one of the deputies takes her place. Current senior deputy is Christine Canyon.

Force Breakdown

The Lakers are divided into squads and specialized teams. There are three regular infantry squads (known as the Lakers proper), one autoduel team, one artillery team, and one scout/counter-terrorist team. The following is a description of each team, including their weapons, members and assignment.

Laker Control

HQ of the Defense Co-op is located in the Sheriff's Office. There, the sheriff or one of the deputies keeps in constant radio contact with all the various units. In emergencies, the HQ doors are bolted and the machine gun positions manned by civilian volunteers (each with attributes of 10, Gunner (Machine Gun)-12).

The Senior Citizens' Heavy Weapons Club

The backbone of the Lakers, and they know it. The Heavy Weapons Club is led by Kiley and, at any given time, contains about three dozen members, not all of whom will be on duty during an emergency (due to illness, arthritis, etc.). The Heavy Weapons Club's armament includes: one tank gun on the roof of the Seniors Activity Center; one machine gun in each corner of the ground floor of the Activity Center; one tripod recoilless rifle on the roof of the Five Cents to One Dollar, and another on the roof of Brewin's Food and Feed.

The recoilless rifle positions are manned by two Club members; the machine guns are crewed by two members and the tank gun is crewed by five members. The recoilless rifles are protected from forward fire only by a metal shield (DR 5, HT 10); the machine guns are placed in small automotive-type turrets with PD

The Tank Gun

The tank gun was built from the cannibalized parts of several heavy artillery pieces left behind by the Guardsmen. Replacement parts are kept locked in the basement of the Activity Center.

The tank gun functions for all purposes like a standard *Autoduel* tank gun. It is housed in a home-built turret atop the Activity Center. The turret has a 360-degree turning radius (turning at 90 degrees per second), weighs 1,500 lbs., holds 75 cubic feet, and has PD 4, DR 16. There is one gunner inside the turret along with a hi-res targeting computer and indirect fire computer.

In the Command Center/Fire Control Room are the rest of the hardware of the indirect fire computer, spare parts and tools, 100 extra rounds of tank gun ammunition, and the four other gun crew members. The gun crew members change off with the gunner when he becomes fatigued, load new magazines, and protect the gun from infantry assault. The Fire Control Room is locked (Electronics (Security Systems)-5 to break in) behind a sliding steel door (DR 3, HT 15).

Indirect Fire Rules

These are not definitive rules for indirect fire and are meant to work for this adventure only.

Indirect fire is not allowed within 1,000 yards of the tank gun. Within that range, the gun must switch to direct fire to hit its targets. Indirect fire is allowed up to a range of 5,000 yards; any target within that range basically has the same chance to be hit.

When using indirect fire, apply no range or aiming modifiers. Instead, adjust the roll by -3 after applying all other modifiers. Also, remember the burst effect radius.

The accuracy of the high-explosive shells is best suited for breaking up groups of bikers. Most of the vehicle wrecks along the turn-off road were deliberately put there by the Lakers as a psychological tactic.

3, DR 12 armor. Both the recoilless rifles and machine guns have ten extra magazines each.

The Heavy Weapons Club is responsible for the maintenance of its own weapons. As necessary as it is, the other Lakers see the Club as a cash-eater.

The Spotter

The tank gun is also capable of indirect fire. The spotter for the gun is located near the top of Lookout Mountain, where it commands a clear view of the town and the road leading to it from the highway. The spotter is a camouflaged tree house (DR 2, HT 10, IQ-5 to notice, holds 20 cubic feet), containing a high resolution IR video camera linked to a plotting computer. The camera effectively "sees" for the computer, which sends the information to the tank gun's indirect fire computer. Visual information is translated into plotting coordinate information.

Every square yard of the Black Lake turnoff within three miles of the town has been meticulously pre-plotted. The same goes for the road around the Lake, and the cabins and farms (the farms and cabins all have radios with which to contact Laker Control). The spotter is crewed by two Scouts at all times and is one of their prime defense mandates.

Only a few people know the actual location of the Spotter Post. The sheriff and her deputies know, Wiley Kiley knows, and the Scouts know. Everyone else is kept in the dark — the Scouts have even sworn a death oath not to reveal its whereabouts. Most people do know that the Post is somewhere in the vicinity of Lookout Mountain, but don't know exactly where. And they don't go looking for it, either.

The Scouts have the authority to kill any person who comes within 50 yards of the Post. Revealing the location of the Post to outsiders is a capital offense without trial. So far, no one has been so foolhardy.



The AADA Chapter

The "Flying Lakers," as they call themselves, form the cavalry arm of the Defense Co-op. Like most duellists, they believe that they are most important part of the town's defense. The Flying Lakers perform scouting missions, make preemptive strikes against bandit motorized columns, and provide mobile firepower where needed. The unusual degree of cooperation between the duellists and the ground fighters bolsters the entire defense force's morale.

Current president of the AADA is Jerry Low. Presidents serve one-year terms and are *elected*. The Black Lake AADA does little actual duelling; they do a lot of mobile target practice, and perform mock combats with each other. Every now and then, a formal duel will be held under strict supervision and well away from the town. (There hasn't been a lethal duel in Black Lake in ten years, not since Roosevelt Grady's targeting computer mistook Grady's unwary second for the opposing vehicle and turned the turret in the wrong direction).

The Black Lake duellists feel that their first duty lies in keeping their vehicles in shape to protect the town. As the possibility of danger decreases, however, they are beginning to think of setting up a small arena on the outside of town. At least, that's what they say as they gather in their hangout, the Pinetree Pub. Current members of the AADA include Jerry Low, Eve Kosnowski, Josef Homencik, Bill O'Keefe, Malcolm Fraser and Sydney Jonathan.

The Lakers Proper

These are the infantry, the guts of the Defense Co-op. They are divided into four squads:

Scout Commandos Troop: led by Joe Renko, the Scout Commandos crew and guard the spotter on Lookout Mountain, patrol the woods, rescue stragglers from the farms and cabins, and engage in surprise raids against enemy camps. They are armed as described in the "Posse" sidebar (p. 46). The troop usually numbers a dozen.

South Entrance Squad: NCO Fuzzy Dent; members Alfredo Pagliacci, Captain Fred, Uncle, and Alice Johnson. All are armed as per their character descriptions. Their job is to protect the south drawbridge entrance.

North Entrance Squad: NCO Barbara Fram; members Adrian and Sarah Chew, Codhead Ed. Their job is to protect the north entrance into town.

Church of Pure Values squad: NCO Jim Fisher or his designate; members: ten Church of Pure Values members with attributes and arms as described in the "Posse" sidebar (p. 44). They are the Lakers' crack squad and are kept in reserve until the basic strategy of the attackers is determined.

The Medical Team

Set up in the town clinic, the Medical Team prepares to receive emergency cases. Under Basset's firm rule, they will treat anyone, friend or bandit. Members of the team include Basset, Nelson Tambo, Jane Hall, and Maggie Brewin. Tambo has the ambulance prepped to go once the emergency alarm has been sounded, but he wishes that he could be in the front lines.

The Irregulars

The Irregulars include everyone else in town. Their job is to stay put, point

a convenient weapon out the window, and fire at any bad guys. They follow the orders of any Laker. Irregulars include Lisa Bellechamps, Simpson Godot, Pete the Punker, Mabel, Ali Ben McKinley, Smiley, Velda, Mrs. Brown's maids, Jesus Ortega, and Maria Ortega.

How It Works

All traffic coming down the Black Lake turnoff and all traffic on the logging roads is monitored by the Spotter (the tank gun is crewed by one gunner at all times). Signs warning all incoming traffic to make contact with Laker Control are clearly placed along the side of the road. Failure to make the required contact will be seen as a sign of aggression and is a serious mistake.

If the signs are ignored, Laker Control will order the tank gun to fire two initial warning rounds at the offending vehicle. These are not meant to hit, but if they do, Laker Control is not concerned. If the warning shots are ignored or if the oncoming traffic is an obvious threat (such as 50 bikers screaming for blood), then the tank gun opens up full-blast.

At that moment, Laker Control turns on the old civil defense air-raid siren atop the roof of the Town Hall, signaling a general emergency. KNEW radio cuts into its regular programming and broadcasts either a "Code One" or a "Code Two," depending on the instructions it receives from Laker Control.

Code One means: "Everyone get into town now!" Code Two means: "Get to the nearest cover fast." Code Two is primarily meant for the inhabitants of the farms and cabins, who must decide whether or not they should make a dash for the town and safety. Code Two is ordered by Laker Control if the sheriff believes that those outside will have no chance of reaching town before being cut off by attackers.

As soon as the siren sounds, the seniors quit their lawnbowling and scramble to their gun positions. The autoduellists race to their vehicles and drive to pre-arranged positions in the town: two of the vehicles go to the north entrance, while the rest go to the south entrance. They stay there as mobile firepower until ordered to move by Laker Control or directly attacked by enemy forces. They are also often sent out on flanking maneuvers on the logging roads before the drawbridges are raised.

Meanwhile, the Laker squads suit up and race to their pre-arranged positions, while the Medical Team assembles at the clinic, taking out dressings and piling supplies into the ambulance. Two deputies keep an eye on the general situation, help out the Irregulars, and report constantly to Laker Control. Both are in the Sheriff's Department's vehicles, one at the east end of the town and the other at the west end. Laker Control itself is staffed by the sheriff, a third deputy, and two civilians. The Irregulars stay where they are and shoot strangers.

The Lakers maintain their basic positions until ordered to change by Laker Control. If Laker Control is knocked out, team and squad commanders are left to their own devices. Nominally, control falls to Wiley Kiley, but this system has not worked out so far in drills. When the emergency has lifted, the air raid siren blasts the all clear and KNEW radio broadcasts "Code Three," meaning "It's safe now."

Treatment of Visitors

All visitors that contact Laker Control and comply with its requests are met at the south drawbridge by the sheriff and/or a deputy. Depending on the number of visitors and vehicles, the sheriff may have some Laker or AADA backup. The sheriff will ask a number of questions; if she is satisfied with the answers to these questions, visitors will be allowed to pass with a stern warning to behave

The Vehicles of Black Lake

Listed are the name of the vehicle, the maker, and the owner.

Buzz Bomb (West Coast Motors, Josef Homencik)

Compact, hvy. chassis, improved suspension, medium power plant, 4 PR tires, driver only. RL front, hvy. rocket back, targeting computer. Armor: F 0/18, R 0/18, L 0/18, B 0/18, T 0/12, U 0/6. Accel. 5, top speed 90, Driving skill modifier +1, 3390 lbs. (310 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 6 cu. ft. remaining.

The Drill (privately produced, Malcolm Fraser)

Luxury, hvy. chassis, improved suspension, super power plant, 4 PR radial tires, streamlined, driver only. Two linked lasers front, spikedropper back, targeting computer. Armor: F 6/12, R 4/8, L 4/8, B 3/8, T 3/4, U 1/4. Accel. 10, top speed 110, Driving skill modifier +2, 5705 lbs. (345 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 6 cu. ft. remaining.

Police Off-Road Van (Vancouver Arms, Sheriff's Department)

Van, x-hvy. chassis, OR suspension, medium power plant, 6 OR solid tires, targeting computer (for Gunner), roll cage, fire extinguisher, driver, gunner, 3 passengers. RR front, machine gun (in medium turret). Honeycombed armor: F 2/14, R 1/10, L 1/10, B 2/14, T 1/10. U 0/6. Accel. 5, top speed 90, Driving skill modifier +1 (off-road only), 6200 lbs. (1000 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 39 cu. ft. remaining (plus 25 cu. ft. also in cargo area).

DocuLife Chopper (Northern Hawk, U-Fly Rentals)

Small helicopter, small copter power plant, one pilot, three passengers. Two linked machine guns in belly-mounted universal medium turret, LD radio, fire extinguisher, radar. Armor: F 4/16, R 4/16, L 4/16, B 4/16, T 1/4, U 6/24. Accel. 5, top speed 200, Pilot skill modifier +2, 6900 lbs. (1100 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 3 cu. ft. remaining.

Laser Flamberge (originally published in GURPS Car Warriors)

Mid, x-hvy. chassis, hvy. suspension, large power plant, 4 solid tires, RR front, medium turret, driver, gunner. Laser in turret. Fully honeycombed armor: 0/18 in all locations. Accel. 5, top speed 100, Driving skill modifier +2, 5290 lbs. (470 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 1 cu. ft. remaining.

themselves. Almost everyone who comes to Black Lake gives the sheriff advance notice of their intentions.

Patrols

After dark, two Commando Scouts and two Church Of Pure Values members constantly patrol the ditch perimeter. The Sheriff's Department takes care of the town's interior. They issue a standard password (changed nightly at random), challenge any trespassers, and are very trigger-happy.

Vehicles of Black Lake (continued)

Horsemen Van (privately produced, Linda Lovewar)

Van, x-hvy. chassis, OR suspension, large power plant, 6 OR solid tires, driver, three passengers. VMG (extra magazine) in medium turret, smokescreen back, hi-res targeting computer, IR system. Honeycombed armor: F 2/14, R 1/10, L 1/10, B 1/10, T 2/14, U 0/6. Accel. 5, top speed 100, Driving skill modifier +1 (off-road only), 6280 lbs. (920 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 55 cu. ft. remaining (plus 25 cu. ft. in cargo area).

The Beast, Personal Combat Tractor (Armageddon Motors, Ezra Nash)

Sleeper longnose, x-hvy. chassis, regular truck power plant, 10 solid tires, driver. Two VMGs in x-lg. turret, laser front, minedropper back, two heavy rockets back (all weapons linked to one another), cyberlink to VMGs, hi-res targeting computer, IR system, LD radio. Armor (fireproof, surface-hardened for 3 points, sloped for 5 points): F 11/17, R 11/17, L 11/17, B 11/17, T 12/21, U 6/17. Accel. 2.5/5, top speed 100, 15,800 lbs. (400 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 7 cu. ft. remaining.

Ambulance (Republic Motors, Black Lake Medical Clinic)

Station wagon, x-hvy. chassis, hvy. suspension, super power plant, 4 PR radial tires, driver, two passengers. Searchlight, roll cage, LD radio, fire extinguisher, medical computer (+2 to Diagnosis skill), medical couch, supplies cabinet. Honeycombed armor: F 2/20, R 2/20, L 2/20, B 2/20, T 0/12, U 2/20. Accel. 10, top speed 100, Driving skill modifier +3, 5840 lbs. (760 lbs. left for crew and cargo), 8 cu. ft. remaining (with 18 cu. ft. remaining in cargo area). The weight and space of the medical equipment have been taken into account.

Does It Work?

No one knows. The Defense Co-op organizes at least one random drill per week, and is constantly holding drills on weapon care and tactics. But many of the Lakers are lightly armed, and few are truly competent soldiers. The AADA section, the Commando Scouts and the Heavy Weapons Club are the real force behind Black Lake's defensive ability. The town does have a good reputation, however, and the town's leaders are loathe to openly discuss any weaknesses their system has.

The town's reputation came after the only really serious threat the town has ever faced. Near the end of the Food Riot era, Hugo's Harlots, a bike gang of unknown origin, decided to take on the town. Hugo was not very bright and wanted to find out whether the rumors of the town's artillery were true.

The town's warning system failed completely, and the Harlots managed to make it to Main and Renko without a shot being fired by either side. Hugo was just as amazed as the townspeople, who snapped out of their shock first to end the career of the cycle gang in a point-blank crossfire. Black Lake was nationally famous for a day and won the California Governor's Civil Defense Medal of the Month.

Since the demise of the Harlots, there has only been sporadic raiding on the town by ill-equipped or just plain stupid bandits. The town constantly drills and refines its defenses, but some are beginning to wonder if they are getting a bit rusty . . .

Autoduel Zombies

An *Autoduel* adventure will run somewhat differently than a standard *Horror* adventure. There are two big differences.

First, the level of technological sophistication and the tolerance for violence in *Autoduel America* will be much higher than in the 1980s. Fright checks based on violence and death will be at +1 to the normal roll. Characters (and players) will be used to the idea of cloning — indeed some of them may be clones themselves. It is the way that cloning is used by Nash, and the evil intent behind his program, that should give duellists the creeps.

Second, defeating Nash without also destroying the town's chances of resurrection is a difficult tactical challenge — especially for characters who are used to toting around and using heavy weapons. Keep the players guessing, keep them wondering just what is going on here. Dead people rising from the grave should give them reason to ponder; a whole town massing together at the sound of a lonely bell at midnight, then attacking a heavily defended estate, should really make them think. The whole point behind using this adventure for *Autoduel* is to get your trigger-happy duellists to think their way through an adventure. There will be car battles sure enough, but automotive mayhem alone will not solve this adventure.

There will be plenty of opportunities for your heavily-armed duellists to use their non-combat skills: debating with the town council, for example, or crawling around in the airshaft, or figuring out what the zombies are, or convincing the frightened non-clones that they are on the same side.

There will also be at least two places in the adventure when the heavy weaponry of 2038 will be important.

The Mansion Assault

Remember — vehicles are *mobile*. The PCs will still be unable to meet the mob head-on without being destroyed, but they may try hit-and-run tactics to break it up or delay it. They may also try to draw away the town vehicles so that the guards' Leos can handle the footmen. All things considered, autoduellist adventurers will have more combat options available to them than do their 1980s counterparts.

But so do Nash (the villain) and his cronies. They will have at least half a dozen vehicles, including the wicked-looking (albeit untested) Beast tractor. They'll also have the tank gun, which will begin shelling the estate as soon as the mob leaves the Activity Center parking lot. This shelling will certainly discomfit the guards and the PCs, and may even kill some of them.

One possible development sees the party swinging around behind the mob column to mount a rear assault on the Activity Center. Such an attack would have to be commando-style to succeed — the seniors will not give up easily. But if the adventurers do win, they could turn the tank gun on Nash's forces and change the whole complexion of the adventure. And if they do manage to stall the attack on the estate, you can bet that angry mob members will come charging back to town to retake the gun.

The Mine Assault

If duellists find this too easy, you might allow Nash to escape, mount his Beast and radio a death-duel challenge to the party. Thus, the mine attack could begin with a cars vs. water tower engagement, leading to a sweep on foot through the mine itself, and then ending with a classic heroes vs. villains autoduel.

Duelling and the Law in Black Lake

Black Lake law permits the carrying of personal weapons, but all citizens and visitors who own automatic or heavy weapons must report their ownership to the Sheriff's Department. Failure to report ownership of such hardware will result in immediate expulsion from the town.

Duelling is strictly forbidden within the ditch perimeter and on the road around the lake. Violators will find themselves under fire from the Heavy Weapons Club. Those violators who survive will have their vehicles permanently impounded.

Duels are allowed anywhere else, including on the logging roads and on the turnoff from Route 299. All duels, however, must be sanctioned by the Black Lake AADA and must have the clinic ambulance in attendance. Failure to abide by this provision will render the duel illegal and subject to the penalties listed above.

Local duels are almost never lethal; bloodthirsty actions are frowned upon, and may lead to instant vengeance matches at unequal odds. Mock combat and defense-related drills are most common in this area; duellists who can aid in these drills will be respected. AADA sanction for duels is usually granted between two equal opponents, but almost always rejected when one side has a clear advantage.

Nelson Tambo, Ambulance Driver

Age 25; Black, tightly-curved black hair, dark; 5' 11", 170 lbs.

ST 13, DX 13, IQ 12, HT 9.

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Acute Hearing +2; Combat Reflexes.

Skills: Administration-13; Computer Operation-14; Driving (car)-19; First Aid-17.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (recoilless rifle)-14; Guns (pistol)-15. He carries a concealed .45 Colt and wears a Kevlar vest.

Doc Willy Basset

Age 62; White hair, blue eyes, 5' 5", 140 lbs. Usually wears white medical smock.

ST 9, DX 13, IQ 13, HT 9.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Immunity to Disease; Magical Resistance (unknown to him); Wealth; Status 2 (only doctor in small town).

Disadvantages: Age; Pacifism (total non-violence); Sense of Duty to Black Lake.

Quirks: Will help anyone with any medical problem; Smokes two packs of cigarettes a day.

Skills: Administration-12; Computer Operation-13; Diagnosis-17; Naturalist-12; Physician-18; Surgery-16; Veterinary-17.

Languages: English-13; Chinese-10; Spanish-11.

Equipment: Doctor's black bag.

Basset is the only doctor in town, and many Black Lake residents feel that he is enough. Unfortunately, Doc Basset is getting old and is thinking of selling his practice. He is totally committed to the Hippocratic Oath and will help anyone at any time with a medical problem. He hates violence in any form and dislikes those who use guns. He does not get along well with the Sheriff, calling her "the Soldier Bag." His magical resistance is the result of something that happened long ago in his family — he knows nothing about it.

Autoduel: Doc Basset works with very sophisticated computerized equipment, but he has been careful not to be de-skilled by the software available — he is still a hands-on, old-fashioned healer. He holds true to his pacifist convictions and will treat wounded Black Lake enemies without hesitation. It is due to his insistence that the Clinic ambulance is unarmed — which bothers Nelson Tambo.

3

ZOMBIETOWN U.S.A.

The adventure begins with a special-delivery letter addressed to one or all of the characters. The letter is from Fuzzy Dent, the mayor of Black Lake, California. The PCs probably have never heard of either Dent or Black Lake. The letter is brief, and simply states that “something odd” is going on in the town, and that Dent would like the party to look around. He promises to pay them well. The letter is dated a few days before the current game day. Included with the letter is a check for \$500 made out to one of the characters, or to the company or organization that the players own or work for. A small note attached to the check indicates that it will be cancelled if not cashed within five days.

If the PCs wish, they can call directory assistance for his number. However, all calls are met by a busy signal. A check with the operator indicates that the problem is on Dent’s end of the connection.

Autoduel: The letter and money were sent electronically.

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Black Where?

A successful roll against Research +2 reveals that Black Lake is a small town of about 1,000 people in northern California, situated on the southern approaches of the Salmon Mountains. Its principal industries are logging, tourism and retirement. The town once boasted a gold mine, but the gold played out many years ago. Area Knowledge (California)-3 or Occult-3 uncovers some stories about a Nessie-like monster (named Blackie) in the lake, but serious occultists and most of the locals discount the stories as fairy tales. Otherwise, Black Lake is an insignificant place, especially for horror-hunters.

Autoduel: Black Lake has changed little from the above description. It is now designated a fortress town due to an efficient militia and good defenses. A History-4 roll also brings to mind the town’s background. Black Lake survived the Food Riots, thanks to a collectivist attitude on the part of the townspeople, the presence of local farms and the hijacking of several U.S. Army trucks filled with rations. In this period, the town suffered only one major biker assault, which was bloodily repulsed (more by accident than by tactical acumen).

During the brief secession of northern California, Black Lake was used as a secret National Guard staging area prior to the Sacramento Declaration. There was no fighting in Black Lake itself, but National Guard and militia elements did fight a major (and losing) battle with the 101st Airborne near the turn-off to Black Lake on Route 299. Retreating Guardsmen reportedly buried some of their heavy weapons near Black Lake, and the AADA believes that such weapons may be responsible for Black Lake’s current defensive prowess.

How To Get There

If the PCs live anywhere along the West Coast, they can drive to Black Lake directly. Black Lake lies ten miles north and approximately twenty miles west of Redding along Route 299. The turn-off, simply named Black Lake Road, is a paved two-lane road in fairly good condition.

