



SHADOWRUN

MISSIONS

LIBERATION

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05-04



OLDER THAN DIRT

“Older than dirt.”

That’s a phrase that gets bandied about rather often around me these days. In my youth I never considered old age. I was young and strong. Blessed with the strength of my powerful troll heritage, and fortunate enough not to have the weakness of mind so common among the same. I took my physical abilities and magical powers for granted.

But I am not young any longer. The years as a shadowrunner and a teacher have taken their toll. My body is no longer so responsive. I don’t bounce back from injuries or strain the way I used to. My old joints creak and pop every morning when I get out of bed. My mind thankfully is still as sharp as ever, but the magic doesn’t come as easily as it used to. I can’t just slam my will against the mana and shape spells all day with no thought of the consequences. I tire too easily.

And just as a man who finds that one of his legs is no longer as strong as it used to be, I need a crutch. My magic could use a crutch too.

And so I am in this misbegotten hellhole of a city. Plagued by vermin both metaphysical and metahuman. And all for some very old dirt.

“Presolar grains” is what the scientists call them. Fragments of minerals, crystals, even precious stones that date back to a time before the solar system existed, before the sun itself existed. These fragments of stone fall from the sky in ancient meteorites. And the old Chicago Field Museum held the world’s largest collection of them at one time.

Of course that was back before the bugs, before the nuke, before the gangs, and before the FAB. Now these few scant handfuls of precious magical materials are held by a group that calls itself the Astral Space Preservation Society in a place called “Sanctuary.” I am certain they don’t realize what they hold. Of course if I go to them myself they will suspect, and will demand proper payment. Specifically, they will insist that I join them in their insane quest to construct some sort of “nature preserve” for free spirits. My work is too important to be slowed down by such a silly task. My need is too great. I need my crutch, and to construct it, I need those presolar grains.

And so I will use a stalking horse. I will send an intermediary to negotiate in my place. It seems fitting that as an ex-shadowrunner, I now offer work to some of my former kind. I will send these runners to bargain with the scholars. The idealists will have no reason to suspect these youngsters and should release the grains to them. They will bring me what I want. I will provide them with a not insubstantial amount of nuyen. We all will win.

They really should thank me. This will be, as we said in my day, a “milk run.”

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INTRODUCTION

SRM 05-04: *Liberation* is a *Shadowrun Missions* living campaign adventure. Full information on the *Shadowrun Missions* living campaign is available at shadowrunnable.com/missions and includes a guide to creating Missions characters and a regularly updated FAQ. All maps, player handouts, and other playing aids are found at the end of this document.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

SRM 05-04: *Liberation* is intended for use with *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*, and all character and rules information refers to the fifth edition of the *Shadowrun* rules.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

SRM 05-04: *Liberation* consists of several scenes. These scenes form the basis of the adventure, which should be completed in approximately four hours. If you are running short on time, you should streamline each and be a little more generous with clues, target numbers, and other requirements to aid in guiding the players through the adventure.

Each scene outlines the most likely sequence of events, as well as how to handle unexpected twists and turns that inevitably crop up. Each one contains the following subsections, providing gamemasters with all the information necessary to run it.

- **Scan This** provides a quick synopsis of the scene's action, allowing you to get a feel for the encounter at a glance.
- **Tell It to Them Straight** is written to be read aloud to the players, describing what their characters experience upon entering the scene. You should feel free to modify the narrative as much as desired to suit the group and the situation, since the characters may arrive at the scene by different means or under different circumstances than the text assumes.
- **Behind the Scenes** covers the bulk of the scene, describing what's happening, what the non-player characters are doing, how they will react to the player characters' actions, and so forth. It also covers the setting of the encounter, going over environmental conditions and other properties of the location as well as providing any descriptions of important items.
- **Pushing the Envelope** looks at ways to make the encounter more challenging for experienced or powerful characters and other ways you can add some extra spice to the scene. This subsection

should usually only be used for home games, or games where time is not a factor. At most convention and Open Play events, gamemasters should omit this information. It adds to the scene but does not contain important information.

- **Debugging** offers solutions to potential problems that may crop up during the encounter. While it's impossible to foresee everything that a group of player characters might do, this section tries to anticipate common problems and other suggestions for dealing with them.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Gamemastering is more of an art than a science, and every gamemaster does things a bit differently. Use your own style when it comes to preparing and running the adventure and do whatever you feel is best to provide the best *Shadowrun* game you can for your players. *Shadowrun Missions* adventures are designed to run in a standard four-hour convention time slot.

Please keep this in mind when running the adventure. You should leave at least 15-20 minutes at the end of the time slot to complete any necessary paperwork and pass out the players' **Debriefing Logs**. (Make sure that you have enough copies of the **Debriefing Log** for this adventure to give one copy to each player after running the adventure.) This section offers some guidelines you may find useful in preparing to run *SRM 05-04: Liberation* (or any *Shadowrun Missions* adventure).

STEP 1: READ THE ADVENTURE

Carefully read the adventure from beginning to end. Get a feel for the overall plot and what happens in each scene. That way, if something different happens, you won't be caught off guard and you can adapt things smoothly.

STEP 2: TAKE NOTES

Take notes for yourself while reading through the adventure that you can refer to later on. Possible things to note include: major plot points (so you can see them all at a glance), the names of various non-player characters, possible problems you notice, situations where you think a particular character can shine and other things you'll want to keep in mind while running the adventure.

STEP 3: KNOW THE CHARACTERS

Prior to the start of the adventure, examine the PCs' record sheets and Debriefing Logs for your reference and have basic information about their important abil-

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ities handy so you can refer to it during play. Also go over the characters and keep their previous events listed on the Debriefing Logs in mind when determining non-player character actions in various scenes if such a dynamic has been included.

STEP 4: DON'T PANIC!

Gamemastering involves juggling a lot of different things. Sometimes you drop the ball and forget something or you just make a mistake. It happens, don't worry about it. Nobody is perfect all of the time and everybody makes mistakes. Just pick up from there and move on. Your players will understand and forget about it once you get back into the action.

STEP 5: CHALLENGE THE PLAYERS

Gamemasters should challenge the players but should generally not overwhelm them. This is not to say that games cannot be deadly. If the characters die through their own actions and repercussions of those actions, then so be it. But the idea is to challenge the players and their characters, not to bury them. If the enemies and challenges are too light for the characters present, then increase them. On the other hand, if the characters are badly outmatched by the enemies, then tone them down. Make things difficult but not impossible.

GENERAL ADVENTURE RULES

Shadowrun Missions adventures use the rules presented in *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition (SR5)*. Standard rules such as success tests, limits, glitches, critical successes, and other common mechanics are described in *SR5* and are not repeated in this adventure.

Please keep in mind when preparing for the adventure, that the PCs will not necessarily comprise a balanced party. It's entirely possible that the party will be made up entirely of technomancers or back-to-nature shamans. If the characters run into a brick wall because of such complications, show flexibility and use your best judgment in how you lead them back to the plot.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-player characters (NPCs) are essential to any adventure. They are the allies, antagonists, and background characters in the adventure that interact with the player characters. NPCs in this adventure have already been created and can be found throughout the adventure.

Minor NPCs are found in the individual scene that they appear in, and generally have a brief write up, noting only their important skills and the gear they are carrying.

Major NPCs can be found in the **Cast of Shadows** at the end of the adventure. They have more detailed write ups and include most of the skills and the gear they have access to.

