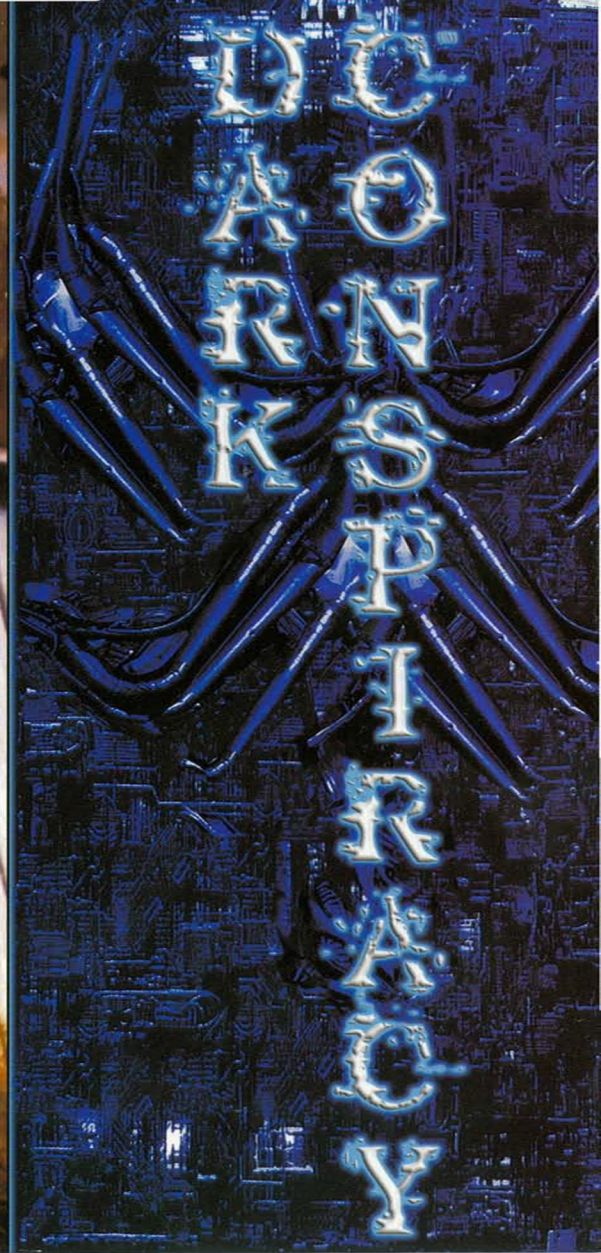
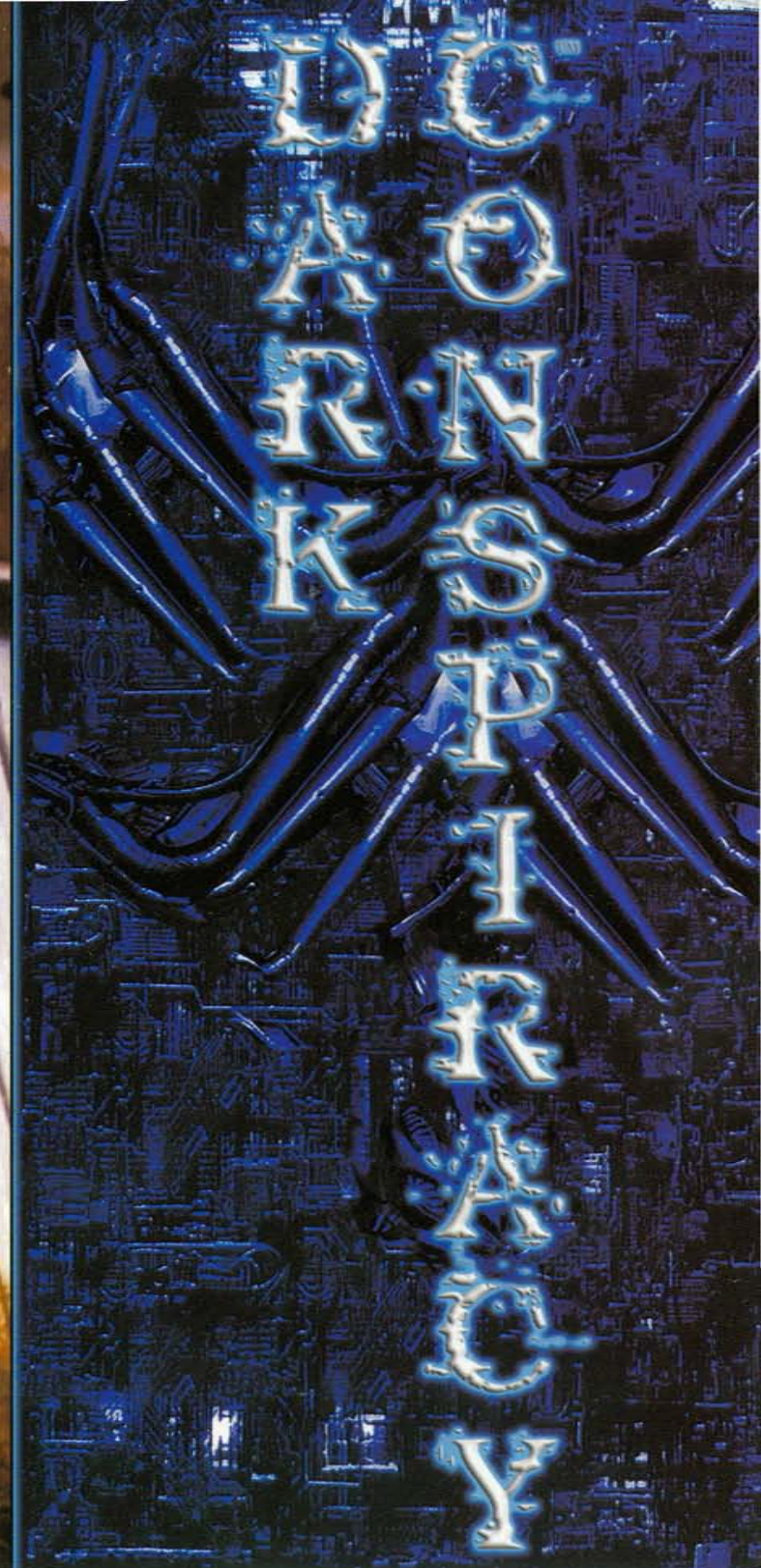




Referee Screen



DARK CONSPIRACY™

SECOND EDITION

TASK DIFFICULTY LEVELS

Attack Type	Roll (1D20)	Default
Automatic	None	Difficulty (1D20) vs. Controlling Attribute
Easy	≤ 4 x (Skill or Attribute)	D% ≤ 4 x Controlling Attribute
Average	≤ 2 x (Skill or Attribute)	D% ≤ 2 x Controlling Attribute
Difficult	≤ Skill or Attribute	D% ≤ Controlling Attribute
Formidable	≤ 1/2* x (Skill or Attribute)	D% ≤ 1/2* x Controlling Attribute
Impossible	≤ 1/4* x (Skill or Attribute)	D% ≤ 1/4* x Controlling Attribute

*Round Down – it's a dark world.

Auto Success/Auto Failure: A 1D20 roll of 1 always succeeds, and a roll of 20 always fails, regardless of skill level. There is no auto success nor auto failure for D% rolls. **Outstanding Success/Outstanding Failure:** A 1D20 roll of 10 points or more below the target number results in an outstanding success. A 1D20 roll of 10 points or more above the target number results in an outstanding failure. Effects of these are decided by the referee.

UNARMED MELEE

Attack Type	Difficulty	Skill	Effect
Strike	Difficult	Melee Combat (Unarmed)	Damage
Block	Formidable	Melee Combat (Unarmed)	Avoid Strike/Lose Action
Aimed Strike	Formidable	Melee Combat (Unarmed)	Damage Chosen Location
Grapple	Difficult	Agility	Controlling "Hits"
Strangling	Difficult	Agility	Controlling "Hits"/Damage
Escape	Difficult	Agility	Remove Controlling "Hits"
Avoid Diving Blow	Difficult	Agility	Avoid Diving Blow

ARMED MELEE

Attack Type	Difficulty	Skill	Effect
Attack	Difficult	Melee Combat (Armed)*	Damage
Block	Formidable	Melee Combat (Armed)**	Avoid Strike/Lose Action
Aimed Attack	Formidable	Melee Combat (Armed)	Damage Chosen Location

*Some weapons have die modifiers.

**Must have object to block with.

THROWN WEAPONS

Attack Type	Difficulty	Skill	Effect
Throw	Difficult	Thrown Weapon	Damage
Throw, Long Range	Formidable	Thrown Weapon	Damage

DIRECT FIRE COMBAT

Attack Type	Difficulty	Skill	Effect
Fire, Short Range	Average	Small Arms**	Damage
Fire, Medium Range	Difficult	Small Arms**	Damage
Fire, Long Range	Formidable	Small Arms**	Damage
Fire Extreme Range	Impossible	Small Arms**	Damage
Fire, Quick	+1 Level	Small Arms**	Damage
Fire, Target Obscured	+1 Level	Small Arms**	Damage
Fire, Automatic	*	*	Damage

* See Automatic Fire rules.

** Small Arms = Appropriate Small Arms skill.

BODY ARMOR PROTECTION

Type	Head	Chest & Abd.	Arms & Legs
Flak jacket	—	1	—
Kevlar vest	—	1	—
Steel helmet	1(1-3)	—	—
Kevlar helmet	1(1-4)	—	—
Close assault armor	—	2	1

Numbers in parentheses are the chances on 1D6 that a round will strike the armor and not an unprotected area.

HUMAN/ANIMAL HIT LOCATION CHART

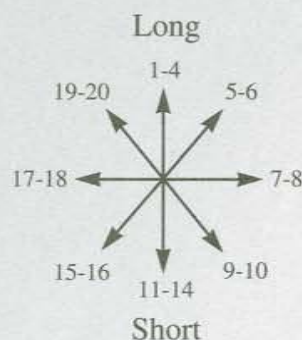
Die Roll	Biped & Prone Biped	Quadruped
1-2	Head	Head
3-4	Right Arm	Forequarter
5-6	Left Arm	Forequarter
7-8	Chest	Forequarter
9-10	Abdomen	Chest
11-12	Abdomen	Chest
13-14	Right Leg	Abdomen
15-16	Right Leg	Hindquarter
17-18	Left Leg	Hindquarter
19-20	Left Leg	Hindquarter

Biped: Table assumes front/rear shot. For side shots, far side hit equals near side hit.

Prone Biped: Table assumes top shot (shooting down onto target). For side shots, far side hit equals near side hit. For front shots, a leg or abdomen hit equals a miss. For rear shots, a head, arm, or chest shot equals a miss.

Quadruped: Table assumes side shot. For front shots, a hindquarters or abdomen hit equals a miss. For rear shots, a head or forequarters hit equals a miss.

SCATTER DIAGRAM



COMBAT SEQUENCE

Actions in each phase are conducted in a specific order. Characters with the same Initiative as the phase number go first, followed by the next higher Initiative, followed by the next, and so forth. A typical turn proceeds as follows:

Phase 6: 6 acts.

Phase 5: 5, & 6 acts.

Phase 4: 4, 5, & 6 acts.

Phase 3: 3, 4, 5, & 6 acts.

Phase 2: 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 acts.

Phase 1: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 acts.

Note: If two characters have the same Initiative and are conducting actions at the same time that may interfere with each other (such as firing at each other), the character with the highest Agility goes first. However, for purposes of this determination, subtract the bulk rating of each character's weapon from that character's Agility.

BURN DAMAGE

Source	Damage
WP	2D6
Thermite	2D6
Fuel	1D6
Structure/ grass fire	1D6

All damage dice are per second, except for structure/grass fire, which is per phase.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Range	Hit Mod.	Damage
Axe	L	-2	1D6+STR
Bayonet†	L	+1	1D6+1/2STR
Bottle	S	—	1D6+2
Club	S	-1	1D6+1/2STR
Garotte	S	+1	Special**
Hatchet	S	—	1D6+1/2STR
Knife*	S	+2	1D6
Machete	L	+1	1D6
Spear	L	—	1D6+1/2STR
Sword	L	—	1D6+STR

* Including bayonet, when not on rifle.

** Unarmed combat damage x 2.

† When on rifle.



BOWS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
Hunting bow	SS -1 Nil 1 5 10 — 15
Crossbow	SS 1 Nil 4 6 4 — 20

REVOLVERS AND SINGLE-SHOT PISTOLS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
Zip gun	SS -1 Nil 1 1 2 — 6
BP Pistol	SS 1 Nil 2 2 3 — 8
S&W 29/16.5	DAR 3 2-Nil 2 6R 4 — 16
S&W 36	DAR 1 Nil 1 5R 6 — 4
Python/20.3	DAR 2 1-Nil 2 6R 3 — 18
Pacifier stun gun	SS * Nil 1 1i 1 — 1

*Damage is special, must look up in book.

AUTOMATIC PISTOLS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
HS .22	SA -1 Nil 0 10 2 — 10
DE .357 mag	SA 3 2-Nil 1 9 3 — 18
DE .44 mag	SA 1 Nil 1 8 4 — 14
HP-35	SA 1 Nil 1 13 2 — 12
Colt Krait	SA 2 1-Nil 1 14 3 — 15
ALP	(1)* 4 2 3 — — 30
M9 (M92S)	SA 1 Nil 1 15 3 — 12
M1911A1	SA 2 Nil 1 7 3 — 12
M1911A1 10MM	SA 2 1-Nil 1 6 3 — 15
WALTHER PPK	SA 1 Nil 1 7 3 — 10
VZ-52	SA 1 Nil 1 8 4 — 12
WDY .475 wm	SA 4 2-Nil 1 7 4 — 25
XM26 APW	SA 3 1-Nil 3 20 4 — 25

*One shot per 15 seconds

SPORTING RIFLES

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
.22	BA -1 Nil 4 5i 2 — 50
.22	SA -1 Nil 4 10 2 — 50
.30-06	BA 4 2-3-Nil 5 5i 2 — 75
Win. 1894	LA 3 2-Nil 5 6i 4 — 50
Tranq gun	SS * Nil 1 1i 3 — 8

*Damage is special, must look up in book.

SUBMACHINEGUNS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
AKR	5 3 1-Nil 2/3 30 3 8 30
M3A1	5 2 Nil 3/4 30 2 4 30
M177	5 3 1-Nil 3/4 20/30 3 8 40
M231	5 2 1-Nil 3/4 20/30 1 4 25
MAT-49	5 2 Nil 3/4 32 1 4 30
MP-7	5 2 1-Nil 4 30 2 6 30
Uzi	5 2 Nil 2/3 25/32 2 5 30
Vz-61/62	5 1 Nil 1 10/20 3 7 4
stock	5 1 Nil 3 10/20 1 4 12

SNIPER RIFLES

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
C3	BA 4 2-3-Nil 5 3i 5 — 75
M21	SA 4 2-3-Nil 6 20 4 — 65
bipod	SA 4 2-3-Nil 6 20 2 — 75
AR-27	SA 4 2-3-Nil 6 20 6 — 85

All sniper rifles come with a scope. With the scope, add 15 meters to the basic range for aimed shots. If the scope is later damaged or lost (or for quick shots) this modifier is not added.

ASSAULT RIFLES

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
AK-74	5 3 1-Nil 5 30 3 7 50
AKM	5 3 2-Nil 5 30 3 8 50
AKMR	5 3 1-Nil 5 30 3 7 45
G11	3 3 1-Nil 4 50 2 3 55
M16A2	3 3 1-Nil 5 20/30 3 5 55
AR-15	SA 2 1-Nil 5 20/30 2 — 55
ALC-2	1* 12 2 5 12** — 60

*One shot per 30 seconds.

**Backpack is good for 12 shots; none are actually carried "in" weapon.

BATTLE RIFLES

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
FN-LAR/L1A1	SA 4 2-3-Nil 5 20 4 — 65
G3	5 4 2-3-Nil 5 20 4 9 65
KAR-98K	BA 4 2-3-Nil 5 5i 4 — 65
XM22 AIW	3 6 2-3-Nil 4 50 4 6 55

AUTOMATIC RIFLES

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
M249 SAW	10 2 1-Nil 5 30B/200B1 3 60
bipod	10 2 1-Nil 5 30B/200B1 3 75
XM7 Storm Gun	SA 16 1-2-3 5 5 8 — 80
bipod	SA 16 1-2-3 5 5 4 — 120

SHOTGUNS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
311-R	SA 4 3-4 Nil 5 2i 5 — 40
Short	SA 9 Nil

with buckshot*

Medium 5x10 1 Nil

with buckshot*

Stormcloud 5 4 3-4-Nil 4 12 3 8 45

Short 5 9 Nil

with buckshot*

Medium 5x10 1 Nil

with buckshot*

Autoriort SA 4 3-4-Nil 5 5i 3 — 40

Short SA 9 Nil

with buckshot*

Medium 10 1 Nil

with buckshot*

H&K CAW 5 4 3-4-Nil 4 10 3 8 40

Short 5 9 Nil

with buckshot*

Medium 5x10 1 Nil

with buckshot*

M500 PA 4 3-4-Nil 5 8i 4 — 40

Short PA 9 Nil

with buckshot*

Medium 5x10 1 Nil

with buckshot*

*See Shotguns

ROCKET LAUNCHERS

Weapon	Mag/ROF/Rng/Round/Damage/Pen
M136	1 * 75 HEAT C:4,B:4 70C
LAW 80	1 * 125 HEAT C:6,B:4 100C
M12 SMAW	1 2 100 HEAT C:4,B:4 55C
	125 HE C:12,B:12 5C

*Single-shot disposable. Cannot be reloaded.

MACHINEGUNS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
L86A1LSW	10 3 1-Nil 5 30B/100B 2 11 50
bipod	10 3 1-Nil 5 30B/100B 1 6 65
M60	5 4 2-3-Nil 6 100B 1 4 65
bipod	5 4 2-3-Nil 6 100B 1 2 90
tripod	5 4 2-3-Nil 6 100B 1 1 125
MAG	10 4 2-3-Nil 6 100B 1 7 65
bipod	10 4 2-3-Nil 6 100B 1 4 90
tripod	10 4 2-3-Nil 6 100B 1 2 125

HEAVY MACHINEGUNS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
M2HB	5 8 2-2-3* 8 105B 3 14 65
tripod	5 8 2-2-3* 8 105B 2 7 150
AHL	(1)† 14 5 — — — 80

*.50 SLAP ammunition has a penetration value of 1-1-2.

†One shot per 15 seconds.