They can also take a bus to Redding or Eureka. A bus route runs between these two points every Monday and Friday. It stops at the Junction Cafe at noon and leaves at 1 p.m. A one-way fare is \$25 per passenger. There is a shuttle to Black Lake that leaves at 12:30 p.m. The one-way fare is \$3.00.

The investigators can also fly to the airport at Redding, and from there either

catch the Redding-Eureka connector or rent a car at the airport and drive directly. If they're really rich or have a generous patron, a helicopter will get them to Black Lake — a helipad is located in back of the town clinic.

Autoduel: Travel is not quite as easy. The road to Black Lake is still there, but it is in poor condition. Bandit activity is also heavier along Route 299 than on I-5, though it decreases sharply toward both Redding and Eureka. The bandits, however, are not well organized or heavily armed. The AADA records no actual "gang" in the area. Nonetheless, this is fairly wild territory, and the forests do harbor desperate people. Any bandits the PCs encounter will be the crazed, lone-wolf type.

One can still take a bus to Black Lake in 2038. Shasta Convoy Lines sends a busnaught round-trip to Redding from Eureka every Sunday. Depending on the passengers, the bus may stop briefly in Black Lake at an undetermined time. For \$50, a passenger gets his ticket and can bring along 50 lbs. of luggage.

For travel by air, the nearest airship port is in Sacramento. From there, the PCs can take a bus and transfer to the Shasta bus in Redding. Those with access to a chopper will be happy to know that after fifty of the most tumultuous years in California history, Black Lake still has a helipad.

The Trip

The trip to Black Lake is pleasantly unmenacing, and the characters arrive sometime around noon (unless other arrangements have been made). The town is neatly tucked away in a picture-postcard valley surrounded by tall, green forests and a few farms. The air is clear, the weather is good, and there is an abundance of wildlife. The PCs will get the feeling that this is the place they want to retire.

The town itself is modest and small, having one main street intersected by half a dozen other streets around which are clustered quaint neighborhoods. The architecture is a mix of old, fairly well-kept buildings from the late nineteenth century, houses and businesses built during the boom of the 1950s, and a few modern homes and stores. The town has a lazy, old-fashioned feel to it — apple pie sitting on window sills, retirees sleeping in rockers and dogs safely crossing the street. As they get close to the town, the PCs pass several farms with cows, horses and sheep put out to pasture.

If the adventurers take a bus into town, it drops them off about 12:45 p.m. in front of the Black Lake Five Cents to One Dollar Store.

Landing a helicopter on the clinic helipad, or anywhere in the town, attracts

Bending the PCs to Your Will

So the letter didn't pique the curiosity of Our Fearless Investigators. They tear up Dent's check. What now?

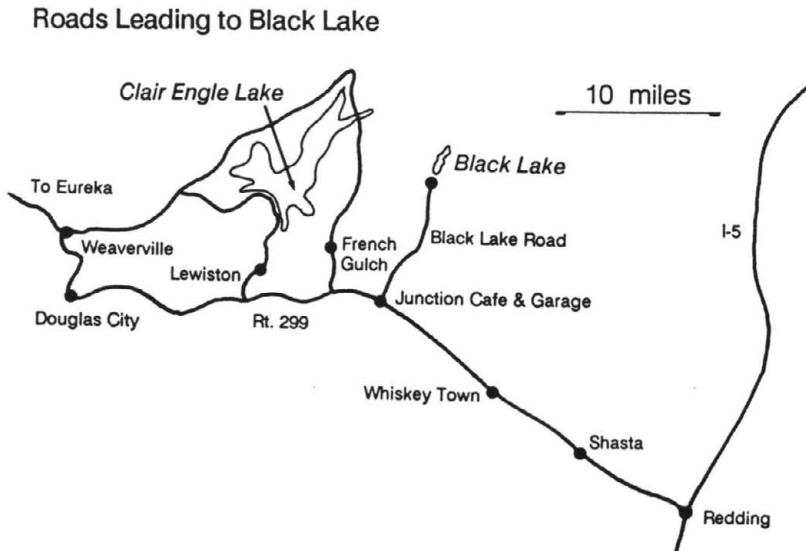
Well, you could sigh, put this book away and work up some other adventure for them. Not very satisfying.

You could have someone break into the characters' offices, trying to recover the letter. This doesn't make a whole lot of sense, but sometimes you have to kick-start a plot line.

You could alter the adventure's timeline a little bit. Perhaps Dent is able to make it to a phone — "This is Dent. You've got to help. They're going to — (BANG! BANG!) aarrgh . . ." If that doesn't make them pay attention, give up and find yourself a more inquisitive group.

On the other hand, it's a lot easier if you know from the start that your PCs will never take this kind of bait. In that case, you can use a net instead. If the PCs are traveling through northern California, one of their vehicles can suddenly develop engine trouble. A character might have a friend or relative in Black Lake. And so forth.

The bottom line is this: You know your players better than we do. If curiosity and greed won't motivate them, come up with a plot introduction that will.



the immediate attention of the police department. A bad reaction roll from the Sheriff or her deputies could earn the visitors a fine. If any children or seniors are scared by the helicopter, the town will immediately look on the newcomers with distaste.

Autoduel: In 2038 the drive to Black Lake is just as pretty. Jaded autoduelists and mercenaries with too much blood on their hands will feel their hearts warm to the scenery. The road, of course, is marked with potholes and chunks of debris here and there. Five miles from the town, the PCs encounter a sign along the road saying:

Fuzzy Dent

Age 52; Long blond hair, fuzzy blond beard, big stomach, brown eyes, 5' 6", 230 lbs.

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Wealth (Wealthy); Status 2 (Mayor of small town, +2 from citizens).

Disadvantages: Fat; Hard of Hearing; Age.

Quirks: Tends to spend money easily; Likes to mediate disputes.

Skills: Acting-11; Administration-13; Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-12; Diplomacy-12; Guns (shotgun)-12; Driving (car)-11.

Language: English-11.

Weapon: Pump shotgun, 16 shells.

Hangout: Just about every place in town.

Fuzzy is the beloved Mayor of Black Lake. Dressed in jeans, T-shirt and baseball cap, he treats the town as his divine trust, often intervening in arguments wherever and whenever they occur in order to solve them. The problem: he's hard of hearing, a handicap which more than undercuts his good intentions. But he's liberal with his wallet, gregarious and an able administrator. People just make sure they shout loud enough in committee meetings. Research into Fuzzy's background will reveal no criminal or occult connections. Fuzzy owns Dent's Best Motel, the Black Lake Five Cents to One Dollar Store, and an expensively-outfitted van which he has named the *Love Machine*.

Autoduel: Fuzzy's shotgun is an Amex. In times of emergency, he dons body armor. His van is a standard Torch (p. A38).

Velda Opermeyer

Age 39; Flaming red hair; 5' 5", 120 lbs.

ST 10, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Disadvantage: Odious Personal Habit (Nosy).

Skills: Accounting-11; Administration-10; Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-17; Computer Operation-11.

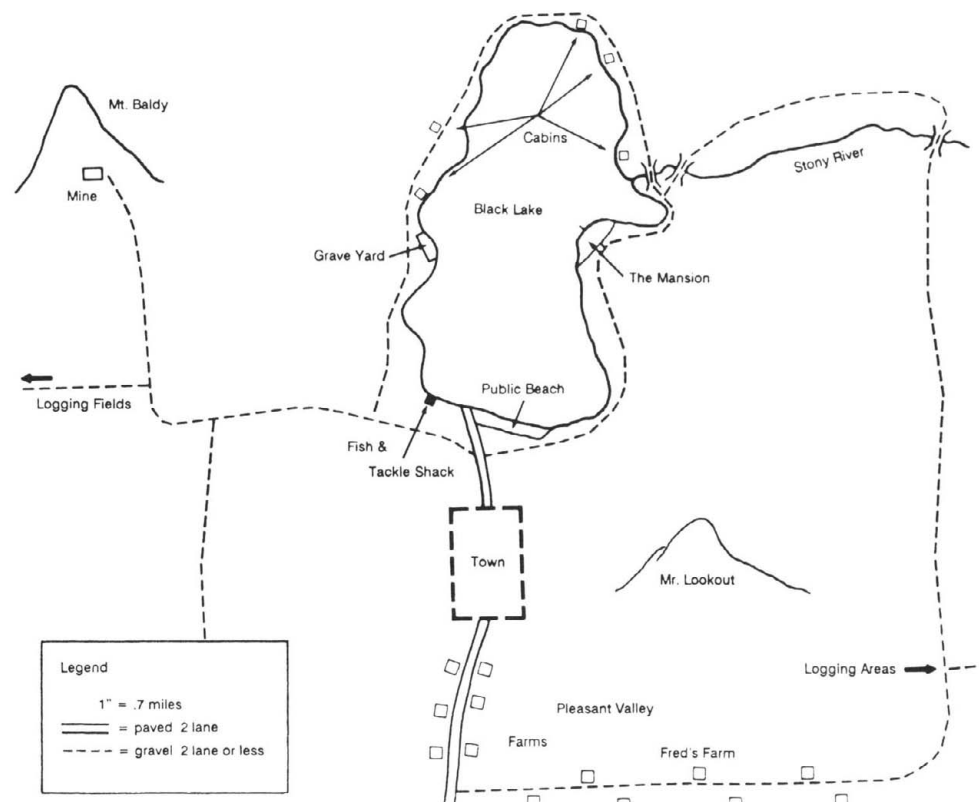
**WARNING: FORTRESS TOWN AHEAD.
THIS ROAD SPOTTED BY ACCURATE ARTILLERY FIRE.
RADIO AHEAD YOUR TRAVEL INTENTIONS
ON CHANNEL 9 OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES.**

After the sign there are occasional burnt-out wrecks of cars and cycles, presumably a testimonial to the veracity of the sign. Three miles from the town is another wrecked vehicle close by a sign:

**WARNING: FORTRESS TOWN AHEAD.
IF YOU HAVE NOT CONTACTED
US BY NOW — TOO BAD.
TRY COLORADO NEXT TIME.**

See p. 23 for a description of the penalty.

Using their radios, the duellists encounter "Laker Control," who instructs them to slow to 10 mph as they approach the town. If the players decide to speed



up, or if they do not contact the town at all, they'll be in deep trouble. Again, see p. 23 for a description of the town's defensive system and reactions.

When the town finally comes into view, there are more signs warning all vehicles to stay on the road. Surprisingly, there is no wall around the town, only a ditch dug around its circumference. The road leads up to the ditch, where there is a small raised drawbridge. Characters with military experience recognize this as military bridging equipment. A police cruiser and one civilian duelling vehicle are on the other side of the bridge. This is obviously Laker Control. Inside the cruiser is one of the deputies. She asks the PCs for identification, and what their business in Black Lake is. An acceptable answer will bring the drawbridge down and allow the PCs to pass. A suspicious, obnoxious or threatening response will earn the visitor a limited 24-hour pass, a "Get out of my sight" or a call for a general alarm. See p. 23 to discover just what a stupid group of players deserves.

Meeting Dent

Or, more accurately, finding him. No one is on hand to officially greet the adventurers as they boldly arrive to fight evil. No one that they ask has any knowledge of Dent's original call for help. The PCs are told that the best places to find Dent are in the Town Hall, Dent's Best Motel or Joe's Restaurant. And everyone who talks about Dent, whom they refer to as "Fuzzy," will have an amused look on his face. As the party wanders around the town, they may meet some of the locals described earlier.

Eventually, the PCs find Dent in his office at the Town Hall. The Hall is a lovely two-story building from the early part of the 20th century. The bottom floor hosts the Sheriff's Department. The top floor, containing the Town Council's offices, is divided into a work area fronted by a reception counter. At the back of the work area are two doors, one marked "Council Chambers" and the other reading "Mayor's Office." In the work area are several desks cluttered with typewriters, word processors and piles of paper.

Velda Opermeyer works here. When the investigators arrive, she quickly approaches them. She has flaming red hair, a twangy accent, and a "V" embroidered on her blouse. She peppers the party with questions until asked to stop; a harsh reaction on the part of a player will make her cry.

Once they get her settled down, the PCs can ask to see Dent. Velda asks if they have an appointment — since they don't, she asks them what their business with Dent is. A simple answer will do for her, since she really doesn't care. She then gets Dent on the phone. She talks very loudly, repeating each of the characters' names at least once. Once finished on the phone, she tells the PCs that Dent has never heard of them, but "what the heck," he'll see them anyway as soon as his meeting is over. Meanwhile, Velda resumes her inquisition.

A few minutes later, the Mayor's office door opens and a loud, jovial voice booms out, "I'm always glad to solve a problem among my people." A woman dressed in a police uniform and cowboy hat emerges with an older man dressed



Marjorie Goldblum, DocuLife Productions

Age 38; Blonde hair, brown eyes,
5' 7", 140 lbs. Well dressed.
ST 10, DX 12, IQ 13, HT 12.
Basic Speed 6; Move 6.
Dodge 6.

Advantages: Voice; Acute Vision +2.

Disadvantages: Squeamishness;
Dependent (one small daughter, much-
loved, appearing on 12 or less).

Quirks: Likes unusual assignments.

Skills: Acting-13; Electronics (com-
munications)-16; Computer Operation-12;
Lipreading-12; Streetwise-12; Writing-15.

Languages: English-13; Spanish-12;
Chinese-11.

Equipment: Mini-video camera; per-
sonal tape recorder; can of mace.

Hangouts: Dent's Best Motel, Joe's,
the Pinetree.

Goldblum is a very good journalist who
likes to take on unusual assignments. She
is currently freelancing with DocuLife
Productions, who picked her because of
her growing reputation within the industry
— she's already won several awards. She's
been in tougher places than Black Lake,
but once or twice her career nearly ended
because of her weak stomach for grisly
sights. Most of the time, however, she is
professional and cool. She is completely
dedicated to her daughter.

Julie Goldblum

Age 12; Cute blue-eyed blonde girl,
4' 6", 75 lbs.

ST 6, DX 10, IQ 8, HT 9.

Basic Speed 4.75; Move 4.

Dodge 4.

Advantages: Appearance (Attractive);
ESP (Power 15, Uncontrollable); Acute
Vision +2.

Disadvantages: Youth; Honesty; Im-
pulsiveness.

Quirks: Loves puns; Wants to look
after Mommy.

Skills: Computer Operation-10; Fast-
Talk-10; Clairvoyance-12; Precognition-
10.

Languages: English-9; Spanish-8.

Equipment: Small clutch purse contain-
ing Swiss Army Knife; \$5.25 in small bills
and change; Book of butterfly face decals.

Julie is a very good girl; though she is
of only average intelligence, she impresses
adults as being precocious because she is
usually quiet, always polite, and makes
fairly clever puns. She thinks her mother's
work is exciting and romantic, and wants
to be a reporter when she grows up.

Julie has not yet realized that some of
her dreams — the most realistic-seeming
ones — come true.

in a white coat. Both look rather disgruntled — so much for problem-solving. As
the man and woman shuffle past the PCs without saying a word, Velda whispers,
"Sheriff Muldoon and Doc Basset." Dent himself then appears at the door, more
than filling the doorway, and beckons the PCs to join him. His office is small
and plain, with only two guest chairs. On the walls are pictures of Dent's Best
Motel, the Black Lake Five Cents to One Dollar Store, Dent's van, the current
American president and an American flag.

Letter? What Letter?

Remember that the PCs will constantly have to repeat themselves to get their
message across to Dent, because of his deafness.

Surprisingly, Dent knows nothing about the telegram or the check. He's
never heard of the characters, and everything in Black Lake is "fine, just fine."
If the PCs can produce the check, Dent will admit that it is one of his personal-
ized checks, and the signature on it does look like his, but he doesn't remember
issuing it. Neither a psionic or magical probing, nor any Detect Lies roll will
sense any lying on his part.

A clever PC may ask to see Dent's checkbook. He'll oblige, producing it im-
mediately. The check made out to the PCs will be entered there in what appears
to be Dent's handwriting — not even a very good Forgery roll will spot any mis-
takes. Nothing the PCs do will lead to any conclusion except that Dent really
wrote the check and the letter. But Dent denies any knowledge of either.

He appears genuinely confused. He apologizes to the PCs for inconvenienc-
ing them with all "this funny business" and suggests that he hire them to find out
who has been playing around with his name and finances. He also insists that the
PCs stay the night at his expense in his motel, "the best accommodation north of
Sacramento." Indeed, he'll immediately escort the party to his motel, introduc-
ing them to any townspeople along the way that the GM wants the players to
meet. One person in particular that they should meet is Deputy Pasha Lee of the
Black Lake Sheriff's Department.

Autoduel: The electronic draft the PCs received makes reference to Dent's
personal banking code, and a quick computer check with the bank confirms that
his password was used to authorize the draft.

Staying the Night

Dent takes the party to his motel, Dent's Best Motel, at the south end of
Main Street, where he instructs the manager, Norman Barstow, to make Dent's
visitors comfortable. Norman gives them up to three rooms and includes as many
cots as needed to accommodate everyone in the party. Clean sheets, blankets,
and free coffee are also provided. After making sure the party is comfortable,
Dent will take his leave, inviting them to make themselves at home.

Depending on the time of the day, the adventurers now have a few hours to
start their investigation (if they can figure out anything to investigate). They can
continue to explore Black Lake, going out for supper or for a few drinks, and
meet some of the more or less friendly inhabitants. The GM should keep in mind
when determining NPC reactions that small town people are often suspicious of
strangers.

The PCs can try to use the phone (to call home base, to do a little research,
etc.). Unfortunately, the phone will constantly ring a busy signal. A call to the
operator will indicate that there are continual line problems, and that repair
crews are working on it.

Autoduel: A similar problem exists with the motel room computer. The computer is only able to access databases in Black Lake; any attempts to link up with databases outside the town are met with a “lines down” message on the screen. The problem persists with all Black Lake phones (or computers) as long as the adventure continues.

The PCs will also have at least two encounters with the other visitors staying at the motel. The first encounter is with a group of fishermen from out of town who are leaving at about the same time the party arrives. They tell the PCs about “that damned Sheriff,” who banned fishing on Black Lake just because a bad storm two days ago drowned three local men. They say that they only have a brief vacation, and are leaving for another lake — the PCs will never see them again.

The second encounter will be with the only other visitors staying at the motel. A film crew from DocuLife Productions, a Los Angeles-based documentary film production company, occupies two rooms next to the party. The crew, led by Marjorie Goldblum, is in Black Lake to do a documentary on small-town life. They’ve been here for five weeks, and aside from a few suspicious older residents, most of the town now accepts them. The film crew is a good source of information about what the town is like, and what recent events have occurred, provided that the PCs can provide the necessary liquid encouragements. If the players don’t already know it, Goldblum and the crew talk about the town’s history, some of the local organizations and “who’s who” in Black Lake.

She also talks about how the locals are upset about the delay in the mine reopening. A big resources cartel from Los Angeles bought the mine about a year and a half ago, claiming that it had new technology which would make the mine profitable again. The company, however, alienated the town by bringing in outside workers to do construction at the mine site — only recently have local residents been hired at the mine. Goldblum compares this to the local logging industry, which is much more sensitive to the needs of the town because it’s controlled by a northern California firm.

If pressed, Goldblum will relate the story of the drownings. Her crew filmed the funeral that day, and they’re still shaken up by it. Three local, popular brothers, the Homencik boys, went fishing in the lake, were caught by a sudden, violent storm, and drowned before they could be rescued. The deaths have hit the whole town very hard. At the moment, the Sheriff has put a ban on further fishing and boating on the lake. By the time she finishes the story, Goldblum will complain of fatigue and retire for the evening. Her crew will follow her.

Nothing else will happen that evening. But at about 3 a.m. (or whenever the characters finally go to bed), the GM should roll for all characters with Intuition or Danger Sense. If a roll is successful, that character feels like looking out the window. Any character who does so will see a black unmarked van with blacked-out windows moving slowly down Apache Avenue. If the PCs try to pursue the van, it will have vanished by the time they leave their room. An IQ roll, unnecessary for anyone with Eidetic Memory, reveals that this is not Dent’s van; the DocuLife van is still parked outside.

Shocking News

Early the next morning, the PCs wake to find the DocuLife film crews hurriedly loading camera equipment into their van, getting ready for a shoot. Goldblum tells them with a shaking voice that during the night, the graves of the Homencik brothers were opened. The bodies are gone!

Goldblum’s Crew

Goldblum has a sound engineer, Tony Brummet, and a camera operator, Cliff Sanger, with her. Both are ST 12, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 12. They have skills of 13 in their respective fields of Electronics (communication) and Photography. Both enjoy carousing and neither has much respect for Goldblum — they apparently resent having a hotshot freelancer dumped on them. Each also has Pilot (helicopter) skill-12. Between them they have about 150 lbs. of camera and sound equipment. The crew has rented a helicopter and a van. For more information about the company that they work for, see the sidebar on p. 42.

Autoduel: Goldblum has Driving (car)-12 and Guns (pistol)-15. She carries a .22 pistol with her. Brummet and Sanger each have Driving (car)-12, Gunner (machine gun)-13, Guns (pistol)-12, and Judo-11. Each is armed with a .45 automatic and one extra clip. Neither has any armor. The sound and video equipment that Goldblum, Brummet and Sanger use is very sophisticated and miniaturized — about 20 lbs. total. All sound and visual images are put on cubes and edited afterward with a small personal computer. The van is a standard Torch (p. A38), rented in nearby Redding.

Does DocuLife Have a Secret?

It’s doubtful the PCs will be suspicious of Goldblum and her associates, but they may have reason to be later on. If the PCs ever stake out the DocuLife crew, or secretly rummage through their van, chopper or motel suite, go to the sidebar on p. 41 to discover what they might find.

One thing the players may find suspicious is that every time there is a strange or sensational incident happening in Black Lake, DocuLife is there. In some cases, it seems that the crew had *advance* information about what was going to happen.

To The Graveyard

The graveyard can be reached by taking the gravel road which circles the lake. The site itself is on a knoll overlooking Black Lake and surrounded by a wrought-iron fence. In the yard itself are about one hundred graves (some dating back to the 19th century), a small maintenance shack and a dozen crooked trees (see map of graveyard below).

Inspecting the situation are Dent, Sheriff Muldoon, Deputy Lee, the newspaper reporter Sydney Jonathan, Smiley Smyth the graveyard caretaker, and the DocuLife film crew. Vehicles parked outside the graveyard are the police cruiser, Dent's van, Jonathan's car and the DocuLife van. The group is in the middle of the graveyard looking down into three adjacent opened graves.

As soon as the PCs approach the scene, the Sheriff demands to know why they are there. Before the PCs have a chance to respond, Dent intervenes on their behalf, explaining that he hired the adventurers to do a little investigating. "Unfortunately, I'm not exactly sure what they're supposed to investigate so they might as well help here." Whether or not the Sheriff will tolerate the help of the party depends on how they conduct the investigation.

Sheriff Glory Muldoon

Age 46; Red hair, 5' 8", 150 lbs.

Wears cowboy hat.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 13, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Reputation (Sheriff, +3 from locals all the time); Legal Enforcement Powers; Combat Reflexes; High Pain Threshold.

Disadvantages: Duty to Black Lake (on 10 or less); Impulsiveness; Intolerance toward men (especially obvious in dangerous situations).

