

*Gang Busters*

GBM-1

# WEIRD TALES

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

THE BLUE BOOK DETECTIVE AGENCY



JOE'S DINER

*GangBusters*

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&

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

THE BLUE BOOK DETECTIVE AGENCY™

MODULE GBM-1

## JOE'S DINER

**By MARK A HUNT**

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# Black Mask

GAMES BY MARK HUNT

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The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game is a supplement for the GANGBUSTERS 1920s adventure game, and requires the GANGBUSTERS rulebook for more detailed play.

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# INTRODUCTION

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*Eat at Joes, one of Rock Junction's great places to hang out and rub elbows with the locals and learn what the pulse of the city is really like.*

**Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner** is the first in a series of adventure modules after nearly three decades for use with the **Gangbusters™ RPG** rules. As an adventure module, **Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner** requires one person to act as Judge (or referee), but is specially designed for the Judge who needs to get back up to speed with the system.

**Gangbusters** is a game that takes place in the Roaring 20's and early 1930's, essentially the Prohibition Era of America. The focus of the game is on the Prohibition and the police/law enforcement struggle to control the streets and the halls of power. The player characters can take the roles of law enforcement, criminals, private investigators, reporters, and other types of roles. The **Gangbusters™ RPG** is set in Lakefront City, a fictional version of the city of Chicago, but **Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner** is set in Rock Junction, an ostensibly fictional steel town located in the Midwest. The Judge is free to set the contents of **Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner** in Rock Junction or take those contents and place them in Lakefront City or whatever location suits his campaign.

The names of the characters used herein are fictitious and do not refer to any persons living or dead. Any descriptions including similarities to persons living or dead are merely coincidental. The information in this module is only for the Judge who will guide the players through the Game module. If you plan to participate in this module as a player, please stop reading now.

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO PLAY

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In order to play **Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner** you will need the **Gangbusters** rule book, pencils, paper, two ten-sided dice and three six-sided dice, and your imagination! You will also need some time, somewhere comfortable to play, and maybe even some snacks.

## RULES AND IMPROVISING

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From time to time you will need to make up events or NPCs as you play. You will never be able to predict or plan ahead for everything that your players and their characters might do. The adventure has left a lot of open spots so you as the Judge can fill in when the players wander. Do not be afraid to improvise as you go. Just be sure to keep notes so you do not forget important details as you develop a story or adventure in the middle of playing it out!

## USING JOES' DINER

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This module is meant to be played over a period of several weeks. In the time, Joe's diner should be a place that the PCs (Player Characters) come to feel at home. The Judge should not try to rush the action, but should let the adventure develop at its own pace. If the players are having fun with the minor characters, then that is what this module and Joe's Diner is for. There are plenty of things the PCs can get involved in if they take the time to talk and get to know the NPCs who work or eat at Joe's Diner.



## TYPES OF CAMPAIGNS

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The Judge can use **Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner** in several different ways. Some of these include the following:

- 1. The Open Campaign.** The players play whatever characters they like. The Judge fits everyone into the overall flow of events by connecting as many minor events as possible with the main adventure location.
- 2. Cops vs. Robbers.** The Judge uses Joe's Diner and the area around it as a backdrop for the Law Enforcement efforts of the player characters. Together they will monitor and investigate criminal activity in Rock Junction, making cases and arrests, and ultimately, the streets safe.
- 3. Gang War.** The player characters decide to form a gang and stake out their territory in Rock Junction, running protection rackets, numbers games, and even taking over the local bootlegging operations all while avoiding coming to the attention of law enforcement and rival gangs.
- 4. Reporters.** The player characters are freelancers and stringers for local papers, hoping to get the scoop on what is happening in the city.
- 5. Private Investigators.** There are some crimes and cases that the police will not investigate and this is when the citizens go to a private eye. The player characters are private eyes who work missing persons, divorce, and other cases, hoping for the special cases that will get them the big rewards! This campaign is perfect when using **Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner** with **The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game**.

## THE FIRST ADVENTURE

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When you run your first adventure using GBM-1 Joe's Diner, you should carefully plan it so that several things should happen. The 'Getting Started' section has several ideas, but here is what you should be aiming for:

- Each and every PC should have something important and exciting to do right away.
- The cases and adventures the various players are working on should be designed so the PCs will meet each other naturally and start working with (or against) one another as the game unfolds.
- Ultimately each PC should be made welcome at Joe's Diner and come to feel that it is the place to visit in Rock Junction in order to get a cup of coffee, meet friends (even enemies and rivals), and make new contacts.

## GETTING STARTED

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The following suggestions outline how to get the various types of character started in **Module GBM-1 Joe's Diner**. Using this module in other ways will require some set-up time, and may be easier for an experienced Judge. The Judge may not need all the information given; for example, if there are no Reporter player characters, then all of the information on reporters can be ignored.

### POLICEMEN

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A player who is playing a policeman should have his character assigned to a beat that includes Joe's Diner. The NPC Robert Wells is a veteran cop and will be assigned to show rookies around the beat. The player character will begin the adventure by walking and learning the beat, meeting the staff and customers at Joe's Diner, and perhaps getting involved in a foot chase and run-in with the local vagrant, James Jones.

### FBI AGENTS

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Any player who is playing an FBI Agent should have his character assigned to watch the Green Warehouse for signs of smuggling activity. They could also be looking into the land deal or maybe into the trains activities.

### PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS

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Any player who is playing a Private Investigator could pick up cases or look for work while hanging out at the diner. This is also a great place to pick up leads and question people.

### REPORTERS

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Any player who is playing a Reporter might be assigned a local beat that includes Joe's Diner. The diner would be an excellent place to follow up on a tip, interview someone for a story (which could include another player character), and so on. The players may also interview people here as human interest stories also.

### CRIMINALS

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Criminal players will have to create their own opportunities.