GRENADE LAUNCHERS

Weapon	Mag/ROF/Rng/IFR/Round/Damage/Pen
M203	1i SS 100 400 HE C:3,B:12 Nil
	HEDP C:3,B:12 4C
	CHEM C:1,B:4 Nil
	ILLUM B:100 Nil
	10 — Stun * Nil
Mk-19	50B or 1i 5 100 400 CHEM C:3,B:4 Nil

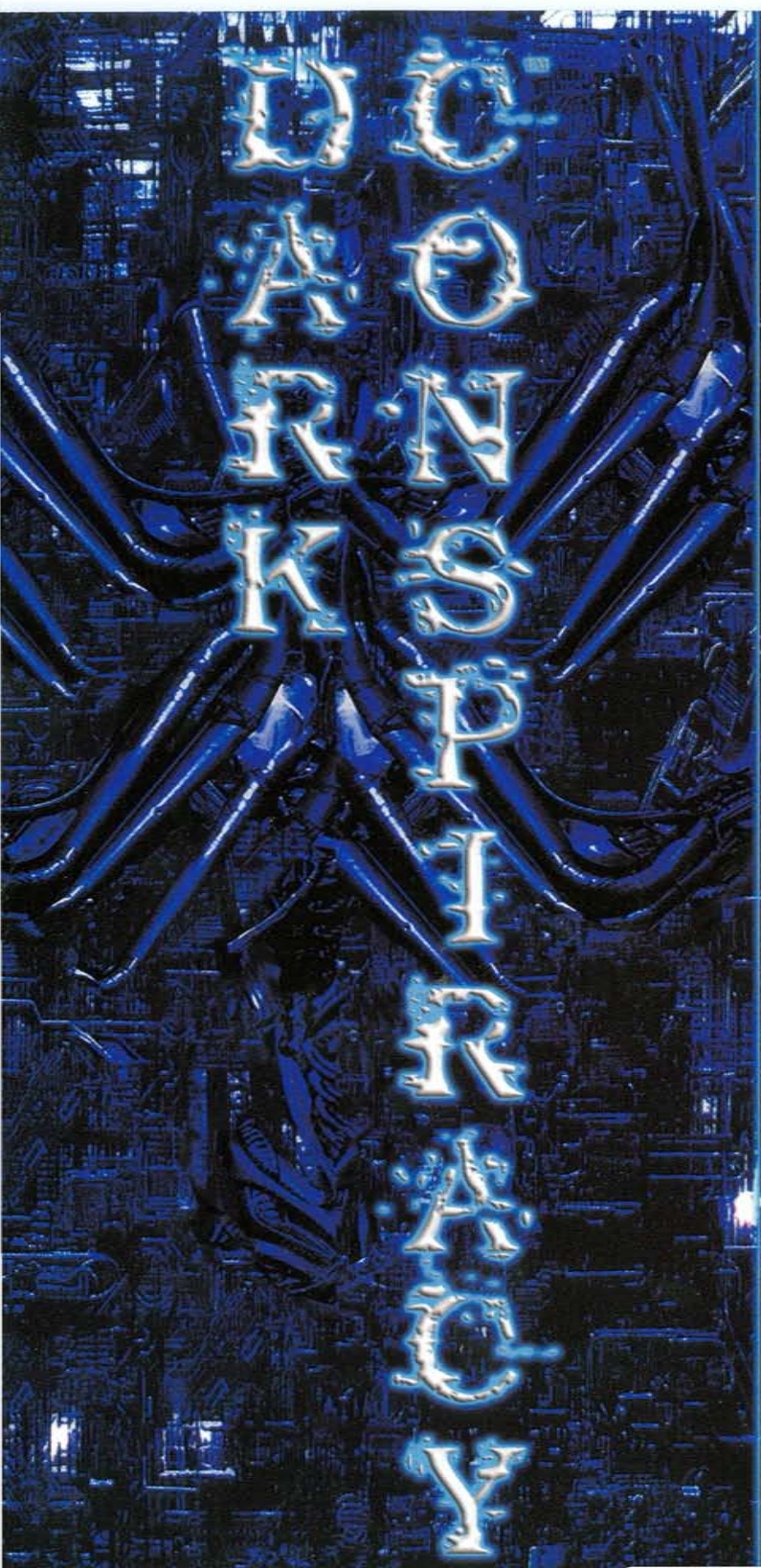
*Target knocked down, loses remaining actions for the turn, and must roll Average: CON each turn thereafter to recover.

ANTITANK MISSILE LAUNCHERS

Type	Rld	Rng	Damage	Pen
Dragon PIP	2	1000	C:12,B:12	135C
Tank Breaker	2	2000	C:6,B:4	90C

MORTARS

Type	Rng	Damage	Pen
60mm	HE	C:5,B:20	Nil
IFR:4km	WP	C:2,B:12	Nil
	ILLUM	B:400	Nil



FLAMETHROWERS

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
M9A1	
Flamethrower	SA * Nil 4 5 4 — 5

*Damage by burning gasoline is covered in rule book under Burns.

SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES

Missile	Accuracy	Rng
FIM-92A Stinger	Difficult	6 km
FIM-99 Scorpion	Average	7 km
MBB-7 Venusfliegenfalle	Average	7 km
SA-27 Grapppler	Average	6 km

HAND GRENADES

Type	Damage	Pen
Antitank	C:3,B:4	18C
Chemical	C:1,B:12	Nil
Concussion	C:5	Nil
Frag	C:3,B:12	Nil
Thermite	C:1,B:4	Nil
WP	C:1,B:12	Nil

RIFLE GRENADES

Type	Rng	IFR	Damage	Pen
HEAT	15	200	C:7,B:12	30C
WP	25	200	C:1,B:12	Nil
RAW HE	100	2000	C:10,B:28	1C
RAW HEAT	100	2000	C:8,B:20	75C

FRAGMENTATION ATTACK

Fragment	Mult. One
Radius	Rng Frag. Frag. Miss Dam Pen
Primary	1x Burst 1-3 4-6 7-10 2D6 1
burst radius	
Secondary	2x Burst 1 2 3-10 1D6 Nil
burst radius	

CYBER HANDS

Weapon	Range	HitMod.	Damage	Value
Power Hand	S	—	2D6+Strength	
Chainsaw Hand	S	—	2D6+Strength	
Blade Hand	S	+2	1D6+ (STR ÷ 2)	
Torch Hand	S	—	3D6	

—Recoil—

Weapon	ROF/Dam/Pen/Blk/Mag/SS/Brst/Rng
Gun Hand	5 2 Nil 0 8 5 78 20

DEMOLITION

DP	Concussion/Penetration*
1	3
2	4
3	6
4	7
5	8
7	9
8	10
9	11
11	12
13	13
15	14
18	15
32	20
50	25
72	30
96	35
128	40
162	45
200	50

*Penetration is modified by emplacement. Tamped:Penx2. Laying On or Leaning Against:Pen÷2.

ARMOR VALUES OF COVER

Cover	AV
Sandbag(250mm)	5*
2" wooden plank (50mm)	1
Timber house wall (200mm)	4
Cinderblock wall (300mm)	9
Stone wall (300mm)	6
Thick stone wall (600mm)	12
Reinforced concrete	10**
Tree trunk (600mm)	12
Brick wall (100mm)	3
Thick brick wall (300mm)	9

*Per sandbag. **Per 250mm.

ARMOR EQUIVALENT

Material	Millimeters per Armor Value	Armor Value 1 Constant
Armor plate	5	.2
Sheet steel	6	.16
Reinforced concrete	25	.04
Concrete and bricks	35	.03
Stone, packed dirt, wood	50	.02
Loose dirt	250	.004

EXPLOSIVE PENETRATION FORMULAS

$C=5\sqrt{(DP\div2)}$. C: Concussion; DP: Damage.

$DP=2[(C\div5)^2]$. C: Concussion; DP: Number of damage points needed to arrive at a certain concussion.

NPC STATS

Level	Initiative	Attributes
Elite	5	7
Veteran	4	6
Experienced	3	5
Novice	1	5

Level	Skill	Damage
Elite	6	4
Veteran	5	3
Experienced	4	2
Novice	2	1

NPC MOTIVATION

Clubs: ViolenceDiamonds: Greed

Card	Motivation
Ace	War leader
King	Brutal
Queen	Stubborn
Jack	Murderous
8-10	Very violent
5-7	Moderately violent
2-4	Somewhat violent

Hearts: Sociability

Card	Motivation
Ace	Just
King	Honorable
Queen	Loving
Jack	Wise
8-10	Very Sociable
5-7	Moderately sociable
2-4	Somewhat sociable

EMPATHY TASKS

Situation	Task Difficulty
Total Security	Easy
Relaxed Environment	Average
Normal Stress	Difficult
Great Stress, Combat	Formidable
Incredible Stress	Impossible

EMPATHIC POWER LEVEL TABLE

Power Level*	Stage
0 or less	No Effect
1-9	Basic Success
10-17	Stage Two
18-27	Stage Three
28-36	Stage Four
37-45	Stage Five
46 or more	Stage Six

*Empath's EMP Attribute + Skill Level +
1D10 - (Target's Willpower + INT)

SPACE MANUEVER TIMES

Distance	Time
Suborbital	Minutes
LEO	Hours
GEO	Days
Cislunar	Weeks
Translunar	Months
Transmartian	Years
Transjovian	Decades

Card Motivation

Card	Motivation
Ace	Generous
King	Selfish
Queen	Lustful
Jack	Coward
8-10	Very greedy
5-7	Moderately greedy
2-4	Somewhat greedy

Spades: Ambition

Card	Motivation
Ace	Charismatic
King	Deceitful
Queen	Ruthless
Jack	Pompous
8-10	Very ambitious
5-7	Moderately ambitious
2-4	Somewhat ambitious

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Nightsider™

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ICE DEMON

I hate Texas. Sherman was right when he said if he owned Texas and hell, he'd rent out Texas and live in hell, 'cause it was hotter than hell in Texas. I've never been able to see why anyone in his right mind would live there.

Not only that, the weather is lousy. If you just wait a few minutes, it'll change--and always for the worse. Like yesterday.

When I woke up in the morning, I was drenched in sweat. I didn't even look at the thermometer, I knew it had to be at least 25 already. We all piled into the car and took off. It was too hot to use the air conditioner and besides, they don't work worth a damn since freon went the way of the dinosaur. So even if it meant we'd get a facefull of water, we were glad to see a blue norther moving in. They always bring the temperature down, for a little while anyway, and if we drove fast and left the windows down, the air and spray might keep us cool until we hit someplace decent.

The one thing we didn't count on, in the middle of Texas in the middle of July, was getting snowed in. "Great," Charlie says, "next thing you know we're gonna see some abominable snowmen."

Come to think of it, that was another thing we hadn't counted on...

INTRODUCTION

There's a good side to everything. For instance, the global warming of the last century or so has melted the polar ice, raising the level of the world's oceans an inch or two-but this also means that the disastrous freezes of the late 20th century which almost destroyed the United States' citrus crop have almost disappeared.

At the moment, however, the PCs might think they'd trade the world's entire stock of grapefruit for a little cool air. They're travelling across south Texas in the middle of July. The temperature outside their car is over 45 Celsius, and even with the air conditioning running full blast it's sweltering inside the car. With the humid air coming in from the nearby gulf, it's as oppressive as only summers in south Texas can be.

The PCs are travelling on a long, lonely stretch of highway in a county that's larger than some states. They have been travelling for some time, and the close quarters, poor air conditioning, heat and humidity are causing them to get on each other's nerves.

The heat is taking its toll on other drivers as well. Most drive faster than normally prudent, from a combination of boredom, heat stress and trying to get "poor man's A/C" (drive fast with the windows down to keep cool). Once or twice before the storm appears, the PCs should run into an irate driver. Imagining that the party has slowed him down, cut him off or otherwise inconvenienced him, he will retaliate with inflammatory comments, obstructive driving, or perhaps even violence. The

referee should devise encounters appropriate to the situation, requiring anything from tests of Vehicle Use (the driver swerves in front of them) to small firefights (the driver shoots at their car).

METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION

This adventure assumes that the PCs are travelling by car. With slight changes, it can be adapted to other methods of transportation. For instance, if the party is travelling by train, the train will not slide off the tracks, but since snow-removal equipment is not stored this far south, the train will become snow-bound, allowing the characters to disembark and investigate the source of the cold. While planes can skirt small storms, this one is too large for the PCs to fly around. Hint to the PCs that they should make an emergency landing along an unoccupied stretch of highway (or have the plane's NPC pilot make the decision, if appropriate). This is an Average test of Pilot (Fixed-Wing) skill.

RELOCATING THE ADVENTURE

Although this adventure is set in south Texas, the exact location is less important than the climate. For instance, if the referee wants to fit this adventure into an existing campaign, it can take place anywhere it doesn't snow in July. In the Southern Hemisphere, change the date to mid-January; in most areas of the tropics, the date could be anytime during the year. Of course, the psychological effect is greatest in desert and subtropical areas where snow is unlikely at any time of year.

Natives know that this is tornado and thunderstorm weather. Storms often form in the late afternoon, even when no weather system is present-but today looks like a typical south Texas summer day. Clear and hot.

At least it does until clouds begin appearing over the northern horizon. These are cumulus clouds with high tops, bright at the top but growing darker as they reach toward the ground--classic thunderstorm clouds. Storms in this part of Texas can be dangerous, but they also bring welcome relief from the heat and much-needed rain for the area's vegetable and citrus crops.

THE LOCAL FORECAST

If the PCs are listening to the radio, the local stations are primarily Tejano and country stations, some broadcasting in Spanish. These are the radio equivalent of corporate television, playing music and broadcasting inoffensive news stories for the proles and migrant workers in the area. Between songs, as the clouds begin to peek over the horizon, the announcer gives the local time, then says, "This just in from WeatherCorp, your source for the most accurate weather reports in North America. An unseasonal cold front is sending a blue norther our way. Over the last hour, the temperature has dropped 12 degrees in Austin and is falling in San Antonio, bringing relief from the heat wave. The front is scheduled to pass through the Brownsville area later this afternoon.

"The forecast for today: Thunderstorms late this afternoon, with continued rain for the next two days. Highs cooling down to the low 30s, with lows in the 20s. Better weather is coming, folks!" The announcer then goes into a corporate public service announcement and finally returns to the music.

Thunderstorms are often preceded by cooler air, and as the cool air reaches the player characters and the storm clouds begin to occlude the sun, the temperature drops. The car's overloaded air conditioning begins to work better, and suddenly the car is more comfortable. The PCs are eventually able to turn off the air conditioner and roll down the windows.

As the PCs drive on, however, the temperature continues to drop. Usually, at the approach of a thunderstorm, the air cools some 5 to 10 degrees. As the clouds continue their approach, the temperature continues to fall, becoming cool, then uncomfortably cold--even without the chill factor of the wind going past the car. If the characters have any way of determining external temperature they will realize that within the space of an hour the temperature has dropped from 45 Celsius to 7 Celsius--far colder than the radio announcer predicted. There are no signs of it leveling off.

THE BIG CHILL

As the storm approaches, the wind speed increases and the PCs begin to see lightning and hear thunder. As the clouds approach, they can see the precipitation falling from the cloud, but somehow it looks different from the rain they would expect from a normal thunderstorm.

Finally, when it gets close enough, they will be able to see that it is white and falling slowly. It's snowing! Migrant workers and the drivers of other vehicles stare in amazement as they watch the flakes fall from the sky. Children scream in delight, even as they shiver in their thin summer clothes.

Sometime in the next hour or two, the PCs must make a decision to either stop and wait for the storm to pass or to keep going and try to get through it the best they can. If they decide to stop, they will have problems: The few motels along this stretch of highway are already full, and the owners are turning people away (or charging lodgers an outrageous sum--say, \$500 each--to stay). The local residents' homes, most of them tar paper shacks, will offer no real shelter from the storm, though the residents will be more than glad to take lodgers at no cost.

If the PCs decide to drive on, they meet the storm well outside any cities. At first the snow is a minor annoyance; the PCs can manage by turning on the car's heater, and the road is still warm enough to melt the snow as it lands, even though it soon begins to stick to the land on the sides of the road. In fact, the scene is pleasant enough, if somewhat surreal. As freeze alarms sound and workers rush to attempt to save the crops on both sides of the road, families stop to have their pictures taken in the snow-covered orange trees. Children with no winter clothing rush around, throwing snowballs at each other and building snowmen.

Soon enough, however, the scene turns into a nightmare. As the snow continues to fall, the temperature continues to drop. The children begin to shiver and cry. Families huddle in the cabs of their pickup trucks--the truck's heater their only available source of heat. Workers rush to hose down the crops, hoping to save them by covering them with a layer of ice (which will be warmer than the outside air).

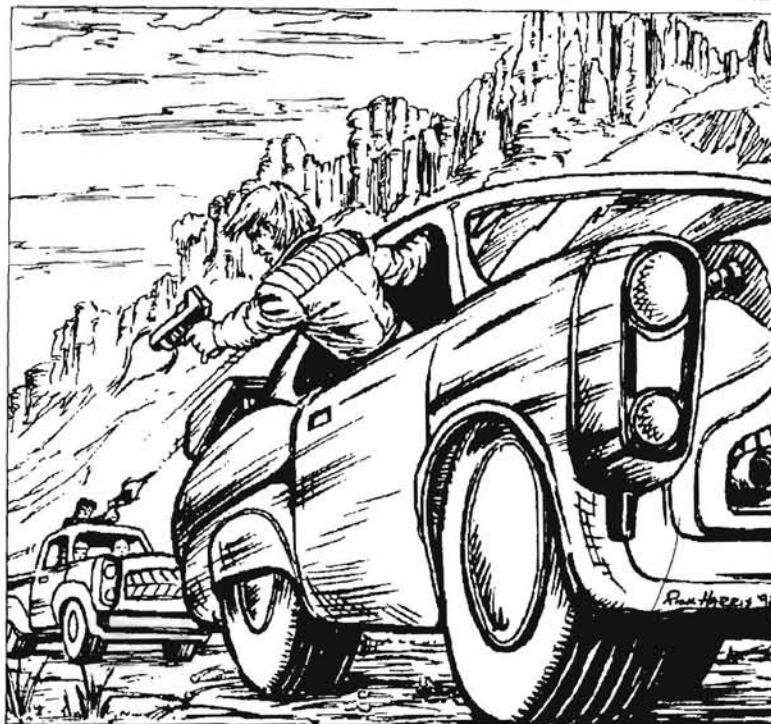
The roads, wet from the melting snow, quickly begin to ice over as well. Vehicles not prepared for the ice begin to skid out of control. Some drivers slow down or pull over to the side of the road; others, driving like the roads were clear and dry, skid off the road or into the path of the PCs' car. From the time the PCs first encounter the ice, have them make an Easy test of Vehicle Use (Wheeled) for every five minutes they continue driving; after an hour, have them make an Average roll every minute. A failed roll means the vehicle skids out of control and into a ditch; an Average test of Mechanic or a Difficult test of Vehicle Use (Wheeled) is necessary to get the car out of the ditch. (If the PCs are in a plane, the plane is forced down; a train will stop in its tracks, unable to proceed due to the heavy snowfall.)

Whether the PCs stay with their vehicle or find shelter somewhere else, they will face a fundamental problem: how to keep

warm. Six hours ago, everyone in the area—including anyone the PCs might be staying with and any other drivers on the road—was worried about how to cool off in the oppressive Texas heat. Now they have to figure out how to survive the cold. (When the PCs are forced—or decide—to stop for the night, the temperature outside is -6 Celsius. After that, it will continue to fall, but slowly—perhaps one degree every eight hours.) PCs will only have blankets, stoves and other cold-weather gear if the players specifically state before the adventure that their PCs are carrying such items.