The NPCs in this adventure should generally stand up to the average player character but may need some adjustment to suit a particular group of characters, especially a more experienced and powerful group. The scenes and NPC descriptions offer tips on adjusting the NPCs to suit the abilities of the characters in your group. To adjust the power level of an NPC, refer to **Helps and Hindrances** (p. 378, *SR5*). Take the player characters' abilities into consideration when assessing the NPCs in this adventure and modify them accordingly.

MISSION DIFFICULTY

Gamemasters are encouraged to use their own judgment and to adjust the difficulty of the encounter to take into account the abilities of the players. If the players have no magical support, replace magical defenses with mundane ones. If the players are weak on combat, reduce the number of enemies by one or two. Conversely, if they're steamrolling the opposition, add one or two enemies to the fight. Missions should be difficult and something of a challenge but should not be insurmountable.

A simple method for adjusting difficulty is to simply increase the dice pools and Professional Ratings of the enemies. A simple +1 or +2 to all combat and defense tests gives enemies a minor boost in power, while a +3 or 4 will make them truly formidable. Adding to their Professional Rating will give them a larger group Edge pool to draw from, and gamemasters are encouraged to use this Edge when logical.

Often a combat scene will tell you if it's supposed to be challenging or is simply there to serve as filler or a minor obstacle that the players should steamroll through. When possible, use this as a guide to know when to tweak the enemies and encounters. If it doesn't say, assume the scene should present a challenge to the power levels of the players.

A NOTE ON LOOT AND LOOTING

Gamemasters should be careful what they allow players access to, because they can and will try to steal everything not nailed down (and even then, they often have pry bars and claw hammers to deal with those nails). *Shadowrun Missions* operate under the assumption that two players who have run the same missions will have roughly the same amount of resources available to them (give or take some negotiation and a little bit of minor loot fenced), so when players are able to steal and fence a lot of gear or are able to get their hands on high-priced vehicles, cyberdecks, or foci, it

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can unbalance the game and make it unfair to players who didn't have the opportunity to get those items. Gamemasters should avoid letting the players get into a position to do high-value looting whenever possible.

CHICAGO, THE CZ, NOISE, AND BACKGROUND COUNTS

While for many the Chicago and the Bug City Containment Zone are synonymous, the CZ comprises less than one-third of the total landmass of the city of Chicago proper, not counting suburban areas and farmlands connected to the city. But the CZ is still big, and it is the rotted, gutted, feral heart of the Windy City. It starts at 115th Street to the south and runs nearly thirty kilometers north to Belmont Avenue, and reaches from the Lake Michigan on the east to an average of fifteen kilometers inland to Harlem Avenue on the west. A mass of torn-down buildings and hastily erected barricades were added to and reinforced over the three-year period that the Containment Zone was in effect, and even now nearly twenty years later this barrier stands as an imposing divide between the Zone and the outside world. Anyone can supposedly freely travel between the Zone and Chicago proper, but Lone Star watches those coming out and the gangs and warlords watch those going in very closely.

Between the Cermak Blast, the bugs, the debilitating effects of FAB III, and years of death and metahuman misery, astral space in and around the Zone is horrible. Unless otherwise noted in the scene, assume a default background count of 2 anytime characters are within the Containment Zone. The count fluctuates wildly at times, so players should expect to encounter everything from high background counts and mana voids to various aspected backgrounds and mana warps. (See **Background Count** sidebar for full rules. Future *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* rulebooks may supersede these rules). Areas of Chicago outside the CZ may also suffer background count bleed from the Zone.

Besides the background count, the CZ is a virtual nightmare for deckers and technomancers. The persistent low-level background radiation coupled with a distinct lack of modern matrix broadcasting equipment through the area results in a high level of constant background Noise that makes even basic matrix communication difficult. Noise levels will vary from area to area, but unless otherwise specified in the scene, assume a default Noise level of 2 anytime the characters are within the Containment Zone.

BACKGROUND COUNTS

Background counts impose a negative dice pool penalty equal to their rating for all tests that are linked to or utilize magic in any way (i.e., spellcasting, summoning, assensing, any test made while astrally projecting, and any active skill that benefits from active adept powers such as killing hands, critical strike, great leap, or improved skills, etc). Dual-natured creatures and spirits suffer this penalty to all actions.

Aspected background counts grant a boost to any limit that utilizes magic in any way (see above) to any metahuman, spirit, or dual-natured creature that matches the aspected domain. This includes spellcasting Force limits, so spellcasters need to be careful as it can be hard to control the additional surge of mana. Any magically active being that does not match the aspected domain should treat this as a normal background count and suffer penalties.

Background counts above 12 are called either a flux (for aspected domains) or a void (for magically dead zones), and are very dangerous. Any being that is magically or astrally active in any way (dual natured, astrally perceiving, casting a spell, has an active adept power, has an active foci, etc.) takes background count – 12 unresisted Stun Damage each turn that they are active and exposed to the flux or void.

PAPERWORK

After running a *Shadowrun Missions* adventure, there are several important pieces of paperwork that need to be filled out.

The first is to make certain to distribute a copy of the adventure's **Debriefing Log** to each player. As the gamemaster, please make certain to fill this out and sign off on it for each character. In the interests of time, you may have each player fill out the sections, with appropriate values that you give them. Please consider the PCs' actions in the scenario when providing Reputation modifiers, per those rules (p. 372, SR5).

The second is to make sure that all players have updated their character's **Mission Calendar**. PCs are allowed to go on one run per week. The calendar is used to track the character's monthly lifestyle expenses, adventures, and their downtime exploits.

Finally, once an adventure is completed gamemasters should head over to the official *Shadowrun* forums at forums.shadowruntabletop.com and look in the *Shadowrun Missions* section. There will be a section to post the outcome of the Missions adventure. Future adventures will be affected by these results. Without gamemaster feedback, the PCs' exploits will be unable to affect the larger campaign.

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MISSION SYNOPSIS

In *Liberation*, Lothan the Wise contacts the team to meet him at The Wisest Troll, the talismonger shop he owns and operates. He hires the runners to retrieve a canister that is being stored at the Astral Preservation Society at the Sanctuary (the old Chicago Field Museum) from Dr. Eric Kersh. Lothan expects this to be a simple job, but as always complications arise.

Kersh decides to avail himself of the runners' services and sends them to the Cermak Crater to take some readings with special instruments. At the crater, the runners have to deal with a couple of child-like toxic spirits that love to play with anyone brave (or stupid) enough to come close to their hole in the ground.

Upon returning they discover Kersh under attack.

On top of that, the canister has been stolen by a local gang called the Swamp Thangs. After driving off or defeating the remaining Swamp Thangs, they learn that the canister has been taken to Calumet Swamp, home of the mysterious master of the Thangs. There they must steal the canister back from more members of the game.

Then it's time to call Lothan and get paid. Or so the runners think. The wendigo mosquito shaman known as the Foul One had Lothan's phone tapped and rerouted, and she attempts to get the canister back through guile and trickery, impersonating Lothan. The runners have to see through her deception and defeat her to return it to the real Lothan for their final payday.