## HOW TO READ NPC STAT BLOCKS

NPC information is given as follows (sections are omitted if 'none':)

**Name** — Profession (Age, Ethnic background) Level and Class

*Ability Scores* (**MS** = Muscle; **AG** = Agility; **OB** = Observation; **DR** = Driving; **PR** = Presence; **LK** = Luck; **HP** = Hit Points)

*Skills* (if any)

*Arrest Record* (if any)

*History of character* (if any)

*Tips for Character* (if any)

*Weapons* (if any)

*Valuables Carried* (if any)

*Vehicle Owned* (if any)

*Other Uses of Character* (if any)



## ROCK JUNCTION

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*"We build America!"* is our slogan. Located at the Crossroads of America, Rock Junction provides the perfect location for a weekend getaway, a family vacation, a business trip, or a night on the town. Relax in our parks or sail our rivers! Spend the day shopping in our Downtown shopping district, filled with boutiques and galleries. After dinner, take a long a long walk under the stars with Lakefront City beautiful skyline twinkling across the calm waters of Lake Michigan and then when night draws near, get dressed up – the 7th Heaven Club awaits!

Rock Junction is a steel town sixty miles from the sprawling, brawling metropolis of Lakefront City located somewhere in the American Midwest. Rock Junction serves a town the players and their characters can get to know and explore, perhaps serving as a home base for when head off to the life in the big city.

The first European-American settler, Tom McMasters, arrived in 1817 along with his brother-in-law Charles Black, and a young man named Clark Dowling. McMasters' family followed soon after. In 1820, the Rock Junction Company, a land development company formed by Charles Black, plotted a village and named the settlement. McMasters became the first postmaster in 1838. Rock Junction incorporated as a village in 1825 and then as a city in 1845. The McMasters family has been in power ever since, either as city mayor or head of the local fraternity, the Order of the Silver Palm – if not both. If you want to get anything done in Rock Junction, membership of this fraternity is a must.

The Rock River provided power for its mills and Rock Junction quickly became a mill town as well as an agricultural market for the surrounding counties. A railroad line arrived in 1852, fostering the development of its other industries. The presence of several major manufacturers since the 19th century has given Rock Junction the reputation of being a factory town. The city has a population of 30,000.

## JOE'S DINER

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DINER — 3 SEATING UNITS

The main location of this adventure is Joe's Diner. It is located in a great spot, just across the street from the rail yards and a warehouse, on the northeast corner of Canal Street and Pipestone Avenue. It is just down the block from the offices of the Blue Book Detective Agency. A haven for solid American food, this diner has managed to stick around while other businesses have come and gone.

The diner has a traditional diner floorplan; a service counter dominates the interior, with a preparation area against the back wall and floor-mounted stools for the customers in front. There is also a row of booths against the front wall and at the ends. It is a common American diner from the 1920s with white and black tile floors and the smell of home cooking as you enter the eatery. The diner itself stands on a half-acre plot of land, which is otherwise empty except for the two-room shack where Fess lives and runs his monthly dice games. The open ground between the diner and Fess' shack is used to grow fresh vegetables for the diner.

In addition to an extensive lunch and dinner menu, Joe's Diner serves up eggs practically any way you can think of 24 hours a day. During busy times, there is always a staff of two in the kitchen, someone behind the counter, and two waitresses and a busboy working out front. Betty Joe Belle the morning shifts (during which she goes to the bank to pay in the previous day's or weekend's takings if the bank is open) and every evening shift except Sunday and Monday. When it is quiet, there is usually only one person each to work the kitchen, the counter, and out front.

Betty Joe does not put all of the money that the diner takes in to the bank. She does not entirely trust banks and only puts in enough to cover the cost of the loan repayments on the diner. The rest she seals into old fruit jars and buries in the land behind the diner.

Joe's Diner is located on the corner where several police beats meet. This is the main reason why Betty Joe does not have to pay any protection money to a gang.

## RUMORS ABOUT JOE'S DINER

Things the PCs may have heard about the place at the start of the campaign.

### RUMORS TABLE

| 1d10 RESULT | RUMORS  |
|-------------|---|
| 1           | <i>Derek Howard is looking for investors for a land deal.</i>                   |
| 2           | <i>Somewhere behind the diner is loot from a bank job 2 years ago.</i>          |
| 3           | <i>Members of the Purple Gang have been seen here.</i>                          |
| 4           | <i>It's the best place to get a good meal.</i>                                  |
| 5           | <i>Fights take place behind the diner on the 15th of each month.</i>            |
| 6           | <i>The owner is looking to sell the dive.</i>                                   |
| 7           | <i>There is a still in the back room.</i>                                       |
| 8           | <i>The diner is in disputed territory so no one is collecting fees from it.</i> |
| 9           | <i>The Five and Dime wants to shut down the diner.</i>                          |
| 10          | <i>The back of the diner is a safe place to camp out at night.</i>              |



# NPCS AT JOE'S DINER

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## THE STAFF OF JOE'S DINER

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**Betty Joe Belle** — Owner and operator of Joe's Diner (*Age 47, Assimilated*) Level 2 Businesswoman.

**MS = 50; AG = 75; OB = 75; DR = 65; PR = 9; LK = 33; HP = 18**

Margaret Josephine Belle or 'Betty Joe' was raised in the Hills of Tennessee, but left for the big city when she was 14. Betty Joe is a hard-headed business

woman and has put a lot of effort into owning and running her own business. She has every intention of making it a success especially since she named it after herself. She takes no nonsense from her customers, but enjoys taking the time to chat to each and every one of them, sharing a smile and even laughing at their jokes. Betty Joe's primary concern is the food the diner serves up every day and will have sharp words with 'Big Bill' Valdez and the cooking staff if the food is not up to scratch.

Betty Joe is the matronly type, but is unmarried and has no children. Indeed noone knows if she has ever been married (she does not wear a wedding ring). Although she cares about everyone who works for her, she is very fond of 'Fess'. Some think that he is the son she never had

*Carries:* \$5d10 in her purse.

*Owns:* 1920 Model T Ford (3 passenger coupe).

*Other Uses:*

Betty Joe does have family, in particular, a brother, Robert lee Stewart Belle. When she hears that he has gone missing after working as a bootlegger, she might hire a PC private detective to find him. The PCs will need to travel to Tennessee if they take this case.