If the PCs have survival gear, waiting the storm out is an Easy test of Constitution. Otherwise, it becomes a Difficult test of Constitution. Failing the test means a character suffers 1-3 points of damage to the chest per 15 minutes of exposure. This test is necessary if the PCs are taking cover in an emergency shelter, migrant shack or their vehicle, but not if they are in a permanent building such as a motel. Although they will not be in immediate danger if they've taken shelter in a building, they will be uncomfortable. Heating systems are mostly inadequate. In fact, many buildings have no central heat at all. It's unnecessary in this part of the world.

The referee should have the characters announce their actions in getting out of the storm and take any resourcefulness and ingenuity into account in modifying the die roll for the test.



FURTHER INFORMATION

If the PCs have managed to secure reasonably comfortable accommodations (in a motel room or house), the referee should strive to create a feeling of claustrophobia and cabin fever. Going outside is unwise, but staying indoors is stifling—and by the way, did the PCs think to buy any food?

If they've managed to obtain shelter indoors, the PCs will have access to a TV set. Most of the channels are carrying their usual mix of soap operas, celebrity news, exposes and similar drivel, but one will be of interest to the characters—WeatherCom, "all weather, all the time." As they come across the channel, a vapid announcer is giving a rundown of the weather in North America. The PCs should immediately notice that temperatures everywhere in North America are in the teens to 30s, including in Texas—in fact, everywhere but in a small area centered on their location.

"The big weather story at the moment, of course," the announcer continues, "is that freak area of cold in south Texas. The rainstorms that have plagued the midland for the last few days are turning to snow there, with patches of sleet and hail on the outskirts. Temperatures are even colder as the storm intensifies farther south. Here heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures are bringing transportation to a standstill. So far, meteorologists have no explanation for this bizarre weather, as crews have been unable to approach the area. We expect to know more in 12 to 24 hours. An Air Force reconnaissance jet is going up to investigate. We'll give you more on this severe weather situation as it develops, but now it's time for your local forecast."

Normally at this point the station would give a brief weather forecast, but at the moment the TV screen simply says, "Forecasts suspended due to abnormal weather conditions"—meaning the local meteorologists have given up. Immediately afterward, however, a display of the local weather radar shows the extent of area precipitation coverage. Several kilometers north of the PCs' location, according to the display, there is an area of color that indicates severe precipitation—the color usually reserved for tornadoes and the most severe thunderstorms. The area is blinking on and off like a beacon.

This should make the PCs curious. If they look out the window (or step outside and look) in the direction the radar indicates, they will indeed see an area of very heavy snow—and they will also see a hairy, humanoid figure shambling off over the hill that seems to be the center of the heaviest snowfall. It looks almost human, but is covered with thick, white fur and does not appear to be wearing any clothes. (If the characters investigate within about a half-hour of the sighting, see "Stand of the White Wolves" on page 6.

FROM THE SHELTER

If the player characters have had to improvise shelter, they should suffer a bit, but not die (unless they do something stupid), before they hear an unearthly howl, similar to a wolf's howl, but throatier. The howl is coming from the direction of the heaviest snowfall, just over a hill from the player characters' position. If they look closely, at the top of the hill they can see a creature that looks like a wolf (they will have to make an Average test of Observation to see the wolf, because its white pelt blends in with the snow), but its muzzle seems unusually short.

As the PCs watch, they see the wolf turn as a figure steps toward it. The figure is humanoid, but tall, and looks like it is completely covered in white fur. The humanoid and wolf then disappear over the hill, in the direction of the heaviest precipitation. An attempt to follow or track these creatures takes the characters to "Stand of the White Wolves" below.

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS

It is possible that the player characters will be completely stuck, with no winter provisions and no way of leaving their shelter. (Even worse, they may be in danger of freezing to death after having failed their Constitution test.) If this happens, help arrives in the form of Jon Sailer (see sidebar at left).

Jon's identity can be changed to fit the situation. If the PCs are in their car or another improvised shelter, he is a textbook good Samaritan who just happened to see them and stopped to help. If they are staying in one of the tarpaper shacks alongside the road or in a hotel, Jon is a fellow traveller seeking refuge from the storm. Jon's role could also be filled by a generic or solid contact that happens to be nearby in a position to help. In this case, the winter clothing mentioned below will be available at half price.

In any case, Jon talks to the player characters, says he has a friend that might be able to help them out with some winter clothing—for a price. If necessary, Jon will offer the use of his vehicle, a simple ATV.

Jon's contact is located a mile down the road, toward the thickest part of the snowstorm. To get there safely requires an Average test of Vehicle Use (Wheeled). If this task is failed, Jon's ATV skids off the road into a ditch, and they must walk the remaining distance.

The contact has parkas, gloves and boots for the entire group at a cost of \$200 per person. The price is high, but the player characters' need is great. If the group doesn't have enough cash, the contact will barter at half the listed value of the trade goods.

Jon is very familiar with the local area and can help the PCs track the wolves and hairy humanoids. The weather doesn't bother him, he explains; he lived in Alaska for two years.

STAND OF THE WHITE WOLVES

When the player characters decide to go out and investigate, they will see tracks in the snow, if they arrive within half an hour after the appearance of the wolves or humanoids. After that time, the tracks begin to be covered by snow and will require an Average test of Tracking to spot. After about two hours they are completely covered. This is a mixed set of tracks, with both canine and oversized, human-type footprints. The human prints show that the maker was barefoot, has a foot about 35 centimeters long, and has flat feet. The canine paw print has six toes.

As the player characters investigate, they hear a growl behind them, then one to the right. As they turn, they see a group of wolf-like creatures surrounding them. There are twice as many wolves as there are members of the party, and they are slowly advancing, closing the circle.



JON SAILER

Experience: Novice

Attributes: 6; INT 7, EDU 7, EMP 1

Skills: Vehicle Use (Wheeled) 6, Streetwise 4; English 10, Mayan 3, Spanish 7, Bargain 5, Luck 4

Initiative: 2

Motivation: Jack of Diamonds—Coward: Jon is not a brave man and will always run or panic in the face of danger. Ten of Hearts—Helpful: Jon does not like to see people in trouble. He will generally try to help anyone out of a difficult situation if it will not cause him undue trouble.

If Jon is with the party, he screams, bolts and runs. One of the wolves immediately attacks him, knocking him to the ground and biting as he screams. (If any of the PCs try to escape, the wolves will attack them as well.)

The wolves fight until either all of the wolves or all of the player characters are dead.

Once the attack has been resolved and the party has taken care of its wounds, it is a simple and obvious matter to find the tracks the wolves made when encircling the player characters. It will require an Easy test of Tracking to follow them back to a small opening in the side of a hill. However, while this opening provides good passage for the wolves, it would be much harder for a human to use this entrance (an Average test of Agility), and it would be clearly impossible for the large, shaggy humanoids they've been tracking to do so.

Any player character that realizes there must be another entrance, if the shaggy humanoids live here, may attempt an Easy test of Observation skill at this point to notice another set of tracks. A PC party that does not make this logical connection must instead roll an Average: Observation test in order to spot the tracks.

Success in either case reveals another set of wolf tracks leading off around the hill, requiring an Easy test of Tracking to follow. After a while, this set of tracks is joined by more of the humanoid tracks, and together they lead to another cave about one-fourth of the way around the hill from the wolf entrance.

This cave is just over a meter wide by three meters tall, wide enough for two humans to enter side by side, and is set at the foot of the bluff that forms this face of the hill. The concentration of tracks leading to this cave indicates that it must be the main entrance to whatever kind of base this is.

While the PCs are following the tracks around the hill, the wind blows unusually bitter and cold from the top of the hill. If they look carefully through the blowing snow and darkness (an Easy test of Observation, but they must specifically state that they are looking for something at the hilltop), they will be able to see a black, crystalline shaft about four meters tall at the hill's summit-right in the center of the strongest portion of the snowstorm.

If the PCs try to climb the hill to get to the shaft, they will fail. Even if the snow weren't blowing, the air would get colder and blow harder the closer they got to the shaft, increasing the windchill factor to well below -75 Celsius. They should be able to figure out that the crystal column is important-but the answers lie in the cavern ahead of them.

INTO THE EARTH

Upon entering the cave, the PCs will see that the cave has limestone walls coated with a layer of ice, and floors of well-packed snow. The passage slopes down for about 50 meters, then turns to the left. Light shines from beyond the turn.

The ice and snow that cover everything refract and scatter the ambient light, suffusing the entire passage with a blue glow. Any sounds that the player characters make are muffled by the snow-covered walls close around them. After the howling, biting wind outside, this area seems peaceful, even momentarily reassuring.

The player characters also notice that it is warmer here. Although the temperature is just below 0 Celsius, the absence of wind makes the temperature tolerable for anyone wearing cold-weather protection.

THE CAVE COMPLEX

The cave complex is mapped in detail on page 8. The characters start out at the "x" at the bottom of the map. The following notes apply to all areas in the complex unless otherwise indicated.

The surfaces of the caverns are coated with ice. For the most part, the floors are icy as well, although portions of the floor in the central and portal areas are muddy from the effects of the constant activity. Ceilings are three to five meters high. The rooms

SIT BACK AND WAIT

Of course, the PCs might not care to investigate the snowstorm, preferring to stay in the relative comfort of the motel or their vehicle until the storm ends. This will take two days, at which time snow will be piled up so high as to make it impossible for them to leave their shelter. Since there is no snow removal equipment in the area, and in the meantime the temperature will have dropped to about -12 Celsius, they could be there for a long time.

In addition, as the cold deepens, the ice wolves will begin raiding the local settlements (possibly including the PCs' settlement). These raids will get progressively worse and worse as time goes on. Use these wolves to impress the PCs with the need for action (see page 15 for ice wolf statistics).

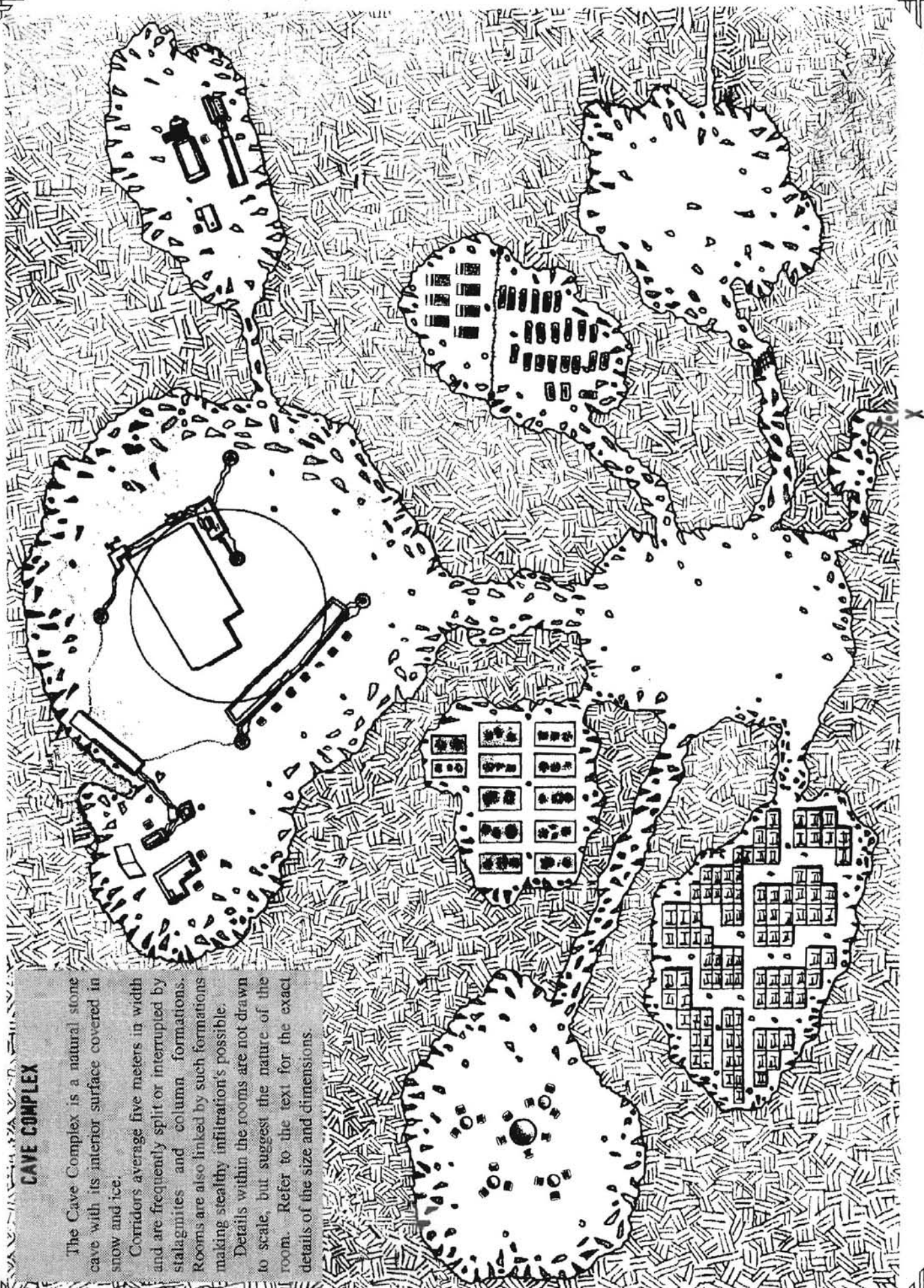
If the players firmly decide their characters don't want to go out and try to find the source of these unusual events, despite the mounting threat of the wolves, then the referee should hint strongly that they could end up being responsible for the next ice age and countless deaths.

CAVE COMPLEX

The Cave Complex is a natural stone cave with its interior surface covered in snow and ice.

Corridors average five meters in width and are frequently split or interrupted by stalagmites and column formations. Rooms are also linked by such formations making stealthy infiltration's possible.

Details within the rooms are not drawn to scale, but suggest the nature of the room. Refer to the text for the exact details of the size and dimensions.



are irregular in contour, with enough niches in the walls and irregularities in the floors to allow player characters to move stealthily. The edges of the rooms have numerous alcoves and concealed spaces, created by the ice-covered stalactites, stalagmites and columns that line these areas. It is possible to sneak most of the way around the perimeter of these rooms by slipping from one such hiding place to the next, based on the completion of the appropriate Stealth test (see "Sneakin' Around," page 10).

The "corridors" between the rooms are more properly thought of as cavern tunnels, as ice-encased boulders, columns, and other formations similarly break them up. These corridors average five meters wide and are frequently split into two or three narrower passages by these obstacles, allowing PCs many options to slip out of the way of a passing corporate or yeti group.

While passing through or spying on other locations from these corridors, the party is subject to encountering corporates and yeti wandering by in the course of their business. For every five minutes, roll 1D20. 1-4 indicates a passing corporate, 5-9 a passing yeti, and 10-20 no encounter. The corporates and yeti will make no effort to move stealthily, so if the characters are maintaining any kind of lookout they will have plenty of warning to attempt to hide (see Sneakin' Around, page 9, for Stealth tests).

All of the caverns are well lit, though the lighting appears to be chemical rather than electrical.

YETI REACTIONS

For the most part, the yeti will ignore the humans. They will notice the humans, but tend to shoo them away rather than attack them, treating them as nuisances, not menaces. If the humans attack the yeti, however, the yeti will fight back. If any yeti witness a PC assault on a wolf or yeti and gets away to report it, the yeti will spread the word that these humans are dangerous and need to be eliminated. From that point, the yeti will attempt to eradicate them on sight, but will not actively seek out their prey.

This is because the yeti can't tell one human from another. The yeti will simply assume that the PCs are wandering corporates.

WOLF REACTIONS

The PCs will not encounter any wolves wandering loose inside the cavern complex. The wolves perform the role of guarding the outside of the complex by attacking any intruders who come near, but within the caverns they are kept either inside a closed-off kennel or on leashes, controlled by yeti handlers.

However, for the sake of completeness, the referee should know that the wolves know all the corporates by scent, and would recognize any PCs as intruders and attack immediately. So long as a general alarm has not been raised, wolves under the control of a yeti handler will be restrained from attacking the PCs, as the handler would assume that they were mistakenly attempting to attack wandering corporates. Once the alarm has been given, however, a yeti handler would slip the leashes and allow the wolves to attack.

HUMAN REACTIONS

Any human encountered will immediately recognize the humans as intruders and raise a general alarm. If a human NPC succeeds in raising a general alarm, activities in the base will continue to proceed as described on the next few pages, but with the important addition that all NPCs will be on the lookout for intruders, raising the difficulty of each of the various Stealth tasks described below and in "Sneakin' Around" by one level, except for those which are already Difficult, which will remain at that level.

All humans in the complex are armed with Browning HP-35 automatic pistols and stun wands (see page 17).

THE FOYER

This area is smaller than most of the caverns—only about 10 meters square—and is empty except for its current occupants: two ice wolves and their yeti handler. They are silent, and will not be detected by the PCs before rounding the corner. As the PCs round the corner, the first in line will come face-to-muzzle with one of the wolves, who yips, jumps back, and then springs for the attack.

However, to the PCs' surprise, the yeti hauls the wolf in, preventing it from harming them. The yeti is clearly not interested in harming or obstructing them. They are free to pass into the cave system, should they overcome their surprise and attempt to do so. They may then wander the base at will, so long as they are not seen by the corporates or caught in the act of harming the yeti.

If, however, they respond too quickly and fire on the wolf or yeti before seeing the response, the yeti will deduce their hostile intent and loose the wolves, and attack the PCs himself. In this case, the PCs must not only quickly eliminate their opponents, but also dispose of the bodies and other evidence of the fight. Failure to do so will result in the general alarm being raised.

SNEAKIN' AROUND

The chance for the PCs to avoid detection in their exploration of the base varies depending upon location. Unless otherwise noted in a specific location, tests to avoid detection are as follows:

In a corridor (passing through or spying into another area): Easy test of Stealth.

In a room (staying out of sight at the perimeter): Average test of Stealth.

Hastily ducking behind an icy cave formation to avoid detection, although it may work, it should get a little hairy, and the referee should demonstrate this to the players from time to time.

For example, a PC has ducked behind a stalagmite to avoid detection by a passing corporate. However, just as the corporate passes the PC's concealed position, she stops to carry on a conversation with a colleague, leaning against the character's hiding place. All the while, a melting icicle drips cold water onto the back of the PC's neck.

Or an oncoming yeti carrying a large box has prompted a PC to slip behind a row of columns that separate one of the subpassages of a corridor. The yeti, which cannot see around the box, uses the same passage and runs directly into the PC, who is knocked sprawling. The yeti is so close that the PC can smell its dank, wet fur, and see the debris clinging in the pelt, perhaps even a little dried blood. As the PC lies there, heart in throat, perhaps pulling a pistol, the yeti decides to back out of this passage and try another hopefully wider one.