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SCENE 1:

HIRE LEARNING

SCAN THIS

The shadowrunners are invited to The Wisest Troll talismonger shop where Lothan the Wise hires them to obtain a container of presolar grains from the Chicago Field Museum. Lothan intends to use the grains as powerful telesema to create a focus of unique and great power. Clearly the magical theory is far too complicated for the runners simple minds to comprehend. Lothan is rude and abrasive, but money talks, and there is a very real possibility that the runners can obtain the goods without bloodshed, as the field museum is in the hands of semi-reasonable people.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

There's a fetid wind blowing in off Lake Michigan tonight. It's a relief to step inside Miller's Pub and get out of the stench. The bartender gives you a quick once over, then motions toward the back of the pub when he gets a look at a team of professional shadowrunners. You pass the other patrons of this drinking establishment, walk down a few steps to the basement, duck through a beaded curtain, and find yourself in The Wisest Troll—the talismonger's shop owned by Lothan the Wise. Looking over the assorted charms and elixirs for sale you see that you could buy everything from a medallion to ward off insect spirits, to oil guaranteed to make you more handsome, virile, and overall more appealing to everyone. None of those catch your eye as much as the proprietor of the shop. Lothan the Wise—legendary shadowrunner, teacher of magi, and general old curmudgeon—sits at a tall table arranging colorful stones on a chart.

"Excellent of you to arrive." Lothan speaks without so much as a glance in your direction. "The details and magnitude of the undertaking I wish to employ you to perform would doubtless tax your more obtuse members, so I will endeavor to spell things out in as unadorned a manner of speaking as I can. Me want thingy. You get thingy. Me give you many nuyen. Understand? I can go slower if you need me to."

BEHIND THE SCENES

Despite his grating personality, Lothan the Wise has a legitimate offer to make. He is interested in acquiring a canister of presolar grains. Canister number CAT27000 is just another relic of the old Chicago Field Museum, but Lothan believes he can use these presolar grains to construct a unique power focus. As such, he is willing to offer then team 5,000 nuyen up front, and an

additional 5,000 nuyen upon delivery of the canister. The team can negotiate for more money. Each net success on an Opposed Negotiation Test will see Lothan increase both sides of the payout by 500 nuyen, up to a limit of 7,000 nuyen on the front and back of the deal (14,000 nuyen total).

Once the bargaining has been completed, Lothan spells out the specifics of this job. "Completion of this task should be rudimentary. Even for a band of ruffians like yourselves. I have already made contact with the Astral Space Preservation Society's leader—a pasty-skinned human named Dr. Eric Kersh. Kersh will meet with you on the steps of the old Chicago Field Museum in one hour. I have no notion of what he may ask of you in exchange for the canister. Should the task prove onerous we can discuss further recompense once you are in possession of the canister. There is one additional stricture I must insist upon. Please do not mention my name to Kersh. He is a well-intentioned if misguided idealist. If he learns that the canister is for me, he will doubtlessly want me to perform some ridiculous act of thaumaturgy in exchange for it. I have no time for his flavor of magical nonsense. As long as Kersh believes that you want the canister, this should be a very simple quest. Get canister CAT27000. Call me at this number when you have it to arrange a proper handoff."

If the runners think to look, be sure to emphasize astral space. The astral plane in Millers is quiet, but full of life. There are sure to be small free spirits and watchers flitting around. The place is an old pub, with all the emotional content that implies. Lothan's shop is equally vibrant. There are all sorts of potent magical auras still lingering from spells that Lothan has recently cast. Anyone who Assesses the stone chart Lothan is working on will realize that this is a powerful Detection Spell Focus. Not exactly portable, but very potent.

In contrast, the Matrix here at Millers is almost silent. There is a cheap Point of Sale system (Device Rating 2) that serves as a cash register and inventory management. Lothan himself doesn't have a commlink. He has an honest to ghost hardwired landline! (This line has been tampered with from the outside. Someone is intercepting Lothan's calls. This will play out in Scene 6 "Payout?")

DEBUGGING

First and foremost, make sure that you play Lothan as a grouchy old troll in this scene. Establishing his personality will be very important in a later scene. Lothan is grating and condescending, certain that he is the smartest person in Chicago, and he uses elaborate and intellectual words and phrases whenever possible to back this belief up. It doesn't help that he is incredibly

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intelligent, but his arrogance makes it more of a flaw than an advantage.

Of course playing him this way could make the characters unlikely to work for Lothan. They are free to walk away, of course. If they do, have Lothan make a grumbling and half-hearted apology to try to convince them to take the job. If they still resist, Lothan will be very clear that he intends to spread word around town that the runners are unprofessional, untrustworthy, and generally not worth hiring. If they still want to walk, feel free to give them 1 to 3 points of Notoriety. If the runners are foolish enough to engage Lothan in combat or try to steal from him, feel free to mop the floor with them. Lothan's shop is a place of power for him. He is surrounded by magic items of his creation and likely has several bound spirits at his beck and call. A team of runners should be well within his ability to restrain.

SCENE 2:

SHY TOWN

SCAN THIS

The runners go to the ruins of the Chicago Field Museum. Here they can attempt to secure the presolar grains from the Astral Space Preservation Society and Dr. Eric Kersh. Taking the items by force and stealth is a terrible idea, as they are guarded by a host of free spirits allied with the Astral Space Preservation Society. If the runners are smart and polite, they can easily negotiate for the presolar grains by agreeing to a sub-run to the Cermak Crater to retrieve a sample of the FAB present there.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Once one of the finest scientific institutions in the world, the Chicago Field Museum is a mere shadow of what it once was. The front steps are littered with debris and trash. There's a dark brown stain at the base of the stairs—probably best not to examine that too closely. Waiting at the top of the stairs are a pair of very incongruous men. This must be your meet.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The two individuals waiting at the top of the stairs are Dr. Eric Kersh and a free spirit known as Daytripper. Dr. Kersh is a powerful magician, although more of a theoretical type than a fighter. Daytripper manifests as an unassuming, jowly elder gentleman with bulging eyes and oddly bright fashion choices. Both Kersh and the spirit are masking their auras to appear mundane. Negotiating with Kersh should be a simple matter for the runners. Kersh has no real need for the presolar grains and is willing to part with them in exchange for a favor.

Let the players make their pitch. They can offer any-

PRESOLAR GRAINS

Presolar grains are the bits of solid matter that were contained in the interstellar gas before the sun was born. Before the sun coalesced into the big burning ball of hydrogen and helium we all know and love, it used to be an undifferentiated cloud of space stuff. All the leftover stuff that didn't get turned into the sun? Those are presolar grains. These normally are encountered on earth as meteorite fragments. The most common materials found in presolar grains are diamond, graphite, titanium, and a whole host of silicon and carbon compounds. Nearly all of these are found in unique isotopic forms. The rarity and uniqueness of these materials make them perfect ingredients for all sorts of enchanting projects.

thing they would like. Kersh just smiles and nods. If they mention Lothan the Wise, Kersh stiffens for a moment, then grins slightly. This will affect the players final pay, so make note of it. After the runners complete their pitch, Kersh makes his counter offer.

"While I appreciate everything you have said, and I am more than willing to part with canister CAT27000, I have a very specific need that I want addressed in exchange."

Kersh reaches into the pocket of his lab coat and removes a strange electronic device.

"This is a sensor unit of my own design. It helps us detect and measure a variety of contaminants in the physical and astral planes. I would like you to take this unit to the Cermak Crater. Activate it. Allow it to complete a fifteen-minute sweep of the area, and then return it to me here. All told this shouldn't take you more than an hour or two. Do that and the canister is yours."

Kersh will not accept another offer, no matter how sweet.

"The simple fact is that you are a well-armed and well-trained gang of combat-ready shadowrunners. That is exactly the kind of team I need to complete this task. I understand that what I ask is rather dangerous. That is why I am asking it of professionals like yourselves."