Betty Joe has a smooth-talking gentleman caller, Randolph Evans. Is he sincere or trying to put the moves on Betty Joe to charm her out of the diner? Fess is concerned and will pay someone his life savings (\$100) to find out.



**Fess Washington** — Busboy (Age 23, Black) Level I Worker.

**MS** = 68; **AG** = 77; **OB** = 42; **DR** = 56; **PR** = 5;  
**LK** = 32; **HP** = 20

*Skills:* Stealth 40.



Fess was a starving street kid when Miss Betty Joe took him in ten years ago. She is the only family he knows and she put him through school before employing him full time at the diner. Fess loves Betty Joe as the mother he never had and would never work anywhere else. He will fight for his Miss Belle to the bitter end.

Fess has an ear for languages and is a sympathetic listener. In the years spent serving customers and clearing away dishes, he has learned, Spanish, Dutch, Italian and a bit of Yiddish (he can only read English though). He is always willing to hear another person's troubles without giving unwelcome advice.

He runs a dice game on the 15th of each month behind the diner.

*Weapons:* A butcher knife kept under his apron.

*Carries:* \$3d10 in his wallet.

*Owns:* 1923 Indian Scout Motorcycle.

*Other Uses:*

Someone stole his motorcycle and he wants it back! Fess will put word on the street, that he has a reward of \$100 for its return. This is for anyone who can bring the person who stole his bike back to him along with the bike.

Fess is in trouble. Last night someone tried to rob the diner and he has stabbed a man. Can you help him prove it was self-defense and not some savage attack on a random customer?

**Bill 'Big Bill' Valdez** — Cook (Age 50, Assimilated) Level 1 Worker.

**MS = 13; AG = 81; OB = 71; DR = 76; PR = 9; LK = 29; HP = 15**

Bill is a modest man, despite the ribbing he takes for working for Betty Joe. He is helpful and friendly, a favorite with most customers.

*Carries:* \$2d10 dollars.

*Other uses:*

'Big Bill' likes to bet on the dog races and is often found at the local track, Vickers' Race Track (as detailed in GBE-2 Man's Best Friend). Well this time he won big – \$3000. Unfortunately the local bookie refuses to pay up. Bill will gladly split the take 50/50 if the PCs can help him out.

Bill has been asked to join Rock Junction's leading fraternal order, the Order of the Silver Palm. He invites one of the PCs to stand as his second during the initiation ceremony which is in two weeks. In the meantime, he needs to acquire a list of strange objects.

**Vivian Allen** — Part-time Waitress (Age 23, Assimilated) Level 2 Worker.

**MS = 66; AG = 50; OB = 74; DR = 62; PR = 4; LK = 31; HP = 17**

Vivian has a round face, with black hair and gray eyes. She wears a patterned dress and a short apron. Vivian is a chain smoker and speaks with a raspy voice.

*Carries:* \$1d10 in her purse.

**Nina Capoli** — Part-time Cook (Age 28, Italian) Level 1 Worker.

**MS = 66; AG = 50; OB = 74; DR = 62; PR = 4; LK = 31; HP = 17**

Nina is common in appearance, with bobbed black hair and sharp green eyes. She wears a basque dress and a gold necklace. Unmarried, she works the shifts that 'Big Bill' Valdez does not.

*Carries:* \$1d10 in her purse.



**April Green** — Waitress (Age 21, German)  
Level I Worker.

**MS** = 32; **AG** = 54; **OB** = 47; **DR** = 51; **PR** = 8;  
**LK** = 23; **HP** = 14

April is a third generation German-American. She is fiery and fun-loving, but a good worker. She is looking for a man to take her away from the diner.

She keeps a flask tucked away for the German folk who stops by.

*Carries:* Change only.

*Other uses:*

April may fall for one of the PCs if they are German decent. She has knowledge of the goings on in the German-American affairs in the city.

April has not showed up to work and Betty Joe is worried. It is not like April to not come to work on a Friday. As a favor, Betty Joe will ask a PC to go and check on April – his next meal will be on the house – but if April's absence turns out to be serious, Betty Joe will offer \$20.00 and free meals for a month if the PC can help find her.



**Lois Sanders** — Part-time Waitress (Age 25, Assimilated) Level 2 Worker.

**MS** = 55; **AG** = 55; **OB** = 38; **DR** = 47; **PR** = 3;  
**LK** = 20; **HP** = 16

Lois has frizzy brown hair and hazel eyes. She wears a patterned dress and silver headband. Lois is fascinated by astrology and divination and is currently taking a correspondence course in both subjects.

*Carries:* \$1d10 in her purse.





**Karen Greenberg** — Waitress & Widow  
(Age 31, Jewish) Level 2 Worker.

**MS = 60; AG = 28; OB = 41; DR = 21; PR = 8;**  
**LK = 10; HP = 13**

Karen's husband died of the Spanish Flu in 1919 while two years ago, their eldest son, Herschel Junior, was caught in the crossfire when the Rock Junction Police Department staged a botched raid on some bottleggers and killed. As a result, she has no love for either the police or the crooks, the former because they launched the raid and failed to catch his killer and latter because they were the cause of it. She delights in making both sides fail, tipping off each side as to their activities on the sly.

Karen is in charge when Betty Joe is not present, including Betty Joe's days off, Sunday and Monday. Karen is Jewish and does not work Fridays or Saturdays. She is an inveterate gossip.

*Carries:* \$1d10 in her purse.

*Other uses:*

Karen will be a snitch for the mob in a minute, especially if the mobster in question is Jewish. Then again, if she thinks that a PC is tough enough, she might set him up to bump off the same mobster.

Karen has saved enough money to hire someone to investigate the murder of Herschel Junior. If the PC identifies the culprit, then she will offer her life's savings of \$860 if he will help her get her revenge.



## LOCALS AT JOE'S DINER

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**Derek Howard** — Lawyer (Age 38, Assimilated) Level 3 Lawyer.