Just because the players make their rolls doesn't mean they shouldn't sweat a little.

and some cacti (which are caving in and dying).

THE CENTRAL CHAMBER

This is the large cavern that connects the others together. As the PCs look in here, they will observe yeti and humans bustling through here constantly.

There are humans passing through here approximately every five minutes. With some timing and a successful Easy test of Stealth, the PCs will be able to cross, only being seen by yeti.

However, no sooner have they entered this area when they bump straight into a yeti, its fur slick with blood, carrying two mangled human bodies, one in a business suit and the other in technician's coveralls. Unless the PCs respond, the yeti will walk right past the group and proceed toward the wolf kennel (see map). The bodies are of corporates who rebelled against their Dark Minion master and are now wolf food.

There are six entrances other than the one through which the PCs entered.

THE GREENHOUSE

This room is crammed full with meter-wide tables, all of which are virtually concealed beneath a load of hydroponics tubs. A few plants are rooted in soil. Some of the plants will be recognizable to the PCs, but many will be alien, ranging from tubers that resemble bright blue carrots to plants that look like a shrub that had been uprooted and replanted with its leaves in the soil and its roots quivering weirdly in the air.

There are three yeti going up and down the aisles, tending the plants. Occasionally, one of the yeti will tear off a leaf or piece of fruit from a plant and eat it.

These plants serve as food for the yeti in the compound. Some of them are still experimental--which explains why one tank has a bunch of daffodils (the yeti tried them and liked them), a clump of pampas grass (which they haven't tried yet),

THE MESS AREA

This is a lounge, with one large and four smaller round tables. Three to five chairs surround each table. When the PCs first visit, ten humans are sitting at the tables, and eight yeti on the floor. The yeti are eating from bowls piled high with plant matter while the humans are eating prepacked military rations.

On the large central table are stacks of rations packets and large bowls of plant matter. Momentarily, a human arrives from the central area bearing refills for this table.

If the PCs enter this area, they will almost certainly be seen by the humans (a Difficult test of Stealth to avoid).

THE BUNK AREA

This area is filled with bunk beds separated by a light privacy screen running east-west across the middle of the room. The beds south of the screen are obviously for yeti. These are made from logs, with hollowed-out depressions to lie in. Some of the

beds have straw or grass for padding. If all of the beds were in use, there could be as many as 500 to 600 yeti in the station, but the numbers the player characters have seen so far indicate that the actual number is probably closer to 20 or 30. PCs may deduce the fact that the station is expecting more yeti.

Waking a yeti from a sound sleep is not a good idea. If the PCs watch long enough, one of the yeti will come in, shake a sleeping yeti, then spring back as a massive, hairy fist flies at him. If the player characters try this on their own without first seeing this example, the surprise of the yeti's instinctive response requires an Average test of Agility to avoid being struck. Damage is 2D10, and the yeti will rouse to full wakefulness in 1-4 combat turns.

The beds north of the screen are standard corporate security (read: military) issue. The PCs will have seen a power cable along the corridor between this room and the portal area. Each of these bunks has a smaller cable leading from it to the power cable.

Each of the corporate bunks also has a small, glowing rod sticking out of a receptacle in the base of the bunk. These are the stun wands (see page 17) the corporates carry for security, and they are being recharged via the cables beneath the bunks that lead back to the heat exchanger power source in the portal area. If a PC touches the rod anywhere in the glowing area, he or she suffers the effects of a stun wand hit (see page 17). All of the exposed areas of the rods are glowing; in order to grab one safely, a PC must press a raised knob just above the rod, which exposes the handle.

HALF ASLEEP

If the PCs are spending a lot of time in the sleeping area rummaging around for useful items, have them make Agility tests at random intervals. Failing an Average test of Agility indicates that a character has knocked something over, causing a loud noise. One of the yeti half-awakes, becomes aware of the characters, and starts attacking. This yeti has been half-awakened from a violent dream, and perceives the characters as some horrific opponent from its dreams.

If the characters can subdue rather than kill the yeti, it will fall back asleep and no harm will have been done. If, however, the PCs kill it, the other yeti will be alerted that something dangerous is among them and will raise a general alarm.

THE STOREROOM

Equipment of all sorts is stored here, divided into human supplies on the north side of the room and yeti supplies on the south. The human supplies include over-the-counter medication, military rations, blankets, spare uncharged stun wands, and even a few boxes of Browning HP-35 ammo.

Yeti items include wooden bowls, empty plant pots, and various shovels and pick-axes.

Four yeti guard the storeroom but will not hinder or try to stop the player characters unless they see them trying to leave with an item of yeti supplies. If this happens, the guards will attempt to take the item back, roughly handling the PCs if necessary. If the PCs succeed in leaving the storeroom with a yeti item, the guards will spread the word that the item needs to be returned, and that there are unauthorized intruders in the cave complex.

The yeti will not object if the PCs take any human items, however.

THE KENNEL

The yeti keep their wolves here. Though the animals prefer to hunt and roam on the outside, the area outside the cave was too hot for them until the heat exchanger (see page 17) was activated. They now roam freely on the outside, but return here to sleep and be tended by the yeti. The rear wall contains a fissure, which leads to the wolves' private entrance on the surface, which the PCs discovered earlier. They are confined to this area by a barred metal gate at the end of the corridor, next to which hangs several leashes.

When the PCs approach the kennel, the wolves begin to howl, filling the cavern with their din. The PCs will probably think that they've been discovered, and try to hide. However, so long as the alarm has not been raised, the worst that will happen is the yeti handler arrives in one minute, sees the PCs, then bellows deafeningly at the wolves to stop howling.

If the alarm has been raised, and the PCs are not hidden, the yeti will know they are intruders, and attempt to open the gate and loose the wolves on them.

There are 28 wolves currently in the kennel, some of which are gnawing on bones and bits of fabric. Two wolves are actually playing tug of war with a red piece of cloth that looks like a necktie. (If the PCs look closely, they can see that this is all that remains of the corporate bodies thrown in earlier.) Other wolves are out roaming the countryside.

PORTAL AREA

The central area is circular and about 100 meters across. A tunnel extends out from the east wall (to the data banks, see below), and a large secondary chamber (the control area, also below) extends out of the northwest side. In the center of the room is a large metal platform surrounded by equipment and power cables. To one side is a large control console with a number of chairs behind it. This is the dimension door and its control and power equipment.

PCs who succeed at an Average test of Intelligence will realize that this room is immediately beneath the crystalline column that they spotted earlier. The four artificial columns surrounding the platform do not merely support the ceiling. Judging from the power cables leading out of them to the equipment and the fact they go through the ceiling indicates they lead to something else--and their robust size indicates that something else is very heavy. A Difficult test of Physics will allow a player character to suspect that the column is actually drawing energy from the environment to power this equipment, and the cold they experienced is the result of that loss of energy.

If the PCs remain hidden, they will see the dimension door in action. As the PCs watch, human technicians at the console watch monitors, press buttons, and do other similarly scientific things. A set of lights above the platform begins to emit a deep blue glow, and the outlines of a piece of machinery appear on the platform. It appears to be somewhat unreal, sort of hazy. One of the techs makes some adjustments at his console, and the "envelope" widens to include the entire piece of equipment. As the PCs watch, the equipment solidifies, then appears on the platform. As various technicians dismantle the machine, two yeti begin moving the pieces off the platform and toward the control area. This example will show that the envelope size can be shrink and enlarged at will, it must be possible to even make the envelope the size of the room.

After the newly arrived equipment has been cleared from the platform, the techs operating the control equipment change the settings. Two other yeti get on the platform, the lights come on again, and the yeti on the platform fade out then disappear.

If the PCs find and understand the instructions in the computer data banks, they will be able, with some trial and error, to use the dimensional portal.

This dimensional portal is tied to a similar platform in the ice dimension that is home to the yeti, ice wolves, and the Ice Daemon. Anything sent to or brought from there must go through these two platforms.

If the PCs enter the main open area of this room they will be spotted unless they make a Difficult test of Stealth. To observe the portal's operation otherwise, the PCs must watch from the corridor or from behind and among the stalagmites and columns around the edge of the room as described in "Sneakin' Around," page 9. If the PCs are spotted here, a general outcry will go up. In that case, refer to "The Final Battle" on, page 13.

THE DATA BANKS

This room contains several large computer consoles hooked into large processing units. Any PC with Computer Operation or Computer Empathy will recognize this place as having the same layout and equipment as a corporate data storage facility. A player character recognizing this would know that such facilities typically include computerized operations summaries and training procedures for equipment and tasks appropriate to that facility.

Within the computer, available through a Difficult test of Computer Operation or an Average: Computer Empathy task, are operating instructions for use of the dimensional portal generator. The reason for the difficulty of the task is because the time required to find the information, read, and learn it makes it very likely that the PCs will be stumbled upon by one of the corporates during the attempt. If one or more of the PCs can distract the corporates, the difficulty of the task will be one level lower.

Use of these instructions requires an Electronics skill of 4+ to understand enough to even try, and is then an Average test of Electronics skill.

THE CONTROL AREA

This room is an extension of the portal area. There are consoles spread throughout the area with human technicians sitting at most of them. One of the central features of the room is a "war board," looking like the glass plotting boards familiar to those who watch World War II movies. One side depicts the southern half of North America, while the other shows a foreign land mass.

Gathered in front of this board are three humans in cold suits and a one-meter-tall creature. This creature has fur over half of its body. The parts uncovered are scaled and chitinous, as if the creature were a large, furry insect. When it speaks, it is with an audible hiss, its voice coming from beneath a proboscis adorned with three-inch fangs. This is the Ice Daemon.

As the PCs watch, the Ice Daemon speaks quietly to one of the humans. To hear requires an Average test of Observation. It is speaking of plans to expand the operation to all areas warm enough for the heat exchangers to operate. As it speaks, it makes motions across the map, and small red lights go on to show future sites for the exchangers.

The PCs should rapidly come to the conclusion that they need to stop this right away—if they don't, not only will American agriculture be ruined, the planet's weather patterns will be changed, very possibly making the entire continent uninhabitable—by humans, at least.

If the Ice Daemon is attacked or if the PCs are spotted, it will screech orders to the six humans in the room. Then it will leap into the portal area and step through the portal. One of the human techs will hit an alarm, and the PCs will shortly hear the howls of approaching yeti. If this happens, see "The Final Battle", below.

THE REAL STORY

Though the humans or yeti may seem to be in control, the power actually lies with the small creature, the highly intelligent Ice Daemon. Several months ago, this small but brilliant creature entered this dimension through a dimensional portal. Through its empathic powers, it quickly took over a small megacorporation. Using scientists and technicians from the corp, it set in motion a plan to alter the climate of the Earth. Once complete, this change would allow it to dominate the entire world.

THE FINAL BATTLE

The Ice Daemon has leapt through the portal, having given orders to kill the PCs. Six humans are present in both the control area and the portal room at the time. Every combat turn, a yeti enters the fray from the central chamber. The humans are armed with Browning HP-35 automatic pistols and stun wands. Of the humans, half are Novice technicians and the other half are Experienced security personnel.

After two combat turns (one minute), the portal will begin to shimmer and the shadow of something really big will appear on the platform. It will take one turn to coalesce. This is an Ice Wyrn, sent by the Ice Daemon to wreak havoc. It will appear and begin killing indiscriminately, tearing its way toward the PCs. Any surviving corporates and yeti will scatter, running from the room in panic.

If the PCs run from the Ice Wyrn, go to the "Retreat", page 14.

If the PCs do not run, it is unlikely—given the incredible size of the creature—that any of the PCs will care to face it in a stand-up fight. Rather, they will most likely dodge about behind equipment and ice columns, taking potshots at it with their weapons while trying to avoid its attacks. This sort of dodge-and-fire combat will eventually enrage the Ice Wyrn (the referee should decide how long this takes, timing it to be dramatically appropriate). Once enraged, it will begin bellowing and thrashing about with its tail, knocking over anything standing, including the four heavy power columns. The PCs should notice the first column go down, then as the second goes down, they hear a groaning and rumbling sound. When the third goes down, rocks start falling from the ceiling, hitting and further enraging the Ice Wyrn. From this point, there will be one combat turn before it knocks down the final power column and precipitates a cave-in that buries it and the heat exchanger controls under several tons of rock and ice.

Once that happens, a hush will fall over what remains of the room, and the PCs will find that a hole has appeared in the ceiling, and the crystal heat exchanger column has fallen through it, the column's base now resting on the cavern floor. Most likely, the PCs will assume the adventure is over at this point, but they are wrong, because the rod continues to function. (In fact, the PCs immediately begin feeling the cold, taking 1 point of damage to each hit location every minute they remain in the room.)

NO TIME TO LOSE

Soon after discovering the dimensional portal, whether while skulking about the base or while continuing to spy on the operations of the portal, the PCs will witness an event sure to impress upon them the importance of what they have discovered. This will be particularly true if they had started to think about escaping to get someone else to handle the yeti invasion.

The PCs will be stopped by a veritable parade of yeti. Each is carrying a piece of equipment that looks like part of the heat exchanger/dimension door combination. The last group out the door consists of a dozen yeti sweating and straining to move what looks like an obsidian obelisk—a heat exchanger column (see page 17). Assuming they can convince anyone to take the job, by the time the player characters can return, it will be too late. There will be other heat exchangers already en route to new locations. They have to act now.

TURNING OFF THE CONTROLS

If the PCs do not assume the heat exchanger has ceased functioning, and they decide to ensure that it is turned off, they will have to dig out the buried controls. Remembering the controls' location in the collapsed room requires an Average test of Intelligence; digging them out requires an Average test of Engineer or a Difficult test of Strength and takes 15 minutes.

Once the controls have been dug out, the PCs can attempt to deactivate the heat exchanger. The best way to do so is to set it to backfire (a Difficult test of Electronics). Another suggested method is to short it out by laying something conductive across the power leads to the crystal column. To get to the leads requires another Average test of Intelligence to remember their location, followed by a repeat of the tests above to dig them out once again, the digging process requires 15 minutes. Another method would be to blow up the rod. This requires large quantities of explosives and a remote detonator. To rig the equipment to explode requires an Easy test of Demolitions, assuming, of course that the PCs have the equipment available.

A more creative possibility is to open the dimensional portal, then set it to gradually swallow the area, giving the PCs time to escape. Again, 15 minutes will be required to dig the controls out. When the portal swallows the support machinery, the power is cut off, causing the portal to collapse the machinery still inside it, including the crystal column. Setting the portal in this way takes five minutes and requires an Average Electronics Test using the instructions from the data banks.

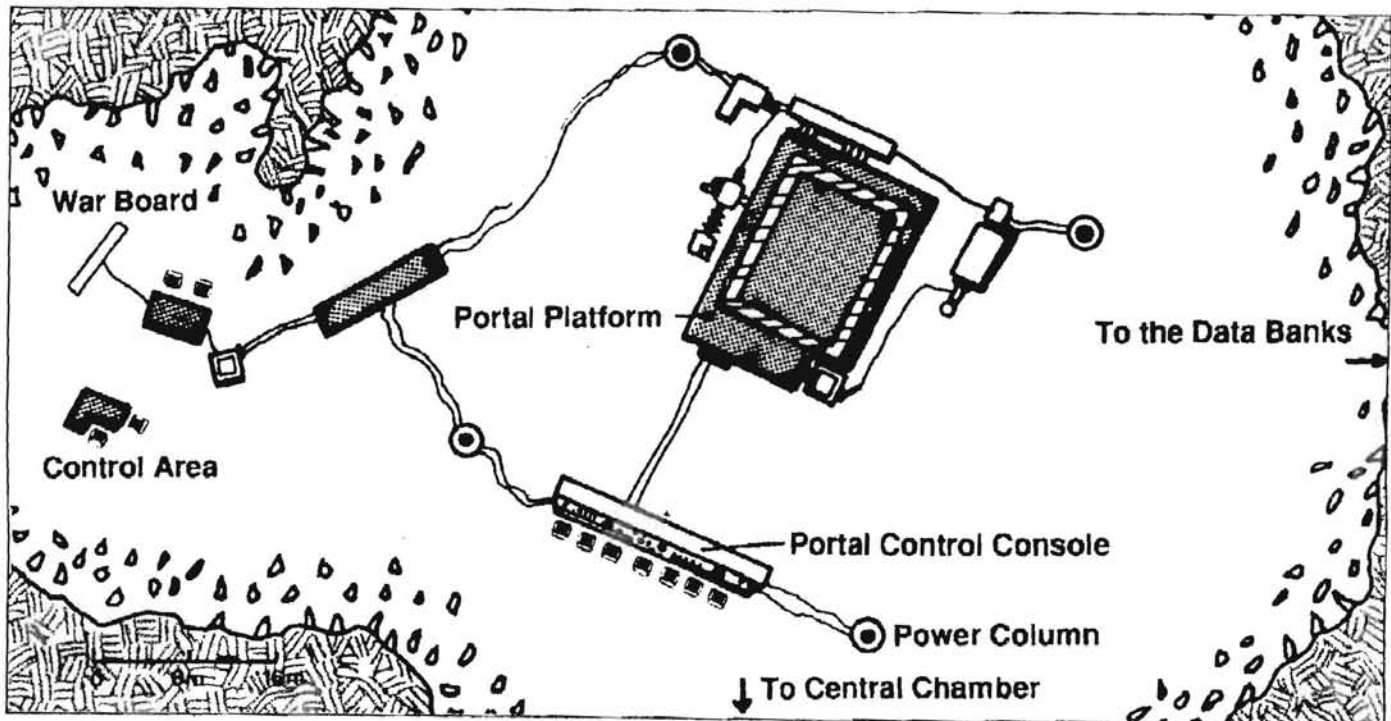
Any of these options will cause the entire installation to destruct spectacularly. As the PCs escape, the entire complex will shake and rocks will fall constantly from the cavern roof. Once outside, the PCs will see the entire complex collapse, then explode. The air will begin to warm at once, becoming normal Texas weather within an hour. All the snow and ice will melt to slush and then to water, soaking quickly into the desert ground.

The threat will be over, but the Ice Daemon will have escaped into its home dimension. It could be gone forever, or it could return to cause more trouble in another adventure at the referee's option.

RETREAT

If the player characters run from the Ice Wyrms when it first comes through the portal, they will successfully get out of the complex to be pursued by a large number of yeti, wolves, and the Ice Wyrms itself. Every 20 minutes, either a patrol of five yeti with five wolves, a patrol of 10 wolves, or the Ice Wyrms will attack them. Which is encountered is up to the referee.

If the PCs retreat after the Ice Wyrms has caused a cave-in, but without having first destroyed the heat exchanger themselves, then the cavern will collapse, but the weather will continue to grow colder and the PCs will need to return and shut off the exchanger. They will find the crystal column lying amid a circle of collapsed stone. It will be exuding black light and throbbing audibly. The only way to destroy this column is to crack it (blow it up) with explosives. If the PCs have none, they can go back



to Jon's contact. He will sell the PCs enough explosives to do the job, but will charge an exorbitant amount. The precise cost and the amount of explosive necessary are up to the referee. In the time since the PCs were last here, the temperature has grown extremely cold. As the PCs approach the column, they will feel this coldness progressively more severe; once within 10 meters of the column, each player character takes one point of damage to every hit location every combat phase. Once the PCs get to within three meters of the column, up from the ground will burst a seriously wounded--but really angry--Ice Wurm. It survived the cave-in and is none too happy with the PCs. It will fight to the death. During the fight, it is possible to maneuver the creature into tromping on the column and cracking it. If this happens, a huge amount of energy discharges through the Ice Wurm and up into the clouds. When the brilliant light clears, all that remains is a scorched mark on the ground where column and monster used to be.