Quirks: Calls her rifle "Mamie"; Proud of Black Lake; Talks loudly; Likes male exotic dancers.

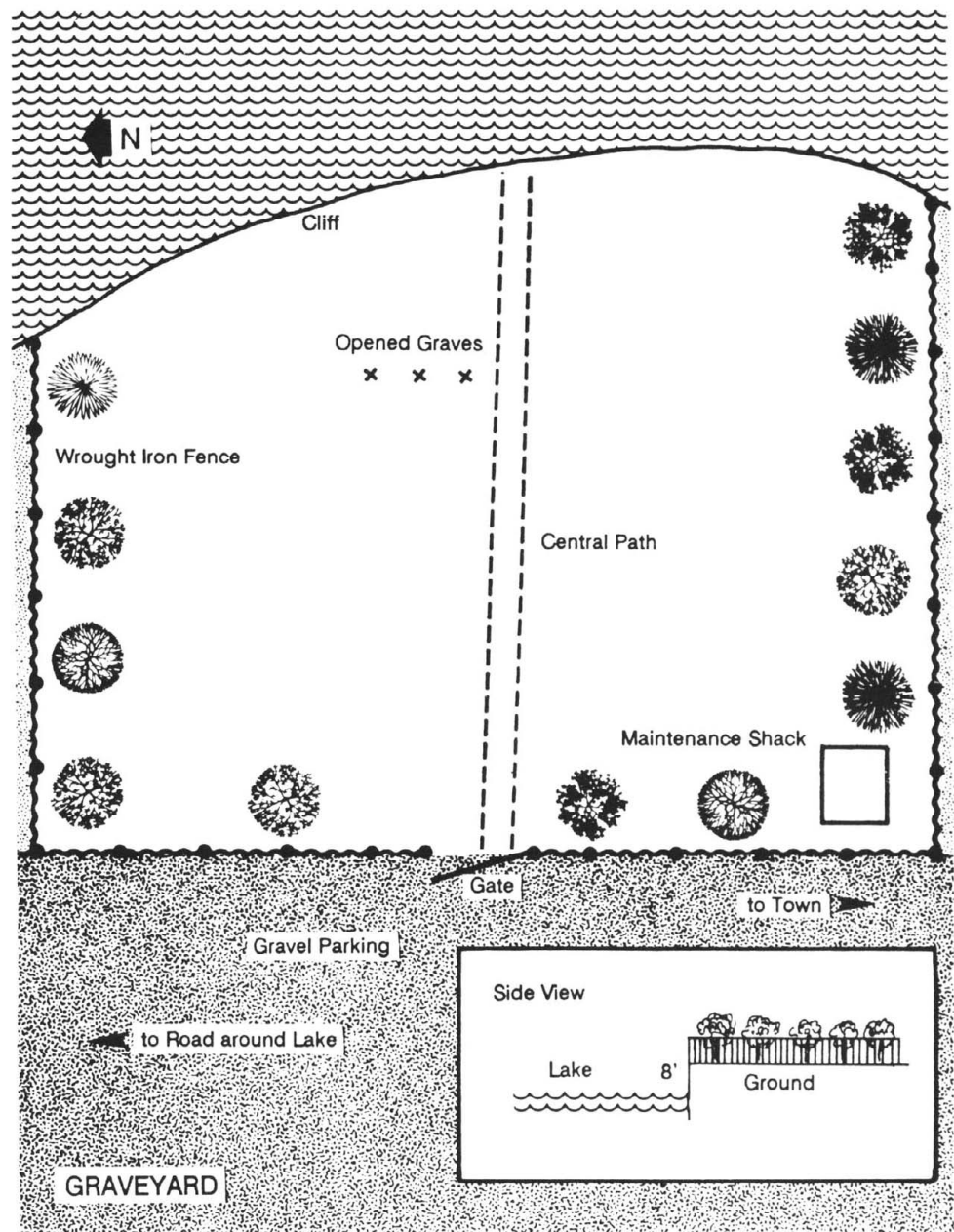
Skills: Guns (pistol)-16, (shotgun)-14, (rifle)-16; Driving (car)-13; Shortsword (nightstick)-13; Tracking-13; Swimming-12; Fast-Talk-14; Diplomacy-13; Leadership-14; Area Knowledge-15; Professional Skill (Law Enforcement)-12.

Languages: English-13; Spanish-11.

Equipment: Standard Sheriff's Department issue with the following substitutions: .357 Magnum; .30 rifle with scope.

Sheriff Muldoon is tough — former Army and some say former mercenary. She fell in love with Black Lake about five years ago, moved to the town immediately, ran for Sheriff in the next election, and has served in that role ever since. She is respected among the townspeople, even by the men. And as for men, she has little use for them unless they can prove themselves worthy in serious or dangerous work.

Autoduel: Muldoon is indeed a former mercenary. She fell in love with Black Lake while flying over it in a chopper. She believes North California should secede. Add Gunner (machine gun)-16 to her skills. Her rifle is a Remington M750.





The Scene

The three opened graves are side by side. Each grave belongs to one of the Homencik brothers: Pete, Ivan and Leo. Dirt is heaped up on all sides of the graves, and two of the coffins are still partially covered by several feet of earth. One of the gravestones is broken in two. All three coffins are smashed. Splinters are everywhere.

Careful examination reveals that the dirt has not been evenly dug out of the grave — *as if tools were not used*. A Forensics-1 or Engineering-4 roll will offer the conclusion that either someone was in a hurry to get the bodies out, *or* the bodies dug themselves out! Make a Fright Check at +2 (this is not a terrifying moment, but it should send chills up the spines of the players). Another Forensics-2 or Carpentry-1 roll will indicate similar frightening facts about the coffins — they have not been smashed open by tools, but by the force of something dull and relatively soft, *from the inside*.

A Tracking-1 roll will show stockinged footprints leading away from the graves. (Any PC with Forensics or Professional Skill (Undertaking) gets a roll at +2 to remember that corpses are usually not buried with shoes on.) These tracks lead out to the gravel parking lot. If the PCs spend another half hour or so searching the area, a further Tracking-1 roll will discover fairly fresh motorcycle tire tracks in the graveyard, which also lead out the gates. Finally, another thirty minutes of searching (and a Tracking -3 roll) will reveal the presence of *three*, not two, sets of fresh van tracks. The footprints disappear near the tire tracks.

The Sheriff and the others notice none of these things at first. If the PCs discover the clues and advance the peculiar idea of the bodies digging themselves out, they will be received with laughter and scorn. The Sheriff is convinced that it's a prank by someone with a bad sense of humor. If the PCs mention the tire tracks, the Sheriff will immediately say, "I think I know who may be responsible for this." She won't say anything further and will leave with Deputy Lee. The rest of the group except for Smiley will leave with her. If the players decide not to mention the tiretracks, or fail to notice them, the Sheriff will discover them herself and leave right away.

Smiley remains behind to clean up the mess. The party can either stay and talk to Smiley or they can follow the Sheriff. If they follow the Sheriff, skip this next section.

Talking To Smiley

Smiley Smyth, a wino, talks in a drunken murmur. He is also very jittery and will be afraid to talk to the PCs if he's left alone with them. All their requests for information will be at a -2 reaction; if the PCs produce some powerful alcohol, change the reaction modifier to neutral.

Smiley Smyth

Age 57; Wizenod little man with few teeth and shabby gray clothes.

ST 9, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 9.

Basic Speed 4.75; Move 4.

Dodge 4.

Disadvantages: Alcoholism; Poverty (Poor).

Quirks: Lives in graveyard maintenance shack; Believes strongly in the monster of Black Lake.

Skills: Blacksmith-12; Accounting-11 (his former profession); Carousing-12; and Demolition-13 (another former profession — the one that ruined him).

Equipment: One set of tattered clothing, a mattress and blankets, a club for self-defense, many empty liquor bottles, and a dozen sticks of dynamite hidden somewhere in the graveyard. He can't always remember where the dynamite is — roll his IQ once per half hour for him to remember.

Capturing the Suspect

If the PCs decide to forget about Smiley and follow the Sheriff out of the graveyard, they will find themselves trying to keep up with her police cruiser as she roars down the road, sirens blaring. The others at the graveyard will be in similar pursuit. This little chase assumes the PCs have a car — if they don't, they will either have to hitch a ride (Dent will oblige) or run fast.

The ride ends at the Cave Bar. Sheriff Muldoon and Deputy Lee jump out of the cruiser, draw their guns and charge into the bar. A few seconds later they emerge with a sleepy but angry Vic, handcuffed. Muldoon and Lee hustle Vic into the back of the cruiser and get in themselves. Then the merry chase begins anew to the Sheriff's Department office. There, Vic will be booked under suspicion of graverobbing.

Is Vic the Knife Guilty?

Well, he fits the part. He also can't provide a decent alibi. He claims to have been in bed all night in his room at the back of the Cave Bar, but there are no witnesses — at least no sober ones. And there is the motorcycle track in the graveyard. Vic and the other members of the Shards are the only cyclists in town who are likely to ride through the graveyard.

A PC with either Criminology or Forensics skill gets a chance to roll to remember that one can make a plaster casting of the track itself. If such a casting is made and compared to Vic's bike's tires, or to the tires of any of the bikes belonging to the Shards, there will be no match.

Sheriff Muldoon won't like this news at all. She'll ask to see the casting several times. Reluctantly, she will let Vic go with a stern warning. Her reaction to the PCs will depend on how they went about getting the evidence. She may hate them for the rest of the adventure, respect them and allow them more leeway, or both.

If the PCs question Smiley and receive a favorable reaction, he will tell them several things. First, he'll state his firm belief that the Homencik brothers were killed by the monster that lives in Black Lake. Smiley knows that the monster exists because he's seen it several times.

The problem is that each time he describes it to the characters, he'll describe something different. The first time he'll talk about a huge, green serpent-like thing; the next time he'll describe a hairy, gorilla-type monster; the third time a completely different creature; and so on. He's afraid to tell the PCs much because he doesn't want to offend the monster. If sufficiently encouraged, however, Smiley will say that months ago, he tried to dynamite the monster in its secret cave in the lake. He was nearly eaten alive by the serpent-gorilla thing and was thrown in jail for his pains. He's forgotten where that cave is.

If prodded about the events of the night before, Smiley will grow even more agitated — only a good dose of spirits will calm him down. He'll claim that he was sleeping in his bed in the shack last night. He heard the sound of motorcycles and what sounded like a small truck. Not being very brave, he hid under the covers. The engine noises lasted for about ten minutes and then disappeared.

About an hour later, he heard "an awful racket there in the gravepits" — the sounds of wood and stone banging on each other. Then he heard horrible moans, the sound of shuffling feet, and someone pounded on the door. Smiley fell into a faint and experienced a vision in which he saw the monster of Black Lake saying to him, "Smiley, my old nemesis, this town is mine!" The next thing he knew it was early dawn, and the graves lay opened. He ran to town and got the Sheriff right away.

If the party searches the shack, they will find a collection of gravedigging and gardening tools, Smiley's battered mattress and dirty blankets, and about three dozen empty bottles of cheap booze. At least three of the bottles seem to have been emptied very recently. No amount of searching will discover hidden passages, tunnels or monsters. Smiley will say no more and will plead to be allowed to go back to his job.

A Command Appearance

Soon after Vic's arrest or (if the investigators remained to question Smyth) when they get back to town, they find out that the Sheriff wants to see them in her office. If the PCs won't go voluntarily, one of the deputies *brings* them.

The party must wade through a small crowd of excited and shocked locals outside. Pagliacci will be among them, yelling, "Lynch the infernal desecrator!" Dent is in front of the crowd, trying to calm it down and telling Pagliacci to stop using rude language. Meanwhile, Sydney Jonathan is asking questions of anyone within microphone range.

Once inside, they find Sheriff Muldoon in her office with deputies Canyon and Lee present. Vic the Knife is sitting in one of the cells. The Sheriff has released a statement, which she reads to the investigators, saying that Vic was taken into custody under suspicion of graverobbing.

The Attack

As Muldoon finishes reading the statement, Deputy Lane rushes into the office and tells the Sheriff that she's needed immediately at Fred's Farm — there's been some sort of incident there. Muldoon orders Lee to stay behind while she, Canyon and Lane head out to the farm. Once again, Jonathan, Dent, the Docu-Life crew and (let's hope) the PCs join the chase, which ends at the farthest farm out in Pleasant Valley.

This small, ramshackle farm belongs to Captain Fred. Captain Fred himself

is outside his house to greet the party. He is white-faced and fiercely clutching his shotgun. His story is as follows:

About three in the morning, he was awakened by a noise out in his chicken coop. Thinking it might be foxes again, he grabbed his shotgun and approached the coop. Just as he reached it, the door burst open and knocked him down. Three men came out — the Homencik brothers. (Make a Fright Check.) Each was eating a raw, freshly-killed chicken.

Fred takes the group to the coop, shows them the devastation inside (dead half-eaten chickens and lots of feathers), then shows them the direction in which the three brothers departed. His story concludes with two things. First, he said he got a look at one of the Homencik boys' faces; it was gray, and his eyes were pure white. Second, he managed to get a shot at one of the boys. The figure fell down, paused for a moment, and then got back up and shambled on as if nothing had happened (Fright Check at -1). After finishing the tale, Fred invites everyone in for a Scotch because he feels sure he needs one. "I never did like fighting zombies," he says. The word "zombies" spreads through the group like fire.

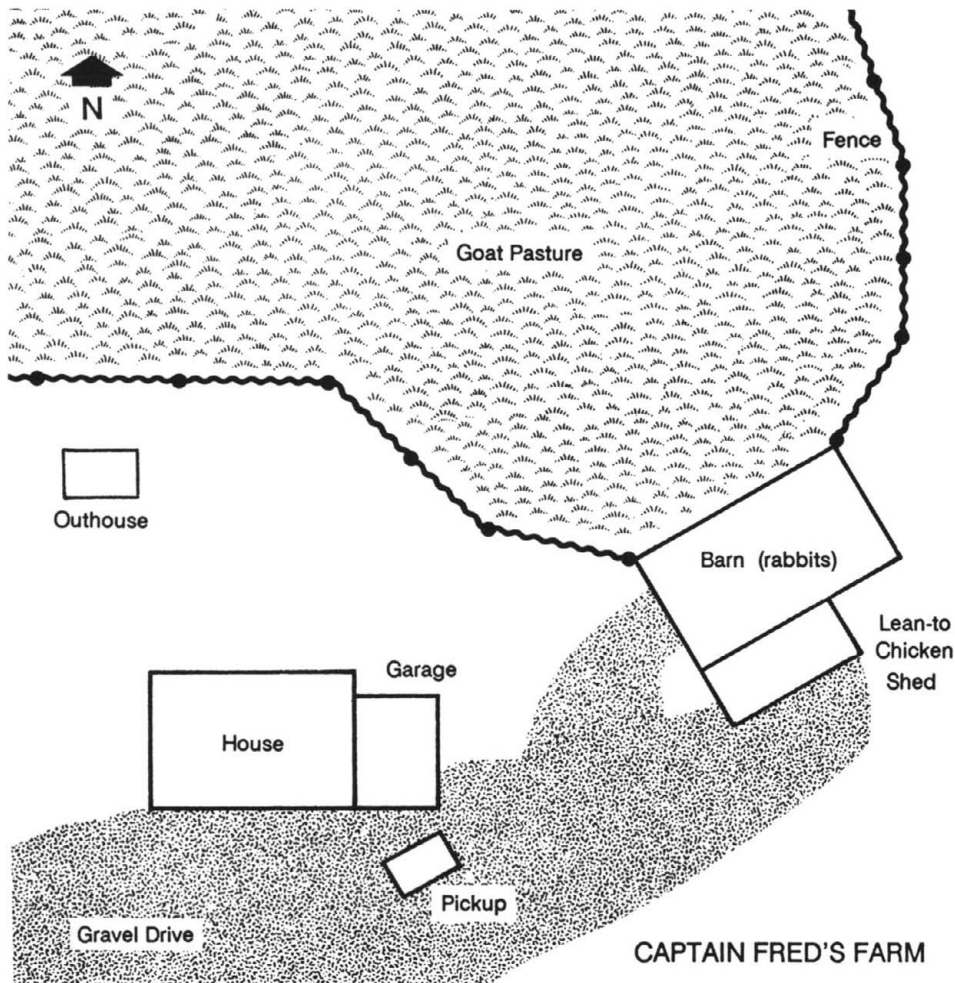
If the PCs look around, they immediately discover a trail of scattered chicken bones and feathers, leading a few hundred yards away from the farm and towards the woods. A Tracking-1 roll will find three sets of stockinged footprints that continue past the last of the chicken remains. Looking in the chicken shed itself with a Forensics-2 roll will reward the searcher with small fragments of clothing. These match the color and texture of the burial clothes of the Homencik brothers, should they ever be seen again. A PC with Forensics skill can also collect a sample of dried blood from the patch of earth on which Fred says the wounded brother fell. With the proper equipment, he can determine its nature; otherwise, the sample can be taken to the Clinic where Doc Bas-

Getting Along With the Sheriff

The adventure now begins to pick up and the PCs are going to start their investigation in earnest. The problem is that Black Lake already has one official investigator — the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Muldoon and her deputies will not tolerate any undermining of their authority or of their function. Therefore, the players are going to have to tread softly.

If they act like big-city know-it-alls, they will be told to mind their own business. If they persist, they will be shown the town limits and told to be gone by sundown. If they continue to harass the Sheriff's Department or the good citizens of Black Lake, they will be jailed or fined (e.g., \$250 fine each or two days in jail). On the other hand, if the PCs act with decency and respect for the local law, and if they are discreet (i.e., don't tell the Sheriff everything they do), then they will receive little interference. If they offer to pool their information with the Sheriff, she will treat them as distant and junior partners — indeed, she may even be grateful for the help, since she's understaffed right now (one of her deputies is on vacation). She may grow to respect them grudgingly, even if they are men. The deputies will follow Muldoon's lead.

If Pasha is involved with any of the PCs, she will have much more sympathy with their investigation and could serve as a useful agent inside the "official police investigation."



set will be glad to either test it himself or let the PC. The results will be the same: the blood is human.

The Zombie Thesis

Sheriff Muldoon and her deputies don't believe Captain Fred's story. If confronted with the footprints and the clothing fragments, they will revert to the "bad practical joke" explanation. The blood sample will make them smile at the thought of the practical jokers getting their come-uppance. This doesn't mean that Muldoon and the locals are taking the situation lightly — they earnestly want the guilty party behind bars. They just can't accept farfetched stories about people rising from the grave and eating raw chicken.

If the PCs want to investigate any leads regarding the "zombie" thesis, they will be on their own — and if they mention their plans to the Sheriff, they'll get the "you keep your noses out of my town" speech for which Muldoon originally called them in. After sampling some of Fred's Scotch, Sheriff Muldoon and the entourage will depart.

If the PCs stay and talk to the Captain, he'll impress on them strongly his gut feeling that the zombies will return to finish off the rest of his animals. Roll for each character with Intuition or Danger Sense — if they succeed, they'll get the same feeling. Captain Fred will then talk about his past in the future, get progressively drunker, and fall into a sleep that will last for hours.

Tracking the Zombies

The players might decide to hunt the brothers on their own. Anyone with Tracking skill can follow the footprints, but at a slow pace making a Tracking-1 roll every half hour. If the PCs have not bothered to take along a guide, they will be lost if they fail a Tracking roll and then fail a Navigation roll. After five embarrassing hours of wandering through the woods, they will be rescued by Joe Renko and his scout troop on an expedition.

After about two hours of searching through the thick of the forest (whether or not they get lost), the PCs can

trail the zombies to a cave midway up a hill. The cave's opening is about five yards by five yards. The cave itself appears to be deep. The party can either enter or they can wait until something comes out. If they enter, they will feel something crunching underneath their feet — bones of small animals (Fright Check, no modifier). They will then hear a low growling (Fright Check at -1). A Naturalist-2 roll can recognize the source of the growl.

If they shine a light on the source of the noise, they will see an angry and just awakened black bear about ten yards away (Fright Check at -1). The bear will roar very loudly, but will give the characters enough time to escape unharmed. If the players decide to stand their ground, however, or *attack* the bear, the enraged animal will attack the nearest character immediately. The bear is ST 16, DX 13, IQ 5, HT 14/18, Speed/Dodge 7/6, PD/DR 1/1. Its bite does 1 die cutting damage, and its claws do 1 die of crushing damage in close combat. It weighs 300 lbs. The bear will fight to the death to defend its home. If it kills any of the PCs, it will be in a qory manner.

If the party waits outside the cave until dark, they will hear heavy breathing and growling coming from inside the cave. Then they will hear the sound of



heavy padded feet moving toward the mouth of the cave from deep inside. A Naturalist-2 roll will determine that a black bear is coming out. Once the bear appears, everyone must roll a Fright Check at -2. If the players stay cool and leave it alone, the bear will saunter past without harming them. If they shout loudly, blind it with light, or attack it in any manner, the bear will instantly attack the nearest person.

All further searching will reveal no bodies or tracks for the rest of that day.

Staking Out the Zombies

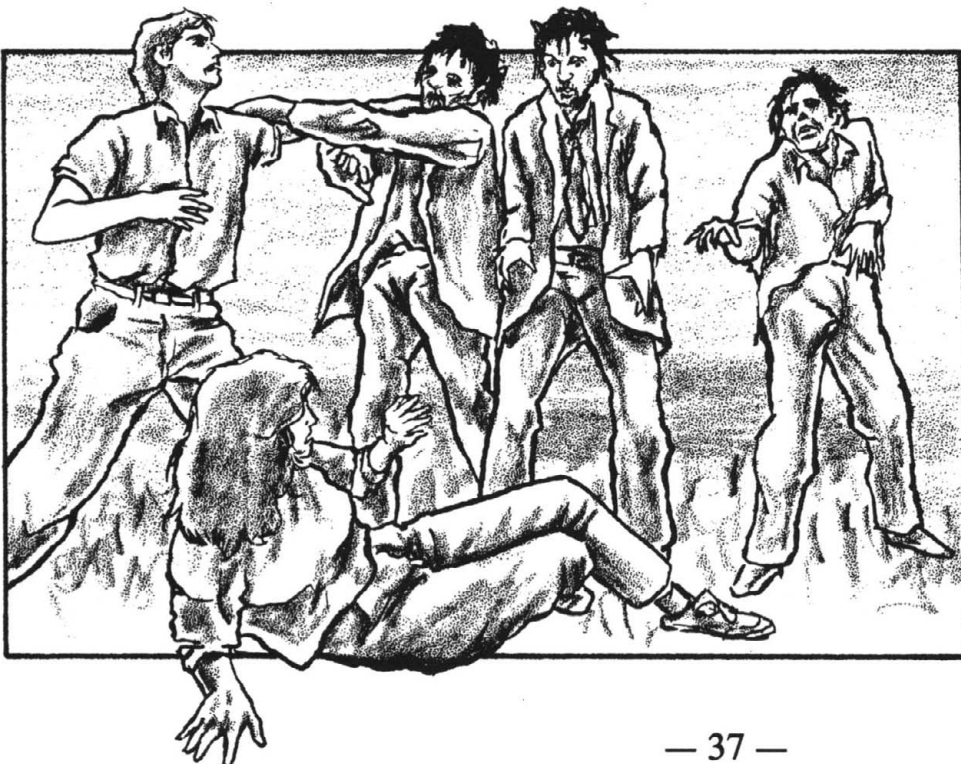
If the players decide that Fred is right about his feeling that the zombies will return, they might decide to stake out the farm. How the PCs would challenge the zombies is anyone's guess ("Stop or you're, uh, a dead man . . .").