**MS** = 45; **AG** = 77; **OB** = 90; **DR** = 84; **PR** = 8;  
**LK** = 22; **HP** = 18

*Skills:* Law Degree 65.

Derek is the lawyer looking to get rich. His specialty is corporate law. He has realized that a dishonest lawyer can make much more money than an honest one, but wants to start somewhere small before moving on to Lakefront City. Thus he is looking to get in the local rackets if he can.

He is working on a land deal to put in new homes while skimming off the profits. His plan is to trick some deep pocket investors to buy plots and then sell the same lots to the poor and let them fight it out. He has two city blocks worth of lots he is hoping to unload. He meets some of his clients at Joe's Diner and can be often found in his regular booth near the back door.

*Weapons:* Colt M1908 Vest Pocket pistol in his brief case.

*Carries:* \$50 in his wallet.

*Other uses:*

Derek has screwed over one client too many and now needs protection, he of course deserves what he has coming, but a job is a job. If Joe's Diner is located in Rock Junction, then the client is part of the all-powerful McMasters family.

Derek would like to hire someone to follow a prospective buyer, he wants to know a bit more about Mr. Hawkins before he sign over a subtitle to his share of the land to him. Maybe the PCs can help.



**Robert Wells** — Beat Patrolman (Age 44, Assimilated) Level 2 Police Officer.

**MS** = 66; **AG** = 86; **OB** = 73; **DR** = 80; **PR** = 6; **LK** = 28; **HP** = 21

*Skills:* Shadowing 83.

Robert Wells walks the beat that surrounds Joe's Diner. Robert is conscientious and honest. He hates the fact that many local criminals have political connections that prevent him from stopping their activities. He is friendly and outgoing and always carries candy for the local kids.



*Tips:*

- 1) He thinks the Green Warehouse is used for booze storage but can't prove it, yet.
- 2) He has seen people at night behind the diner but is unsure why.
- 3) There have been break in's at some abandoned buildings lately.
- 4) He would love to get a look inside The Blue book Detective Agency.
- 5) He is looking for leads for a missing boy last seen down by the tracks.
- 6) He is looking for two kids who stole a brief case from Mr. Parker.

*Weapons:* Smith & Wesson Military & Police .38 revolver and a nightstick on a belt holster.

*Carries:* \$15 in his wallet.

**Bill "The Stick" McKay** — Driver (Age 32, Assimilated) Level 2 Criminal.

**MS = 44; AG = 82; OB = 69; DR = 91; PR = 3; LK = 24; HP = 18**

*Skills:* Auto Theft 64, Stealth 85.

*Record:* Arrested for Grand Theft, Auto; May 1919, served 9 months in the Federal Penitentiary.



Bill is an excellent driver and is currently driving a truck for the Black Hand Gang operating the Green Warehouse across the street from Joe's Diner. He is often at the diner while he waits to make the bootlegging run to Detroit and back again. As well as the gang he knows several other crooks in the district, including those who know how to get rid of stolen vehicles.

Bill is greedy, underhanded, and a sneak. He has grown tired of what he considers to be the peanuts he is paid to drive to Detroit and back. So Bill wants to make enough dough to make a clean start elsewhere in the bootlegging business himself. Thus he is looking for someone to help him knock off the warehouse and the gang for a cut of the take. He might even agree to that person going into the bootlegging business with him, but then Bill does not have an untrustworthy reputation for no reason.

*Weapons:* Colt Positive Police Special .38 revolver in his coat pocket.

*Carries:* \$10 in his wallet.

*Other uses:*

Bill comes back from regular trip to Detroit hours early with an empty truck. He was hijacked and the bootlegged whiskey stolen. He will be in serious trouble if he goes back and tells his gang bosses, so he implores the PCs for help in getting the stolen hooch back.

Bill has two trucks for sale, stolen trucks that is. He thinks that he can get rid of one of them, but do the PCs know where they can sell the other?

**Rosza 'Rose' Bartok** — Freelance criminal (Age 38, Hungarian) Level 2 Criminal.

**MS = 63; AG = 80; OB = 58; DR = 74; PR = 5; LK = 24; HP = 22**

*Skills:* Safe Cracking 84, Stealth 66.

Rosza is a first generation Hungarian-American who learned to speak English and German as a child. He was a watch maker back in Szeged, Hungary, before the Great War when he was conscripted to fight for the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After the war, he was recruited to work in the American auto plants, but when he got to the USA he found that there was no such job and the agents hiring him had absconded with his money. In the years since, he has done a variety of menial jobs and is currently working at the Green Warehouse unloading booze where he hates being called 'Rose'.

He embittered and looking to carve out his share of the American Pie. Recently he has taken to burglarize homes and premises and around the city and if he thinks he can get more money elsewhere, he will give it a try. Rosza sees the city as his turf and will fight tooth and nail to keep it. If the warehouse where he works is robbed, he will look to get into the action.

*Weapons:* Smith & Wesson Safety Hammerless .38 revolver tucked into his belt.

*Carries:* \$500 in stolen jewelry in a lunch box, \$250 in his wallet.

*Other uses:*

Rosza knows where there is a safe stuffed with dough. The thing is, he needs help getting in to get to the safe, especially there are staff on site. He offers the PCs \$100 upfront and a share of the take. Oh and the safe is on the 27th floor.



# SCENARIOS

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## THE GREEN WAREHOUSE

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The existence of the Green Warehouse and what goes on there is an open secret to anyone who decides not to look the other way. It is just that no one is stupid enough to mess with it. With beer deliveries once a week the warehouse is always busy and traffic at the Warehouse is always so heavy that a few more trucks or cars will not draw any attention. In fact the warehouse is so busy that anyone with any real guts might be able to get a truck or two loaded with booze and driven out of the loading dock without raising suspicion. The warehouse belongs to the RJ Packing Company.

### JUDGE PREPARATION:

Once the PCs have agreed to go all in with Bill McKay to steal a shipment of booze he will have the PCs watch the place for a week to be sure of the times when it is nearly empty.

### THE PLAN:

Drive a convoy in the warehouse, load up, and then make off with the beer. Further planning is up to the players involved.