If the PCs kill the Ice Wurm, then they must blow up the column in the manner described above.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

Experience awards for this adventure are modest. For successfully completing the adventure, each PC should get between 2 and 3 skill experience points and one initiative experience point. If a player character chose to take Jon as a solid contact, give him or her an additional experience point. Any other awards are at the referee's discretion.

ICE WOLVES

Attacks: 95%
Move: 15/30/60
Initiative: 5
Strength: 6
Constitution: 5
Agility: 9
Skill/Dam.: 7/2D6
Hits: 18/28
Appearing: 2D6



These creatures resemble Earth's arctic wolves, with a few subtle differences.

The most noticeable difference to anyone familiar with wolves (an Easy test of Biology) is that the ice wolf has a shorter and thicker snout than its Earth cousin.

Yeti value their wolves as guards and as pack and sled animals.

YETI

Strength: 12
Constitution: 14
Agility: 8
Intelligence: 5
Education: 2
Charisma: 4
Empathy: 2
Initiative: 2
Move: 2/8/15/30
Skill/Dam.: 6/2D10
Hits: 60/120
Appearing: 1D6



These are the "abominable snowmen" of legend. They first showed themselves in the mountainous regions of Tibet. Legends spread quickly to China, surrounding countries, and as far as the U.S. (Sasquatch or "Bigfoot"). They are the denizens of an ice dimension.

Although immensely strong and therefore dangerous to humans, the yeti are none the less seen here to be herbivorous.

These creatures are known to keep company with animals, wolves in particular. The "wolves" associated with yeti are not Earth wolves at all, but rather a similar species native to the yeti's ice dimension.

The yeti have few goals of their own, and are seen here as servants of more powerful ice beings. They are comfortable in temperatures below 5 Celsius, but can survive in temperatures of -25 for short periods of time. They are as comfortable in barely freezing weather as in biting temperatures of -40 or lower. In fact, they grow more active at the lower temperatures.

Its white fur allows the yeti to blend easily into snowy environments. This natural camouflage allows the yeti to attack by surprise even in clear weather and on moderately flat ground.

THE ICE DAEMON

Strength: 3
 Constitution: 3
 Agility: 12
 Intelligence: 12
 Education: 7
 Charisma: 2
 Empathy: 16
 Initiative: 6
 Move: 4/12/23/40
 Skill/Dam.: 10/8p2
 Hits: 30/60
 # Appearing: 1



This small creature is native to an as yet unexplored ice dimension. It cannot survive long in temperatures much above freezing, and for this reason it needs to install a network of heat exchangers if it is to dominate Earth. Though it has had immense success due to its great empathic powers, it is not equipped for mass combat. For this reason, it employs its massive slave, the Ice Wurm.

The Ice Daemon physically appears to be some sort of fanged insectoid with large tufts of white fur and a thick blue-gray chitinous shell. It appears like nothing else seen on Earth.

Its goal is the conquest of the Earth. If defeated here it will escape to its home ice dimension to plot a new strategy. The struggle against the Ice Daemon is not over yet. The PCs will find that they must keep an eye out for unseasonably cold weather for the rest of their lives.

Though highly intelligent, the Ice Daemon's talents do not lie in the technical area. Thus, it frequently employs human aid. This aid is supplemented by that of its lesser servants, the yeti.

THE ICE WYRM

Strength: 30
 Constitution: 30
 Agility: 5
 Intelligence: 1
 Education: 1
 Charisma: 2
 Empathy: 6
 Initiative: 5
 Move: 3/10/20/35
 Skill/Dam.: 7/5D10
 Hits: 120/200
 # Appearing: 1



This huge monstrosity is the slave of the Ice Daemon, who uses it to fight battles in its stead. Ideally suited to this purpose, it has huge claws that inflict vicious wounds and a powerful tail studded with knife-like projections, and is very nearly invulnerable.

Nearly mindless, this creature has no concept of pain or surrender and will always fight to the death. Due to its low intelligence, it also has no concept of allies, and will kill indiscriminately once given the command to fight.

In appearance, the huge, spiky Ice Wurm retains the insectoid resemblance of the Ice Daemon and shares the same white and blue-gray coloration, but is 10 meters tall and has a snake-like shape. Its long muscular body is armored with sharp, chitinous plates, and ends with a spiked tail that it lashes as a weapon. It has only one pair of limbs, which are attached to its erect forebody, as hand/claws. Both of its limbs are covered with wickedly sharp, spiked projections which resemble scythe-shaped icicles.

When seriously injured or extremely confused, this creature will fly into mindless rage, striking out in all directions and destroying all objects within reach. Without its diminutive master, this creature would be a mindless killing machine with no direction at all.

ICE DIMENSION DARKTEK

Heat Exchanger: The heat exchanger is a fairly complex piece of machinery. The most visible portion of it, until the PCs entered the caves, was the crystalline shaft. The shaft appeared black because the reactions inside it cause it to absorb light.

The shaft acts, like an antenna, transferring the molecular motion of the surrounding air into itself and converting that kinetic energy into electricity and other forms of power. This, of course, has the effect of cooling the air around it. Normally, all that would happen in the area around the antenna would get colder--The snow was merely a byproduct of the thunderstorm.

In theory, the heat exchanger can produce an amount of energy limited only by the number of molecules in the atmosphere and their temperature. However, as the air around the exchanger gets colder, it becomes less efficient. It reaches maximum efficiency at about -10 Celsius.

The heat exchanger's crystal column is effectively indestructible, being reinforced by interdimensional energies from the portal generator. It will stop working if the temperature goes sufficiently low--approximately -100 Celsius--but is set to regulate its local environment to achieve maximum efficiency at -10 Celsius. Burning it would not work--it feeds off heat. If they want to destroy the exchanger, they will have to come up with a plan acceptable to the referee.

Buried beneath the crystal column are several bundles of heavy power cables that handle the tremendous energies of the device. They carry the power leached from the air down into the portal area through the four very large power columns around the room, which also serve to support the tremendous weight of the heat exchanger column itself. From these columns come a number of cables that channel the energy to the dimensional door and its control equipment.

Ice Dimension Stun Wand: Anyone struck by this stun wand must succeed a Difficult test of Constitution to stay conscious. Those who fail must make an additional Difficult test of Constitution at the start of every combat turn to regain consciousness. PCs who are conscious (or regain consciousness) suffer a -2 penalty to Initiative and Agility for one combat turn (outstanding success at the roll reduces this penalty to -1).

This weapon holds enough power for three attacks. After this power is exhausted, the weapon is useless--it's too light to be a melee weapon.

They are charged from the bunk bed sockets in the bunk area. These sockets are designed just for them and the stun wands can't be used with other power sources. Although similar in effect to human stun sticks, they don't work the same way. These weapons are a product of the same technology as the heat exchanger.

Price: N/A (-/-)

Wt: 0.35 kg

ICE DIMENSION STUN WAND STATISTICS

Weapon	Range	Hit Mod	Damage
Ice Dimension Stun Wand	S	0	*

**See text above for stun effects*

DEMONGROUND

The Electronic Fanzine of Dark Conspiracy



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Nightsider

INTRODUCTION

Philosophers and scientists have long suspected that there are other space-times besides our own. They are quite right. However, they never suspected that these realms might be inhabited and might be accessible to our own realm. They never suspected, while they worked with their cold logic and formal mathematics, beings that would make their blood freeze and their screams die in their throats existed in these realms. Worse, they never suspected that these beings could enter our realm, bringing darkness and horror with them. Unfortunately, these realms and their inhabitants are far too real. They are no longer philosophic abstractions, but as real as the blood that flows in one's vein. Nightsider is an adventure that involves the player characters in an attempt to stop an intrusion into our realm of sanity and light from a realm of madness and darkness.

Nightsider consists of three parts: "Dead Island," "Out of the Grave," and "Off Ramp." The first part of the adventure, "Dead Island," takes place on an Island off the coast of Maine. A military scientific research center has been infiltrated by a Nightsider (evil, nonmaterial beings who inhabit dead bodies see pages 28-30) who have manipulated the research and directed it toward producing a chemical agent that turns people into zombies. The research results in both success and disaster: Such an agent is produced, but the production process is extremely violent and results in the contamination of the research center as well as the surrounding island, turning it into an island of the dead. To make matters worse, several groups with conflicting goals are on their way to the island, and not all of their members are human. The reasons the party becomes involved are discussed below under "Getting the PCs involved." Regardless of which briefing is used to set the adventure in motion, the party must determine what actually occurred on Fang Island. This part is necessary to introduce the players to the Nightsiders and the threat they pose.

In the second part of the adventure, "Out of the Grave," the PCs are drawn to the woods of New England by strange goings-on there. Once there, they will become involved in the plot of a lesser nosferatu (Janet Savage) to free three true nosferatu from their dimensional prisons. To complicate matters, one or more of the Nightsiders will be present for its own fiendish reasons. The Nightsider(s) also provides the PCs with the gateway controller they will need in part three. In fact, one of the reasons the PCs are brought in to help Nightwatch (a secret organization dedicated to fighting the Dark) is because a mystic in Nightwatch has learned that the PCs possess a device that could close the dimensional gate.

Part three of this adventure, "Off Ramp," involves the players travelling to the dimension from which the Nightsiders came. Once there, the PCs must try to close off the gate allowing travel between our dimension and theirs. Truly ingenious parties may even manage to accomplish this feat and survive.

ECO-TERRORIST BRIEFING

Brothers and Sisters. We have learned that the hierarchy-based, patriarchal United States Army has established a research center on Fang Island, Maine. This center is intended to produce nerve gases and disease-causing agents. Worse, it is believed that they are trying to develop a chemical agent to reanimate the dead. This center must not be permitted to continue. You brave warriors will be equipped with the weapons, explosives, and protective equipment you will need (including advanced NBC kits) to do the job required of us. Best of luck. May the Goddess be with you.

Referee: The briefing will also include descriptions of the area as well as semi-accurate maps of the island. There are no maps for the bunker interior, however. There will also be a great deal of political-socio-religious talk, half-truths picked up on the mainland. Once the PCs are on the island, fear can be built as they discover the emptiness of the houses and vehicles. Terror can be planted by having the PCs hear the zombies moving about in the woods and seeing shadows moving, then finding the bodies of the Marine pilots when they go to investigate. As the PCs find more bodies (the Marine recon team), things will be more frightening. More terror can be generated by a properly orchestrated encounter with a zombie or two.

Finally, terror can reach a peak under the earth in the station. There are few things more frightening than an underground laboratory filled with the walking dead.

PART ONE: DEAD ISLAND

The US Army BioChem Research Station F-7 on Fang Island has produced a biochemical agent that first kills humans and then reanimates the bodies, turning them into zombie killers. This agent was developed under the impetus of a Nightsider. Upon development of the agent, the station was contaminated, as was the island. All human life on the island was killed and then reanimated. Thus, the PCs will be facing a sizable number of zombies. In addition, the project director, Colonel Fisk, 'survived' his contamination. His body is dead, but being a Nightsider, he can manipulate the reanimated body.

In order to make the situation in part two more interesting, it is suggested that the referee find some way for Fisk and/or Ruskin to survive part one.

In addition to the indigenous problems, the situation will draw several groups to the area. These groups include a military investigation team, ecoterrorists, and a few groups of innocents and curiosity seekers.

MILITARY BRIEFING

[Project file abstract]

Secret: FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

PROJECT VOODOO

Location: United States Army Biochemical Research Center, Fang Island, Maine.

Abstract: Primary research projects include development of Type XI Flu, Tsung Nerve Gas XX, and PROJECT VOODOO.

PROJECT VOODOO Abstract: PROJECT VOODOO is dedicated to production of a neurotoxin/reanimator. The agent is a two-stage reactant. Stage one results in death in 6-36 seconds. Stage two results in the reanimation of the body, preferably with hostile behavior patterns implanted in the nervous system via viral neuro-etchers. This process is estimated to take 1-6 hours.

Project Head: Colonel Fisk, United States Army.

[Situation Briefing]

Secret: FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Situation Briefing: PROJECT VOODOO.

Situation Summary:

Day One (1630): Routine Communication indicates substantial progress on PROJECT VOODOO.

Day One (1830): Routine Communication interrupted.

Day One (1831): Emergency Transmission received.

Day One (1833): Military Helicopters dispatched from Bar Harbor.

Day One (1840): Quarantine Signal Received. Helicopters ordered back to base.

Day One (1844): Overflight by military recon aircraft. A faintly luminescent, cloud is seen drifting from a section of the forest near the station. The cloud obscures the area of the station.

Day One (1946): Overflight reports that cloud is entering civilian area of island.

Day One (1952): Overflight reports that civilians are collapsed in the streets.

Day One (2000): Fang Island is officially quarantined.

Day Two (0622): Overflight reports that civilians are no longer in the streets.

Day Two (0722): Marine Recon Team dropped onto island.

Day Two (0734): Communication lost with recon team.

[Mission Briefing]

You are to land on Fang Island and proceed to the Research Station, then ascertain the situation. Once the Research Station has been secured, you are to enter the civilian sector and ascertain the situation there. You are to render all possible aid to the civilians. You are to report in every half-hour (CODE: DOLPHIN). You are to maintain secrecy regarding the situation in regards to civilians. As this is a quarantine situation, media intrusions should be dealt with accordingly.

Referee: The briefing also includes a description of the area, as well as maps and so forth. The maps are completely accurate. See page 24, briefing their source had received. Or the PCs might blunder into the situation by accident. Other ways of getting the PCs involved are left to the referee.

The island is located about three miles off the coast of Bar Harbor, a tourist town, for the most part. The area is very pleasant and is a rather nice place to be. There are local sporting goods stores where PCs can purchase supplies and weapons. Due to the bad times, the local people are a bit suspicious of outsiders, but less so than some other areas, since tourists are common here.

Referee: While Bar Harbor is a real place, Fang Island is not and cannot be located on actual maps. However, maps of the area might prove useful during play.

Once the PCs are on the island, what they do and where they go is up to them. However, they should gradually move toward the bunker. They can be guided to this area by having an accident force them to land in the civilian area.

SETTING THE MOOD

As with a Dark Conspiracy adventure, it is necessary for the referee to create the proper mood if the game is to be enjoyed to its potential. So, obviously, the mood of fear should be set from the very start. The island is rather foreboding. If the PCs arrive at night, the island will be quite dark (no one but Fisk is alive to turn on the lights). If the PCs arrive during the day, they will have odd feelings, like the kind one gets in an empty, spooky house in emptiness with an undertone of being watched. The mood can be built by arranging events carefully. For example, an aura of mystery about what is going on can be built by rumors and

GETTING THE PCS INVOLVED

There are several viable ways to get the PCs into the action. They may be sent in as part of one of the groups that have been sent to the island. If the PCs are military, they will receive the military briefing below. If they are eco-terrorists, they will receive the eco-terrorist briefing (see page 19). If they are among the innocents and curious, refer to the "Rumors" sidebar below. Also, they may have contacts among those involved with the situation. For example, they might have a friend in the military who knows of their involvement in strange cases and "lets slip" a few clues to get them involved. In this case, the PCs will receive a certain portion of the

ARRIVAL

If the PCs are in an official military group, their transport will be via military helicopters. If the PCs are with the eco-terrorists, their transport will be motorized rubber rafts (electric engines, recharged from solar-powered panels). If the PCs are on their own, their mode of transport is up to them.

What occurs when the PCs try to get to the island will depend on who they are with and how they arrive. If the PCs are part of an official group, their travel will be without incident. The second best way to reach the island is by rubber raft. These can be purchased locally, and are too small to be picked up by radar, so if the player characters go at night, there is very little chance they will be spotted.

Other groups will have some difficulty getting in, for the following reasons:

First, the island is under radar surveillance. Unless the player characters can fly an aircraft NOE (or "NOW"), they will be picked up and intercepted by either jet aircraft or RAH-66 Comanches. This will be very bad for the PCs, as they will be arrested or shot down.

RUMORS

The PCs are likely to have access to some rumors, even if they receive no formal briefing. The exact number of rumors the PCs know will depend on such factors as who they talk to, how long they have been in the area, and so forth (i.e., referee's discretion). Rumors are either true (T) or false (F), but the PCs have to find out which is which on their own.

1d10 Roll Rumor

- 1 "There is some sort of hush-hush military base on the island." (T)
- 2 "I was talking to my cousin on the shortwave, when I heard a choking gasp, then a thud. The channel is still open, and this morning I heard somebody moving around." (T)
- 3 "Coast guard cutters have closed off the island." (T)
- 4 "I saw UFOs landing on the island!" (F)
- 5 "I had a dream last night. In it I saw everyone on the island die and then get up and walk around." (T)
- 6 "A friend of mine in the coast guard said he saw some sea monsters near the island. One of them had a human body in its mouth!" (F)
- 7 "Ayuh, I heard that the army was doing some fancy work with the influenza and nerve gas over there." (T)
- 8 "Honest, I've seen ghosts on the island before. I think the dead are loose over there!" (T, sort of)
- 9 "My grandpa said that island belonged to the fey folk, so I never went there. It's a bad place." (F)
- 10 "I was looking at some birds when I saw two Marine helicopter fly in. They haven't flown out yet." (T)



Second, there are two coast guard vessels patrolling the area. They are armed with 25mm cannon and machine-guns. The guard vessels are equipped with radar, and any vessel larger than a small boat will be picked up by them. The coast guard would prefer not to shoot anyone and will give a warning the first time. If the PCs are caught a second time, they will be arrested. Some of the crew has family and friends on the island, and the PCs may be able to talk them into letting the PCs by. This requires a Difficult: Persuasion roll.

Third, the ocean around the island is known to be frequented by sharks. If the player char-

acters end up in the water, a shark will appear on a 1D20 roll of 1-2 (see page 422 of Dark Conspiracy Referee's Guide Masters Edition for full details). The chance can be modified for various conditions (for example, if a PC is thrashing and bleeding, the chance would increase).

Unknown to the PCs, at some point the coast guard vessels will be forced to leave this area to respond to an event farther up the coast. This event will allow a boatload of innocent people to reach the island by accident. The PCs may be able to capitalize on the situation, either by chance or by planning.

In any case, the PCs should get to the island, although the trip over should rattle them a bit (dark, predator shapes whispering by under their flimsy raft, a helicopter cruising overhead, shining a searchlight that misses them by mere meters, a tricky wave that threatens to capsize their frail craft, losing sight of the island for a few minutes, etc.): These events will help to set the mood of the adventure, but should not be too dangerous. Once on the island, the player characters will constantly feel that they are being watched.