Instead, the players might want to stake out another farm, on the premise that the zombies will pick another target. Unfortunately, no farmer other than Fred will allow the characters to go rummaging about on his or her land, especially if they're muttering things about walking dead. If the PCs decide to lay a trap on a farm other than Fred's, they will be hiding from the owner as much as from the walkers, especially since the zombies will only attack Fred's farm.

The PCs can stake out Fred's farm in any way they want. The night is cold and a full moon rises in the sky. The distant sounds of hooting owls and moaning coyotes drift down from the mountains. There is no wind. Suddenly, just when the characters are the most tired and cold, and it seems the whole thing is a waste of time, into the moonlight emerge three shambling figures. All three will be male, over 6' tall, and at least 180 lbs., and all are dressed in tattered formal suits. Their skin is a ghastly pale white. Make a Fright Check at -2.

The three figures approach the barn. If not stopped, they will easily break down the door, shamle inside, and begin to eat rabbits left, right and center. Once they finish with the rabbits, the zombies will move toward the house. Again, they will break down the door and eat anything warm and fleshy that they find inside. Any character inside the house but not standing guard should get a chance to hear the commotion in the barn; characters on guard will, of course, notice the zombies right away.

These three figures are indeed the Homencik brothers, or at least their bodies. Each is a Walking Dead (p. H45). They have ST 18, DX 9, IQ 6, and



Deputy Pasha Lee

Age 24; Long black hair, Oriental, 5' 9", 135 lbs.

ST 10, DX 13, IQ 12, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6.25; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Legal Enforcement Powers; Appearance (Beautiful).

Disadvantages: Duty to Black Lake (on 10 or less); Truthfulness; Pacifism (self-defense only).

Quirks: Loves sport shooting; Wants to be a model; Loves animals.

Skills: Guns (pistol)-18, (shotgun)-16; Judo-12; Shortsword (for nightstick)R-12; Area Knowledge (Black Lake)-13; Savoir-Faire-13; Driving (car)-13.

Languages: English-12; Korean-12.

Equipment: Standard Black Lake Sheriff's Department issue.

Hangouts: Joe's, Mrs. Brown's, Town Hall, the forest around town.

Pasha is the love-interest for this adventure. She is present to encourage the players to take a human interest in the town they are supposed to save from harm. Half of the men in Black Lake are in love with Pasha. The rest are in love with someone else or are too old or too young to know what it's all about. She is charming, pacifistic and, oddly, a crack shot. She is torn between her desire for a career in modeling and her success in state shooting competitions.

She will be friendly to any PC who takes an interest in her, and if that character is at least pleasant, kind to animals and likes to shoot, a relationship will result. An obnoxious character, however, will get nowhere with Pasha.

The GM should note that the relationship between Pasha and one (or more!) of the PCs can have important plot consequences later on. It gets the *players* more involved in the adventure and should be encouraged — if it's better to have a *male* love interest, go ahead and change Lee to a *he*.

Captain Fred the Farmer

Age 42; Sandy hair, good-looking but slightly wild features; 6', 165 lbs. Dresses in either typical farmer garb or a very tattered futuristic-looking uniform.

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Appearance (Attractive); Unusual background (marooned in time); Luck.

Disadvantages: Alcoholism; Overconfidence.

Quirks: Likes to impress women; Talks about his life in the 22nd century only when drunk (which means that nobody takes him seriously); Wishes he had a spaceship.

Skills: Agronomy-11; Astrogation-12; Astronomy-13; Electronics-11; Computer Operation-14; Free Fall-11; Guns (shotgun)-12; Pilot (spaceship)-12.

Languages: English-11 (with an unusual accent and vocabulary); Japanese-11 (same).

Equipment: Farming tools; 12-gauge shotgun (ten extra shells).

Captain Fred may or may not be a time traveler. He showed up in Black Lake one day dressed in a strange uniform and clutching a clipboard with a flight itinerary marked Jupiter Two-2137. The last thing he remembers, he says, is going to a pre-flight party at Space Command. The locals nearly sent him to a downstate asylum, but Dent took a liking to the man right away and prevented him from being committed. Dent lent him money and set him up in a small farm just outside of town. Now, Fred grows enough to feed himself. On starry nights when he's had just a little too much of the bottle, he'll talk about how he misses sailing the solar winds in the silent black of space. Tears will follow.

Whether or not Fred is a genuine spaceship captain or just a harmless lunatic is up to the GM. If he's for real, he may have, hidden away, a laser pistol with a few shots left. He has skill-13 with this weapon.

Autoduel: Fred will be much more at home here and now than he would have in the 20th century. He'll keep telling everyone that things are going to get better very soon and that, yes, they *will* go to the stars. His shotgun is a Blastmaster.

HT 15. Their Speed is 3. They have two types of attacks. First, they will bite for 1-2 cutting damage. Their other attack is to Grapple in close combat and then rend a grappled limb each turn for 2 dice damage.

Unlike normal Walkers, the Homenciks will not infect their victims with wasting diseases. They have the usual regenerating abilities. Any crushing or cutting damage done to the zombies will produce human blood. Impaling or bullet damage done to the head or to the torso will cause sickly green fluid to spurt out (Fright Check at -4 the first time this happens).

Since the Homenciks were bullies in their former lives, the zombies' only tactic will be to gang up on a single PC. Any attack on a zombie will turn it in the direction of the attack. The zombies will continue pursuing, fighting and eating until they are completely destroyed.

The PCs better be ready for this battle. If they are doing badly, Captain Fred will show up at the critical moment with his shotgun. The Sheriff will arrive within a minute after the zombies are sighted.

Autoduel: These zombies are nasty creatures with tremendous regenerating abilities. Damage done to the body of a zombie will regenerate at the rate of 1 HT per turn, including all damage done below 0 HT. They are not subject to the HT rolls for survival at -HT from damage to the body; however, any damage done beyond a zombie's HT will cause it to fall. They suffer no stun or shock penalties. Damage to the head will not regenerate, and if HT drops below 0 from head damage alone, the zombie will fall unconscious. Further, it must roll for survival at -HT, and every -5 after that, for damage taken to the head. Finally, **Autoduel** zombies, contending with the domestic arms race, have two levels of Toughness (DR 2) and wear Kevlar vests (PD 2, DR 4) under their suits.

Even with their beefed-up abilities, these zombies aren't much of a match for characters in combat vehicles. This isn't a problem for the plot, but if the players will be disappointed by the lack of challenge, make them get out of their vehicles — perhaps Fred hates autoduelling, or just doesn't want his land torn up by tire tracks, or the ground is too soft to drive on.

Aftermath

If the PCs win the fight, they will have three bodies and a very suspicious Sheriff on their hands. (Remember that zombies who have just taken 84 hits to the chest will still be up and about in under 2 minutes.) The Sheriff will have the Homencik bodies taken immediately to the clinic for an autopsy. She will detain the PCs briefly for questioning, though she won't be sure just what to ask, and then will tell them to attend an emergency meeting in the Town Council chambers at nine the next morning.

Also on hand, almost as soon as the fight is over, will be the DocuLife film crew with full sound and video equipment. They will say that they heard about the fight on the police radio (Detect Lies -1 will reveal that they are lying). Their van will be some distance away, however, well off the road. Goldblum will be aghast at the scene and will say little. Sanger and Brummet will be their usual uncouth selves, capturing everything in glorious color.

If the players didn't lie in wait for the zombies at Captain Fred's farm, they will hear the next morning about another attack on his farm. This time, Captain Fred will have been torn limb from limb and most of his pieces will be missing. They will also hear how the Sheriff and her deputies arrived at the farm and finished off the zombies in a desperate battle. Then they will be summoned to the nine o'clock meeting at the Council chambers. Should the players ever question Josef Homencik about these events, he will give out little information, only saying with a strange calmness, "Boys will be boys."

The Message in Blood

As the investigators head to the Council chambers the next morning, they notice a large gathering on the corner of Main and Renko. The DocuLife crew is there, minus Goldblum. When they reach the scene, they discover a very unsettling sight. On the street, written in some congealed brown liquid, is “SLAY THE BEAST” in five-foot-tall letters. A successful IQ roll reveals that the liquid is blood. This realization calls for a Fright Check at -2. Any chemical analysis will reveal that the blood is human.

As for the crowd, some people are shrieking hysterically and running away, others are nodding sagely, and the rest have little apparent reaction. A deputy soon appears to disperse the crowd.



The Morning Meeting

The Council Chamber, a windowless room with one door, is packed. Present are Dent, the sheriff, deputies Lane and Canyon, Doc Basset, Velda Opermeyer (as recording secretary), Sydney Jonathan, Maggie Brewin, Wiley Kiley, Jim Fisher, Alice Johnson, Joe Renko, Jerry Low, Captain Fred (provided, of course, that he wasn't slain by the zombies) and the DocuLife crew (this time with a sickly-looking Goldblum). Fisher holds a large printed sign reading: COME HEAR PASTOR JIM FISHER'S SERMON 'KNOW YE THE BEAST' AT SPECIAL SERVICE TODAY AT THE CHURCH OF PURE VALUES, 1 P.M. The meeting is chaired by the sheriff — even in 1988, she takes precedence during town emergencies.

She begins by summarizing the events of the past night, asking the party and any other witnesses to give their versions of events. Then Doc Basset gives his autopsy. The bodies are indeed those of the Homenciks; the fingerprints, dental

patterns, etc., all match. Pandemonium breaks out at this news. The sheriff pounds her gavel and shouts for quiet. Slowly, the crowd quiets down.

Order restored, Doc continues. He states that, yes, the Homenciks did drown, and that the bodies were given an autopsy and prepared for burial (including the removal of internal organs). The most recent autopsy showed that the bodies had somehow regained their internal organs, and that the torso cavity was filled with some unknown green organic fluid. None of his tests have been able to identify this fluid.

He does not know why or how the bodies came back to life. And he doesn't seem to care much about it, either. Heated argument ensues once again as soon as Doc is finished. After awhile, it becomes apparent that one faction — led by Wiley Kiley, Maggie Brewin and Fisher (who keeps mentioning “The Beast”) — are accusing the party of causing this disturbance.

On the other hand, Dent, Basset, Velda, the deputies, Sydney Jonathan and Alice Johnson are indifferent to the whole affair. More than once they ask when the meeting is going to move on to something important. The sheriff, appalled

by their indifference, caters to the accusers. She grills the suspects about their background, their jobs, why they came to Black Lake, and about the events of the past night.

She tells them that she has every good reason to throw them in jail and contact the FBI, but that she's going to give them a chance to defend themselves. Roll a Contest of Skills (versus IQ, Fast-Talk, Diplomacy or another appropriate skill) between a party member chosen as spokesman and one of the accusers. If the

PC loses, the sheriff arrests the party. If the PC wins, the sheriff holds off on jailing them. Regardless of the outcome, however, she confiscates their weapons. The meeting then ends.

The Sermon

If the investigators are arrested, they are immediately thrown into jail without being questioned. They are allowed one phone call (but remember, all outside calls will be met with busy signals). In the other cell is a philosophical Vic the Knife (unless the party managed to get him released earlier). In the office area, a radio plays music from station KNEW. The radio cannot be reached to be turned off. At 1 p.m., the music is interrupted by a live broadcast of Jim Fisher's sermon.

Should the party not be arrested, they notice many signs posted around

Reverend Jim Fisher, Church of Pure Values

Age 28; Sandy brown hair, pale skin, gray eyes, 6', 120 lbs. Wears clerical collar and black suits.

ST 8, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 9.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

11, HT 9.

Disadvantages: Bad Sight (near-sighted); Major Delusion (“God sends me visions”); Fanaticism about the Apocalypse; Skinny.

Quirk: Believes the End is Near.

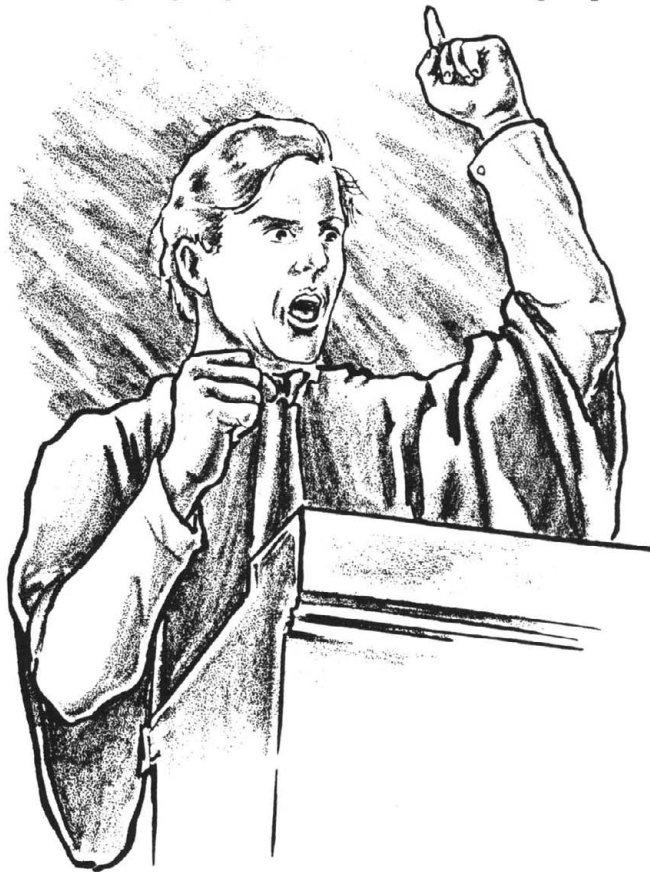
Skills: Acting-12; Detect Lies-13; Fast-Talk-14; Guns (pistol)-12; Leadership-12; Theology-11.

Languages: English-11; Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew-9; Ancient Greek-10.

Equipment: Big black Bible; .38 pistol; Library of books on prophecy.

Not only does Fisher claim to receive visions, he also believes that *he* has a role to play in the coming events. His thinness, pale skin and shrieking voice are a striking combination during his sermons.

Autoduel: As pastor of the church, Fisher carries an M26A2, but has no training with it. The gun is more a ceremonial device. Fisher acts as the official chaplain to the Lakers. Add Driving (car)-12 and Gunner (rocket launcher)-12.



town. These are exactly like the one that Fisher had at the meeting. Around noon, the townspeople begin gathering at the Church. If the investigators attend the sermon, they find themselves in a muggy auditorium packed with apprehensive people. The sermon (whether heard on the radio or seen live) goes something like this:

Brothers and sisters, lemme tell ye the word! Yea, I say that I have yet received the word and wish to render it unto you. (Shouts of approval from the gathering.) I have seen a new series of wondrous revelations. I tell ye that the time is near, so near that its hot breath is bearing down on my neck and its sweaty smell invading my nostrils. And the revelation is this — when ye see the dead rise from the grave, know that the Beast is come! And when the Beast is upon ye, I say, I say, our duty is to slay the Beast! Slay the ancient evil!

Already there have been signs, already there was a sign just last night, and there was a sign this morning. Unexplainable signs, wondrous signs — Amen, yes, Amen! And ye shall know the Beast by the place in which it lives, by the castle on the water in which it drinks the blood of the saints and commits abomination upon abomination.

Soon, very soon, ye shall receive the call, the great call, the great bell of God shall ring out throughout the land and gather together the armies of God to do battle with the Beast. And our King shall be there in His Glory, and He shall slay the Beast at the height of the siege. I say, be ready, be ready for the coming signal for the battle that is to come! Amen, ye brothers and sisters, Amen!

After the sermon, Fisher is quite exhausted and retires to his home, refusing to speak to anyone.

Strange Happenings

As the party continues its investigations (or continues to rot in jail, as the case may be), they may witness several bizarre events.

The Jail Change

The investigators witness this event only if they are in prison along with Vic. The sheriff is nowhere near the building when it occurs.

In the middle of the afternoon, one of the deputies comes into the cell lobby with gun drawn. She opens Vic's cell, completely ignoring the imprisoned investigators. She orders Vic out — saying, "Come on, the sheriff is waiting!" — and escorts him out of the cell room. A minute later, the prisoners hear a loud report, like a shot, from the next room.

A minute after the shot, the deputy reappears with Vic and locks him back into his cell. The deputy and Vic ignore the other inmates entirely — Vic doesn't even recognize the characters, and Detect Lies will indicate that he is not lying. Anyone with Danger Sense or Intuition gets a roll to look out the cell window. Driving down Main Street, this time in daylight, is the same black van seen before.

Indifference and Hostility

The indifference that the investigators found among some of those attending the morning emergency meeting begins to manifest itself in a good many of the townspeople as the day progresses. Most go about their business as usual, caring little for discussion about the strange and bizarre events that have recently occurred. Their indifference is genuine, passing the strictest of lie detector tests.

At the same time, the out-of-towners encounter hostility from other townsfolk, particularly from Church of Pure Value types. These people tell the investigators to mind their own business, or not to interfere in the great plans ahead. They will not elaborate on what these plans are.

Investigating the DocuLife Crew

The party may become suspicious of the DocuLife crew and decide to check out their motel room. They will find it to be exactly the same as their own. Inside the room, they at first find nothing out of the ordinary — just personal items, suitcases, and film and sound equipment. Looking inside the suitcases, they find extensive maps of the area in and around Black Lake, and several reels of camera film. The film has much footage of ordinary day-to-day life in Black Lake, and some really strange scenes.

There are scenes of Fuzzy Dent wandering around Main Street arguing with people that they are three weeks ahead of him. There are also scenes of the three Homencik boys playing basketball, the boys' subsequent funeral, the black van moving through the silent dark streets at night, and then the investigators' own battle with the zombies (if this has occurred). The party will find no documentation on DocuLife, but will find a picture among Sanger's personal items of Cliff and Tony with some short, balding man.

If the investigators confront Sanger and Brummet with this information, the two will try to run. (The film and snapshot themselves are not incriminating, but help confirm Goldblum's confession.) They will return with the deputies, or possibly one of the posses, looking for the PCs. If the party confronts Goldblum, she will break down and give a lengthy confession (sidebar, pp. 42-43). If, in the GM's opinion, the party's investigation is not going well, Goldblum (who by this time is racked with guilt) will confess on her own.

Autoduel: On a very bad reaction, the adventurers are embroiled in a minor duel.

Memory Loss

The same apparent memory loss suffered by Fuzzy Dent begins to appear in the townspeople whom the investigators have met. These people do not remember the investigators' names and faces, miss appointments with the party, forget any facts that they have learned from the PCs, and so on. For example, if the investigators go to Velda for more information, she will treat them as if she's never met them before and will grill them with all the same questions that she asked before. Again, her ignorance, and the ignorance of other townspeople, is genuine. Some of them are even unaware of the fantastic events that happened a bare 24 hours ago.

Goldblum's Confession

Goldblum has a good raging cry before the coherent part of her story begins. She reveals that DocuLife is a sham — it does not exist. *They* have her daughter, Julie, and unless she puts her considerable journalistic and documentary skills to use for *them*, she will never see her daughter again. Sanger and Brummet are also with *them*, but only as junior members.

About two months ago, Goldblum received a documentary proposal from a company in Los Angeles called Labac International. (Anyone making an Occultism-3 roll recalls that Labac is a highly secretive and dangerous front corporation for the Cabal! Just the very thought of confronting Labac calls for a Fright Check at -2. The only thing known about this part of the Cabal is that they like to experiment with advanced science in an effort to increase their own occult powers.) A Mr. Bob Smith from Labac contacted her and offered a substantial amount of money, a crew and a large expense account to do a documentary on life in a small town. Smith said it would be for the company's own marketing training division. Goldblum accepted the proposal and left for the town with Sanger, Brummet and Julie. They've been here ever since.

The deeper she got into the job, the less she liked it, though. She decided she neither liked nor trusted Cliff and Tony; they seemed to be up to something. Also, strange events began to occur in the town. People began to experience short-term memory loss, some people disappeared altogether, etc. Then the phone lines went awry and she could not make calls to the outside world.

Continued on next page . . .

The Love Interest Change

This event occurs only if one of the characters has gotten romantically involved with one of the townsfolk. The love interest will know and care for the investigator at one time, be separated for a time, and then, on reappearance, not know (or care to know) that same PC. (GMs can award an extra point for convincing pining on the part of the jilted.)

For example, if one of the investigators has gotten involved with Pasha, the two might go for a picnic one afternoon and have a wonderful time. Pasha then goes off to work for a while. The next time that the character sees her, she walks right past him or, worse yet, asks him what he's doing in Black Lake!

She's Not My Mommy!

This scene is only witnessed if the party either is not jailed or escapes from jail. As they prowl around the town, the investigators see a small boy run crying down the street. A young woman, whom they might recognize as Mrs. Chew, chases after the youngster.

If the party tries to stop the boy and return him to his mother, he screams, "No! No! She's not my mommy!" Characters with Intuition or Empathy may make an IQ-3 roll to realize that he believes what he's saying. If the party does not stop the boy, another towns person will.

Mrs. Chew arrives smiling sweetly, thanking the PCs (or the other towns person) and gently scolding the boy for playing "such silly games." On a good reaction roll, she even invites the PCs to her house for tea. Questioning gets nothing out of her regarding her son's strange behavior, other than comments about "boys being boys."

The Sheriff Is Attacked

If the party has been jailed, then sometime in the late afternoon — several hours after the incident with Vic — the sheriff comes into the jail area. She is breathless and bruised, and has a slight limp. She immediately opens the investigators' cell and walks in, apparently unconcerned with security. If the party has not been jailed, or has escaped, she seeks them out in the town. In either event, she tells the following story.

About a half hour earlier, as she was driving along one of the logging roads in the cruiser, Deputy Lane came up behind her in the police truck, tried to run her off the road, and fired several shots at her. Then, the chase was joined by a black van which the sheriff says she had never seen before. The van also tried to run her car off the road, and someone in the van fired an automatic weapon at her. Fortunately, she says, she was able to pull a bootlegger to elude the truck and van. (*Autoduel* GMs can devise an appropriate automotive battle for the

sheriff to describe, including damage to the armor of the police cruiser.) She came back to town right away. She doesn't know what to think — the whole world is going crazy. "You're the only ones in this town who I think I can trust now, but don't ask me why," she tells the party.

The investigators' actions at this point will make or break the sheriff as an ally. If they try to overpower her and escape, she will treat them as dangerous criminals. If they suggest combining forces and offer her their help, then she will let them out of the cell and will be a useful ally. In all likelihood, she will keep Vic locked up.

However, if the investigators leave the sheriff unattended for more than half an hour, the next time they see her, she, too, will not remember them, and may even be hostile to them. Never venture out alone in this genre.

Further Investigations

Throughout the day, the strange events continue. The party, either alone or with the sheriff, should try to find out what's behind it all and, second, try to find more allies.

Investigating the Clinic

If the investigators question the townsfolk, sooner or later, one of them will exasperatedly say, "You guys must be feeling ill or something, there's nothing wrong here. Why don't you go over to the clinic and get a checkup on Doc's new machine?" He explains that, for the last six months, Doc Basset has been using a "new-fangled machine" donated to the clinic by an institute in Los Angeles. "It does wonders," the townsman claims.