### SET-UP:

There are six people in the warehouse between 1am and 8am and twice that during the daytime. These six consist of four regular workers and two mobsters. The workers will either flee at the first signs of violence or follow the order of whomever who is sticking them up, while the mobsters will refuse to take the attempt lying down.

### THE ACTION:

When the hijack is attempted, any gunfire will alert the two mobsters at the front of the warehouse. The Judge should also remember that the dock workers are neither armed with guns nor heroes.

### THE WRAP-UP:

If successful, each hijacked truckload of beer is worth \$550 and each truck is worth \$400 to a chop shop. McKay's 50% cut comes out before any XPs are figured.

## THE DOCK WORKERS

**Will Reed** — Mobster (*Age 28, Assimilated*) Level I Criminal.

**MS = 60; AG = 72; OB = 57; DR = 70; PR = 7; LK = 18; HP = 19**

*Skills:* Lockpicking 62.

Will was a Corporal in the army during the Great War. When he left the army he drifted into Lakefront City. Here, he found his skills at killing came in handy. Soon he found a place in the Mob.

*Weapons:* Colt Government (M1911) .45 in a shoulder holster, knife in his coat pocket.

*Carries:* \$400 in his wallet.

*Owns:* Shares a motorcycle with a side car with John "Lil John" Greggs.

**John "Lil John" Greggs** — Gang member (*age 40, Assimilated*) Level 3 Criminal.

**MS = 54; AG = 82; OB = 60; DR = 76; PR = 4; LK = 50; HP = 20**

*Skills:* Auto Theft 58, Explosives 79.

*Record:* Arrested for Armed Robbery — November 1920, served 2 years in the State Penitentiary.

Lil John has nerves of steel. He will do anything to keep the trucks from getting away.

Reed and Greggs have a motorcycle with a side car if they have to chase the hijacked trucks. Reed will drive while Greggs will ready his Thompson Machine Gun.

*Weapons:* Thompson submachine gun and three sticks of dynamite.

*Carries:* \$120 in his wallet.

*Owns:* Shares a motorcycle with a side car with Will Reed.

## DATE WITH DEATH

Last week, Merritt & MacLachlan's Five & Dime was robbed of over \$1,000. The burglary was carried out by Rosza 'Rose' Bartok who unbeknownst to him, was spotted leaving the building by a local squatter, Jimmy Jones. Desperate for food and a place to stay Jones has called the cops and agreed to inform on Bartok for a train ticket and \$10.00. Unfortunately, Sergeant Niall O'Malley, the cop who is put in charge of keeping Jones safe is on



|               |  |       |          |         |       |      |      |
|---------------|--|-------|----------|---------|-------|------|------|
| Name          | JONES James Hargreaves   |       | L.P. No. | 299/27. |       |      |      |
| Aliases       |  |       |          |         |       |      |      |
| Born          | 1896   | Trade | Moulder  | Comp.   | fresh |      |      |
| Build         | prop.  | Eyes  | blue     | Ht.     | 5'1½" | Hair | bro. |
| Marks         | Wound scar rt. side of face.   |       |          |         |       |      |      |
| Peculiarities |  |       |          |         |       |      |      |
| M.O., etc.    | Begs in residential areas, and breaks into houses he finds unoccupied. |       |          |         |       |      |      |

the take and informed Bartok that there was a witness to his crime and where the witness is. In response, the Hungarian Bartok has hired three hit men from the Detroit Purple Gang to kill Jones.

## JUDGE PREPARATION:

The player characters should be near or in Joe's Diner at the start of this scenario.

## THE PLAN:

Sergeant Niall O'Malley has agreed to meet Jimmy Jones outside Joe's Diner and take him to a safe house above Carlson & Sons Shoe Repairs across the street from the diner. Unfortunately for Jones, a room above the store overlooking the street has been hired by a middleman acting for the Purple Gang where three hit men will be waiting for him. They have a black sedan parked outside Joe's Diner on Pipestone Ave. They will shoot Jones as he crosses the street towards the shoe repair shop and then escape in their vehicle.



## SET-UP:

The Purple Gang gunsels are Arthur O’Gorman, Sean Dawson, and Kristoff Budny. The hit men are all standard NPC hit men armed with rifles (**MS** = 17; **AG** = 88; **OB** = 83; **DR** = 86; **PR** = 5; **LK** = 15; **HP** = 21).

**James ‘Jimmy’ Jones** — Worker (Age 33, Assimilated) Level I Worker.

**MS** = 31; **AG** = 80; **OB** = 74; **DR** = 77; **PR** = 1; **LK** = 20; **HP** = 17

Jones is a down and out shop worker. He is irritable, cold, and sarcastic. He is an altogether unlovable person.

*Carries:* \$10 in his wallet and a ticket to Albion, Michigan.

## THE ACTION:

The action starts as soon as Jimmy Jones goes to meet Sergeant O’Malley outside Joe’s Diner. Officer O’Malley makes sure the street is clear and then waves Jones over to him. When Jones is halfway towards the cop a flurry of shots ring out and Jones will crumple (dead, unless he makes his Luck check).

Any character who the Judge decides might see the hit men open fire is allowed an Observation check to see the flash of their rifles and where it came from. If the characters react immediately, the likelihood will be that a gun battle will ensue with the escaping hit men.

If Jones is shot down, O’Malley will react by running over and checking, not to see that he is alive, but to see he is dead. He will do his best to ensure that Jones does die while drawing his revolver and firing back at the assassins. His aim is to make himself look good rather than kill them.

## THE WRAP-UP:

If any of the hit men are captured, they will say they were hired by a man with thick European accent and that they were only doing their job. They never met Rosza and do not know what he looks like. A clue can be found in the pocket of one of the hitman or on the floor of the room from the shots were fire. This is a matchbook from the Albion Inn Poker Club. Inside the matchbook is a telephone number. This is for Canalside Bed & Board, a cheap flophouse where Rosza lives. There are several men residing there with thick European accents, so identifying Rosza may take some investigation.