If the players negotiate with Kersh, they can get him to make his side of the deal better. The ASPS has access to all sorts of useful magical spells and items. Kersh will offer such services to the runners at a twenty percent discount if they score two or more net successes in an Opposed Negotiation Test. If they score five or more, he will offer to quicken one spell on them before they go. Kersh will also point out that he can provide them with Detox spells to remove any irradiation poisoning they could get on this job.

Runners Assessing Kersh and his friend (who he will

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only introduce as Daytripper) get very little information. Kersh is a Grade 4 Initiate and is masking his aura to appear mundane. Daytripper is a powerful free spirit who is also masking his aura to appear as a mundane human.

DEBUGGING

Kersh has not got the canister with him, so picking a fight would be a waste of time. Again, if the runners get violent with Kersh, Daytripper will move to defend him. Daytripper is a powerful free spirit with a large number of area-effect mind controlling spells and spirit powers. Fear is the easiest way for him to end a fight. Bear in mind that Counterspelling does not work against spirit powers!

Players may point out to Kersh that the Cermak Crater is radioactive. If they do, Kersh is willing to provide hazmat suits (Radiation 6) to protect the runners from contamination, although he is reluctant to part with these valuable pieces of equipment, so he will not offer unless the runners ask first. He will also insist that they be returned after the job is done. “Hazmat suits are expensive and hard to come by,” he explains. The suits Kersh offers are clearly old and brittle. He cautions the runners not to engage in any “horseplay” while wearing them to prevent them ripping and becoming worthless.

Additionally, these hazmat suits are equipped with a rudimentary personal radiation dosimeter. Kersh will explain their use. When the badge is green, radiation exposure is minimal and safe. Yellow means the wearer has been exposed. Red indicates a damaging dose of radiation, and black indicates a fatal dose!

The gamemaster will use these dosimeters in the next chapter to strike fear into the runners, so make sure the runners understand what each color means.

ASTRAL SPACE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Based out of Elemental Hall, a four-story complex that used to be part of the University of Chicago’s magical studies program, half a kilometer off the shore of Lake Michigan, the Astral Space Preservation Society (ASPS) is nominally dedicated to the restoration of the damaged astral plane in Chicago. The head researcher is Dr. Eric Kersh. The group consists of a sizable number of thaumaturgists of all flavors, and they are willing to recruit any magician willing to help return astral Chicago to a better state. While the ASPS would never force anyone to work with them, they aren’t above doing some hard bargaining to get what they want.

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SCENE 3:

GEIGER COUNTER

SCAN THIS

The runners head to the Cermak Crater. Without proper precautions they are going to get exposed to some dangerous levels of radiation. Magic users will need to power down foci and refrain from using their powers or else risk being exposed to FAB III. Too much noise runs the risk of waking up hibernating bugs, but the real threat here is the various predators and scumbags they may encounter in travel.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The Cermak Crater. This is where UCAS soldiers operating under the orders of Ares detonated a nuclear device in an attempt to destroy the largest infestation of bug spirits ever seen in the Sixth World. Even now, so many years later, this ruined city block feels off somehow. It's too quiet. Too still. Nothing moves here. Nothing grows here. It's as if this spot has been frozen in time. Polluted and tainted for eternity. A radioactive snapshot of a single moment.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Let's be honest. You send the runners on a trip to the Cermak Crater, and they are going to be expecting bug spirits. Fortunately for the runners, all the bugs here are torpid, sleeping away in a nuclear and FAB-induced coma. Unless your players are stupid enough to go poke one of the sleeping bugs, they won't have to fight any.

But there's more than enough trouble here. For starters, the crater area is intensely radioactive. Unprotected characters will get a lethal dose of radiation in a single hour here. Give the players fair warning before they enter. Have the device Kersh gave them begin making an ominous Geiger counter-like ticking noise.

Then there's the damage done to astral space. While the FAB levels here are very low, the whole astral plane is in constant turmoil. There is a vortex of dangerous and unknown energies swirling through this area at all times. Just trying to astrally perceive here imposes a -5 dice pool penalty on all Assensing tests. Anyone who astrally projects will automatically take one box of physical damage each round they are out of their body, and the toxic energies unleashed in astral space shred their astral form.

The background count around the edge of the crater

is a 6, and it gradually increases to 12 a half-block from the center. The background count is aspected towards radiation. The center of the crater itself is a mana void. There simply *is* no astral plane there. Any active magic item or person actively using magic or Astral Perception or Projection within this mana void will be disrupted (p. 316, SR5)

This scene is really about making the runners nervous. Between the hundreds of sleeping bugs just laying around and the terrible radioactivity, there is plenty here to make your runners jumpy. The slightest shifting shadow or sudden noise should make the runners think about fleeing. Maybe one of the sleeping bugs twitches as it dreams? Play up the unnatural, creepy atmosphere to full effect.

Unless the runners are extraordinary stealthy, they will be detected by a pair of radiation spirits. Since the background count is aspected in favor of radiation, it will act as a positive die modifier to all Magic-related tests these spirits make. The two spirits manifest in the form of a young boy and girl made of glowing green static and light, like a phosphor tube flickering with dead-air trid static.

The radiation spirits are not initially hostile, merely curious. Because the area is so dangerous, they have not interacted with living beings for some time. Play these spirits as petulant, needy children. One of them will approach the runner closest to Dr. Kersh's device and whisper in an oddly dead voice. "Whatcha doin'?" If the runners are polite and humor the spirits' growing lists of requests, the spirits will remain calm and simply act like normal children. However, they are very "touchy-feely" and like to give the runners hugs.

The spirits are eager to interact with the living again. Sadly, any physical contact with these spirits immediately causes the runners dosimeter to jump one level each time they are touched or when a spirit uses Elemental Attack, Engulf, or Noxious Breath on the runners. Make sure to point out to any runner that has been hugged or affected that their dosimeter has immediately jumped to the next color level.

Allow the runners to deal with the spirits as they wish for some time, then have the device "ping." When the runners pack up and begin to leave, the spirit children will become visibly agitated and ask for the runners to stay a play tag. Unless the runners are very diplomatic they will have to fight the spirits or flee from them. The spirits will not pursue the runners outside the radioactive zone. The runners, however, will not know this.

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RADIATION SPIRITS (FORCE 5)

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | EDG | ESS | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 5 |

Physical Initiative: 14 + 2D6

Astral Initiative: 11 + 3D6

Condition Monitor: 11

Skills: Assensing, Astral Combat, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Flight, Perception, Unarmed Combat

Powers: Accident, Astral Form, Confusion, Elemental Attack, Energy Aura, Engulf, Materialization, Sapience

Optional Powers: Noxious Breath

Weaknesses: Allergy (Water, Severe)

Special: Radiation Exposure: Each attack that merely touches (not necessarily damages, see Grazing Hits, p. 173, SR5) adds one color level to the dosimeter.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

If the runners are bored and need a little combat to keep them on their toes, you can ratchet up the threat by adding additional toxic spirits into the mix. Addi-

tionally if the runners are foolish and disturb one of the sleeping bug spirits, feel free to have one wake up and immediately attack. There is plenty of danger here if you wish to make things more difficult for your team. Bear in mind that this area has a punishing background count, so the runners may have a tough time dealing with two spirits using only mundane gear. Remember that spirits that have materialized gain Immunity to Normal Weapons, giving these two spirits 10 points of hardened armor.