If the adventurers go to the clinic and ask to see the machine, Doc Basset will gladly show it to them. He describes it as the "latest in hi-tech computer body-scan equipment." It is large (DR 2, HT 14/8), and includes a couch, a camera-like object suspended on a rail above the couch, and a computer attached beneath the couch.

Basset explains that the computer picks up information from the camera and translates it into images on a video screen on the computer bank. He offers to demonstrate it on one of the PCs; a successful Danger Sense roll will warn the party that this is not a good idea. If anyone does volunteer to be scanned, Basset also insists on taking a cell sample, saying that it is standard procedure (in *Autoduel*, this is actually the case — tissue samples are often used for detailed analysis in even simple examinations).

Anyone with Physician skill will recognize the machine as something vaguely like a body-scan machine, but with some puzzling additions — such as attachments for the patient's head. The information gained by the computer is dazzling, at least a generation ahead of anything any medically-trained character has seen.

Basset says that he received the machine about half a year ago from a new company — American Medical Technologies — based in Los Angeles. Apparently, AMT wants to use the clinic for a test-run of its product. He says that he was the first one to use the machine under the supervision of a company trainer, who installed the machine. The trainer's name was Dr. Bob Smith — Basset remembers him as a short, intense and bald man. No one with any medical background or belonging to any medical organization will have heard of AMT or Bob Smith, nor will computer searches reveal any likely candidates.

Basset happily shows the machine to the investigators, but is averse to anyone taking it apart or seeing any manuals for it. The only way the party is going to get a closer look at the machine is to sneak in after dark. Breaking into

Goldblum's Confession (continued)

Mr. Smith, who phoned her from the outside every three days or so, began to give her advance notice of strange events, and demanded that they be filmed. For example, he said that he wanted the Homencik boys filmed at play; then he wanted their funeral on tape; then he wanted the DocuLife crew to go to the graveyard on the night of the funeral. Goldblum refused outright and, a mere hour later, her daughter disappeared. Smith then showed up in person (he was supposed to be miles away in Los Angeles!) and told her that unless she complied with his requests, she would never see her daughter alive again.

Smith has lately told her (this time by phone) that something "grand" is going to happen at the mansion by the lake this evening at midnight. Smith said that "a certain Mr. Walter Wong will get his long-deserved reward as the armies of God roll over his beloved green lawns." Smith then broke out in maniacal laughter.

Goldblum cannot bear to be a part of this demonic plot any longer. The incident involving the Homencik boys, the attack on Captain Fred's farm and the fight with the zombies has turned her stomach. She is contemplating suicide (a character with Psychology or Charisma may pull her out of it). More than anything else, she wants her daughter back. She offers to join forces with the investigators, doing whatever they tell her. If asked, she describes Smith as a short, bald and jittery man. If shown the picture in Sanger's possession, she immediately identifies the third man as Smith.

At this point, Sanger and Brummet break into the room, screaming, "Traitor!" and try to kill Goldblum. Each wildly swings a club. Once they've finished with her, they run for reinforcements. If they are caught or overpowered, they laugh hysterically and simply die. No amount of resuscitation will bring them back. Their sudden deaths call for a Fright Check at -3.

Posses

There are several posses that may be encountered if the party tries to leave town. They will be encountered in appropriate locations (e.g., the Scout troop will almost always be in the forest, Vic and the Shards on a back road, etc.). The goal of these posses is not to kill escapees, but to dissuade them from leaving town. Lethal force will be used only if the escapees will not listen to "reason."

If one posse is overcome, others will soon arrive as reinforcements.

Vic and the Shards

Vic will be with the posse, despite the fact that the last time the investigators may have seen him, he was in jail. Vic is laid-back and philosophical about the gang's job, but no less dedicated to the task for all of that.

If the GM feels that the Shards are out-gunned by the party, add an extra duellist from the AADA, preferably Malcolm Fraser.

Church of Pure Values Posse

This posse is composed of five churchmen and led by Jim Fisher. Each churchman is ST 12, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 12, Speed 5.75, Move and Dodge 5. Each has skills Axe/Mace-14; Brawling-12; Driving (Car)-12; Guns (Pistol or Rifle)-12; Tracking-11. Three men are armed with .38 revolvers with 12 rounds each. The other two carry .30 rifles (15 rounds each). All carry axes; being loggers, they know how to use them. They travel in two civilian cars. The Church of Pure Values posse members possess a special characteristic — they are not stunned or affected by wound-based penalties, and do not collapse until HT is fully negative — the result of another Nash experiment.

Autoduel: All members of the posse wear flak jackets. All have Guns (pistol)-12 and Guns (rifle)-13. Each is armed with an AK-13 with two extra clips. All have Combat Reflexes. If the GM feels that this posse will be outclassed, add another AADA member or two to bolster their defenses.

the clinic will not be too difficult (Lockpick-4 or, in *Autoduel*, Electronics (Security Systems)-3 to get in the door).

Unfortunately, as the investigators either approach or stake out the clinic, they see a black van drive up to the clinic's rear entrance. Basset opens the back door of the clinic; Tambo is with him. The driver of the van remains inside the vehicle while another figure, dressed in a black leather jacket and camouflage pants, emerges from the rear of the van. (This is Blackie.)

Tambo and Basset begin handing out small black plastic boxes to the leather-jacketed figure, who places them in the rear of the van — there are about a half dozen boxes in all. When all the boxes are in the van, the figure climbs back into the vehicle and the van drives off. Tambo and Basset re-enter the clinic.

If the observers interrupt this process, Tambo and the rest train all available weapons on the party, telling them firmly to back off. They will shoot to kill if the PCs attempt any violence. In a fire-fight, Basset does not shoot, but instead



reaches into his pocket, takes out a small device, presses a button on it and — boom! — the six boxes begin to leak smoke; they are incinerating their contents. The van roars off in an unblocked direction, and Tambo and Basset retreat inside the clinic, locking the doors behind them.

The investigators may decide to pursue Basset and Tambo. If they take longer than one minute to break into the clinic, they will find that the machine has been smashed to pieces. Tambo will fight until overpowered, while Basset will try to phone for help from the deputies. If he is successful, Deputies Lane and Canyon arrive in the police truck within four minutes. They immediately try to haul the party off to jail. Basset will not talk, except to say that the PCs should “join us, not fight us.”

Alternately, the party may elect to chase after the van. It will try to elude them on one of the logging roads; roll a Contest of Skills between the Driving skills of the van’s driver (Linda Lovewar) and the pursuers. If the van wins, it escapes in the woods northwest of town. If the pursuers win, they continue to tail the van. Suddenly, Deputies Lane and Canyon appear behind them in the police truck! Roll another Contest of Skills if the party wants to lose the deputies. Throughout the chase, both the van’s occupants and the deputies will be firing on the PCs.

This chase can go several ways: 1) the van escapes entirely; 2) the van is driven off the road and its occupants killed or captured; 3) the PCs are driven off the road and/or captured by the deputies; 4) the party escapes from both the van and the deputies. If the party captures the van, its occupants will make a fighting withdrawal into the woods — they will not surrender. (Lovewar and Blackie *can* be bought off, however . . .)

If the deputies drive the party off the road, there are two possibilities. If the investigators have gone to jail once already, let them escape the deputies right away. If they have not gone to jail, have the deputies throw them in the slammer, where they can witness Vic’s sudden change. The deputies will be eager to capture the PCs, but will withdraw if they are outgunned or outrun.

BIAutoduel: The chase here will be a series of running battles. Try not to kill off the PCs at this juncture; some manipulation may be called for.

Attempts to Escape

Given the current state of strangeness in Black Lake, the sense that something is going to happen soon, and the fact that the phone and computer lines are all cut off, the investigators may consider leaving the town entirely — either to get help or to do some outside research. They will not get far. Roadblocks are set up on each road out of town (even on the logging roads) about a mile and a half from the town. There is no way to get out of town without confronting one of these roadblocks.

Each roadblock features a log or two rolled across the road and is crewed by one of the posses described in the sidebars. Passing to the side is not possible without detouring into the woods. These posses can also be used in the chase described above or in any other violent encounter the party endures. The posses have one purpose: allow no one to leave town. They will not explain their rationale, saying only that something big is going to happen tonight and that no one ought to miss it. If fired upon, the posses will shoot to kill.

If the PCs manage to get by one roadblock, then the GM should set up another one just down the road with another posse. Make it extremely tough for them to escape. If they get by the second posse, then throw in the helicopter to buzz dangerously close by with a sniper (any good shot will do) in the passenger seat. Needless to say, any characters venturing through the woods will be turned back by the redoubtable Scout troop.

The Deputies

The deputies are in two posses: In one posse are Deputies Lane and Canyon in the police truck, accompanied by a civilian car with two townmembers; in the other posse is Deputy Lee, with three townspeople in two civilian vehicles. Each townspeople has stats and skills of 11; each is armed with a standard shotgun and a dozen shells.

Autoduel: Lane and Canyon are accompanied by one civilian duellist and a vehicle from the AADA chapter. Lee drives Fuzzy Dent’s Torch, and is also accompanied by one civilian duellist and vehicle.

The Seniors Posse

The uniform of this twelve-person posse led by Wiley Kiley is the standard white lawnbowler’s outfit. The group’s transport is two vans. Each member of the posse is ST 10, DX 11, IQ 11 and HT 10, with Speed 5.25, Move 5 and Dodge 5. Their skills are Brawling-12 and Hobby Skill (Lawnbowling)-12. Each is equipped with three Explosive Lawnbowling balls. EL balls move at 10 yards per second in a straight line, exploding in three seconds. They do crushing damage as follows: 2 dice within 5 yards, 1 die within 10 yards.

To bowl an EL ball, roll against Lawnbowling skill. A successful roll will aim the ball toward the target’s hex. Each turn, the ball will continue along its original line of travel. A very good roll (skill-4) will allow the bowler to change the direction of the ball’s travel by up to two hexsides on the second and third turns of its movement. On a failed Lawnbowling roll, use standard drift rules, as for throwing grenades, to determine how far from the target the ball ends up. The ball will roll in the direction of the drift. A critical failure means the ball blows up immediately.

Autoduel: Add the following advantages and skills — Combat Reflexes (these people have been around a long time); Driving (car)-13; Gunner (machine gun)-15; Guns (pistol)-13. Equipment includes one .45 automatic each (one extra clip), body armor and Heavy Duty Explosive Lawnbowling balls doing standard grenade damage on detonation. The Move of each posse member is decreased to 4 due to encumbrance. The group uses two police vans to get around, modified as follows: no OR capability, no front weapon, MG or RR in turret.

Autoduel: Again, this may turn out to be a series of combats. The posses should still be tough enough to encourage the players not to risk their characters or vehicles.

AADA Posse

This posse will be encountered only in *GURPS Autoduel* campaigns. It is quite possible that the party could outrun some of the less mobile posses. If this is the case, have the party meet the mobile AADA posse (about four vehicles should do it). The AADA's tactic will be to scare off escapees or slow them down with aimed shots at tires and turret weapons.

Scout Troop Posse

This posse is led by Joe Renko and features one dozen members. Each Scout is ST 10, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12, Speed, Dodge and Move 6. Skills include Axe/Mace-11; Area Knowledge (Black Lake Forests)-12; Bow-13; Cooking-11; First Aid-11; Survival (Woodlands)-12. Equipment includes Swiss army knife, backpack and camping gear, flashlight, composite bow and quiver of 10 arrows, and hatchet. Each Scout does one die cutting damage with the hatchet; the bow's stats are impaling damage 1+1, ranges 5/12/200/250.

The Scouts are extremely polite while preventing anyone from leaving, giving them all sorts of warnings. If a fight ensues, the Scouts will fight guerrilla-style, hiding behind trees and bushes, and popping out to loose their rain of arrows at the party. Joe will occupy a strategic point and provide accurate sniping fire.

Autoduel: The Commando Scout skills include everything above plus Flamethrower-11; Guns (Rifle)-12, Grenade Launcher)-12; Karate-12; Running-10. (Their improved speed is countered by heavier encumbrance.) Each is equipped as above plus Body Armor. Two of the scouts have grenade launchers (with a balanced mix of explosive and smoke grenades), one has a flamethrower, and two crew a tripod recoilless rifle (two extra clips). The rest of the troop pack Remington M750s. They will also have bows at Renko's insistence.

The troop has no vehicles. They have planted a variety of traps (pits, rocks behind bushes, etc.) against duellists fleeing cross-country, and have designed ambushes to lead escapees into these traps.

Potential Allies

The party may be doing badly in its investigation. Or, they may have suffered some casualties at this point. The kind GM can have them discover some useful allies among the townspeople. Ideally, these people will have some skill, piece of equipment, or item of knowledge that the players can use. For example, the party may need someone with Demolitions skill or explosives — Bill O'Keefe or Smiley Smyth fit the bill.

The investigators will find the ally in much the same state as themselves; the ally will have no idea of what is going on in Black Lake, and will have no inside information. Some allies in particular will not be part of whatever dark forces are behind the events in town; Mrs. Brown, for example. She is a potential ally, but only at a high price (financial, criminal, or sexual). She may secretly try to control one of the investigators. And, in the end, she may betray the party on a whim.

Maria Ortega and Uncle are two other potential allies. They will be found hiding out at Ortega's Truckstop — they have tied up Jesus, because they think that he has gone crazy. Maria and Uncle will be highly suspicious of the party, but will not demand any bloodprice for an alliance.

Captain Fred is another potential ally, providing he is sober. If offered the opportunity, he will immediately ally with the party, and will be loyal to the death.

Smiley Smyth is another definite ally — especially with his cache of dynamite. Unfortunately, he will only be useful if the party can keep producing magical bottles for him. And his ten sticks of dynamite are rather old; they are Demolitions-2 to handle successfully without blowing up.

Early in the evening, Marjorie Goldblum checks at the motel for messages. One leaves her visibly shaken. "I'm supposed to be at the estate at midnight, with a film crew. Smith wants me to watch particularly for a 10-year-old girl with blonde hair. Julie is 10 and has blonde hair." She faints in terror.



The Mansion

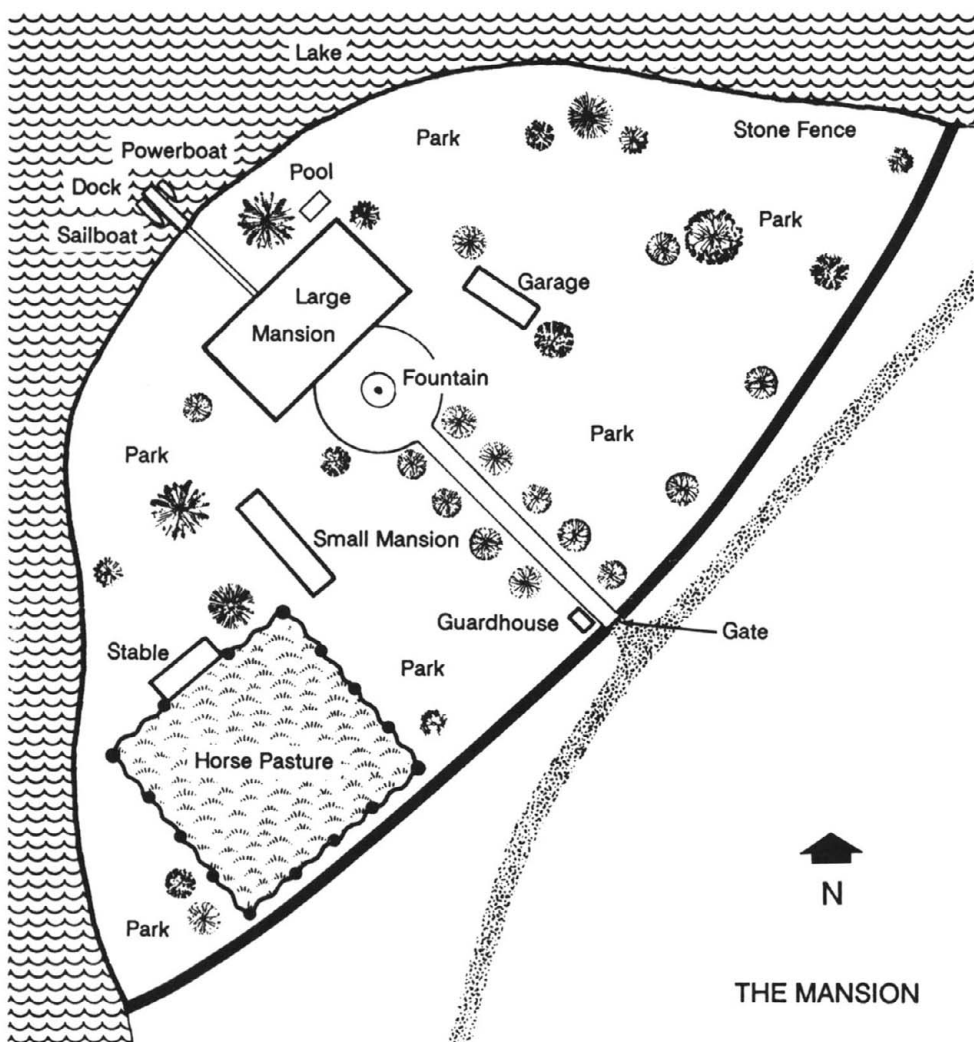
(By this time, one or more of the NPCs mentioned in this or later encounters may already be dead or disabled. If that is the case, replace each with the best alternative or omit the role entirely.)

The Grounds

The mansion and estate are pleasant and attractive. The estate covers a peninsula jutting out into the lake; a wall (DR 8, HT 90, 10' high) guards the landward side. There is no beach on the waterfront; the property rises about 5' above the water, and is buttressed by a stone wall. Entrance to the estate is through a single gate in the middle of the landward wall. The gate itself is cast-iron and richly ornate (DR 3, HT 50, -2 to be hit).

Inside the gate is a guardhouse (PD 2, DR 4, HT 5) that houses the gate controls. Once through the gate, the driveway continues in a straight line toward the center of the estate where it ends in a large circle in front of the mansion proper. A fountain is in the middle of the circle.

To the right of the mansion is a large garage (DR 5, HT 25) which can hold half a dozen vehicles; currently parked in the garage are a limousine and three unmarked silver sedans. To the left of the mansion are a series of low cabins or bungalows clustered together to look like a small mansion. All of the buildings on the estate are done in the same English countryside style. The rest of the grounds resemble a slightly overgrown park with many large old deciduous and evergreen trees, some fruit trees and a pasture with stable (DR 4, HT 20) near the southern corner of the estate. Small animals roam the woods, and horses can be seen in the pasture.



Generic Mob Member

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 5.

Disadvantage: Fanaticism (do whatever the bald man tells us to do even unto death).

Skill: **Brawling-12; Club-11.**

Equipment: club, 1+2 crushing damage.

One in five of the mob members is armed with a .38 revolver, .22 rifle, or shotgun with ten rounds (Guns skill of 10). Any or all of the described townspeople may also be encountered as mob members.

Autoduel: Three out of every five mob members are armed with guns (a .22 pistol, Winchester, or Amex shotgun).

Estate Guards

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry-6 (Billy Club), 7 (Karate).

Disadvantage: Duty (protect Wong, on 15 or less).

Skills: **Broadsword (Billy Club)-12; Driving (Car)-12; Guns (Pistol)-12, (Rifle)-12; Karate-11; Powerboat-12; Stealth-11.**

Equipment: blue uniform, .38 revolver (six extra rounds), M-16 semi-automatic, billy club, flashlight, handcuffs, walkie-talkie.

One of the guards is the Chief of Security and can usually be found in the command room. The Chief has Leadership-13 and Interrogation-12.

Autoduel: All stats at 12. Basic Speed 6, Move 5, Dodge 5.

Advantage: **Combat Reflexes.**

Skills: increase all gun skills to 13 (14 for the Chief). Add **Driving (Trike)-14, Computer Operations-13, Electronics (Security Systems)-13, First Aid-12, Gunner (Machine Gun)-15.** Chief also gets **Tactics-15.** The limousine is a standard police cruiser converted for the purpose; the guards also have four standard Leos (p. A40).

Equipment: Change M-16s to full automatic M26A2s; add **Body Armor, one Smoke Grenade, one Tear Gas Grenade, Headset Communicator.**

There are eight guards. They are **Conadors**, members of **Gold Cross'** elite security service (see *The AADA Road Atlas and Survival Guide: The East Coast*, p. 52). The Leos are used for easy maneuvering within the estate grounds.

**Walter Wong, VP of
Research for Columbus
Meditech/Gold Cross**

Age 56; Oriental, Silvered hair, black eyes, 5' 7", 150 lbs., dresses in fine business suits.

ST 10, DX 12, IQ 17, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Common Sense; Mathematical Ability +3; Status 5 (senior corporate executive); Wealth (Very Wealthy).

Disadvantages: Bad Sight (Farsighted, wears glasses); Enemy: Ezra Nash (single formidable individual, appears on 6 or less).

Quirk: Dislikes guns and loud noises.

Skills: Administration-18; Biochemistry-17; Chemistry-18; Computer Operation-22; Leadership-17; Mathematics-20; Physician-20; Physics-18; Surgery-18.

Equipment: Calculator, notebook, mini-tape recorder, \$1,200 in cash.

Wong has been receiving continuous death threats from some unknown person. CM has secreted him away in its Black Lake hideout until the threats stop.

Autoduel: At the Condors' insistence, Wong wears suit jackets with built-in Kevlar vests (performing like a regular Kevlar vest).

Behind the mansion is a lawn area with a single concrete walkway leading out to a dock that extends about 20 yards into the water. On the north side of the walkway is a large pool with deck furniture scattered around it. Two boats, one a small sailing boat and the other a powerboat, are tied up to the dock.

The mansion (DR 5, HT 60) itself has two floors, an attic, and a cellar. Use the map of Langley Manor (p. H86) if the action moves inside.

The Guards

The estate is guarded by private security guards. Their task is to protect the occupant of the estate and to keep away the curious or harmful. They are polite but firm to anyone inquiring at the gate. There are six in all — at any one time there is one at the main gate, one in the command room on the first floor of the mansion (replacing Noel Tarleton's room), two on patrol around the wall and the grounds, and two off duty. They stay in constant communication through their walkie-talkies.

Anyone seen as a threat will be dissuaded with warning shots, followed by progressively deadlier force. The guards live in the cabins to the south of the mansion; they chauffeur the limousine and drive the silver sedans.

The Estate's Occupant

The sole occupant of the estate is Walter Wong, the Vice President of Research for Columbus Meditech (CM). CM is a huge medical technology firm based in the midwest. Anyone with Physician skill above 16 or a high degree of knowledge in medical technology recognizes CM as a corporation on the cutting edge of next-generation medical research. CM is also known for its high ethical standards in research and experimentation.

CM owns the estate in which Wong is staying. It is a high-security resort for their top-echelon executives; company higher-ups like Wong come here either for an expensive (and usually work-free) vacation or to hide out if threats have been made against their lives. The latter is the case with Wong.

No one in Black Lake is aware of the identity of the estate's occupant. All that anyone knows is that it is owned by CM and that no one is allowed inside. The guards never socialize in town, a fact which naturally makes the townsfolk distrustful of them.