ON THE ISLAND

The island looms ahead of you like a dead body floating on a sea darkened with its blood. You don't know why that picture enters your mind—it just does. The island is dark. Dark and silent, like a tomb. A tomb waiting to be filled.

The island is split into two sectors—the civilian and the military. The civilian section consists of the town of Greensport and includes private houses, two local stores, and the civilian dock. The military sector consists of the barracks (which have been here since before the Second World War), the military dock, the helipad, and the bunker. These areas are described on the following pages.

BEACH

The beaches are sandy. On some of them will be abandoned blankets, radios, coolers, and so forth. In some areas that have not been disturbed by wind or sea, impressions (as if a body had fallen there) can be seen in the sand. There are also the usual dead fish, medical waste, and garbage.

ROAD

These are one-lane, well maintained dirt roads. In some areas, vehicles will be abandoned on the road or beside it, with their keys in the ignition, and personal effects left behind. Some vehicles will have crashed (into each other or into trees or building), and there will be blood, but no bodies.

WOODS

The woods are dark, even in the day. Characters looking at them will swear they see dark shapes moving about in the shadows. During the day, many of the zombies will stay in the woods. Characters entering the woods during the day will

encounter 1 D6 zombies on a roll of 1 on 1 D6. The chances and numbers can be adjusted depending on the characters' action (for example, characters being noisy or using vehicles and lights will be more likely to attract zombies than a stealthy party).

FENCE

The fence is a chain stretched from post to post. There is a gate where the road crosses the fence, with a small guardhouse there. It is empty, except for a spilled thermos of coffee and a walkie-talkie.

CLIFF

The cliff is rocky and an average climb.

DOCK

There are two docks, one military and one civilian. Both are pole-supported wooden docks with concrete reinforcement. The civilian dock has a few sailboats and motorboats moored to it. The military dock has two motorboats (unarmed).

Generic House

First Floor

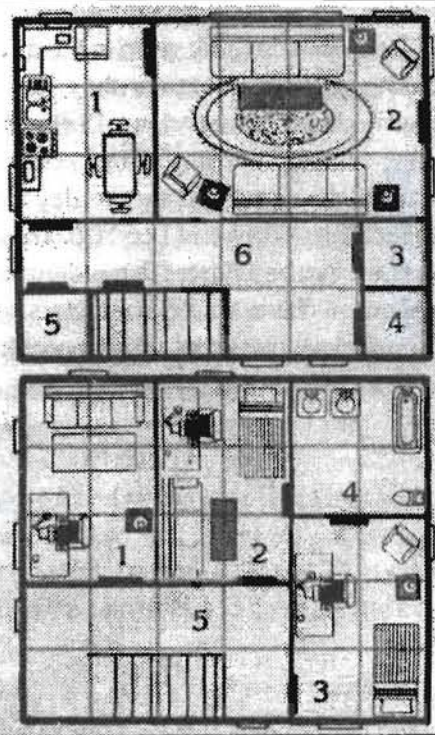
1. Kitchen
2. Living Room
- 3-5. Closets
6. Hallway

□ = 2 meters

— Door
— Window

Second Floor

1. Study
- 2-3 Bedrooms
4. Bathroom
5. Hallway



Generic Store

First Floor

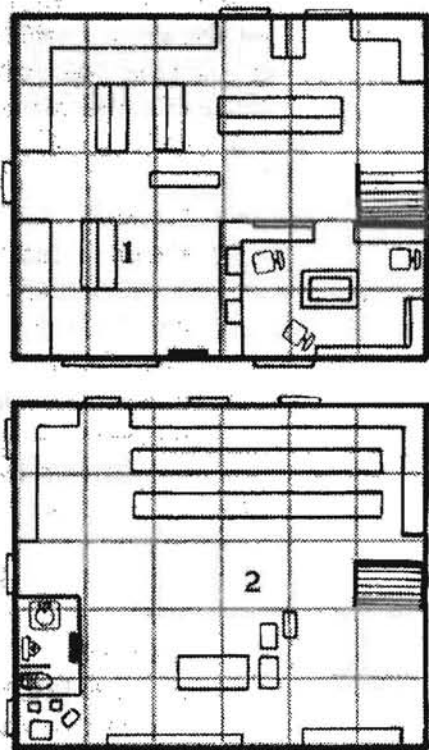
1. Goods

— Door
— Window

Second Floor

2. Goods/Storage

□ = 2 meters



HOUSES

(Use the Generic House Map above.) There are many civilian dwellings on the island. Currently, they all look as if the people in them suddenly vanished: Food is left on plates, TVs and radios are on, water is running, and so on. In some cases, there will be damage, as if someone had fallen or things have been dropped. However, no people will be found. Zombies sometimes stay in the houses to avoid the sun. Any house entered will contain 1D6+2 zombies on a 1D6 roll of 1-2. However, it is recommended that the referee choose the moment of the first PC-zombie encounter for maximum effect.

The exact contents of a house are a matter left to the referee's discretion.

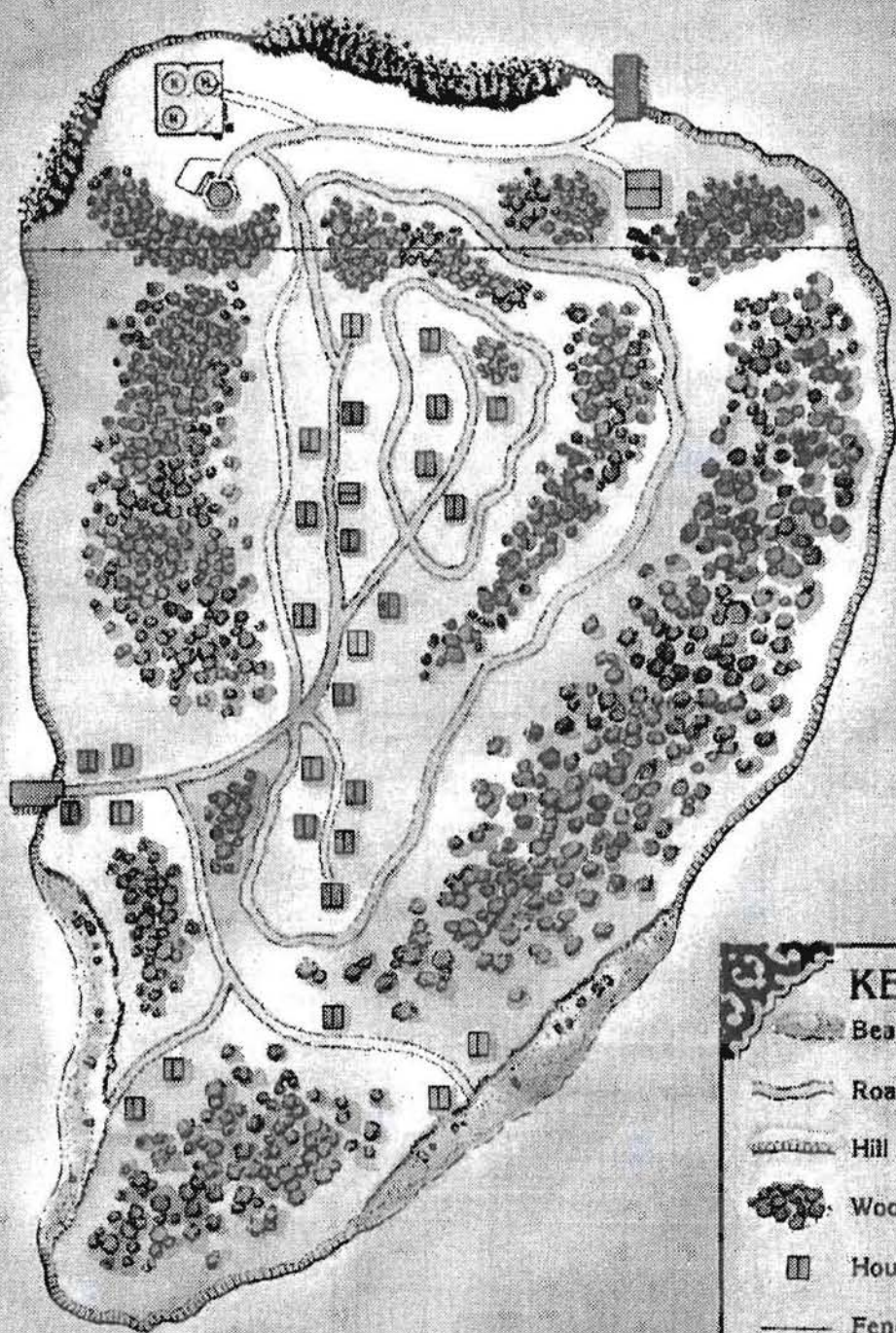
STORES

(See the Generic Store Map on page 9.) The two civilian stores on the island both look as if they were suddenly abandoned. For example, the cash register may be open, with change and a receipt on the counter and a bag of purchases on the floor. One store sells food, and the other has all sorts of stuff, like books, tools, automobile parts, fishing equipment, and so on. Any store entered will contain 1D6+2 zombies on an 1D6 roll of 1-2. The location of the stores is left up to the referee.

FANG ISLAND

Military Sector

To Maine



KEY

- Beach
- Road
- Hill Mark
- Woods
- House or Store
- Fence
- Cliff
- Dock
- Bunker
- Barracks
- Helipads

100 meters

MILITARY BARRACKS

If the PCs go to the barracks via the road, they will encounter an abandoned Orca truck. It has blood on the steering wheel, and there is a blood-soaked hat on the floor. There are six M-16A2s and three Kevlar helmets in the back of the truck.

The barracks building is an old wooden structure left over from the naval base that used to be on the island. It is unlit and seems empty. During the day, PCs entering the barracks will encounter 1D6 zombies on a roll of 1 on 1D6. Of course, the PC-zombie encounters should be used to maximum effect.

GROUND FLOOR

1. **Gun Pit:** Empty.
2. **Lounge:** This area looks like the people in it vanished. Magazines lay on the floor as if dropped, and glasses on the tables are half filled.
3. **Dining Room:** This area also looks like the people vanished. A few half-eaten meals rest on the table, with broken glasses on the floor.
4. **Kitchen:** The gas stoves are still running, with food on and in them (burned to a crisp). Dropped kitchen utensils litter the floor.
5. **Storage Area:** The smaller section is the freezer.
6. **Water Tank**
7. **Generator Shack**

SECOND FLOOR

1. **Arms Room:** This area contains the small arms locker. There are 16 M-16A2s, with two clips for each, six 500-round boxes of ammunition, 16 M9s, with two clips for each, and forty 50D-round boxes of ammunition. The doors are metal reinforced wood and are locked.
2. **Support-Weapons Locker:** The door is also metal-reinforced and locked. The locker contains two M60s with 20 100-round belts, one Mk-19 AGL with 10 50-round belts, one 60 mm mortar and two 50-round crates (80 HE, 10 WP, 10 ILLUM), and four FIM-99 Scorpions.
- 3.-4. **Bunkroom:** Each room contains eight bunkbeds and 16 footlockers. Like other areas, this area looks as if the people just vanished. For example, books lying on the beds are open, and unfinished letters lie on clipboards.
- 5.-6. **Bathrooms:** These also appear as if people vanished. For example, there is a sink full of water with a razor and a can of shaving cream on it.

HELIPADS

The helipads are painted tarmac. There is a radio and light beacon and two fuel pumps, but not much else. Two CV-27 Peregrines are parked on the tarmac, but the keys are not in them. Two OH-62 Shawnees (page 337, Dark Conspiracy Players Handbook Master's Edition) with US Marine markings are also parked on the tarmac. The doors of both helicopters are open, and the keys are in the ignition.

Any characters who make a successful Easy: Observation check will see a bloody Marine pilot's helmet on the tarmac along with an M9 and several spent shell casings. There are splotches of blood on the tarmac as if a body or two were dragged off. What occurred here is that zombies of some of the military personnel were attracted by the noise of the helicopters. The pilots, thinking they had found survivors, went out to greet them. They were killed and dragged away.

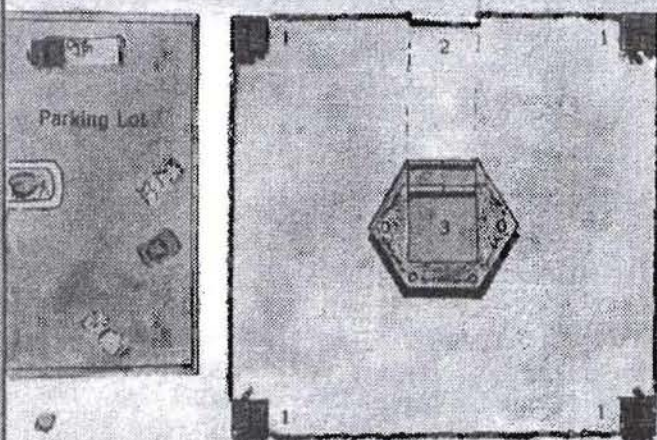
BUNKER

If the PCs are coming to the bunker on the road, they will encounter an empty HMMWV (with an M60 on a pintl mount) in the road. It is empty.

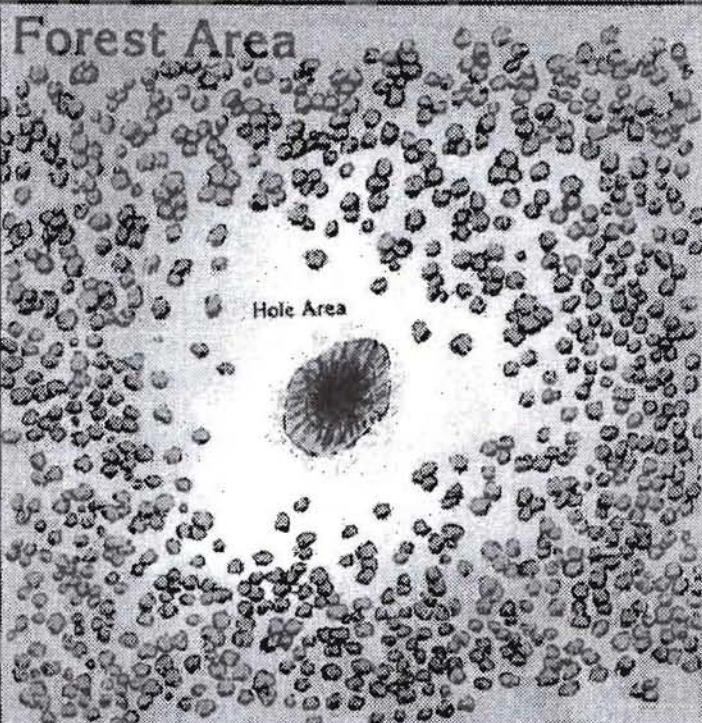
The forest area to the right of the bunker looks odd. Some of the trees have been knocked down, and some have been stripped of their foliage or an explosion damaged them. A sizable hole in the ground leads down into the research station (at Area 356 see page 11). The interior of the hole glows faintly and smells funny.

Any of the PC who enters the bunker through this hole without full NBC gear will become contaminated with the "viral etcher"—(see "Military Zombies," page 28, for description). This will result in illness that will last 10 hours, minus the PC's CON. The illness reduces the PC's STR by 2 and AGL by 1. Viral etchers will also make the character irritable. Characters foolish enough to go all the way down into the bunker will be killed, then reanimated by the viral etcher. The PCs can be warned of the danger by having them feel sicker the farther they go down or have an NPC suffer the fate. For example, a friendly NPC falls in, and the PC rescuers pull out a dead body, which will become a zombie in a few hours.

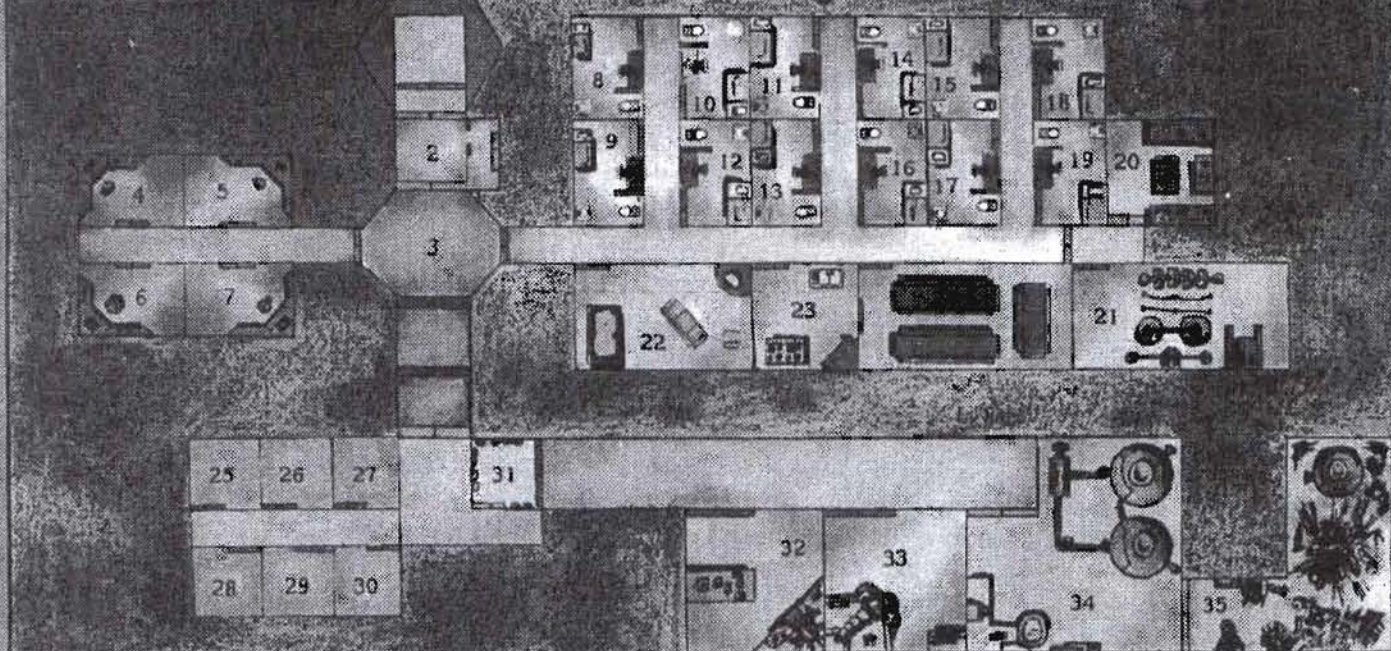
Bunker-Surface



Forest Area



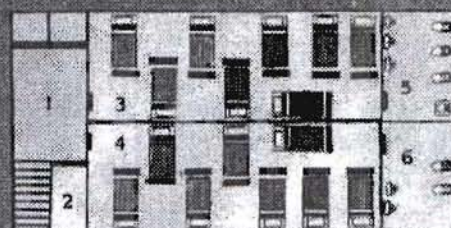
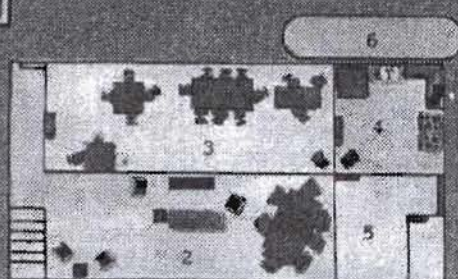
Bunker-Underground



Ground Floor

Barracks

Second Floor



Scale: one square = 2 meters

An inspection of the area will reveal the base's air intake system, which has had the filter and safety systems blown off by the explosion (this should indicate to clever PCs that the bunker is contaminated).