DEBUGGING

If your runners foolishly bite off more than they can handle here, remember that not all the threats at the crater get along with each other. If the runners are having a hard time dealing with the fire spirits, feel free to have a stray Noxious Breath attack wake up a sleeping bug. The runners could slip away while the spirits destroy each other. If for some reason the runners are unable or unwilling to collect the data Dr. Kersh requested, they will have to return empty handed. That won't be a problem in the next scene though.

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SCENE 4:

DOUBLE CROSS

SCAN THIS

The runners deliver the FAB sample to the Astral Space Preservation Society, but before the runners can take possession of the presolar grains, the canister is stolen by members of the Swamp Thangs. There will be a running battle through the streets, but the runners will ultimately be left with some gangers to interrogate, but the presolar grains will escape. Questioning the gangers, or simple legwork will reveal that the Swamp Thangs are a known Maggot gang that works out of the Calumet swamp.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Well that wasn't so bad, was it? A little radiation, some hostile spirits—all in a day's work for runners like yourselves. You make the call to Dr. Kersh, and he agrees to meet you once more on the steps of the Field Museum. This has been a surprisingly simple bit of work, just like Lothan said. All you had to do was run an errand, and now you can collect the canister and get paid.

Wait a second. Did you hear gunshots?

BEHIND THE SCENES

As the runners return to the field museum, they encounter Dr. Kersh, cowering behind an Armor 20, Structure 20 Physical Barrier while he is being attacked by six members of the Swamp Thangs gang. Half the gang has already stolen the canister and fled. These six have stayed behind to finish off Kersh according to their master's orders. The runners will need to act fast to save Kersh. Don't give them time to plan. Dive right into the action.

Until the runners intervene in some way, the Swamp Thangs concentrate on pouring firepower at Kersh. None of them are spellcasters, so they will have a tough time punching through the Physical Barrier spell. Each is hopped up on jazz for the attack.

Once the fight is over, the runners can easily learn from examining their foes that these gangers are all part of the notorious Swamp Thangs, a well-known Maggot gang that works for a mysterious master in the Calumet Swamp. If they have kept a ganger alive for interrogation, he tells them the following.

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“It don’t matter that you got me omae. We got the can! Our Master is going to use that can to get even more powerful! And then she will make us all strong! Nothing can stop the Swamp Thangs! So go ahead. Go into the swamp. My brothers and sisters can always use more food.”

The swamp in question is Calumet Swamp. Clearly the canister has been taken there to the Swamp Thangs’ base of operations.

SWAMP THANG GANGERS (PROFESSIONAL RATING 2)

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS |
|---|---|-------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 7 | 4 | 4 (5) | 7 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4.8 |

Initiative: 8 + 1D6 (9 + 3D6)

Condition Monitor: 12

Limits: Physical 9(10), Mental 5, Social 6

Armor: 12

Skills: Athletics skill group 2, Blades 5 (Axes +2), Intimidation 5, Perception 3, Pistols 3, Stealth skill group 2, Unarmed Combat 5

Augmentations: Cyberarm (standard, used, obvious)

Gear: Armored jacket [12, w/ nonconductivity 6], glasses [Rating 1, w/ image link], jazz (1 dose, +1 Reaction, +1 Phys. Limit, +2D6 Initiative)

Weapons:

Combat axe [Blade, Reach 2, Acc 4, DV 12P, AP -4]

Knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP -1]

Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP -2, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ 2 speed loaders, 30 rounds regular ammo]

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

If the runners are having too easy of a time with the Swamp Thangs, feel free to have more gangers show up as reinforcements. The Thangs are here expressly to kill Dr. Kersh. They are more than happy to pour on the firepower to make that happen.

DEBUGGING

If the runners are getting hammered by the Thangs, feel free to have Dr. Kersh get brave enough to start supporting the team with magic. He could easily summon a spirit to aid the runners, or even cast healing or enhancing spells to give the runners a better chance of survival. Daytripper, the free spirit with Kersh, will not attack the gangers in any way. He merely concentrates on maintaining the Physical Barrier around himself and Kersh.

If the runners don’t leave any of the Swamp Thangs alive for interrogation, the runners can still find out the location of the home in the swamp with some legwork. The Swamp Thangs are a very well-known gang, and the runners can get pointed in the right direction easily. Even Dr. Kersh has heard of them.

Don’t forget that Kersh still wants his device back. Runners who keep their word and still deliver the device can get magical healing and Detox spells to handle their radiation exposure, as well as any other rewards they negotiated with Kersh.

Particularly sadistic gamemasters may want to factor in the radiation that may well be clinging to any gear that made contact with the radiation spirits. Melee weapons in particular are likely to have lingering contamination. If the runners ask, Kersh will gladly Detox those as well. If they don’t think of it—well, more on that later.

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SCENE 5:

SWAMP THING

SCAN THIS

The runners track the Swamp Thangs to their lair. There will be a long and ugly fight in the toxic swamp. Ultimately, the runners can overpower their foes and recover the presolar grains canister.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The Calumet Swamp isn't what most people think of when they hear the word swamp. To most people swamp conjures images of warm murky water, alligators, and reeds. Here in Chicago, swamp means cold, wet lowlands that people have tried to build low-income housing in again and again. Mix in a healthy dose of toxic runoff, feral gangs in league with insect spirits, a fouled and polluted astral plane, and all sorts of awful paranormal animals, and you get the festering cesspool known as Calumet Swamp.

Your legwork and tracking has paid off. You've found the camp of the Swamp Thangs. Now you just need to get that canister and get out!

BEHIND THE SCENES

This Swamp Thang base is a scary, scary place, an old low-income housing project that half fell into the swamp and has since been taken over by this notorious gang. The Swamp Thangs are a ragged band of orks and humans that are allied with a mysterious insect shaman. In return for serving their insect overlords, the Swamp Thangs are protected from predation by other bug spirits. The canister is currently being held in the gang's "larder," a ramshackle house where they store food supplies. The camp itself is guarded by twelve gang members.

Stealth is probably a good way to go here, although good old-fashioned violence will work if the runners have the firepower to handle a dozen feral gangers. As soon as a fight breaks out, the Thangs will take cover and half will pop a dose of jazz while the other half chuck grenades if the runners are at range. They alternate these actions on the following turn, then attack with either their axes or guns.

SWAMP THANG GANGERS (PROFESSIONAL RATING 2)

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS |
|---|---|-------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 7 | 4 | 4 (5) | 7 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4.8 |

Initiative: 8 + 1D6 (9 + 3D6)

Condition Monitor: 13

Limits: Physical 9 (10), Mental 5, Social 6

Armor: 12

Skills: Athletics skill group 2, Blades 5 (Axes +2), Intimidation 5, Perception 3, Pistols 3, Stealth skill group 2, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 5

Augmentations: Cyberarm (standard, used, obvious)

Gear: Armored jacket [12, w/ nonconductivity 6], glasses [Rating 1, w/ image link], jazz (2 doses, +1 Reaction, +1 Phys. Limit, +2D6 Initiative) Weapons:

Combat axe [Blade, Reach 2, Acc 4, DV 12P, AP -4]

Knife [Blade, Reach —, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP -1]

Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP -2, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ 2 speed loaders, 30 rounds regular ammo]

High-explosive grenade [Throwing Weapons, DV 16P, AP -2, Blast -2/m]

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

This is likely to be a straight up fight that won't need escalation, but if the runners are walking all over the Swamp Thangs, feel free to include a pack of six tamed cockatrices that the runners will need to factor into their plans.