Autoduel: The estate is considerably more fortified. For one thing, the guards are better armed and there are more of them — double the staff. The outside wall is DR 10, HT 100. The waterfront and dock also feature a 6' high wall to protect the lake side of the mansion from armed boats. The entrance gate is a massive, steel door (DR 4, HT 50) that slides into the wall.

Video cameras are placed every twenty feet along the walls, and in every room (except Wong's bedroom) in the buildings. These video images feed into a battery of video screens in the command room. A computer constantly monitors the video feeds for movement, and, if anything is detected, displays their views on the screens and sounds an internal alarm that can be heard in each guard's headset. The computer is able to recognize intruders (i.e., it can tell the difference between one person and another). At the moment, it is programmed to accept only Wong and the present team of guards.

The wall and grounds are always well-lit. The command room controls two medium turrets at the main gate, two medium turrets on top of the mansion, and two medium turrets at the dock. Each turret is PD 4, DR 16, and houses two machine guns with an extra magazine each. The command room has three gunner positions with targeting computers.

The security computer that runs the video cameras can also run the machine guns in a pinch, at a skill level of 11. It will fire at any unauthorized intruders. In 2038, Gold Cross is both the owner of the estate and Wong's employer.

Warning Wong

The PCs may decide to warn Wong about the attack. During the daytime or early evening, getting past the guard at the gate will be no easy task. Only a Fast-Talk roll at -5 will get the guard to even listen to what the investigators have to say. Another Fast-Talk roll at -4 is needed to convince the guard to contact Wong. Dropping names like Bob Smith and Labac International will mean nothing to the guard or to Wong; talk of a mass attack by the mad citizens of Black Lake will create a great deal of suspicion. The guard may simply call the Sheriff's Office (which will result in the rebellious deputies coming around).

If the sheriff is with the party, however, the guard will take notice and, if she makes a Fast-Talk-3 roll, will allow her a brief phone conversation with Wong. Roll one die; on a 1 or 2, Wong believes the sheriff's story that he is in danger, and will invite her and the party to talk to his Chief of Security. It will take another Fast-Talk roll at -3 to convince the Chief that Wong is in danger.

Even if the Chief is convinced, he will repeatedly try to call the outside world for help from his corporation's security service and from the FBI. Of course, he will not get through. He will not favor moving Wong, and will request that the party give him their weapons to be locked in the command room. He thinks that the whole thing may just be a practical joke and wants to wait it out.

If the investigators try to warn Wong either just before or during the attack, they will have a much easier time. When the guards look outside the estate's grounds and see a glassy-eyed, chanting mob marching toward them, and (*Autoduel*) realize they are being shelled by the tank gun, they will need little convincing. However, they will have trouble believing that the party is not part of this mob. They will fire at anyone who goes racing toward the mansion without their permission. Roll Fast-Talk-2 or Diplomacy-2 for the PCs to convince the guards to listen to them and to join forces.



The Midnight Mass

At five minutes to midnight, a black van and two motorcycles leave the mine and drive into town, stopping in the Seniors Activity Center parking lot. The two motorcyclists (Blackie and Yeller) dismount and keep a careful watch, weapons at the ready. Two occupants emerge from the van — a woman (Linda Lovewar) clad similarly to the cyclists, and a short, bald man in a white coat (Ezra Nash). If, at any time during the drive or after their stop in the parking lot, they are challenged or attacked, the people will react with extreme violence.

At exactly midnight, the bell in the tower of the Church of Pure Values building begins to toll. Quietly and efficiently, the town comes to life. People leave their homes and walk (or drive) toward the Activity Center parking lot. They come individually, in pairs and in groups. Many are armed, with weapons ranging from baseball bats (light clubs) to hunting rifles and shotguns.

Some form up into their social groups or posses. The Seniors form one group, Vic and the Shards a second, the Church of Pure Values people a third, the Scouts a fourth, and so on. No one under twelve is present.

Their way is lit with flashlights, lanterns, and torches. They cannot be

stopped or dissuaded from reaching the parking lot. They will react with violence if provoked; otherwise, they will simply walk silently past any observers.

Soon, a large mob has gathered in the parking lot. Most of the adult population of the town is there — about five hundred souls in all. All stare fixedly with unblinking eyes at the man in the white coat, who by this time has mounted the black van with megaphone in hand.

If the PCs take this opportunity to eliminate Nash, and are successful, a chilling sequence unfolds. They are, of course, attacked by the nearest townspeople. But, Nash's voice continues over a loudspeaker, as though nothing had happened. The PCs' victim was a clone with only minor mental abilities — it could parrot an assigned speech and gesture heroically, but that was the extent of its usefulness. Nash certainly doesn't want a second Nash on the loose. Nash himself is still back at the mine.

The bell ceases its tolling, and the bald man begins to speak into the ensuing silence: "My children! The time has come. The time for you to fulfill the destiny which I have laid before you. Come now, children; follow these my angels, and together we shall slay the Beast in the mansion by the lake!"

A great cheer goes up from the mob. Then, with one voice, they take up the chant, "Nash! Nash! Slay the Beast! Nash! Nash! Slay the Beast!" Anyone watching this must make a Fright Check at -4; this is a terrifying experience.

The bald man and the woman get back into the van; the two motorcyclists remount their machines. The van leaves the parking lot at a walking pace, followed by the huge crowd. The two motorcyclists bring up the rear. Several other vehicles are in the crowd, including some civilian cars on the fringes and the Seniors vans. The police truck and either a civilian vehicle or the police cruiser (if the sheriff is part of the mob or if the deputies have somehow gotten control of it) do not join the crowd, instead starting to patrol the near-empty town.

Stopping The Mob? Ha!

Depending on what they know, the party might try to stop the mob. They will fail miserably. The mob members cannot be reasoned with and, if interfered with too strongly, will simply kill the closest interloper.

Autoduel: If, for some reason, the party is succeeding, the trusty tank gun can quickly switch targets.



Two deputies are in one vehicle; one deputy and either the sheriff or a civilian are in the other vehicle. They patrol the streets of the town, picking up and arresting anyone they find wandering around. They are prepared to use violence, if necessary.

The great mob continues northward from the parking lot along the road leading to the lake. At the intersection on the south edge of the lake, a small contingent breaks off. This group, composed of ten standard Church of Pure Values brothers and Jim Fisher, heads toward the Fish and Tackle Shack.

The main group continues up the road along the eastern edge of the lake, chanting "Nash! Nash! Nash! Slay the Beast!" all the way. The Church of Pure Values posse gets into two of the three boats on the beach (five people per boat) and heads across the lake toward the mansion.

Autoduel: Meanwhile, the tank gun has begun random shelling of the estate. Don't to kill anyone important with it: use it to increase the uproar and sense of danger.

The Assault

The mob marches on. The occupants of the estate see the glow of their lights and hear their awesome unified chant coming up the road. Within minutes, several hundred people and perhaps a dozen vehicles have assembled before the main gate. The van and the mob suddenly come to a halt and stand deadly still. They do not respond to any communication. Any violence done to them results in an immediate attack.

The bald man grabs a loudspeaker and shouts out the window of the van, "Now, children, attack!" The vehicles surge forward and smash down the gate. Once inside the grounds, they slow to a walking pace. The mob marches in mechanically behind them, in step with each other. Anyone standing in their way is attacked by bullets, clubs and bare hands. Any mob members who fall are quickly replaced by others.

The guards attempt a fighting withdrawal. Their basic aim will be to hold off the mob while retreating toward the mansion. Once inside, they will decide to spirit Wong out the rear entrance to the dock. If the PCs disagree, the surviving guards (about two or three at this point) will grab Wong and leave without them.

The longer the PCs wait to leave the mansion, the greater the chance that the mob will get inside the building. The party may find themselves fighting room to room as they try to get out. The mob sets fire to the mansion, regardless of who or how many are inside. Anyone heading in a direction other than toward the lake runs into a part of the mob, which is roaming throughout the grounds, chanting, "Nash, Nash, Nash!" Anyone heading out the back door toward the lake runs right into the Church of Pure Values posse which has traveled up the lake and landed along the waterfront. Their job is to capture Wong alive, knowing that he would be flushed out toward the lake by the terrible mob.

The Churchmen come running down the path from the dock. They avoid shooting Wong and concentrate on the guards and investigators. This may result in a very deadly firefight — the GM should be a bit manipulative to prevent the party from being completely killed off. At the least, though, all of the guards will fall.

The longer that the Churchmen delay anyone from escaping, the greater the chance that the rest of the mob can catch up to them. If they do, the bald man orders his "children" to take the party alive. See p. 53 to determine the fate of the captives.

Zombietown?

Physically, the residents of Black Lake after the attack on the estate are exactly the same as they were before. Psychologically, they are a little bit different. Individual NPCs retain their old attributes, skills, advantages, disadvantages and quirks as before; the old town feuds are still present; but every now and then, someone drops the name "Nash," causing all present to become instantly and reverently silent. With one voice they all chant, "Nash! Nash! Nash!" Any investigator who does not participate in this ritual with the rest (an Acting roll at -2 will get them out of trouble) will fall under suspicion, and may be shown the way to the clinic.

None of the townsfolk want to leave Black Lake ever again, because Nash is there, ever-present and watchful. Nash is taking care of them; Nash will make them happy and healthy. Some begin to advocate changing the name of Black Lake to "Nashville."

Any outsider who enters the town is arrested by the patrols and escorted to the clinic and then to the jail. Any outsiders who come armed into Black Lake will be dealt with severely.

Anyone probing a townsfolk's mind, either psionically or magically, will find a strange and overwhelming loyalty and love for Nash. Nash is pictured in the subject's mind as a strong father figure who knows the answers to all the questions, and even to some questions that haven't been thought up yet. There is also a mental image of a cranky old woman who resembles Nash in facial appearance. Apparently, she is to be respected and feared even more than Nash.

A psi with Mindwipe skill can remove this Nash compulsion in two hours on a successful Mindwipe-2 roll. A failed roll will create a babbling idiot. No trace of previous memory editing can be detected.

What Are Little Girls Made of?

If the adventurers get to the dock (with or without Wong), they find the craft belonging to the estate and the two powerboats used to transport the Church of Pure Values posse. The estate boat needs starting up (thirty seconds), while the engines of the other two powerboats are running.

Make sure Goldblum survives to this point, as she desperately searches for her daughter. As the fleeing party reaches the dock a small, blonde girl climbs out of the sailboat. Goldblum will rush toward her with a glad cry of “Julie!”

If Wong is still alive, Julie pulls a 20-gauge shotgun from behind her back and takes a point-blank snap shot at him. If Wong is not present, she shoots at Goldblum. She then drops the shotgun and reaches in the pocket of her jacket for a grenade. Pulling the pin, she holds it aloft, letting it explode. She dies in the explosion, oozing green fluids. (Yes, of course, there’s a Fright check!) Even if she isn’t allowed to pull the pin, any damage she takes will kill her. If she somehow survives all this, she will *still* die, staring blankly into Goldblum’s eyes.

Each boat can hold up to six people. Any powerboats left behind by the PCs will rapidly be filled by six mob members each who will chase the PCs on the lake. Long-range gun duelling ensues (-4 to fire a hand weapon from a moving craft). The mob members will give chase until they are sunk or killed.

Attempts to Escape

The party may try to escape again, this time to get help. They run into the same situation as before — armed posses blocking all the roads and prowling in the woods. The GM must assess the situation here; perhaps the only hope the PCs have at this point lies in getting help from the outside. If this is the case, the GM should let them slip through the roadblocks and down to the main highway.

The help they receive, however, should be limited. Most people, including the authorities, will treat their story with suspicion. A successful Fast-Talk or Diplomacy roll at -2 will be necessary to convince anyone to return with them to Black Lake.

The new allies should not be too powerful — just possessed of enough skills and equipment to give the party a fighting chance once more. A regiment of the U.S. Marines would be very unbalancing; a state trooper or two (or a couple of Marines on vacation) would be more appropriate.

Whew!

With luck, the PCs have survived the assault on the mansion. The first task facing the survivors is to find a safe place to rest for the night. An empty cabin will be found near any landing place they choose. Goldblum is a nervous wreck even if PCs try to convince her that the thing she saw die wasn’t really her daughter. Leave her here until the end of the adventure. If they rescued Wong, this is a perfect opportunity to discuss the bizarre happenings in the town with him.

Walter Wong: Target

Wong first asks for a full explanation from his rescuers about their backgrounds, why they are in Black Lake, and how they knew that an attack was coming. He is greatly interested in the events which have led up to the attack, and in the strange occurrences in town; he knows nothing at all about Black Lake or its residents.

After hearing his rescuers’ stories, he reveals his background and reason for being at the estate. He says that the mob’s chant of “Nash!” makes him shudder. Nash was an extremely brilliant researcher who worked under him at CM (his description of Nash fits that of Bob Smith).

Wong says he fired Nash for unethical experiments, but does not elaborate on the nature of these experiments due to the necessity of keeping corporate secrets. Nash, whom Wong declares is insane, vowed that he would one day get revenge for not being recognized for his greatness. Then he disappeared.

Wong has suspected that Nash is behind the recent rash of death threats, but has no idea (he is lying) of how Nash could have manipulated the town of Black Lake. One thing he truly does not understand is how Nash could have financed the whole thing.

As for the immediate future, he argues in favor of finding out exactly what Nash is up to. He argues that it is his duty as a man of science and an employee of CM to pursue knowledge. He also feels guilty that the town is suffering on his account. If his rescuers decide to try to escape from Black Lake, Wong will refuse to go with them. However, he will follow any reasonable suggestions that they make, if they want to continue their investigation.

The Mine

The only conceivable way to save Black Lake is to find the man behind the evil — Ezra Nash/Bob Smith. To confront and destroy him, the investigators must go to his hideout — the mine. The mine should be fairly obvious as a potential base; if the adventurers do not figure this out on their own, however, it may be necessary to have one of their allies steer them in the right direction.

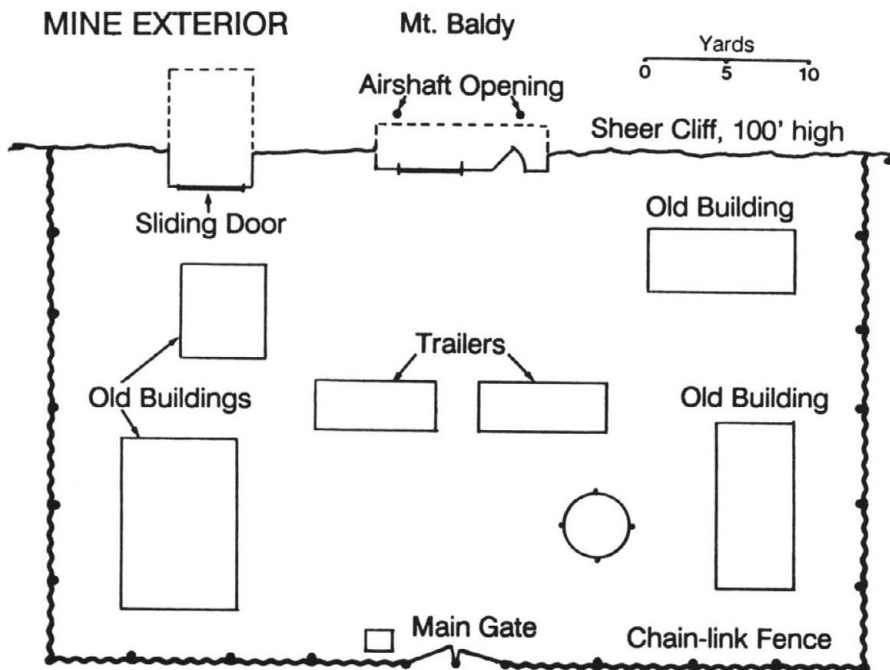
The Mine from the Outside

The mine site lies at the base of Mt. Baldy on a flat area covered with loose rock and gravel. A sheer cliff rises 100 feet above the mine. The entire area is fenced off by a chain-link fence. Signs are posted everywhere saying: **RESOURCE PROPERTY — NO TRESPASSING — VIOLATORS WILL BE SEVERELY DEALT WITH.** There is one main gate with two doors which swing inward; an old guardhouse lies to the left of the gate. The gate is locked (Lockpicking-3 to open); the lock is DR 3, HT 5.

The enclosure holds about half a dozen buildings, most of which are old and run-down. It does not appear as if any significant construction has gone on here in a long time. The only “new” buildings are two mobile trailers laid end-to-end at the center of the site. There is also a prominent water tower; it appears to be just as old and decrepit as the rest of the site.

One of the buildings at the opposite end of the complex from the main gate appears to be partially built into the side of the cliff. Most of the buildings are DR 2, HT 9 (wooden construction, very old). The water tower and the building at the southwest end of the enclosure are two significant exceptions (see below).

On a successful Tracking +3 roll (or IQ-2), the investigators will notice tire tracks in the gravel leading up to and through the gate, and across the complex to the center building built against the cliff, where they end. The tracks were made by both motorcycle and automobile tires.



The Water Tower

The tower is 40' tall; the tank takes up 15' of this height and is 10' in diameter. The tower stands on four legs and appears to be of wooden construction and just as old as the other buildings. In reality, the tower and tank are of steel construction with a false wooden frame built around them. If any part of the tower takes more than eight hits from a single attack, the wooden outer layer will

Getting Along With the Neighbors

The party may try to slip back into town to further their investigations. With the attack completed, the mind-controlled citizens more or less return to their “normal” lives. Businesses are open as usual, town gossip and politics resume. It’s almost as if nothing has happened.

If Wong was not captured in the attack on the estate, however, there are active patrols (the standard posses) out looking for him. And all the citizens will recognize him on sight, and sound the alarm. The patrols and citizens will not be looking for the investigators. The PCs find that they can move around fairly easily if they keep quiet. If they start asking questions about Nash or where he may be, however, they will raise the immediate suspicion of the person to whom they are talking; he will immediately attempt to call for the nearest patrol. Anyone who is part of the “new” Black Lake doesn’t need to ask these sorts of questions.

If Wong has been captured, there are no active patrols looking for him. However, anyone who asks questions about Wong will be referred to the nearest patrol for questioning. Anyone caught by these patrols will be mercilessly interrogated and then thrown into jail. From there, he will be transported to the Clinic for a forced session on the body-scan machine. He is then returned to the jail, until one night a black van drives up to the rear door . . .

Escape attempts are possible during this ordeal. Anyone escaping from jail will be hunted by the posses.

Tactics

The water tower observation post is designed to keep an eye on the mine site and keep away intruders; violence is to be used as little as possible. If anyone approaches the fence, the guard on duty (presuming he notices the intruder) will keep a close watch on him with the video cameras. If he can do so without attracting attention (IQ-2 to notice tank movement during the day, IQ-5 to notice at night), he will rotate the tank so that the gunport faces the intruders. Initially, the gunport is facing the gate.

If anyone tries to climb the fence, the guard will immediately warn him off through the loudspeakers, saying, "You are trespassing on ResourceCo property. Leave now or face prosecution." If the intruder persists, the guard will place a call to the Sheriff's Department — a deputy in a patrol car will arrive in about five minutes. If the break-in occurs at night, the guard will also turn on the searchlight; anyone blinded by the searchlight has his combat skills reduced by 10. Again, the sheriff will be notified.

No one, however, appears from ResourceCo to press charges; the sheriff or her deputies simply kick the intruders off the mine property with a warning. If anyone tries to hide from the sheriff, or tries to break into either of the two buildings built against the cliff, the guard will warn him once again over the loudspeakers (and track him with the searchlight at night). If the party members continue their break-in attempt, the guard will fire several warning shots wide of them. If they return fire or continue their breaking and entering, the guard will fire with intent to incapacitate. The more shots he fires, the deadlier his aim will become.

The guard ceases firing every so often to once again advise the intruders to leave. If the guard is in trouble (e.g., heavy damage to the tower, out of ammo, badly wounded), he will alert those in the hideout below to come to his aid.

Autoduel: The guard is a lot more trigger-happy, especially if the autoduellists barrel straight at the fence at 50 mph.

be blown away at the point of the impact, revealing the steel skin beneath. The legs are each DR 8, HT 25; if one leg is destroyed, the tower will fall, effectively destroying it. The water tank itself is PD 2, DR 12, HT 20.

A small trapdoor (IQ-2 to notice if the bottom of the tank is inspected) leads into the tank from below. It opens into a small chamber about 5' high and the entire diameter of the tank. It is empty except for another trapdoor in the thick wooden ceiling (treat as DR 4, HT 20). This door leads into the rest of the tank, which is actually an observation/guard post. Inside are several sets of control panels, a bank of video screens, a gunrack, and a chair.

Hand controls on the wall open hidden panels on one side of the tank which slide sideways to expose a 1' wide by 4' long firing port about 5' above the floor. The panels also expose a searchlight (DR 2, HT 3) above the firing port. Foot controls on the floor below the firing port quietly rotate the tank a full 360 degrees, at up to 90 degrees per second. The video screens are linked to four cameras hidden on the outside of the tank; each camera covers a 90-degree field of vision so that, together, the cameras effectively cover the entire field around the tower. The cameras can be switched to infrared mode for night vision. Each camera is HT 4; if the tank is hit by gunfire, a roll of 5 or less indicates that one of the cameras has been hit. It is up to the GM to decide which field of vision is lost if a camera is destroyed.

On the control panel is a phone connected to the Electronic Warfare Room in the mine below. There is also a mike connected to loudspeakers hidden in each of the buildings outside. The gunrack contains one extra weapon (with four extra clips) of the type used by whichever guard happens to be on duty at the time. Blackie is the merc most likely to be found in the tower.

Autoduel: The tank is a specially-designed turret containing an anti-tank gun (with extra magazine) and two linked machine guns. The weapons are exposed by opening the hidden panels. The searchlight is in the same position, but aside from the weapon ports there are no gunports for hand weapons. There is one gunner position with a Targeting Computer. Otherwise, everything — including the armor — is the same. The tower legs are PD 8, DR 8, HT 50; the tank itself is PD 8, DR 12, HT 50.

Getting into the Mine

Obviously, the mine is important, as anyone who is shot at will realize; it is well-guarded and will not be easy to break into. Getting into the mineshafts themselves will prove just as difficult. There are no obvious shaft mouths anywhere to be seen; however, several entrances do exist.

The Buildings Against the Cliff

The Building on the Left

The building on the left as one faces the cliff is some 17' high, 15' wide, and 20' deep, with a garage-type door about 15' high. It appears to be as old and as fragile as the other wooden buildings at the site. Anyone making a successful Architecture roll notices that the "building" is actually a wooden shell hiding a concrete building beneath (any damage to the wooden exterior of more than two hits will expose the concrete building). The concrete building is DR 6, HT 30.

The garage door is steel (DR 6, HT 24), and opens much like a home garage door does. It is controlled by an electronic lock system, which is operated from the inside. Someone with the appropriate electronic tools can override the system through the small locking mechanism on the door itself, by rolling Electronics (Security Systems)-3. Failing that, the locking mechanism can be physically destroyed (DR 2, HT 6) and the door manually opened (taking someone with ST

18, or more than one character with combined strength of 25). Any break-in attempt will take at least one minute. A manual pulley-system inside the building can also be used to open the door; it requires someone with ST 14 to use.