## ALBION INN POKER CLUB

### THE POKER CLUB — 2 SEATING UNITS

The Albion Inn Poker Club is owned by the Purple Gang, though its ownership is hidden behind a number of dummy companies. The establishment is on the outskirts of Albion, a small farm town roughly three hours' drive from Rock Junction. The town is a sleepy place and easy prey for anyone wishing to rob or con them. In fact, the current City Manager, Norman Lawrence, is skimming funds and has so far amassed \$15,000. He has this stashed under the floorboards of his home, only drawing from it to fund his weekly late night poker games at the Albion Inn Poker Club. The city manager is crooked as two left shoes.

**Norman Lawrence** — Hotel Manager (*Age 53, Assimilated*) Level I Businessman.

**MS = 64; AG = 22; OB = 82; DR = 47; PR = 7; LK = 18; HP = 13**

Norman is a solid, if slightly flabby man with balding dark hair who wears glasses and a neat suit. He has a winning smile and knows just how to kiss the babies and glad hand everyone else. He is a big cheese in a small town and he likes it that way. He tries to keep everything running smoothly and maintain a balance between the interest of the town and the interests of the Purple Gang. He also knows that if the Purple Gang wanted to a bigger slice of the town, there is little that he could do about it without calling in outside law enforcement – and that might reveal his own crooked practices. Apart his weekly poker game, his only vice is building up the nest egg to supplement his pension.

*Carries:* \$50 in his wallet.

**Norman Lawrence, Jr.** — City Manager (*Age 28, Assimilated*) Level I Businessman.

**MS = 48; AG = 47; OB = 83; DR = 65; PR = 4; LK = 01; HP = 14**

*Skills:* None.

*Record:* Arrested for Drunk Driving — July 1925, served 30 days county lock-up; Arrested for Drunk Driving — September 1925, served 30 days county lock-up); Reckless Driving (Fine).

Norman Junior is the spitting image of his father thirty years ago, except Norman Junior is more florid and appears to be sweating constantly. He wears the exact same suits his father does. They go to the same tailor.

Norman Junior has felt like a failure all of his life. He cannot live up to his father's reputation, he never completed college, and now, even his father got him this dead end job of running the hotel in a town he hates. Equally, he cannot stand the idea of his hotel being owned by criminals, but is afraid to do anything about it. Norman Junior knows about his father's embezzlement and it would not take much in the way of a threat to persuade Norman to tell someone where it was. Likewise, it would not take much of a threat for Norman Junior to reveal the activities of the Purple Gang at the Albion Inn. If he did and his father got into trouble, then Norman Junior might feel real good about it.

*Carries:* \$20 in his wallet.



## BEHIND THE DINER



Almost half an acre of dirt, grass, and vegetable patches stands behind the diner. This space is used as a garden where Betty Joe and the staff of the diner can take a break, but it is also where Betty Joe keeps her spare cash. So far she has \$300 saved up in 2+1d10 empty, cleaned, and resealed fruit jars. It takes 10+d100 minutes to dig them all up. Only Fess and Betty Joe know the locations and even that fact that they are back there. Unless a PC stakes out the diner and specifically watches its rear, he will not see Fess burying a newly filled jar on the 7th of each month.

Fess also has a two-room shack here where he lives. From this shack he can keep an eye on the garden and Betty Joe's stash of cash and see if anyone is snooping around. So far he has been unable to spot that anything is amiss. Once a month, on the 15th, Fess runs a dice game. It is usually attended by 2d10 people and there is about \$200+d100 at stake at any one time.

When Fess is running a game, he pays an ex-gambler, Max Frazer, \$20 to keep an eye out for anyone who might bring too heat to the game. Frazer has promised his wife that he will never gamble again and gets a vicarious thrill from listening to others roll the dice and make bets.

**Max Frazer** — Lookout (Age 31, Assimilated) Level 1 Dock Worker.

**MS** = 60; **AG** = 20; **OB** = 61; **DR** = 21; **PR** = 8; **LK** = 18; **HP** = 13

**Weapons:** Baseball bat, Pocket knife.

## THE LAND DEAL

Should any of the PCs appear to be a sucker and have money to spare, then Derek Howard will try to get them to invest in the plots of land he has for sale. He will show them the deeds and map of Rock Junction showing the plots and explain, "The capital returns for this project are substantial. For just a few thousand dollars you can become a partner. Once the project matures, I predict that we will be able to split the \$20,000 worth of property sales." Of course, what he needs help with are a few city permits, greasing the right palms, and so on. This of course, takes money.

Howard's investment scheme appears to work well and without a hitch. That is until it is time for Howard to pay out. It turns out that the investment scheme is another big Ponzi scheme. The lawyer is just another patsy and is being used as the fall guy.

### OTHER USES:

- The PCs decide to go in and are encouraged to sell the benefits of the scheme onto a few wealthy people. They look to be making some money when everything is revealed to be part of an FBI sting operation and now the PCs are involved!
- An older couple in their sixties, Herman and Gertrude Pongetti, have lost their life's savings to an investment scheme. They might be overheard lamenting their situation in Joe's Diner or scrape together enough funds to hire a private investigator to find out who has their money.



## FLYNN'S FLYING SPEAKEASY

TAVERN — 6 SEATING UNITS



This speakeasy is built into a rail car that pulls in behind Betty Joe's Diner twice a month, once on the 15th to coincide with Fess Washington's dice and then again on the 30th for resupply from Green Warehouse. The rest of the time, it rotates between Rock Junction's various steel mills, being shunted into a siding each time where it can turn a nice profit off the thirsty workers.

Along with the Green Warehouse, Flynn's Flying Speakeasy is the center of the Black Hand Gang's operations in Rock Junction. The Black Hand Gang does pay protection money to the Purple Gang (which is based out of town) for the Green Warehouse, but not for the speakeasy as the Purple Gang does not know of its existence. This also means that the Black Hand Gang must get its alcohol from a source other than the Green Warehouse lest it alert the Purple Gang and they learn of the speakeasy. The McMasters family does know of its existence and receives regular payments in return for ignoring it. Otherwise, if the Black Hand Gang thinks that someone is about to inform the authorities or the Purple Hand Gang about its existence, it simply shunts the speakeasy to another location and sets up shop again.