BUNKER SURFACE MAP

The bunker is a concrete hexagon set in the earth. Around it is a chainlink fence with a one-man guardpost on each corner. Besides it is a parking lot with three civilian cars and an Orca truck.

MAP KEY

1. **Guardpost:** Each guardpost has its door hanging open. Inside each one is an M-16A2 as well as a built-in radio.
2. **Gate**
3. **Bunker:** This should be described so as to make it seem like a waiting tomb. Atop it are flashing red lights, which glare like baleful eyes. The bunker is thick concrete with reinforced steel doors. It is designed to survive a bombing, so the PCs will have a hard time getting in. The first lock is mechanical, and this allows access to the electric lock. If the player characters are with the military group, they will have been provided with cards. Inside, red lights flash and sirens howl.

BUNKER UNDERGROUND MAP

The interior of the research station should be presented as a frightening place. Be sure to emphasize the lifeless sterility, the oppressive feeling of being underground, and so forth. For example: 'It is as if you are in a hell designed by a post-modern devil. Red light drenches the stainless-steel corridor like blood, and the siren fills the air with the screams of the damned.

The doors of the bunker are all security doors requiring an ID card and code. The double doors also require a thumbprint (from a living thumb, they also scan for a pulse). There are red strobing lights flashing inside, and the warning sirens are howling. These will make the PCs very tense and will interfere with their ability to hear what might be closing in on them. The lights and sirens can be put out of commission with a few solid blows from a blunt instrument.

Inactive, inert residue from the Voodoo agent in Areas 1-31 will make the characters feel vaguely ill and irritable, unless they wear NBC gear. Areas 32-35 are highly contaminated with the still active Voodoo agent. Anyone entering these areas will die and become a zombie if they aren't wearing NBC gear.

There are 19 "normal" military zombies in the station and one special zombie. The details for both types are given in the area descriptions. The zombies cannot work the doors, so they are stuck where they are.

MAP KEY

1. **Elevator**
2. **Security Check:** There are two zombies wandering around in here. Each zombie has an M9 with two clips and a tonfa (club). Two M-16A2s are in the small room. The door to that room is open.
3. **Intersection:** There are two zombies in here. One was a scientist, the other a technician.
- 4.-7. **Computer Centers:** Each room contains a powerful computer workstation. There is a zombie that was a scientist in room 7, and a technician zombie in room 6.
- 8.-13. **Technicians' Quarters:** Each room is designed to house two technicians. There is a bunkbed, footlockers, desk, and bathroom in each room. Areas 10 and 11 each have a technician zombie in them.
- 14.-18. **Scientists' Quarters:** Each room is like the technicians' rooms, except they are for single occupancy and are not kept at military standards.
19. **Colonel Fisk's Quarters:** Like the technicians' rooms, designed for single occupancy.
20. **Computer Core:** A technician zombie is in this room.
21. **Power Plant Area**
22. **Lounge Area:** There are two technician zombies in here.
23. **Kitchen:** One technician zombie is here.
24. **Dining Area:** There are two technician zombies and one scientist zombie here.
- 25.-30. **Offices: Empty.**
31. **Airlock:** This area is designed to keep the working area separate from the outside world. This prevented the contamination from spreading completely into the other areas of bunker. There are 10 safety suits with one-hour air supplies in the small room (they can also hitch up to air supplies in the rooms for longer operations). The suits will keep out chemical, bacterial, and viral agents.

32-33. Labs: These labs contain all sorts of complex scientific equipment. Be sure to describe the lab as complex and somehow threatening (this is because elements of DarkTek have been incorporated into some of the equipment). There is a technician zombie and a scientist zombie in room 33.

34. Lab/Production Area: This room contains the equipment needed to produce agents in large quantities. One tank contains an instantly fatal nerve gas, the other a flu-like virus that will kill a person slowly and painfully over the course of two days. Fortunately, the tanks are intact, and a special security code is required to open them. They are clearly labeled (an Easy: Observation check) as being very dangerous. A technician zombie and a scientist zombie are in the room. Either of these tanks might be ruptured by gunfire. Anyone firing a gun in the room will miss his target and rupture a tank on a 1D10 roll of 1. If anyone using a firearm rolls an automatic miss, a tank has also been ruptured.

35. Production Area: This area is very disturbing to humans as it heavily incorporates DarkTek into the normal equipment. It consists of two production tanks. One of the production tanks has exploded, and the machinery is distended and ruined. The interior of the tank is contaminated. Trapped in this room is Colonel Fisk or, more accurately, what purports to be Colonel Fisk (see page 12). Since the lab doors require a living thumbprint to open, he cannot escape and is waiting for rescue. He has produced some chemicals to color his skin and is wearing dark glasses so his rescuers will not realize he is a zombie. This is the area that the hole in the forest area leads to. A second tank of the Voodoo agent is also in this room. Anyone who fires a gun in the room and misses his target will rupture the tank on a 1D10 roll of 1. If anyone using a firearm rolls an automatic miss the tank has also been ruptured.

CAST

There are three groups of NPCs on the island—a military team, an eco-terrorist team, and a group of innocents. And, of course, the zombies.

MILITARY TEAM

The military team consists of six Elite Special Forces soldiers. They will be dropped on the island by a Shawnee helicopter. They are equipped with accurate maps as well as equipment to open the doors in the station (make picking the locks an Average task-but only for this station).

The soldiers are all three-term enlisted men in, the elite forces. They are armed like Colonel Ruskin is (below). They are loyal soldiers and are not aware that their CO is not human. They are aware of some of the weird things going on these days, and while seeing walking dead men will not do them much good, they will not panic.

PCs on the military team can either replace the soldiers or be assigned as advisors or mission specialists. The military team's goal is to find out what is occurring and to secure the station. The soldiers will not be very happy with outside interference, but might be willing to accept help when they find out what they are up against.



COLONEL JOHN RUSKIN

Attributes: 7; INT 9, EDU 6, CHA 10, EMP 14

Skills: Melee Combat (Unarmed) 6; Small Arms (Pistol) 6, Small Arms (Rifle) 6, Stealth 5, Pilot (Rotary-wing) 2, Tracking 6, Willpower 10, Computer Operation 5, Chemistry 2, Act/Bluff 9, Interrogation 2, Language (English) 6, Human Empathy 4, Project Emotion 7, Project Thought 6, Willpower Drain 5, Darkling Empathy 4.

Initiative: 5

Equipment: An M9 with two dos, an MP-7 with laser sights and four clips, flak jacket, Kevlar helmet, personal med-kit, and individual tactical radio.

Description: "Ruskin" is no longer a human being. He is a true Nightsider (see page 29) using the still living body that was stolen from the real Ruskin. The entity has access to most of Ruskin's memories enough to be able to play the part convincingly. Personality-wise, Ruskin is an evil being and has no regard for human life (it considers humans as amusing, albeit dangerous, playthings). However, during this adventure, he will work to aid the PCs. While Ruskin is the same type of being as Colonel Fisk, he has decided he will no longer serve his former master. Instead, he wishes to go out on his own and carve his own niche in the world. As such, he wants to get rid of Fisk. To this end, he has constructed a device that will capture Fisk's life force if Fisk's body is destroyed within two meters of it. "Ruskin" is very intelligent and will do his best not to draw unwanted PC attention to him.

MILITARY ZOMBIES

Attributes: 1, SRT 9, CON 9, AGI 6

Initiative: 5

Move: 2/7/13/25

Hits: 32/72

Skill/Dam: 7/2D6+3

#Appear: 2D6

A military zombie is produced by a human being killed by the Voodoo agent. This agent contains a substance that is instantly lethal to humans. Once the human is dead, chemical reactions alter the muscles and nervous tissue, retarding decay and enhancing the body's strength and resistance to damage. The process is completed by the work of "viral etchers" which "program" the nervous system of the victim. The programming is typically to attack and kill other humans. For unknown reasons, military zombies often consume their victims or at least chew on them. It has been suggested that the viral etchers do require sustenance in the form of certain neurochemicals and direct the body to acquire them. Due to the dispersal of the etchers, the body can function even when severely damaged. In fact, each part will continue to move on its own if separated from the rest of the body (use the stats for a crawling hand, if needed—see page 30 of Dark Conspiracy Referee's Guide Master's Edition). Military zombies look like pale humans with sunken features. Their eyes glow faintly due to the presence of the luminescent animator chemicals in their optic nerves.

ECO-TERRORIST TEAM

The eco-terrorist group consists of two teams of six each, with a leader in each group. The terrorists are armed with VZ-52s and Ingram M10 .5s and have two clips for each weapon. Each team has a case of CSF Semitek (page 251, Dark Conspiracy Player's Handbook Master's Edition) and requisite detonating equipment. The terrorists are also equipped with walkie-talkies. Their goal is to blow up the base station. They will be surprised to find zombies on the island, but this will merely make them more eager to blow up the station. They will kill anyone who opposes them.

TERRORIST LEADERS

Level: Elite

Skills: As per Elite NPC, plus Demolitions 6, Heavy Weapons 7, Lockpick 5, Vehicle Use (Wheeled) 7.

TERRORIST FOLLOWERS

Level: Veteran

Skills: As per Veteran NPC, plus Demolitions 5, Heavy Weapons 6, Lockpick 4, Vehicle Use (Wheeled) 6.

GROUP OF INNOCENTS

If desired, a tourist ship can have engine trouble and end up on the island. This will provide a ready supply of victims. These victims can be used in a variety of ways: Some can turn up dead or vanish to enhance terror. Some can be attacked to show the zombies in action. Some can do things to make the PCs' lives more miserable (like driving off with the PCs' vehicle—which has their equipment in it—or screaming hysterically while the PCs are trying to hide from a band of zombies). Some can be annoying ("I insist you repair our boat or transport me off this wretched island. I am simply not used to this sort of treatment."). Some may actually be helpful.

The victims can be considered to be Dobies and Gidgets (page 405, Dark Conspiracy Referee's Guide Masters Edition) if stats are needed. A Good Samaritan (page 400) or two can be included to help or befriend the PCs and later be brutally killed.

VOODOO AGENT

The Voodoo agent is effective in gas and liquid forms, and has two parts to it. The first part is a chemical reactant that is toxic to humans. It also serves to reconfigure the neural and muscular systems of the victim and reanimate them. However, without direction, the body would just twitch. The second component consists of the viral etchers. These program the neural systems to take hostile actions against humans, and they provide the entity with a rudimentary intelligence.

The agent kills in 6D6 seconds, and a body is reanimated in 1D6 hours. The viral etchers take six hours to do their work, so the body will not do much even if it is animate prior to the sixth hour. There is a 1% chance that an exposed human will retain his mental abilities. However, such a person will have to roll under his Willpower on 1D10 to avoid attacking humans on sight.

Renegade ETs are immune to this agent. Rogue androids are still susceptible to the toxic effects but are immune to the viral etchers, so they will maintain their mental abilities and will not be driven to attack humans.

CONCLUSION OF PART ONE

Technically, this part of the adventure ends when the PCs leave the island (either physically or spiritually by dying). They will face the same difficulties leaving as they had arriving. They may possibly try to leave by mixing with any survivors from the boat of innocents that landed. If they are successful, a government agent will swear them to secrecy (for national security reasons), and then they will be allowed to leave.

There may be some loose ends to be dealt with prior to beginning the second part of the adventure. The exact nature of these loose ends and how they are resolved (or carried over into part two) are left to the referee.

Following are general guidelines as to what the various groups will be doing after the PCs leave the island: The eco-terrorists want the station out of commission permanently, and others will try to achieve this if the first two teams fail. The military will want to reopen the station and to cover up the details of the contamination. This might involve attacks on those who survived the island, especially if Ruskin or Fisk survive. Ruskin and Fisk both desire the production of the Voodoo agent (for different reasons) and will do anything to achieve that goal. Ruskin wants to neutralize Fisk and will keep after him, employing the PCs if possible. It is also suggested that Fisk and/or Ruskin survive this part of the adventure to plague the PCs in part two. Besides making the scenario more interesting, this will also serve to drive home the pervasiveness of the menace the Nightsiders represent. The referee can, of course, choose to simply go on to part two without any interlude.



COLONEL FISK

Attributes: 9, INT 8, EDU 7, CHA 9, EMP 12

Initiative: 5

Skills: Melee Combat (Unarmed) 6, Small Arms (Pistol) 4, Small Arms (Rifle) 4, Electronics 7, Psychology 3, Chemistry 10, Biology 8, Engineer 6, Computer Operation 4, Act/Bluff 6, Language (English) 6, Willpower 8, Human Empathy 5, Project Emotion 5, Project Thought 4, Darkling Empathy 4.

Equipment: An M9 with two clips.

Description: Fisk is a Nightsider like Ruskin. Unlike Ruskin, his body is dead and animated. Fisk can control his body, but must roll under his 2xWillpower on 1D20 when in the presence of people to avoid attacking them (this is due to the viral etchers). Like Ruskin, Fisk has a very low opinion of humans and is evil. Unlike Ruskin, Fisk is still loyal to his master, the Nightsider master. Fisk's task was to develop the military zombie agent, which he succeeded in doing. His goal is to get this information to his master (he has it on a disk hidden in his clothing) and to ensure that the Voodoo agent is produced. His master hopes to use it to create an army of zombie slaves.

Since Fisk is dead, he will have to explain his odd appearance and avoid getting "killed" again. He will try to fake that he is still alive. If the PCs find out he is dead, he will tell a story about how he has retained his mind, as this was expected in 1% of the cases.

PART 2: OUT OF THE GRAVE

Long ago, three nosferatu were sent into Earth's dimension by their master to feed and bring back life energy for him. These beings are from a fragment of what was once a whole dimension. To make an extremely long story short, a massive struggle between the beings of this dimension resulted in its fragmentation. The nosferatu are from one of the darker fragments. An inhabitant of one of the saner fragments was sent to Earth after them, and took over the body of a dying trapper. Aided by three humans, he was able to seal the nosferatu into their dimensional cells. Unfortunately, his body gave out before he could finish his task. He left behind the gateway controller in the hopes that humans would advance enough to be able to use it. Since his home dimension had succumbed to corruption, he could not return and hence was forced to dissipate.

SITUATION

The characters will be drawn to the woods of New England by strange goings-on there. Once there, they will become involved in the plot of a lesser nosferatu (Janet Savage) to release the three true nosferatu from their dimensional prisons.

Her master, another lesser nosferatu, has sent the lesser nosferatu to the area. She has been charged to locate and free the three nosferatu that were imprisoned in what is now Old Town, Maine. She was given papers describing the location of the nosferatu's prison and how they were imprisoned (and how they might be freed again), as well as a device to locate them. Since Janet is a lesser nosferatu, she has to feed on human blood in order to survive. Thus, she has been killing people.

Janet's plan is as follows: First, she wants to locate the site where the true nosferatu are imprisoned. Second, she needs to locate the site of the gateway controller. Third, she needs to find a human to get the controller for her and use it to open the nosferatu's cells, as no Dark Minion can work the device. She will use any means at her disposal (the PCs, for example) to reach her goal.

There will be at least one Nightsider here as well. He to wants to see the three nosferatu released so that they can become servants for this scenario. If either Fisk or Ruskin survive, one of both will be present. Fisk will wish to acquire the nosferatu for his master. Ruskin will wish to acquire the nosferatu for himself. If neither survived, then the Nightsider "Captain Wilson Smith" will be present trying to acquire the nosferatu for the Nightsider master. Whichever Nightsider is present, he will have brought with him some of the Voodoo agent, Smith having obtained it through Nightsider contacts in the research project.

The Nightsider knows about Janet, but she does not know about him (or them). He intends to wait and let Janet find the nosferatu and gateway controller, then destroy her and free the nosferatu himself. The Nightsider is equipped with a DarkTek device that can control the nosferatu (see "Nosferatu Controller" for details). The Nightsider will be maintaining a low profile as a tourist. Since he can do just fine on normal food, he will not draw the attention Janet does.

The PCs are first drawn into the situation by the murders. They may begin by investigating the sites. They should then be drawn to Old Town as bodies are discovered there. Janet has set up a neighborhood watch and has provided walkie-talkies to the members (so she can monitor them and know when it is safe to strike), and the PCs can meet her this way. Janet will pose as an investigator and will try to get one of the PCs to be her dupe.

The situation will be made more complex when the Nightsider decides it is time to step in. Ideally, the PCs should meet both Janet and the Nightsider without being aware of what they really are. This will lead to a greater impact later on when they stand exposed.

The second part of the action will follow the initial investigation. In this part, the PCs will be involved in the search for the nosferatu and the gateway controller. The PCs may be tricked into this by Janet or the Nightsider, or may be drawn in by the strange dreams they will have (see "Dreams," page 36).

The adventure takes place in Old Town, Maine. It is a small mill town on the Penobscott River. Old Town is located 12 miles from Bangor/Brewer and is about a two-hour drive from Portland on I-95. There are airports in both Portland and Bangor. Bangor has numerous stores, including a shopping mall. Camping equipment and weapons are readily available in Maine. There are two hotels in Old Town and several in Bangor, if the PCs need a place to stay. Areas of interest include the University of Maine at Orono and the Bangor Theological Seminary.

GETTING THE PCS INVOLVED

There are numerous ways to get the PCs involved. They could hear about the incidents on the news and come to investigate. The PCs could learn through a contact that some strange chemical residue was found at the site of some missing occultists. Or a friend or associate in the area who is aware of the PCs' interest in the weird could contact them. If Fisk and/or Ruskin survived part one, one of the PCs may notice a story about a cult disappearance in a paper. In a picture of the scene, the PC will notice (Easy: Observation task) that one of the bystanders looking on is Fisk or Ruskin. Or the PCs could simply blunder into the situation by accident.

BACKGROUND

Information in this section is presented in two portions. First is the information that may become available to the PCs in the form of TV, newspapers, radio reports or from conversations. Second, the referee's information is presented.

CULT VANISHES

The media reports on April 23 that the members of the "Church of the Greater Void" vanished yesterday in the Maine woods. The church's tents and the personal belongings of the members were still present when the investigators found the site. There were no signs of violence, and no bodies were found. A police investigation is under way, but it is generally believed that the cult simply dispersed.

If the PCs investigate the cult site (located in the woods 40 miles from Old Town), they will find a clearing in the woods with several tents. From the belongings left behind, the PCs can estimate that there were 15-25 people in the cult (actually 21). There are no signs of violence and no bodies.

Referee: An Easy: Observation skill check will allow a PC to notice that the area has been closed off with police line tape, but there is no one guarding it. As the personal belongings of the cultists are still present, there should be at least one police officer to discourage looting. An Easy: Foreboding skill check will allow a PC to realize that something seriously wrong is going on, but discovering what it is will require some investigation and deductive reasoning. The police officer is missing as a zombie has murdered him.