Anyone searching the interior of the building for more than half an hour (and rolling IQ-4) finds a small trapdoor in the floor. It opens onto a shaft with a ladder descending into complete darkness. The shaft continues straight down for 30' before ending in a horizontal tunnel heading in a westerly direction. This tunnel is round, 5' in diameter, dry, and constructed entirely of metal. It extends for quite a distance, curving slightly to the right before ending at a metal door in a wall of rock. For what lies behind this door, see *The Master Bedroom*, p. 59.

The Center Building

This building is long and low-lying (DR 2, HT 11, 8' tall, 30' wide, and 10' deep), with a flat roof and a row of boarded-up windows. A large door (DR 2, HT 6, 6' wide) near the right side of the building is locked (Lockpicking-3 to open; the lock is DR 1, HT 6). Anyone getting through the door finds a long empty building with a 7' ceiling. A layer of dust covers everything except some recent tire tracks which head straight across the floor from the door to the wall opposite. Anyone searching the wall will (on an IQ-4 roll) find a pair of cleverly concealed cracks about 8' apart, roughly in line with the building door. The tire tracks fall within the width of these cracks.

Anyone searching for a further half hour, and making a Traps roll, finds a switch concealed in the ceiling. Flipping the switch causes the wall between the cracks to slide into the floor; beyond lies an unlit corridor hewn out of bare rock. It looks very much like a horizontal mine shaft. A party which does not find the switch can attempt to break through the door; it is a thin wooden slab covering a metal wall (DR 5, HT 25).

On an IQ-2 or Engineer +4 roll, one of the party members notices that new supports have been constructed in the shaft to keep it from collapsing. He also notices that the roof seems rather weak. The shaft itself is wide — about 5 yards across — and tall enough to drive a vehicle in. It is damp and moldy-smelling; an observant character (IQ-3 roll) will notice a draft coming from the shaft as the entrance is opened.

The Mine Interior

Level One

The Garage

The corridor entered from the center building continues into the darkness. After about 10 yards, the wall to the left curves sharply outward into a large square cut in the rock. The cut is about 10 yards deep by 10 yards wide. Shining a light into it reveals a mini-garage. There are assorted automotive tools, cabinets of spare parts and, depending on when the party arrives, perhaps some vehicles. There are several pools of oil on the floor, a pin-up calendar is taped to the rock wall, and several drums of gasoline rest against the back wall. In the ceiling above the cut is a circular vent protected by a grill (DR 1, HT 6). The vent gives access to the airshaft system.

The vehicles present, if any, can include a black van, up to three large, heavy motorcycles and (for *Autoduel*) a ferocious-looking tractor rig. The van is the same one that the party has seen driving around town. It is locked (Lockpicking-2 to open); inside are maps of the area, a compass, rations, .45 automatics in holsters on each of the front two doors, and three smoke grenades in the glove compartment. Two of the motorcycles are expensive and have heavy-duty suspensions, but are otherwise ordinary. One bike, however, is weirdly modified,

The Air Circulation System

All good hideouts need an airshaft system — especially if they are underground — to provide a constant flow of fresh air, and to allow enterprising investigators a way in. Nash's hideout has such a system; it is illustrated on the hideout map.

The air system has two openings to the outside, both of which are located about three yards above the roof of the low center building. They are about 10 yards apart. The openings are small — only one yard in diameter — and are protected by grills (DR 1, HT 7). They are hidden from view by a clump of bushes; the cliff itself is randomly dotted by small clumps of such bushes. A sharp-eyed observer, however, may notice the airflow disturbing the bushes if he is examining the cliff (IQ-5).

The shaft system is not lit. Anyone crawling through it has a maximum Move of one yard per second. For every five minutes spent in the shaft system, there is a 2-in-6 chance of encountering a swarm of ill-humored bats (see p. B138).

The shaft system has openings into several of the rooms in the hideout. Each opening is one yard in diameter and is protected by a grill. A circle with a "+" indicates that the opening is in the ceiling; a circle with a "-" indicates that it is in the floor.

Note that the airshaft system is not completely interconnected. A character will not be able to travel in the shaft system to reach all of the rooms of the hideout.

Cave-ins and Other Unpleasantness

Several sections of the mine show signs of stress and weakness. Some areas look ready to collapse at any moment. Parties high on initiative and explosives may decide to seal the evil inhabitants below by dynamiting the mine shafts.

This is perfectly possible, but before attempting it, the wreckers should first make sure that they will not collapse the roof over their own heads, and that the bad guys are indeed cut off. They should also determine whether or not anyone is being held prisoner in the mine. A successful Demolitions or Engineering (Mining) roll is necessary to gauge what is a safe distance from the blast; the GM must decide what this distance is.

Anyone caught in a collapse will suffer from 5 to 30 dice worth of crushing damage (roll 1 die and multiply by 5 to find out). Five sticks of dynamite are sufficient to collapse a mine shaft. Also, any grenade explosion or heavy weapons fire (e.g., recoilless rifle) has a 1-in-6 chance of bringing down the roof at the point of the explosion or shots.

Some parties may want to toast their enemies using the gasoline found in the garage. If this is done, there is a danger of suffocation from being too close to a fire in an enclosed area. The GM must decide when and where a PC is in danger of suffocation.

with the foot controls high up on the chassis and a stepladder permanently attached to one side. Anyone with Engineering skill recognizes that the bike has been modified for a midget. Anyone with Eidetic Memory recognizes the tire tread on the motorcycles as being identical to the tracks left at the graveyard the morning after the bodies disappeared from their graves.

The Corridor to the Right

Opposite the garage area is a man-sized shaft. In contrast to the garage area, which is relatively clean for a mineshaft, this corridor is damp and smelly. Indeed, as the intruders penetrate farther into the shaft, the smell becomes worse. After about 20 yards, another corridor breaks off to the left and dead-ends in five yards. At this point, there are vents in the floor and the ceiling.

If the party continues, the shaft gets wider and there are large piles of rock and debris — and the smell gets even worse. Anyone rolling IQ-2 hears a squeaking noise; as the party penetrates further, everyone can hear it. Finally, the PCs reach a wide dead-end; scattered all around this area are hundreds of freshly-stripped human bones and skulls (Fright Check at -4). And in the center of this dead-end . . . a swarm of rats feeding on a mangled corpse (Fright Check at -2, with possible additions if the GM makes the corpse someone the PCs met in town). If the party makes any sudden noise or disturbs the rats, they will attack. There is nothing else here for anyone to investigate; the body is stripped of all its possessions.

The Zombie Pit

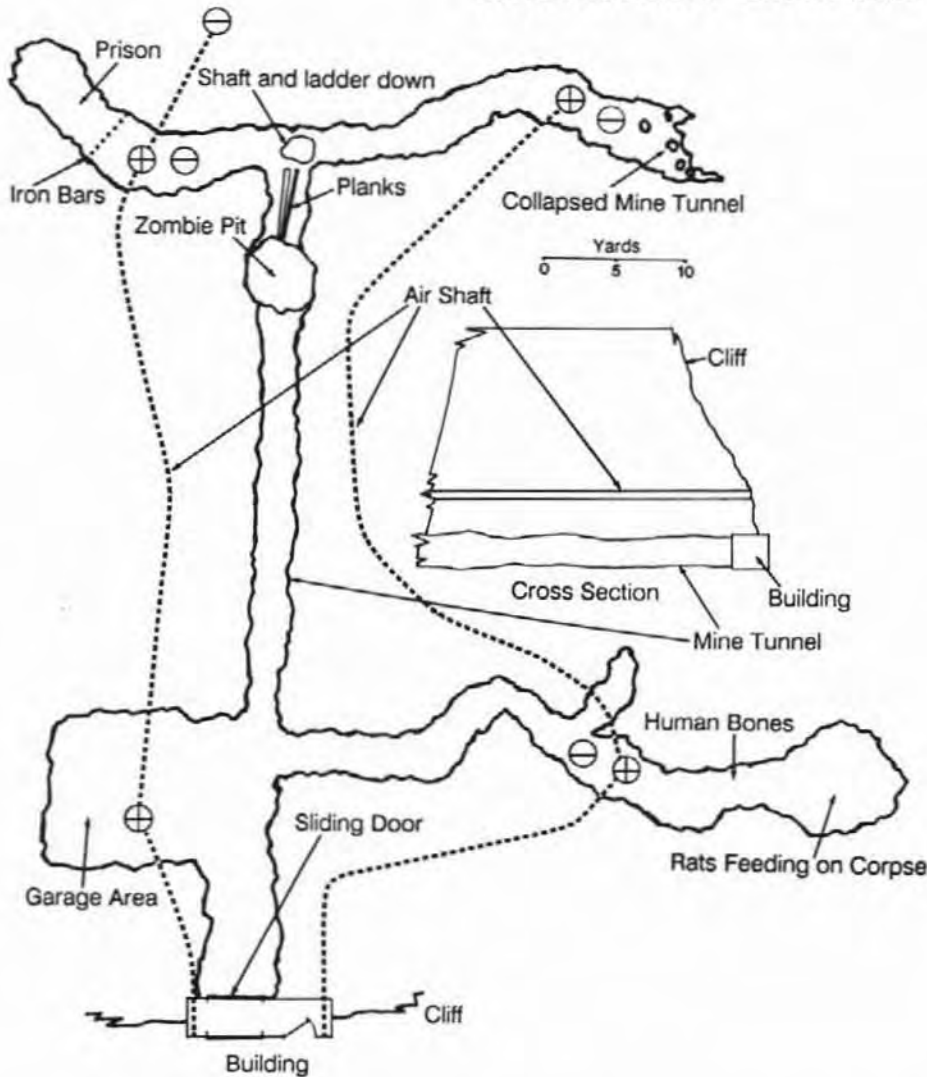
Returning to the central corridor, the explorers find that it continues ahead for a long way. After about 30 yards, they begin to hear a low growling that seems to come from ahead of them and *below*. Shining a light downward reveals a five-yard-deep pit filled with a dozen zombies (stats the same as the Homencik zombies, p. 37). A Fright Check at -2 is called for.

The zombies are ripping and tearing apart some unidentifiable raw flesh. As soon as they smell the characters, they begin to jump at the sides of the pit, trying to claw their way up without success. They continue to reach for the characters as long as the party is in sight, but return to their repast once the party leaves.

The pit is about five yards across and spans the width of the corridor, effectively blocking the way. On the other side of the pit are several six-yard-long timbers. Obviously, these are used to cross the pit. On the party's side of the gap



MINE INTERIOR - LEVEL ONE



The Four Horsemen

These are Nash's hired thugs. The Four Horsemen are a band of ruthless mercenaries who specialize in assignments for the Cabal and the underworld. They do their jobs only for money and have almost no respect for human life.

The Horsemen are led by Linda Lovewar, an albino warrior whose heart was cut from ice. The other team members are Blackie, the super-cool sniper and weapons specialist; Yeller, the team's dwarfish thief and the butt of many cruel jokes; and Red, the demolitions expert. The Horsemen are known for their "uniform" — black leather jackets and camouflage pants.

The Horsemen do not like Nash, and think that he is absolutely insane. However, they respect what he has been able to do and, since they have been promised tremendous sums of money at the conclusion of the job, they follow his orders. But they will certainly not sacrifice themselves for him!

In any firefight, they will withdraw if they believe that they cannot win (though they are likely to regroup for a surprise attack later). The only thing that makes them stick to Nash is money, and if the party can offer them more than Nash is paying them (\$50,000 apiece), they may stand aside as the investigators destroy the hideout. Or, they might take the money and shoot the investigators anyway.

The Horsemen own the black van and the three motorcycles that the party has seen either driving around in town or parked in the mine garage.

is a small intercom which is linked directly with the ECM Room. Buzzing the intercom gets a request for "the password." If the intruders cannot supply it, then everyone below will come up looking for them; they will be well-armed.

A brave explorer can climb along the wall above the pit to the other side (Climbing-2). Everyone gets an IQ roll to remember that the buildings outside contain many long timbers which are fairly easy to transport and will span the gap. Anyone crossing on a timber must roll against DX (or Acrobatics) to avoid falling.

The Shaft Down

Fifteen yards beyond the pit, the corridor comes to an intersection. There, a wide corridor extends to the left and another twisting corridor runs off to the right. A third, smaller shaft lies at the party's feet, with a ladder leading downward. It continues straight down for 20 yards before ending in another corridor on Level Two.

The Prison

The corridor to the left ends at a small jail cell. Behind the bars (DR 12, HT 100; lock DR 6, HT 10, Lockpicking-4 to open) are Captain Fred (if the zombies didn't shred him) and the real Julie Goldblum. They are in a sorry state, not

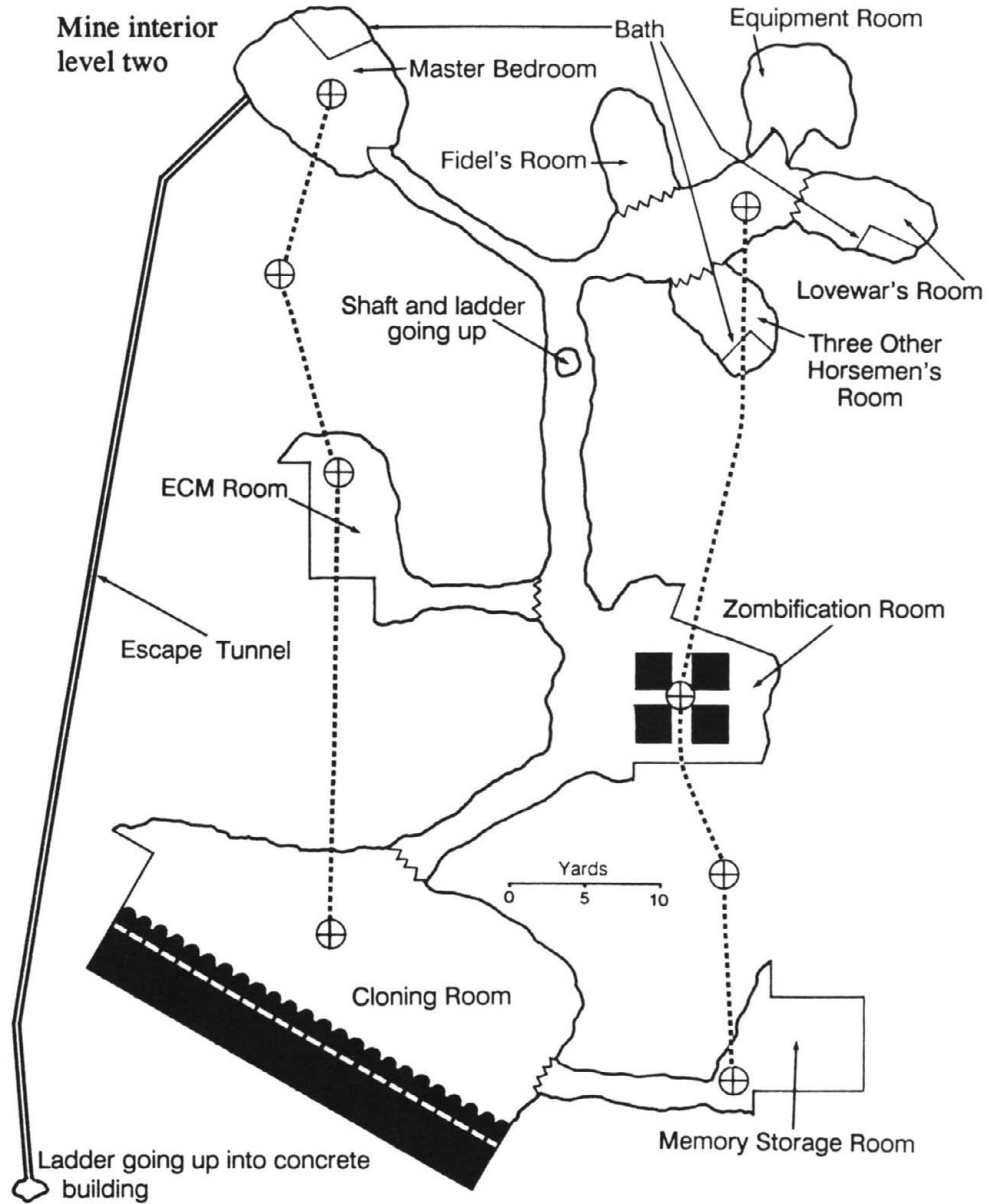
Linda Lovewar
 Age 34; Albino, 5' 7", 130 lbs. Dressed in black leather jacket and camouflage pants (standard Horsemen dress).
 ST 10, DX 15, IQ 15, HT 12.
 Basic Speed 6.75; Move 6.
 Dodge 6.
 Advantages: Appearance (Attractive); Combat Reflexes; Strong Will +2.
 Disadvantages: Greed; Sadism.
 Quirk: Accepts missions only in temperate or northern climates.
 Skills: Computer Operation-15; Criminology-14; Driving (Car)-14; First Aid-16; Guns (SMG)-16, (Pistol)-16; Leadership-18; Sex Appeal-17; Tactics-14.
 Languages: English-15; Spanish-14; German-13.
 Equipment: Uzi (2 clips); .45 pistol (one extra clip); Kevlar vest; flashlight; smoke grenade; first aid kit.
 Linda is a pure mercenary — not to be trusted at all unless one can pay her enough. She is in league with Nash for the money and the excitement of power. Her albinism keeps her away from the tropics and deserts.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (Machine Gun)-16. Linda drives the Horsemen Van.

Red
 Age 40; Big frame, flaming red hair, loud voice, 6' 3", 190 lbs. Standard Horsemen dress.
 ST 16, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 14.
 Basic Speed 6.5; Move 6.
 Dodge 6.
 Advantage: Combat Reflexes.
 Disadvantages: Berserk; Impulsiveness.
 Quirk: Likes to make things go boom.
 Skills: Demolitions-17; Driving (cars)-14; Motorcycle-15; Guns (Pistol)-14, (SMG)-13.
 Equipment: Pump shotgun; Kevlar vest; one smoke grenade; one explosive grenade; demolition priming kit; flashlight.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (Rocket Launcher)-16. Red drives an Outlander with the RL option (p. A39).

MINE INTERIOR - LEVEL TWO



having had food or water for at least 24 hours. If the PCs need an ally at this point, Fred is up to the task, especially if he can get hold of Nash's laser pistol. Just outside the prison are vents in the ceiling and in the floor.

The Collapsed Shaft

The corridor to the right ends in a pile of debris and fallen rock. Anyone exploding grenades, firing guns or shouting too loudly here will cause a cave-in (see sidebar, p. 56).

Level Two

The ladder drops into a corridor on a lower level, just south of another intersection. In contrast to the first level, this area is well-lit and relatively clean. One corridor heads due south, another veers off to the left and another to the right.

Living Quarters

The corridor to the right leads to what amounts to a large hallway. Three

accordion doors and one metal door open off this hallway. In the roof is a vent leading into the shaft above.

Behind the metal door (DR 4, HT 10, Lockpicking -2) at the end of the hallway is a medium-sized equipment room. In it are army-type rations, digging and construction tools, camping equipment, repair tools for weapons, two M-16s, two .45 automatics, five ammunition clips for each gun, three smoke grenades and two explosive grenades.

Behind the accordion door (DR, HT negligible) to the right of the metal door are the living quarters of Lovewar, head of the Four Horsemen. Her quarters are spartan, clean and dry, containing only a bunk and a portable toilet; there are no personal effects.

Behind the door next to Linda's room are the living quarters of the other three Horsemen. Inside are three cots, a portable toilet, and a variety of dirty magazines and food wrappers.

The room behind the accordion door across the hall is dank and messy — there is no toilet. This room belongs to Fidel the Hunchback. Anyone searching under the soiled cot will find one surprised and angry rattlesnake (p. B139 or BY46).

The Master Bedroom

The corridor to the left is only one yard wide, and ends at a metal door (DR 7, HT 15, Lockpicking-5). Behind this door lies the master bedroom of Ezra Nash, the mad scientist. It is ornate and plush, featuring a large king-sized bed, large-screen television, stereo system, built-in toilet and shower, small stove and refrigerator, a closet full of white lab coats and pants, and a commanding picture of an ugly old woman with the inscription "Mother."

A half-hour search and an IQ-2 roll reveals a small door behind the king-sized bed. This is the entrance to the tunnel leading to the vertical shaft from the leftmost cliff-side building. There is also a ceiling vent into the airshaft.

The ECM Room

The south corridor leads to several more rooms. Twenty yards down from the ladder is an accordion door on the west side of the corridor. Behind this door is the Electronic Counter Measures Room. A character with Electronics (specializing in either Security Systems or Communications) or Engineer (Electronics) will recognize much of the equipment as sophisticated radio and phone monitoring and jamming equipment. The whole setup is run by a complex computer program which is responsible for Black Lake's current phone, radio and computer line problems.

Ten hours and a Computer Operations roll at -4 will lift the jamming of the town's phone and radio links. Destroying the equipment or disconnecting it from the generator will do the same thing. Each piece of equipment is DR 2, HT 6.

Autoduel: For autoduellists who are finding the mine a cakewalk, Nash has a special surprise: mobile guns operated by the same master computer. Each robot gun weighs about 700 lbs., is about three feet tall, and is shaped like a turtle. It can carry any weapon (or combination of weapons) weighing 250 lbs. or less. The robot can pivot this weapon as though it were in a top-mounted universal turret.

It has only one armor location, with laser-resistant fireproof armor (PD 8, DR 20), and its tiny wheels are inaccessible to direct fire. Its power plant has HT 3; it can accelerate at 10 mph, and has a top speed of 40. The ECM computer has Driving skill 15 and Gunner skill 15.

Use as many as you wish. We suggest three: one beyond the zombie pit and two on Level Two. Don't forget the perils of cave-ins when using them.

Yeller

Age 43; Yellow hair and beard, 3' 4", 135 lbs. Standard Horsemen dress.

ST 9, DX 15, IQ 12, HT 13.

Basic Speed 7; Move 7.

Dodge 7.

Advantages: Alertness +2; Night Vision.

Disadvantages: Dwarfism; Kleptomania; Appearance (Unattractive).

Quirk: Likes watching reruns of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Skills: Acrobatics-14; Computer Operation-11; Electronics (Security Systems)-15; Brawling-15; Escape-14; Guns (Pistol)-16, (SMG)-16; Jumping-14; Lockpicking-16; Motorcycle-17; Pickpocket-15; Traps-13.

Languages: English-12; French-11.

Equipment: .45 automatic (2 extra clips and silencer); Kevlar vest; smoke grenade; lockpicking set; small set of electronic tools; flashlight.

Yeller is the team's thief. He drives a specially modified motorcycle (complete with stepladder).

Autoduel: Add Gunner (Machine Gun)-16. Yeller drives a Hawk (p. A40) which has been modified for his size.

Blackie

Age 29; Slick black hair, slim build, 5' 11", 160 lbs. Standard Horsemen dress.

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 8 (Judo).

Advantages: Combat Reflexes; Appearance (Handsome).

Disadvantages: Bully; Illiteracy; Jealousy.

Quirk: Likes to shoot up libraries.

Skills: Carousing-12; Motorcycle-15; Dancing-13; Fast-Draw (Pistol)-14; Guns (Pistol)-15, (Rifle)-18; Judo-13; Sex Appeal-15.

Languages: English-10; German-8.

Equipment: M-16 (four extra clips); .45 automatic (1 extra clip); Kevlar vest; dark sunglasses; flashlight.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (Machine Gun)-17. Blackie rides a standard Outlander (p. A39).