COCKATRICE

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | EDG | ESS | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 5 |

Initiative: 7 + 1D6

Movement: x2/x8/+3

Condition Monitor: 10

Limits: Physical 6, Mental 4, Social 4

Armor: 1

Skills: Perception 3, Running 7, Sneaking 5, Unarmed Combat 7

Powers: Armor 1, Immunity (Own Touch), Natural Weapon (Claws: DV 4P, AP -1), Paralyzing Touch (Tail)

DEBUGGING

Once the runners have recovered the canister, they are to contact Lothan to arrange delivery. Unknown to the runners, Lothan's commlink has been hacked. All calls to his number are being rerouted to the Swamp Thang's hidden Master.

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SCENE 6:

PAYOUT?

SCAN THIS

The team contacts Lothan and arranges a meet to swap the presolar grains for their pay. Lothan will be the soul of politeness and discretion, which may make the runners suspicious. If they manage to pierce the masking, or just get jumpy and go agro on Lothan, they discover that they are not in fact dealing with Lothan, but the wendigo leader of the Swamp Thangs—The Foul One. If they confront her, she fights with her magic and summoned mosquito spirits to escape with the presolar grains. If the team allows her to leave with the presolar grains they will be contacted later by Lothan wondering where his goods are.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

After all that, you've finally got the canister! Now to arrange the drop-off and you can collect your pay. A few quick messages to Lothan's number and you on your way to meet him just outside Merle's Grocery, near the port.

Lothan is a very prompt troll. He's waiting there when you arrive. He's not in his usual flashy robes. A simple black shirt and a pair of cargo pants is a very dressed down look for Lothan the Wise. He greets you with a nod of his enormous head.

"Hoi chummers. Did you get the can? Great! I knew you guys were the best. Really wizzer. You can count on a glowing recommendation from me in the future. Null persp!"

Did Lothan the Wise really just call you "chummer?" What the heck is "null persp" supposed to mean?

BEHIND THE SCENES

Here's where playing up Lothan's gruff demeanor and large vocabulary pays off. The Lothan that meets with the runners in this scene acts nothing like the Lothan they met at the start of the job. The reason for that is that this Lothan is actually the wendigo mosquito shaman, leader of the Swamp Thangs known as The Foul One. The Foul One knows that the runners have taken back the canister, and this is her last chance to get it from them before it goes to Lothan.

The Foul One will be incredibly, almost sickeningly polite to the runners—the exact opposite of the way Lothan behaved in the initial hire. Even if the runners abuse her, she just smiles and jokes with them, calling her earlier behavior rude and apologizing, offering stress about this canister as an explanation. The Foul One is



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well masked, and using the Physical Mask spell to make herself appear as Lothan.

If the runners don't get suspicious about the odd behavior from Lothan, the Foul One will gladly pay them what Lothan offered, take the canister, and leave, never to be seen by these runners again.

There are enough clues however, that the runners may become suspicious. If they confront her in regards to her identity or are not forthcoming with handing over the canister, she attacks. The Foul One lashes out with her magic to destroy the runners. She will fight to the death, at which point she will permanently burn Edge to escape, summoning up more Swamp Thang minions to cover her.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

The Foul One could easily have several bound spirits on hand to toughen up this fight. Treat these as Force

6 beast spirits with 4 services each. They will take the appearance of horrific mosquitoes. She could also be holding some Swamp Thang gangers in reserve to harass runners who are having too easy a time with this fight. If there are orks on the team, the Foul One may be malicious enough to attempt to feed on them and infect them with HMMVV.

DEBUGGING

If the runners are getting hammered, let them! This is *Shadowrun*, and sometimes you get your hoop kicked! The Foul One is not interested in killing the runners, or even eating them. She just wants the canister, and then she will retreat somewhere to lick her wounds and rebuild her broken gang.

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SCENE 7

PAYOUT!

SCAN THIS

The runners finally settle one way or the other with Lothan the Wise. Either by finally giving the presolar grains to the real Lothan, or letting the troll know that they allowed someone else to make off with the goods.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

If the runners defeated The Foul One and have the canister for Lothan, read this:

There were twists and turns along the way, but you did the job and got the goods. You meet Lothan at the Wisest Troll. “An adequate performance.” He snorts. “But I expected exactly that from an assembly like yours. You have completed your assignment, and as a man of my word I offer the agreed upon remuneration.” Lothan hands you several credsticks. Slotting them, you are pleased to see a small bonus added into your payment. “Consider the additional sum a gesture of my continued good will. I am sure we will be engaging in business again.”

If the runners lost the canister to The Foul One, read this:

Your commlink buzzes with a call. You check the vid-screen and see that it’s Lothan. “I am greatly displeased and aggrieved with you. You call yourselves shadow-runners, but apparently you have no qualms about delivering procured good to whatever charlatan asks for them! You have made Lothan the Wise unhappy today, and that is a very poor career choice in this town. Nonetheless, I can be magnanimous. Perhaps after my temper has cooled a bit I will find another job for you. We shall see.” The call disconnects.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Give the players a chance to interact with Lothan. If he is happy with them, play it up. Have him offer grudging compliments on their performance and abilities. Likewise, if they failed in the mission, have Lothan give them a good dressing down. Lothan talks to them like they are children who have disappointed him. Give the runners a good lecture about professionalism.

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PICKING UP THE PIECES

MONEY

- Payment from Lothan the Wise for retrieving Canister CAT27000. Base Pay 10,000¥, plus an additional 500¥ per net hit, with a maximum of 8 hits.

OR

- Payment from The Foul One for giving her Canister CAT27000. Base Pay 10,000¥, plus an additional 500¥ per net hit, with a maximum of 8 hits

KARMA

- 1 Karma—Getting the data for Kersh from Cermak Crater
- 1 Karma—Defeating the Swamp Thangs and recovering the canister
- 1 Karma—Defeating The Foul One
- 1 Karma—Surviving the adventure
- 3 Karma—Overall adventure challenge

GAMEMASTER REWARD

When running this adventure you may choose to count the *Mission* as “played” for your personal *Shadowrun Missions* character. You must choose to do this the first time you run this *Mission* only, and take the optional results to match those earned by the team for whom you ran the *Mission*. You may not choose to wait for a better attempt to choose your rewards. You’re on the honor system here, so please don’t skew the adventure to help the players gain extra rewards just so that you can get better results.

You will earn a flat amount of Karma and nuyen, regardless of how well (or poorly) the players do, listed below. For other missions results and rewards that you track on the Debriefing Log (objectives completed, reputation and contacts earned, etc.), take the average results of the group for whom you’re gamemastering. So if four out of six players earned a point of notoriety, you will earn one as well. If only two players out of five earn a +1 Loyalty with Simon, you would not get that +1 Loyalty.

Karma Earned: 7
Nuyen Earned: 11,000¥

REPUTATION

During the adventure, runners may perform actions that will add to their Street Cred, Notoriety, or Public Awareness (p. 372, *SR5*). Besides the scenario-specific gains listed below, gamemasters should consider the characters’ actions throughout the game and award additional points as appropriate. If a player earns Public Awareness or Notoriety, don’t be afraid to give them extra points.

- +1 Street Cred if the players recuse Dr. Kersh from the Swamp Thangs
- +1 Notoriety for giving the canister to The Foul One

CONTACTS

Successfully completing objectives or performing the actions listed below earns characters specific *Missions* contacts at a Loyalty of 1, and they should be given the Contact Sheet included with this *Mission*. If they already have that contact, they gain a +1 Loyalty to that contact (up to a maximum of 4).