**Flynn Harris** — Train Conductor (age 54, Irish) Level 4 Gangster.

**MS** = 35; **AG** = 25; **OB** = 40; **DR** = 33; **PR** = 5; **LK** = 48; **HP** = 11

**Skills:** Public Speaking 63, Gambling 68, Public Relations 70.

Flynn Harris is the epitome of Irish gregariousness. He appears to be happy and likeable, always the genial host.

This is a front, for Flynn is a ruthless and capable gangster even though he gets his bodyguard or other gang members to carry out any acts of violence. He would rather turn the public against a foe if he can, but is not above having him shot or beaten up if it comes to it.

When working at the speakeasy Flynn dresses in the uniform of a train conductor. In fact, it really is his uniform and he was a train conductor until an injury on the job forced him to retire on an early pension. As a result of the injury Flynn walks with a limp.

**Weapons:** Blackjack.

**Carries:** Personal jewelry worth \$100, \$20 in his wallet.

**Wade Parker** — Bodyguard (Age 24, Irish) Level 2 Criminal.

**MS** = 32; **AG** = 87; **OB** = 79; **DR** = 85; **PR** = 6; **LK** = 25; **HP** = 18

**Skills:** Public Speaking 52.

Wade is a second generation Irish-American and a veteran of the Great War. Wade has a narrow face, with trimmed red hair and green eyes. He wears a grey suit and is never unarmed. He is a distant cousin of his boss, Flynn Harris, and shares the same outward friendliness and inner ruthlessness. Wade is a regular at Joe's Diner when off duty as he has a crush on Alice Green and is thinking to pop the question if he can get her to go away for a few days.

**Weapons:** Two Colt Government (M1911) .45 automatics in twin shoulder holsters and a Colt M1908 Vest Pocket in an ankle holster. He also has a cutthroat razor.

**Carries:** \$30 in his wallet.



## OTHER USES:

- Flynn's Flying Speakeasy does not have a secure supply of alcohol since the Black Hand Gang will not go the out-of-town Purple Gang because it does not want to pay any more protection. Sometimes it gets in a bad batch, known as 'Bathtub Gin'. This is notorious for its poor, even poisonous ingredients and effects, leaving some of those who drink it sick or even dead! Having this happen is a great way to introduce the speakeasy to the campaign, someone approaching a PC police officer or private investigator because a relative has fallen seriously ill or died and the doctors cannot say why. Answers are wanted.
- Rumors are flying around Rock Junction about the existence of a speakeasy. The police want it shut down, the Purple Gang wants it to pay the protection it is due or shut it down, and the Black Hand Gang wants to stay in business. If there any deaths in Rock Junction caused by 'Bathtub Gin', the Purple Gang will also want to find the source to avoid its own supply of alcohol being tarnished with a poor reputation.
- If the PCs are criminals or gangsters on the make, then Flynn Harris might hire them to help run the speakeasy. The manager will be paid a salary of \$100 a week, the bouncers \$30 a week each. These salaries do not count towards a player character's Experience Points.



## THE RJ PACKING COMPANY

Steve Miller founded the RJ Packing Company with his brother Raymond in 1899 and has since built it up to be Rock Junction's premier trucking business (Raymond has since retired). When Prohibition began, the company found that its scattered warehouses and trucks were idea for smuggling liquor and other goods all over the mid-west. Just this year the company struck a deal with the Black Hand Gang to run beer up and down the state for it. The company receives 25% of the profit from the beer sales and so far the arrangement has helped the company turn a tidy profit. Naturally Miller would like it to keep going and should any beer shipment be stolen, he will pay generously to have the thieves and the beer tracked down.

In addition to its legitimate warehouses, RJ Packing Company owns through a series of subsidiaries, three warehouses through which it handles the shipping and smuggling of alcohol and other goods into and out of Rock Junction. The Green Warehouse is the main site for its smuggling operations in co-operation with the Black Hand Gang.

**Steve Millers** — Co-Owner and Operator (*Age 58, Assimilated*) Level 5 Criminal.

**MS = 48; AG = 67; OB = 62; DR = 75; PR = 8; LK = 22; HP = 17**

*Skills:* Auto Theft 84, Smuggling 65.

Steve is heavysset, with short golden hair and sharp green eyes. He wears a casual suit and glasses with gold rims. By nature a quiet man, Steve has a certain charisma that means he is never without female company. He also likes to ensure that money is kept flowing into the company's coffers and although he does not need to drive the trucks any more, he makes the run from Rock Junction to Lakefront City once a week to check on things.

*Weapons:* Colt Government (M1911) .45 ACP automatic kept in his truck.

*Carries:* \$80 in his wallet.

*Other uses:*

Steve may hire a PC, either a private investigator or a gangster, to trail his daughter, Pearl, who he thinks is sneaking around with some no good city slicer from Lakefront City. If PC takes the case, Steve will pay \$20 a day. He will pay this for two weeks. If the PC can get pictures and proof, he will pay a \$500 bonus. If the PC manages to bring the boy to Steve, he

will pay double this bonus.

The wrong girl has run off with Steve and her father wants her back. He has put a big bounty of \$1,000 on Steve's head, but would be prepared to pay double that if Steve was brought back alive. Then the father will deal would deal with him personally.

**Ian Bowers** — Foreman and Driver (*Age 41, Assimilated*) Level 5 Criminal.

**MS = 72; AG = 40; OB = 71; DR = 56; PR = 9; LK = 13; HP = 17**

**Skills:** Public Speaking 80.

Ian is the foreman at RJ Packing Company. He is pleasant, always smiling and joking, and has round features, with short brown hair and brown hair. He wears worn clothing and carries a satchel where he keeps details of the routes the company runs as part of its smuggling operations as well as the locations of the three warehouses where the booze is kept. Although he is tough as nails, Ian does not like guns and prefers to scrap with his fists or a baseball bat.