Ezra Nash, Mad Scientist

Age 57; Bald, very skinny, wild-eyed, 5' 9", 100 lbs. Wears white lab coat and pants.

ST 10, DX 14, IQ 20, HT 12.

Speed 6.5; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

Advantages: Mathematical Ability +2; Eidetic Memory (60 points); Intuition; Patron (Cabal, very powerful, appears on 6 or less); Wealth (Very Wealthy).

Disadvantages: Bad Temper; Bully; Major Delusion (My dead mother and I have regular conversations); Overconfidence; Greed; Jealousy; Megalomania; Sadism; Skinny; Appearance (Unattractive); Vow (Get Walter Wong).

Quirks: Sometimes doesn't attend to details; Likes to play games — with live pawns; Insane laugh; Coughs after each spasm of said laugh.

Skills: Beam Weapons (Laser pistol)-15; Biochemistry-24; Chemistry-25; Genetics-23; Computer Operation-25; Computer Programming-21; Engineer (Electronics)-19; Electronics (High-Tech Weapons)-17; Mathematics-19; Nuclear Physics-17; Physics-20; Physiology-21; Psychology-20; Research-18; Zoology-17.

Languages: English-20; German-18; Latin-18; Russian-18.

Equipment: Home-built laser pistol; Kevlar vest; flashlight; walkie-talkie.

The laser pistol weighs 2 lbs. and is connected by a 4' coiled cord to a small power pack (3 lbs.) clipped to the inside of his lab coat. The pistol rests in a shoulder holster beneath his coat; it has ten shots, 1 die impaling damage, range: 3/7/175/400.

Autoduel: Add Driving (Truck)-14; Gunner (Rocket Launcher)-15, (Machine Gun)-15.

Nash's Story

Ezra Nash was a top scientist for Columbus Meditech. He was an undisputed leader in genetics and cloning. He was also known for his erratic, violent behavior and his dubious research methods. He had begun doing secret experiments on cloning *humans*; unfortunately, his deformed creations had a habit of wandering all over the CM labs. Horrified by these unethical experiments, Walter Wong, VP of Research for the company, fired Nash without pension, and destroyed his "clones." An ultra-tight security lid was clamped on the results of Nash's research.

Nash swore vengeance against Wong and CM. Before long, he was initiated into a particularly vicious and wealthy faction of the Cabal. They recognized a mad genius when they saw one!

Continued on next page . . .

The Zombification Chambers

The south corridor continues past the ECM room until it opens into the largest room encountered yet. In here are two large computer banks and four large square metal tanks; a vent in the ceiling opens into the airshaft system. The tanks are each three yards on a side, and are DR 4, HT 20. The tanks are connected by large power cords to the computer banks. Each tank also has a small square window about five feet above the ground.

Looking through the windows, the investigators see that the tanks are filled with a slimy green fluid — the same fluid that spurted out of the zombies. Three of the tanks are empty; the fourth has a malformed and stomach-emptying zombie-in-the-making floating in the horrible stuff (Fright Check at -2). Destroying these tanks causes gallons of the nasty green slime to gush out all over the floor (another Fright Check at -1).

The Clone Tanks

A corridor leads away from the Zombification Chamber at an angle. At the end of the corridor is another accordion door, and behind it a room twice as large as the previous one. In it are two even larger banks of computers (DR 2, HT 12 each). Lined up against the far rock wall are two dozen sarcophagus-like tanks (each DR 4, HT 20). A ceiling vent opens into the airshaft system.

Each tank is completely closed in except for a small window near the "head" of the tank. Looking into the window reveals that the tanks are filled with that same green slime. Six of the tanks have human bodies in them. The PCs will recognize two as Captain Fred and little Julie Goldblum.

The dials on the tanks indicate heart and brain-wave patterns. Anyone who smashes open the tanks will kill whatever is inside (GM: play it up; these mindless humanoids thrash around, gasping horribly and choking up lots of the green slime — Fright Check at -5).

One of the computers is attached to a large cold-storage unit; anyone with Biochemistry or Genetics gets a roll to discover that the cold-storage unit contains a cell sample for almost every person in Black Lake. All the samples are coded according to the names of the individuals from which they were taken. It takes about five minutes to find a given name. If any of the investigators took a session on Doc Basset's body-scan machine, the storage unit contains a cell sample from that person. The cold-storage unit is DR 4, HT 22.

Autoduel: Anyone with medical training, or anyone who has had a high-level job with Gold Cross, recognizes these as clone tanks. Anyone else will recognize them on IQ-3. The clones being grown here are Nash's special "corrupted" clones, or zombies (like the Homenciks, p. 37; also see sidebar, p. 62). Should the question arise, anyone will know, on an IQ roll, that "real" clones don't have green goo inside!

The Memory Storage Room

Yet another accordion door leads from the above room to another narrow corridor. This corridor leads to a smaller room jammed with computer banks (each DR 2, HT 6). Also in the room are two machines exactly like the body-scan machine in the Black Lake clinic. And there is another ceiling vent.

Anyone with Computer Operations and Psychology or Physician (or more than one character with a combination of these skills) who spends two hours at the terminals can determine that these computers are filled with hundreds of extremely sophisticated personality profiles translated into computer language. Each personality profile has a name attached to it; each name is that of a good citizen of Black Lake.

If any of the computers are destroyed, then some of the personality profiles

will be destroyed with them. It is up to the GM to decide how many profiles are lost; if he wants to be merciful, he can create a backup system of profiles on tape, hidden in a secret cabinet in the wall.

What is Going On Here?

If the party has extensive medical and biotechnical knowledge, they can get a fair idea of what all this high-tech equipment means. If Walter Wong is along, he, too, has a good idea of what has been going on. Someone has been cloning the inhabitants of Black Lake and replacing them with his own creations. The villain, of course, is the insane Dr. Nash (for his background and some of the details of his plot, see sidebars, pp. 60-63).

Destroying Nash

Where will Nash and his thugs be when the party comes sneaking in? If they break in before the attack on the mansion, they find the hideout well-defended.



Nash's Story (continued)

They set up ResourceCo and Amalgamated Medical Technologies as fronts for Nash's work.

He soon perfected his cloning technique. He could produce clones identical to their originals in as little as six weeks. Unfortunately, his creations were mindless (consequently, he and his Cabal friends held parties from which none of the clones returned). He then found a method of "reading" memories and storing them, and a technique for editing these memories and replacing them with artificial memories.

Nash soon had the technology to clone a person, tape that person's memories, edit these memories, and then inject them into the clone. The result: a duplicate of the original, with a modified mind. His very first project was Fidel the Hunchback.

He began to stalk Wong. He discovered that Wong spent a lot of time at an exclusive CM estate in Black Lake, California. Nash used his ResourceCo front to buy a spent mine just outside Black Lake. He brought in Cabal construction workers who fashioned the present underground hideout.

He then arrived in town under the alias of Bob Smith of AMT. He convinced Doc Basset to test AMT's "new" body-scan machine. The machine, of course, is actually a memory taper used to record the unsuspecting patient's mind for editing. The first patient on the machine was Doc Basset, under Nash's supervision. Nash also took a cell sample from the doctor.

Six weeks later, Nash's thugs kidnaped and killed Basset, and replaced him with his memory-edited clone. The clone, utterly loyal to Nash, began to call everyone in the town for "checkups."

Every night, Nash's thugs came to the clinic and collected the cell samples and memory tapes. They took them back to the hideout, where Nash grew a clone from the cell samples and busily edited the memories. When the clones matured, the new memories were implanted. The thugs would then return to town, kidnap and kill the originals, and replace them with clones. The bodies were dumped in a rat-infested dead-end mine corridor.

The fact that the clones' memories were six weeks old accounts for the strange cases of memory loss sweeping the town. Nash and his cronies followed a specific plan for whom they would replace. Among other things, they left Fuzzy Dent until near the end, since they considered him to be harmless. They also have had a lot of trouble kidnapping the security-conscious and militaristic sheriff.

Meanwhile, Nash issued a string of anonymous death threats against Wong. Of course, Wong came to Black Lake to hide out. Nash timed the climax of his cloning program to coincide with Wong's arrival.

Continued on next page . . .

Nash's Story (continued)

By the time the investigators arrive in Black Lake, the trap is almost ready to be sprung. Indeed, a day before they arrive, Nash uses his ECM equipment to jam local radio and phones.

What about the zombies? They are a mere diversion. Nash wanted to terrorize the few remaining non-clones in Black Lake, and confuse anyone who might be on his trail. He arranged, through his Cabal ties, to create the storm that drowned the Homencik boys. His thugs then stole the bodies from the clinic (which doubles as the town morgue), and replaced them with "corrupted" clones, his version of the Walking Dead, which he calls zombies.

The Homencik zombies were programmed to burst out of their graves to raise havoc. Nash had his thugs attend the graves when the zombies came out, to make sure they didn't get stuck. Hence the cycle tracks at the graveyard.

Meanwhile, the Cabal faction, enthused by what they saw as a good show, hired a team of filmmakers to record the event for posterity (and for Cabal conventions).

Nash in 2038

While working for Gold Cross, Nash began research into altering the structure of memories stored in MMSDs. He invented a Memory Editor which enabled him to delete certain memories from the general memory structure and to insert in their place artificial memories. The Memory Editor, however, did not work on live subjects (it drove them mad).

Earlier, Nash had experimented with cloning techniques which enabled him to produce clones in as little as six weeks, and "age" clones to any desired biological age.

Using these techniques, Nash produced unauthorized clones of several Gold Cross clients at the *current* ages of those clients (not the standard 25-year old clones that Gold Cross usually produces). Nash then taped these same client's memories from their MMSDs and stored the taped memories in other MMSDs. He edited the memory structures of the new tapes and then programmed these edited memories into the unauthorized clones. The result: clones who were *duplicates* of their originals and who were totally loyal to Nash (the intent of his memory editing).

The clones became his slaves, causing consternation as they wandered around the lab, saying, "We serve Master Nash and his mother." Wong, understandably, fired Nash immediately and buried the work. Nash swore vengeance and soon linked up with the Cabal, as described above.

Blackie is in the water tower, and Linda and Fidel are on Level Two; Linda is in the ECM Room keeping an eye on things. The other two mercs are out in the van, prowling around for their next victim (unless the party has so many combat monsters that all four mercs are needed to make things interesting). Nash is moving around between the Zombification Chamber, the Cloning Room and the Memory Storage Room, doing his evil work. If the trespassers come at night, there is a chance that Nash and Linda are asleep; Fidel sleeps very little — he is prowling around the labs, dusting and arranging pieces of equipment.

As soon as Blackie spots someone trying to break in, he will go through his usual warning procedure. If things get tough and a fight breaks out, he will call down to the ECM Room. If Linda (or whoever else is in the ECM Room) loses contact with Blackie, she will alert everyone else in the hideout and recall the mercs in the van. She will then arm herself and come up to check out the situation. Anyone she finds will be shot immediately.

If both Linda and Blackie are out of action, and Nash has received warning, he will arm himself and Fidel. Then he will put in a call to certain clones in the town. A posse of about a dozen townspeople, all armed, will be dispatched to the mine; they will arrive ten minutes after Nash makes the call. Nash and Fidel will hold off the intruders as best they can while waiting for the posse to arrive.

If all hope is lost, Nash will escape through the tunnel connecting his bedroom to the concrete building and make his escape. The GM must decide whether the adventure will have a climactic chase scene or whether Nash will make a clean getaway. If the posse arrives after Nash has escaped, they will be at a loss as to what to do without Nash present to lead them. They will not harm the PCs unless attacked. There is a chance that Nash will link up with the posse and return to the mine to take on the investigators.

If the party manages to confront Fidel without otherwise raising an alarm, roll Fidel's IQ-1. If he fails his roll, he assumes that the intruders are disobedient clones. He keeps saying, "You're not proceeding according to the plan!" or, "The Master will be displeased with such naughty children." He will try to shoo the characters out of the mine, and will only wake up to his mistake if he is threatened or attacked — "You're not part of the plan? . . ."

In general, any unauthorized persons caught snooping around the mine will be disarmed and taken immediately to Nash. Nash will inspect them, chuckle, and then put them on his machine and take a cell sample from them. He will then throw them in his prison, or throw them in the zombie pit. A new clone will be made, destined to serve Nash all its days. Anyone who resists arrest will be shot dead. A general rule of thumb: outside the mine, the guards and mercenaries act discreetly; inside, they show no mercy.



The Resurrection of Black Lake

If the investigators manage to defeat Nash and the Horsemen, they still have to deal with a town full of clones. The clones are lost without their leader; some even commit suicide. They are harmless, and, indeed, afraid of any PCs. Can the party save the town?

Yes, they can. All they have to do is grow new clones from the stored cell samples, insert a copy of the original personality profiles, and they have a de-Nashed human being. This assumes that the battle for the mine did not destroy any of the machines, cell samples or personality profiles. If some of the computers and storage units were damaged or destroyed, the GM must decide just how many people were lost. For example, if most of the computers in the Memory Storage Room were destroyed, then the GM could declare that 75% of the personality profiles were also destroyed.

The saving of Black Lake also requires that the saviors have adequate knowledge to use Nash's sophisticated cloning and memory storage and retrieval technology. If they do possess the requisite skills, it will still take at least a month or two for them to come to grips with his system. If Wong is alive and with them, he has the knowledge necessary to do the job, but will still take a few weeks to learn Nash's system. He announces to the investigators that recovery is possible, then calls in Columbus Meditech security and research teams.

Finally, there is the problem of what to do with the existing clones — and how to identify who is a clone and who is not. Nash's computers have detailed records of who has been cloned, but if these records are wiped out, what then? An interesting denouement to the campaign could see the PCs helping the authorities search the town for the clones.

Conclusion and Rewards

About two days after the attack on the estate, regardless of whether or not the adventurers have defeated Nash, the California National Guard and state police come pouring into the town. The FBI and CIA also arrive. It is up to the party to tell them what has happened. If Wong is with the party, he will do much of the talking. Within another 24 hours, there will be twice as many military, police and intelligence personnel in Black Lake as there are inhabitants. The town's rescuers find themselves going through a battery of interviews and outright interrogations from all of the groups mentioned above. They may even feel as if they are being accused of being behind what has happened.

If Nash is still in his hideout when the authorities arrive, then the National Guard moves immediately on the mine. There is a short battle in which the Four Horsemen and Fidel are killed. Nash is not found.

Once the authorities are convinced of the investigators' innocence, they are told not to speak to the press about the matter on pain of prosecution and imprisonment. They are given free trips home, and cash to pay for any equipment they lost in Black Lake. Spilling their guts to the media or otherwise trying to capitalize on their knowledge will provoke a whole slew of hide-and-seek adventures as the party avoids vengeful government, Cabal or Gold Cross agents (perhaps all three at once!). If the PCs took any computer tapes or cubes with Nash's information, or even if they made a copy, the pursuit will be even more frantic.

If the party rescued or otherwise helped Wong, CM will award each PC \$10,000 for his efforts. The investigators will also be given a chance to join CM's security and intelligence service.

If Black Lake is almost completely restored, the Town Council awards the heroes the keys to the town, \$5,000 each, and an invitation to come back and visit any time.

Fidel the Hunchback

Age 35; Black curly hair, bulging eyes, hunchback, 5' 7", 160 lbs. Dressed in dirty white lab coat.

ST 8, DX 11, IQ 9, HT 12.

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell +2; Alertness +3.

Disadvantages: Appearance (Hideous); Miserliness; Stuttering.

Quirks: Calls Nash "Master"; Wants to be a nuclear physicist.

Skills: Astronomy-9; Biology-11; Chemistry-10; Computer Operation-11; Driver (Car)-11; Guns (Pistol)-10; Physics-8.

Equipment: .357 Magnum (six extra rounds); elementary science kit; calculator; biography of Oppenheimer.

Autoduel: Add Gunner (Recoilless Rifle)-10; Driving (Truck)-11. He wears Improved Body Armor.

Fidel is one of Nash's first projects. He is absolutely loyal to Nash, and effectively his second-in-command. But he is also quite stupid, a fact which makes the Horsemen despise him. They will in no way lift a finger to protect Fidel if he is in danger.

Fidel feels a special responsibility to keep the hideout in good working order. Thus, he is constantly fussing about in imitation of his master. Unfortunately, he has little understanding of how anything works. Also unfortunately, Nash tends to trust him too much with hideout security. With Fidel at the controls, the party has a better than even chance of getting inside relatively unscathed.

4

ADVENTURE NOTES

Your players have stopped Nash. However, the next time they return to Black Lake something else might be after them. Here are several ideas for non-Nash nastiness in a typical deadly small town.

Timetripping

Anybody who decides to spend a night partying with Captain Fred may wake up the next morning in a really *strange* place. Sort of an untimely departure. Can they get back?

Alternately, Captain Fred could be an intergalactic fugitive making his last stand at Black Lake. The town becomes the site of an alien struggle which only the adventurers can resolve. Or, instead of being chased, Captain Fred is doing the chasing — he's a space ranger after a berserk scientist who has brought some harmful new virus to earth.

The Nest

Is placid peaceful Black Lake being used as an ARF cell hideout? The PCs, as FBI agents or hired mercenaries, come to town to find out. In this case, Ben McKinley could really be an FBI agent working undercover. And perhaps the ARF cell includes more than just Deputy Lane. . .



Horror

The Little Girls Who Lived Down The Lane

The party is led to Black Lake on the trail of a rash of missing young women. The task: find out who in Black Lake is responsible for the disappearances, and then uncover enough evidence to bring the authorities against them. And, of course, the investigators must stand against the psychic power of Mrs. Brown.

The Cult

Small towns make wonderful settings for cult scenarios. In this case, the investigators come to Black Lake either to investigate the disappearance of a vacationing pair of newlyweds, or because occult information gathered by them indicates that something awful is about to happen in the town. What they don't know is that a weird cult worshipping Blackie (the Black Lake monster) is about to perform an ancient ritual to release her from her watery prison.

The ritual, of course, involves a long dark night of unspeakable ceremony, and the sacrifice of young lovers. Blackie, long thought to be fictional, turns out to be something charming — ST 150, DX 14, IQ 28, HT 17/100, DR 8, and a raft of psionic and magical skills. This adventure is somewhat similar to the Nash scenario, as the investigators arrive in a seemingly placid town to discover that something dark and sinister lies beneath its surface. Their job: save the earth from yet another rampaging and egotistical super being.

Autoduel

Revenge

A relative of one of the deceased Harlots (p. 24) plots to destroy Black Lake. This relative could hire the duellists to scout out the town and probe its defenses for any weak points. Good guys scenario: the relative says that he has a brother who is being held hostage in the town and wants to send a force in to rescue him.

Once the scouts deliver their report, the relative sends in a mercenary force of ravening bikers to take out the town. A climactic battle ensues in which the players are forced to choose sides.

Alternately, the duellists could be passing through Black Lake when the town is suddenly and massively attacked. Or, they could be hired by the town to deliver a pre-emptive strike against bandits massing in the area.

The Guns of Black Lake

Similar to *Revenge*, except that the focus is on Black Lake's artillery capability. The PCs could even be U.S. Army agents hired to reclaim U.S. military equipment. Or, they could be agents sent in to destroy the Spotter Post. Alternately, they could be hired by the sheriff as counter-agents to find out who is after the gun and the Spotter Post.

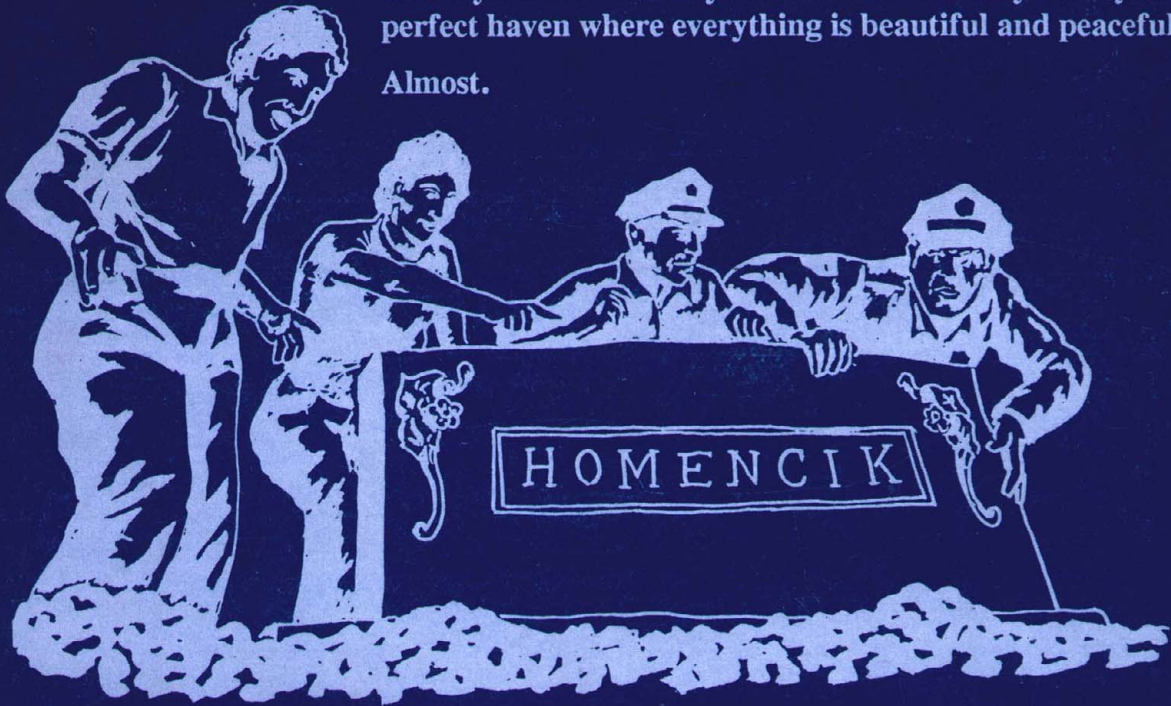
Election Time

The contest between the Brewin forces and the incumbent Dent forces leads to all sorts of election shenanigans. The conflict spreads to the arena recently built outside of town. The duellists are hired by one side or the other to do a little campaigning — *Autoduel* style.

You Can't Keep a Dead Man Down

Black Lake, California, the idyllic small town you've always dreamed of . . . clean air, sparkling water and a scenic countryside . . . friendly townfolk and an easy life style . . . a perfect haven where everything is beautiful and peaceful!

Almost.



There's the mayor who doesn't remember hiring the investigators, the phones that give a constant busy signal, the sudden storm that drowns three brothers, the mysterious van that cruises the streets of Black Lake.

And then the dead begin to walk . . .

As the investigators unfold the strange events shrouding Black Lake, they are drawn deeper and deeper into a complex web of horror, uncovering a sinister plot that is paralyzing the whole town. Only *they* can foil the plot that threatens to turn Black Lake into *Zombietown U.S.A.*

The 64 pages of *Zombietown U.S.A.* feature:

- a modern-day *GURPS Horror* adventure, as well as
- all the information needed to adapt the adventure for *GURPS Autoduel America*;
- a complete town for adventuring in either the present day or 2038, including
- detailed descriptions and stats for *dozens* of NPCs and establishments; plus
- subplots and adventure seeds to provide months of deadly small-town adventuring.

Written by Barry Link.

Cover and interior art by David Welling.



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