Characters might interact with NPCs not specified by the *Mission* and may earn these NPCs as a contact at Loyalty 1. They may also work with non-Mission specific contacts that they have already earned or that they bought at character creation, and gain a +1 Loyalty to these contacts, with a maximum Loyalty of 4. Gamemasters should not grant these lightly, and players should have to work to earn these contacts by going the extra mile to impress the NPC, offering up favors, or paying them well above the standard rates for information or services.

- **Lothan the Wise:** +1 Loyalty if the give him the canister, -1 Loyalty if they give the canister to The Foul One

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LEGWORK

When a PC gets in touch with a contact, make an unopposed Connection + Connection Test for the contact. The results of this test determine how many ranks of information the contact knows about the question. If the relevance of the subject is a specialty of the contact, they get +3 to this test. The player then makes an unopposed Charisma + Etiquette + Loyalty test, the results of which determine how many ranks of information the contact is willing to divulge for free, up to the max ranks of information they know. If the contact knows more, they will require a payment of 500¥ - (Loyalty x 100¥, minimum 100¥) per rank of information they still know.

If the PCs have worked all of their contacts and are still missing important information, they may request that a contact ask around. If they do so, have the contact make an Extended Connection + Connection (20 minutes) Test until the needed threshold is reached. Additional information will be available at a cost of 1,000¥ - (Loyalty x 100¥, minimum 200¥).

A **Matrix Search** action (p. 241, SR5) may also be utilized to gather information from the following charts, using the appropriate thresholds and search times.

LOTHAN THE WISE

Contacts to Ask: Talismonger, Fixer, Any Troll, Any Magic

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | Oh yeah, he was that old geezer who advised Neil the Ork Barbarian! Right? |
| 1 | 1 | Some old trog. Runs a spook shop out of a bar near the CZ. |
| 2 | 3 | He's a talismonger. Runs a shop called The Wisest Troll out of Miller's Pub. |
| 3 | — | He used to run the shadows out in Seattle. Guess he's retired now. |
| 4 | 6 | He's a pompous jerk! Always talks like he's so smart! Arrogant more like it! |
| 5 | — | Listen omae, Lothan's the real deal. He's the guy that trained Kellan Colt! |

CANISTER CAT27000

Contacts to Ask: Talismonger, Fixer, Any Science, Any Magic

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|---|
| 0 | 0 | Isn't that once of those private label synthahols? It's like some secret formula that really kicks your hoop! |
| 1 | 1 | That naming system was used by the old Chicago Field Museum |
| 2 | 3 | With that numbering it's got to be a rare mineral sample of some sort. |
| 3 | 6 | It's registered as 10 kilos of presolar grains. |
| 5 | — | Those kinds of rare minerals would be the perfect ingredients for a power focus. |

THE ASTRAL SPACE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Contacts to Ask: Talismonger, Spirits, Any Magic

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | Oh captain, my captain! (Stands on chair.) |
| 1 | 1 | Bunch of hippies used to be part of the old Chicago Field Museum |
| 2 | 3 | They are trying to heal the Astral Plane in the Chicago sprawl. |
| 3 | — | Rumor has it they are building some "nature preserve" for free spirits! |
| 4 | 6 | Big collective of free thinkers and out-of-the-box researchers. All working on thaumaturgical research. Anything magical they are connected to will be a big deal. |
| 5 | — | Rumor has it these guys knew the bugs were coming! They tried to warn people but no one listened back then. |

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DR. ERIC KERSH

Contacts to Ask: Talismonger, Wage Mage, Any Magic, Any Science

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | He's one of them gynomastoproctologists ain't he? |
| 1 | 1 | Some kind of magical researcher I believe. |
| 2 | 3 | He's a theoretical thaumaturge with the Astral Space Preservation Society. |
| 4 | 6 | He's the second in command of the ASPS. That makes him a pretty big deal in the Chicago magic scene. |

THE CERMAK CRATER

Contacts to Ask: Historians, Old People, Anyone in Chicago

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|---|
| 0 | 0 | Yer mom! |
| 1 | 1 | They popped a nuke there years ago! |
| 2 | 3 | Site of the largest bug hive in Chicago, now a radioactive hotspot. |
| 4 | 6 | The whole place is like a magic graveyard. Don't try to cast spells there. You will die! |
| 5 | — | The whole astral plane for blocks around the crater is just full of hibernating insect spirits. |

THE SWAMP THANGS

Contacts to Ask: Gangers, Local businesses, Any Police

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | Big green dude. Head like a shrubbery? |
| 1 | 1 | Just another feral gang from the Windy City. |
| 2 | 3 | They are a thriller gang operates out of the Calumet swamp |
| 3 | — | They are known maggots! They're in league with the bugs! |
| 4 | 6 | This gang is dangerous. They are involved in all kinds of things that most gangs don't bother with. Someone is directing them. |
| 5 | — | They're leader is never seen. Only referred to as The Foul One. |

THE FOUL ONE

Contacts to Ask: Gangers, Parazoologist, Any Magic

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | Nah, that's just old Mabel. She's ugly, but she never hurt no one! |
| 1 | 1 | The leader of the Swamp Thangs. She's a powerful shaman. |
| 2 | 3 | Nobody knows what she looks like. She looks different every time she's spotted. |
| 3 | — | She's a insect shaman! Serves Mosquito! |
| 4 | 6 | She and her gang are dedicated to rebuilding the old hives and making Chicago home to the bugs again. |
| 5 | — | There are rumors that The Foul One isn't a regular metahuman. She may be some kind of paranormal creature. |

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CAST OF SHADOWS



LOTHAN THE WISE

Lothan the Wise ran the shadows of Seattle for many years, his prime being during the mid-'60s when he mentored and teamed with street legend Kellan Colt. He considers himself a mystical genius, which he backs up with towering confidence and arrogance, and he considers himself an expert in all areas of magic and magic theory. His attitude may be a little unwarranted, but you cannot deny he knows a lot about magic. He moved to Chicago a couple years ago and opened up a talismonger shop called The Wisest Troll.

Lothan is an aging troll, though he is still massive and powerful. What he has lost in physical prowess, he makes up for in magical ability. His hair is bone white, and he dresses very flashy, favoring purple-and-gold robes over his armor, and he wears expensive jewelry that doubles as powerful magical foci.

Connection: 4

Loyalty: Max Starting 3

Quote: "You've come to the right place. Of course I have the knowledge you seek."

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | EDG | ESS | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|----|
| 8 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 11 |

Initiative: 9 + 1D6

Condition Monitor: 12/11

Limits: Physical 10, Mental 7, Social 8

Armor: 12

Active Skills: Alchemy skill group 10, Assensing 8, Astral Combat 5, Athletics skill group 5, Blades 4, Computer 4, Con 6, Conjuring skill group 8, Counterspelling 8, Etiquette 7, First Aid 5, Instruction 6, Intimidation 7, Leadership 7, Negotiation 9, Perception 6, Performance 4, Ritual Spellcasting 9, Spellcasting 10, Stealth skill group 4, Unarmed Combat 5

Knowledge Skills: Classic Art 5, Classic Music 4, Elven Wines 5, History 6, Magical Theory 10, Magical Artifacts 8, Spirit Theory 8, Vintage Cars 4

Languages: English N, Spanish 4, Latin 5, Mandarin 3, Sperethial 3, Orzet 1, German 4, French 2, Italian 3

Qualities: Allergy (Silver, Moderate), Analytical Mind, Bad Rep, Exceptional Attribute (Charisma), Focused Concentration 3, Magician

Initiate Grade: 6

Metamagics: Centering (Latin), Fixation, Masking, Quickening, Spell Shaping, Shielding

Gear: Armor jacket, Fairlight Caliban commlink (DR 7), Power Focus (Rating 5, Staff), Spell Focus (Rating 5, Sustaining, Health, emerald ring), Spell Focus (Rating 5, Sustaining, Illusion, sapphire ring), Spell Focus (Rating 5, Sustaining, Manipulation, ruby ring), Spell Focus (Rating 4, Spellcasting, Combat, golden chain), Spirit Focus (Rating 5, Fire, ruby pendant)

Spells: As needed, both regular and preparations.