**Weapons:** Baseball bat.

**Carries:** \$40 in his wallet.

**Anton Brodski** — Truck Driver (*Age 36, Slavic*) Level 4 Criminal.

**MS = 82; AG = 63; OB = 93; DR = 78; PR = 2; LK = 48; HP = 20**

**Skills:** Stealth 90.

**Record:** Arrested for Assault and Battery — September 1906, fined \$50; Arrested for Assault — May 1909, fined \$50; Arrested for Assault — December 1916, served 3 months in the County Jail; Arrested for Assault and Battery — November 1918, served 6 months in the County Jail.

Anton is a second generation Polish-American. He is a fighter who can barely control his temper and is very sensitive about ethnic slurs.

**Weapons:** Tire iron (treat as a lead pipe).

**Carries:** \$10 in his wallet.

## TOWNSPEOPLE

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These are additional characters the Judge can use in the adventure (customers, off-duty workers, contacts, sources of information, and so on). Some have been given personality outlines, and the Judge is encouraged to outline the others.

**Kit Baker** — Tribune Reporter (*Age 34, Assimilated*) Level 3 Reporter.

**MS = 43; AG = 89; OB = 96; DR = 93; PR = 6; LK = 06; HP = 18**

*Skills:* Public Speaking 78, Disguise 91.

Katherine Baker writes under the byline Kit Baker for the Lakefront City Tribune. She works the crime beat in Rock Junction and other towns surrounding Lakefront City and while she has had a rough time breaking into the world of crime reporting, she has been very successful and got some major scoops. Last year this included getting evidence that Raleigh McMasters, the mayor's brother, was taking payments from the Purple Gang. While other reporters just cover the news, Kit lives it, specializing in the bootleggers and gun runners that run down from the Canadian border.

*Carries:* \$30 in her purse.

**Dustin Oliver** — Private Investigator (*Age 36, Assimilated*) Level 3 Private Investigator.

**MS = 42; AG = 73; OB = 64; DR = 77; PR = 6; LK = 38; HP = 17**

*Skills:* Stealth 82, Shadowing 69, Disguise 84.

Dustin is currently working a missing persons case, that of Michael Hayes. The taxi driver was last seen at the Green Warehouse. Dustin is presently trying to infiltrating the warehouse.

*Weapons:* Colt New Service .44 Special calibre revolver in his coat pocket.

*Carries:* \$20 in his wallet.

**Tibor Tupa** — Gem Appraiser (*Age 47, Hungarian*) Level 4 Businessman.

**MS = 33; AG = 39; OB = 91; DR = 64; PR = 7; LK = 17; HP = 12**

Tibor is stout, with short brown hair and brown eyes. He wears sturdy

clothing and a flat cap. If stolen gems turn up in Rock Junction, he will most likely know about it.

**Matt Tracy** — Dock Worker (Age 28, Irish) Level I Worker.

**MS = 77; AG = 38; OB = 78; DR = 53; PR = 8; LK = 22; HP = 17**

Matt has a long face, with trimmed golden hair and blue eyes. He wears worn clothing and a flat cap. If bribed enough, he might answer questions about goods being shipped, such as what, where, and by whom.

**Hayden Crane** — Boxer (Age 22, Assimilated) Level 4 Boxer.

**MS = 86; AG = 82; OB = 44; DR = 64; PR = 7; LK = 35; HP = 23**

*Skills:* Boxing 74.

Hayden has trimmed golden hair and blue eyes. He wears sturdy clothing and a flat cap. He has come to Rock Junction in search of his sister, Lillian, who disappeared in the town two weeks ago. He will pay \$10.00 a day for two months to a private investigator to try and track down her down. If his funds run out, he will try and raise some more by going back into the ring. If the PC manages to find Lillian, Hayden will give him a solid gold trophy worth \$10,000. Although Hayden is a little punch drunk, he has enough sense to know if he is being ripped off.

## ROCK JUNCTION OUTRÉ

**David Sims** — Traveling Salesman (Age 31, Assimilated) Level 2 Salesman.

**MS = 32; AG = 49; OB = 49; DR = 39; PR = 9; LK = 40; HP = 14**

David is pleasant in appearance, with trimmed black hair and hazel eyes. He wears a grey suit and carries a suitcase. The suitcase is full of various brushes and order forms and \$15.00 in change. David has seen quite a lot in the course of his travels and his reminiscences could be useful in getting the PCs into some weird adventures. Of course, the travelling salesman could just be suffering from the effects of some bad alcohol. This is up to the Judge to decide.

If asked about his travels, David will speak slowly as if he is trying to remember the details exactly, having only have remembered them. He will also ask the PC to buy him a bottle of something which can help him forget what he has seen.

*Tips:*

- 1) **A gloomy mill.** A corpse is chained to a wall; its eyes crudely hacked out.
- 2) **A grim hospital.** In one operating theatre, the tiled floor has been shattered, as though by some colossal weight.
- 3) **On a desolate road.** A wrecked automobile lies here, surrounded by strange tracks.
- 4) **A stately mansion.** The floor is covered with monstrous claw marks.
- 5) **A forgotten crypt.** Several corpses are chained to the wall, each marked with a different eldritch symbol.
- 6) **A desolate farm.** The farmer's plow has unearthed a mass grave of degenerate skeletons.
- 7) **A derelict psychiatric hospital.** A trail of blood leads to a dusty cabinet.
- 8) **A dark courtyard.** In it stands a car surrounded by shell casings. The alley out of the courtyard is too narrow to drive the car down.
- 9) **A cluttered office building.** All the doors are chained and padlocked from the inside.
- 10) **A dark pool of water.** A girl swims to the surface and asks for help.

**Thelma Varga** — Housewife (*Age 26, Assimilated*) Level 2 Housewife.

**MS = 60; AG = 30; OB = 21; DR = 31; PR = 8; LK = 25; HP = 13**

Thelma has bobbed black hair and hazel eyes. She wears a sleek dress and red scarf. Thelma was recently inducted into the Ladies Association of the Order of the Silver Palm. The induction rites at the order's temple mentally scarred her and has brought out her depraved and violent tendencies.

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