Bound Spirits: Spirit of air (Force 5, 4 services), spirits of fire x3 (Force 6, 4 services each)

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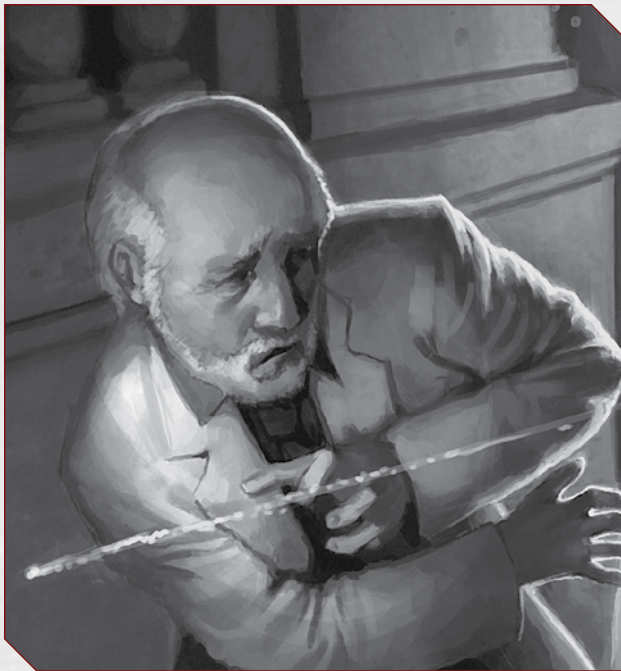
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DR. ERIC KERSH

Dr. Kersh is a fussy older man who is an academic through and through.

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | EDG | ESS | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 9 |

Initiative: 8 + 1D6

Condition Monitors (P/S): 10/11

Limits: Physical 4, Mental 8, Social 7

Armor: 8

Active Skills: Alchemy skill group 4, Assensing 8, Athletics skill group 2, Conjuring skill group 7, Counterspelling 4, Etiquette 5, First Aid 5, Negotiation 4, Perception 4, Ritual Spellcasting 7, Spellcasting 8

Knowledge Skills: History 6, Magical Theory 8, Spirit Theory 8

Languages: English N, Latin 4, French 3,

Initiate Grade: 4

Metamagics: Masking, Quickening, Invocation, Cleansing

Gear: Armor clothing

Spells: Armor, Detox, Heal, Trid Phantasm



DAYTRIPPER (FORCE 10 FREE SPIRIT)

Daytripper is a spacey, slightly confused-looking free spirit wearing a powder blue leisure suit. His reasons for hanging out at the Sanctuary and helping Dr. Kersh are unknown to all, including Kersh (and possibly Daytripper himself). He will occasionally “sit” on a couch that doesn’t exist and watch an unseen television, laughing at sitcoms only he can see and commenting on them occasionally (“With god as my witness, I thought turkeys could fly!” Now that’s funny! They don’t write TV like this anymore!”)

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | EDG | ESS | M |
|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|
| 11 | 10 | 12 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 7 | 10 | 10 |

Initiative: 22 + 2D6

Astral Initiative: 20 + 3D6

Condition Monitor: 14

Skills: Assensing, Astral Combat, Counterspelling, Perception, Ritual Spellcasting, Spellcasting, Unarmed Combat

Powers: Accident, Aura Masking, Astral Form, Banishing Resistance, Concealment, Confusion, Enhanced Senses (Low-Light, Thermographic Vision), Guard, Influence, Materialization, Movement, Psychokinesis, Realistic Form, Sapience, Search

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THE FOUL ONE

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | EDG | ESS | M |
|---|---|-------|--------|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|----|
| 8 | 4 | 5 (7) | 6 (12) | 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 10 |

Initiative: 9 + 2D6 (11 + 4D6 as a result of quickened spell,
Increased Reactions Force 4)

Condition Monitor: 12

Limits: Physical 8(13), Mental 7, Social 8

Armor: 12 (18 as a result of a quickened spell, Armor Force 6)

Skills: Assensing 5, Astral Combat 6, Con 5, Conjuring skill group
5, Stealth 6, Intimidation 8, Perception 6, Sorcery skill group
6, Unarmed Combat 9

Qualities: Wendigo

Critter Powers: Allergy (Moderate, Ferrous Metals), Allergy
(Severe, Sunlight), Dietary Requirement (Metahuman Flesh),
Enhanced Senses (Hearing), Enhanced Senses (Smell),
Enhanced Senses (Visual Acuity), Essence Drain, Essence
Drain (Attribute Boost: Strength), Essence Loss, Fear,
Immunity (Age), Immunity (Pathogens), Immunity (Toxins),
Infection, Influence, Regeneration, Sapience

Gear: Armor jacket

Spells: Acid Stream, Armor, Combat Sense, Heal, Increase
Reaction, Physical Mask, Toxic Wave

Weapons: Bite/claw [Unarmed, DV 12P, AP -2, Reach +1]

Defenses: She has a quickened Combat Sense spell active,
which will give her an additional 4 dice as per the Combat
Sense spell.

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LOTHAN THE WISE

Talismonger
Male Troll

Connection Rating: 4

Loyalty:

Key Active Skills: Conjuring Group, Enchanting Group, Instruction, Spellcasting Group

Knowledge Skills: Classic Art, Classic Music, Elven Wines, History, Magical Theory, Magical Artifacts, Spirit Theory, Vintage Cars

Uses: Magical Gear, Magical Info



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Uses: Magical Gear, Magical Info

DEBRIEFING LOG



PLAYER _____ DATE / /

CHARACTER _____ LOCATION _____

PERSONAL INFO

SRM 05-04 LIBERATION

Lothan the Wise hires a team of shadowrunners to retrieve canister CAT27000 from Dr. Eric Kersh of the Astral Space Preservation Society. Kersh will in turn demand that the runners perform a service for him before he will release the canister, and sends them to the Cermak Crater to take some readings.

- Gave CAT27000 to Lothan the Wise
- Gave CAT27000 to The Foul One
- took the Cermak Crater readings for Dr. Kersh
- Decimated the Swamp Thangs

SYNOPSIS

MISSION RESULTS

Names

Character Improvement

Karma Cost

TEAM MEMBERS

ADVANCEMENT

Previous Available _____
 Earned _____
 Spent _____
 Remaining Available _____
 New Career Total _____

Street Cred _____
 Notoriety _____
 Public Awareness _____

- Lothan the Wise

KARMA

REPUTATION

Previous Available _____ ¥
 Earned _____ ¥
 Spent _____ ¥
 Remaining _____ ¥

GM's Name _____
 GM's Signature _____

NUYEN

VALIDATION

CONTACTS/SPECIAL ITEMS GAINED OR LOST/NOTES

DEBRIEFING LOG