The PCs will be able to find a residue of the Voodoo agent (inert by now) on the tents, trees, and ground. This will require an Easy roll using Chemistry skill to determine that some sort of toxin is present. An Average: Chemistry roll will reveal that the substance is a highly complex neurotoxin with viral agents present, and if the PCs are familiar with the agent, they will recognize it for what it is.

What occurred was that a Nightsider, (either Fisk, Ruskin, or Smith) used the Voodoo agent on the cult to create a distraction. The cult members are now military zombies and are loose in the woods. If the PCs go out into the woods, they will encounter 2D6 military zombies per hour on a roll of 1 on 1D10. They will attack on sight. The Nightsider hopes that any mayhem caused by the zombies will distract police, authorities and, most importantly, any empathic underground cells.

TERROR IN THE WOOD

On April 24, the media reports that two families of campers vanished two days ago in the Maine woods. Their campsite, found by two hikers, had been torn up, as if a struggle had taken place. Part of the mystery has now been cleared up. Two bodies found in the area have been identified as those of the missing campers. The condition of the bodies indicates that a bear or wild animal was responsible.

Referee: The campers were attacked by what were once the cultists (now military zombies). If the PCs investigate the area (which is five miles from the cult site), they will find a badly torn up campsite. There are seven other bodies in the woods, which the PCs may stumble onto. There will be further attacks in the woods until the creatures are dealt with.

BODY FOUND

Children playing in a stream in Old Town are horrified on April 24 to discover the body of Andrew Jacobson, an Old Town resident who has been missing for a week. According to the coroner's report, Andrew died of massive blood loss from puncture injuries. Attached to the body were ropes, which had apparently been chewed through by water rats or snapping turtles. Police speculate that the body was weighted down and dumped into the nearby pond. Police intend to investigate the rest of the pond.

Referee: Janet Savage, the lesser nosferatu, killed Andrew, a resident of a local senior citizens' home. His body was dumped into the pond with weights tied to it. Snapping turtles got at the body and severed the ropes. The body then drifted away downstream. If the PCs manage to find out the details of the autopsy, they will learn that there are deep puncture wounds in Andrew's body and that he has been completely drained of blood. Residents of the home will say that Andrew was last seen leaving the building with his daughter, a very striking young woman. A check of the records will reveal that Andrew has no daughter. The woman was, in fact, Janet Savage.

MAIN MAP

The main map details a section of Old Town, Maine.

Swamp/Woods: This area is a swampy section of woods. There are plenty of insects and leeches to amuse the PCs with.

Woods: The woods are composed mostly of pine trees. The forest floor is covered with needles, which can be a bit slippery. The forest is thick, but most areas have little undergrowth.

Old House: Detailed below.

Frog Pond: A small pond with numerous frogs, leeches, turtles, and so forth. The water is rife with bacteria and is contaminated with years of chemical waste. There are two dead-end streams off the pond and one that flows into the Penobscott River.

Residential Areas: There are some abandoned houses, but Maine has not “metroed” yet, so there are still plenty of people living here.

Devil’s Hole: This area is called Devil’s Hole by the local children, who find themselves drawn to it, in the way one is drawn to the edge of a cliff. It is actually the burial site of the three nosferatu. This area is detailed on pages 17 and 18.

Waste Treatment: This area is the waste treatment plant for the local mill. On windy days, the chemical foam blows into town (it looks like brown snow). The area smells rather bad, and not much lives near it.

Burial Mound: The man who defeated the three nosferatu is buried here. While local legends contain reference to the burial mound, its location is not known. This area is detailed below.

Bodies: These black circles mark the area where the lesser nosferatu’s victims ended up. #3 is where Andrew’s body was found. Three bodies are sunk in the stream here at #2 (held by weights and rope), and the tattered remains of Andrew’s ropes and the weights that held him are here. The bodies are of three derelicts from Bangor. #1 is the lesser nosferatu’s new dumping spot. At first, there will be four bodies sunk here—two fraternity boys from the University of Maine, a local child, and a derelict from Brewer. Future victims of the lesser nosferatu will be dumped here, at least until the site is located. All of the victims have puncture wounds and have been drained of all their blood.

OLD HOUSE MAP

The old house looks like a classic haunted house. It has a high, pointed roof (“like a witch’s hat”) and plenty of empty-looking windows (“like the gaping eyes of a skull”). A dirt road leads up to the old house, and it has a dirt driveway. The house is currently owned by the lesser nosferatu, Janet Savage. Posing as a visiting professor of art at the University of Maine at Orono, she moved in a few months ago. The local people think she is a bit odd, but they chalk that up to her being “one of them New York artistes.” For details on Janet, see page 40. Janet teaches during the day, but is at home during the early evening and at night (except when she is “eating out”).

FIRST FLOOR

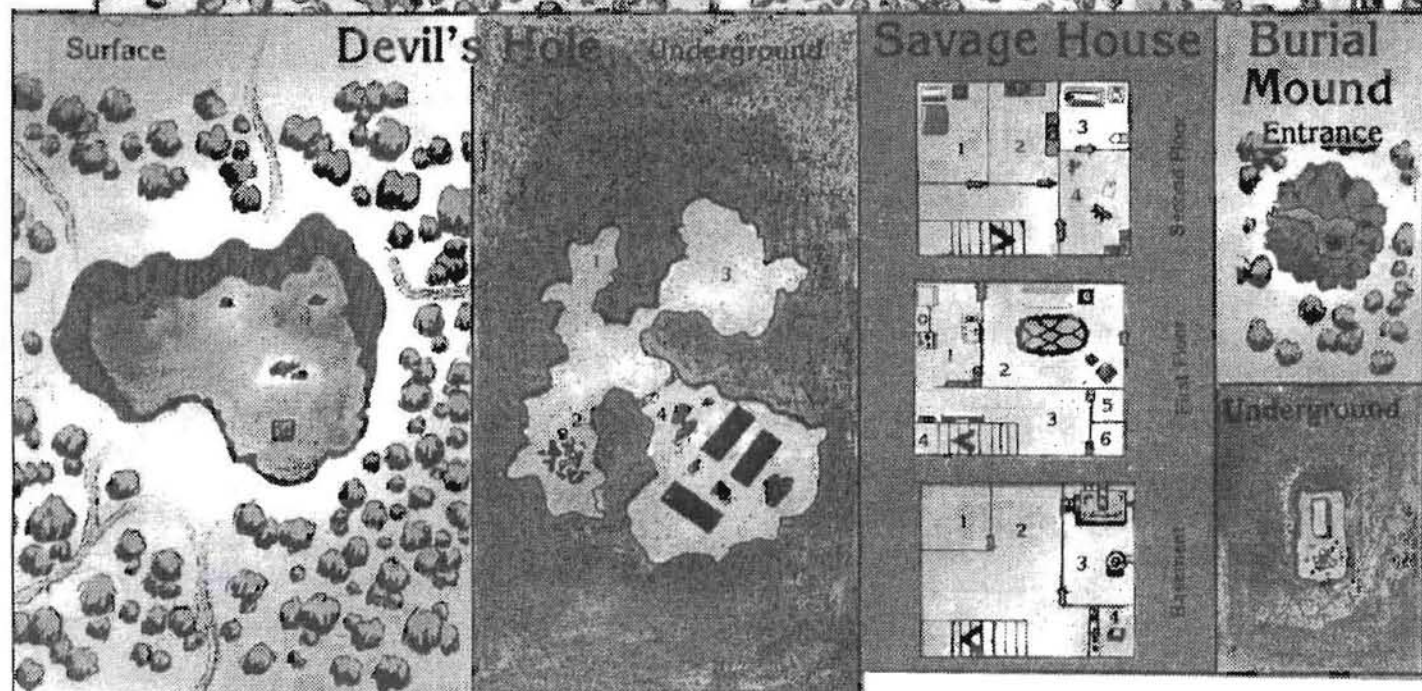
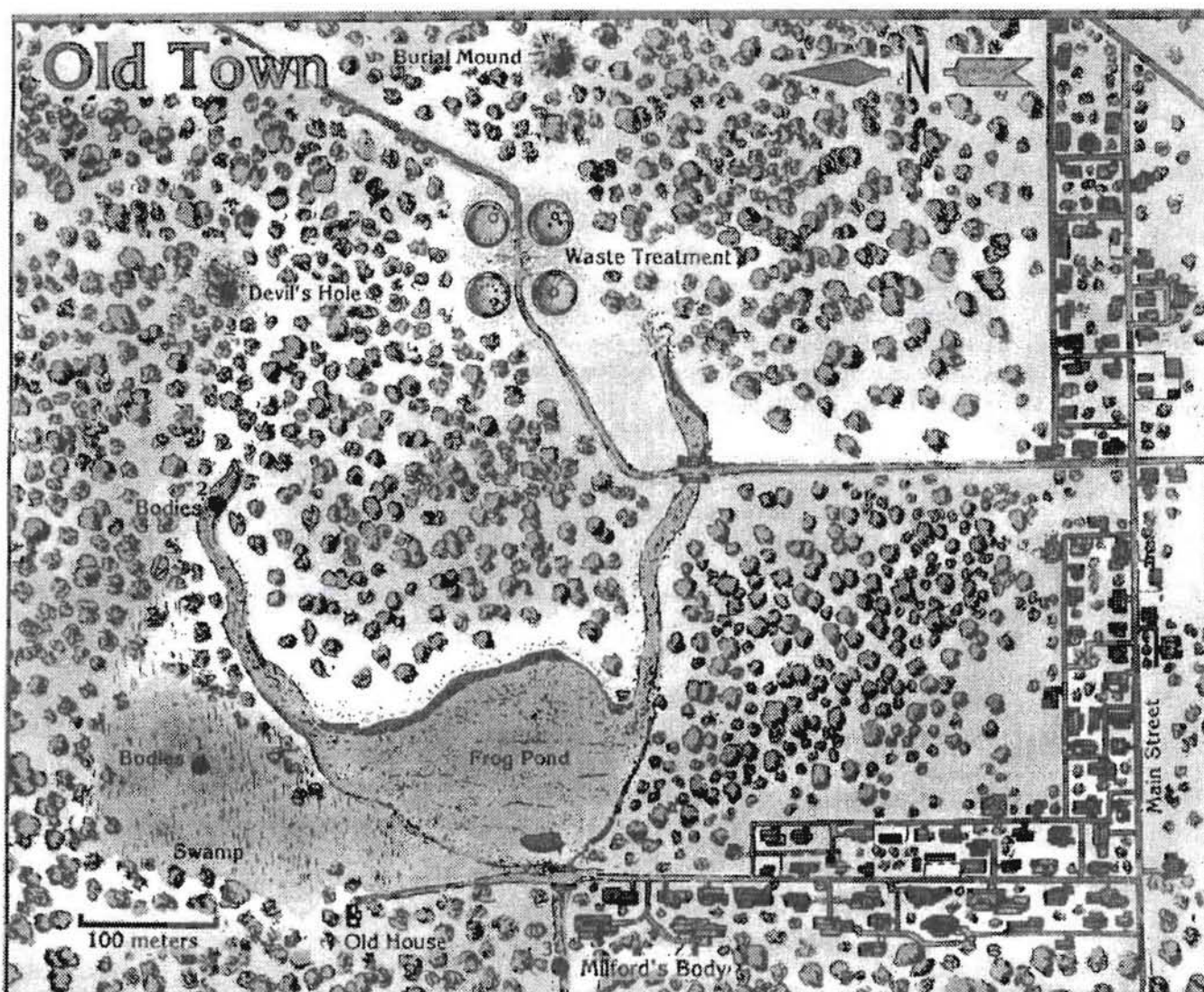
1. **Kitchen:** This area is stocked with food, mostly canned goods and nonperishables. If a character is in the kitchen more than once over a period of a few days, he will notice that the same food is present at each time. If the lesser nosferatu notices this observation, she will say that she often eats out.
2. **Living Room:** This room is tastefully decorated and has several of Janet’s works on the wall. They are well done, but are rather macabre.
3. **Hallway:** There is a door to the basement under the steps. It is hidden by a tapestry that has been hung over it. That the house has a basement is, however, quite evident from the outside.
- 4.-6. **Closets:** Each closet contains clothing and footwear.

SECOND FLOOR

1. **Bedroom:** This is where Janet sleeps. The room is well decorated and features more of her artwork. A character with knowledge of history or antiques will notice that many of the Items in the room are quite old.
2. **Study:** This bedroom has been redone as a study. It is full of old books, many on occult topics, artwork, and local myths and legends. More of Janet’s work hangs here. Some of the paintings look old, and a test or careful observation by a knowledgeable character (a Difficult roll versus Education or an Average roll versus Observation) will reveal that the paintings are quite old (over a century) and that they were done by the same person who painted the others—namely Janet.
3. **Bathroom**
4. **Painting Room:** This room has several easels, as well as a large supply of oils, paint brushes, canvases, and so forth.

BASEMENT

1. **Storage:** Once used to hold preserves and so forth, this area is currently empty.
2. **Basement**
3. **Furnace and Water Heater**
4. **Hidden Room:** This room is located behind a set of hinged shelves which are full of old painting supplies (they are glued in place). A Difficult roll versus Observation will reveal the hinges. The room contains a locked metal box. In the box are some old papers and a smaller box. In the smaller box is what appears to be a small (two inches in diameter) disc of black stone. It feels cold to the touch. The black stone and papers are detailed below, under “Black Stone” and “Janet’s Papers.” respectively.



DEVIL'S HOLE MAP

The Devil's Hole is a depression in the earth out in the woods. There are numerous trails leading to it through the woods as the area has a strange fascination for the local children. This is due to the residual empathic powers of the imprisoned nosferatu. Buried under the earth is a stone slab, and under it is a shaft leading down into the Earth.

UNDERGROUND

The underground section is dark, damp, and dismal. People in the shaft will feel a strange attraction-repulsion, of the sort people feel around terrible accidents or the edges of cliffs.

1. **Entrance:** The shaft has stone slabs embedded into the wall to serve as supports and as rungs. People in the shaft will feel their hair rise and will feel faint electric shocks from the walls. This is due to an electrostatic field that keeps the earth in place.
2. **Bone Room:** This room is littered with very old human bones. Occasionally, sparks from the field run across them, lighting up the room. A skull lighting up at the right time could be an effective device to generate fear. Occasionally, the bones are shifted about by the field. Be sure to play on the PCs' paranoia, especially if they are familiar with animated skeletons.
3. **Generator Room:** Buried about three feet beneath the floor of this room is the electrostatic field generator. It looks like an one meter-diameter sphere made of insect chitin, with glowing spots. It emits a faint humming noise. It can generate a programmable field the size of the underground area or smaller to keep off earth and loose water. Its power source is good for another two centuries.
4. **Tomb:** The entrance to this chamber is blocked by a para-dimensional wall. Characters with an Empathy rating of 0 will merely see a stone wall; their minds will not perceive it as an artificial barrier. Characters with an Empathy rating of 1 or higher will notice the wall as a filmy barrier across a corridor to another chamber, and can pass through it. Such characters can also pull other characters through the wall. The wall is actually part of a sphere, 60 meters in diameter, which extends all the way around the tomb, mostly within the earth itself.

The para-dimension is inimical to creatures from the proto-dimensions that the Dark Minions come from. Such beings will take 4D6 of damage for passing through the wall. A being attempting to dimension walk into the chamber must make a Difficult roll against its Empathy rating to avoid passing through the para-dimensional wall.

The chamber itself feels cold. The temperature, in fact, never rises above 50°F at any time.

Lying on the floor are hunks of odd-looking rock. An Average roll versus Geology or Chemistry will reveal (after proper analysis) that the rocks are nonterran. Set into the floor are what appear to be slabs of black rock or metal. A close look will reveal a pure black, nonreflecting surface that radiates cold. The surface is impenetrable and unmarkable. Bullets will simply glance off; fluids or paint will simply fail to attach to the 'surface.' Metaphorically, these are solid pieces of nothing. These are sealed gates to very small pocket-dimensions (closet dimensions would be a more apt name).

Each dimension is a meter wide, two meters tall and two meters deep. Contained in each one are a live nosferatu, a black sphere, and a dead body. The black sphere is a gateway remote, which will be explained later. The bodies are those the nosferatu were using when they were imprisoned.

The bodies have been preserved by the extreme cold (they are, in fact, frozen). The bodies look as if everything has been drained from them or as if they died at an extreme age. This is due to the drain on the body by the nosferatu.

A being attempting to dimension walk into a nosferatu cell will have to make a skill roll against one-quarter of its Empathy. The nosferatu will attempt to take possession of any living being it encounters that would serve as a suitable host. For the details on the nosferatu, see page 40.

For the details on the gateway remote, see the section on the gateway controller, on page 38.

BURIAL MOUND MAP

The burial mound is located deep in the woods and looks like a small hill. PCs with an Empathy rating of 5 or greater will feel a certain presence, but will not be able to tell exactly what it is.

GROUND FLOOR

On the side of the mound is a very slight indentation (Difficult roll versus Observation; if the characters is actively searching, the roll is Average) which is formed by the stone covering the entrance.

Entrance and Tunnel: This area is dry earth, held in place by an electrostatic field like in the Devil's Hole. A shaft leads down into the earth.

UNDERGROUND

Tomb: This chamber contains the electrostatic field-generating device that is buried under the soil. Set in the floor is what appears to be a pure white rectangle. It is a gateway into a pocket (or closet) dimension.

A human with an Empathy rating greater than 0 can pass through the gateway and bring others with him. The interior is a two-meter deep, one meter-by-two-meter wide area with white walls. Floating in the middle of the room is a device that is confusing to look at (it looks like a machine made of fractals that are shifting through four dimensions). Floating around it are six black spheres. The device will move close to and follow the player character with the highest Computer Empathy skill. If no player characters have that skill, it will follow the PC with the highest Empathy.

If the device is brought out of the dimension and a sphere is not left behind (grabbing a sphere and pulling it away will do the trick), the dimension will seal off, trapping anything that cannot dimension walk until the PC with the device reopens the gate.

The device is the gateway controller and is detailed below. The dimension is inimical to all darkling-type creatures and inflicts 6D10 per round on them.

ACTION

The second part of the action follows the initial investigation. In this part, the PCs are involved in the search for the nosferatu and the gateway controller. Janet or the Nightsider may trick the PCs into this, or they may be drawn in by their dreams.

DREAMS

The presence of Janet and the Nightsider will be sensed by the true nosferatu, who will begin to emit empathic signals. Characters will receive these signals as dreams, with the intensity proportional to their Empathy. The dreams are as follows:

You feel yourself pulled out of your dream by something—something from the outside. You are flying through the dark woods toward a depression in the ground, then through the earth and into a dark room with three gaping holes of nothingness in the floor. Behind the holes are dark shapes. You cannot make them out clearly, and you are glad for this. But then cracks appear in the nothingness and black light spills out...your soul grows cold and you wake up screaming.

The true nosferatu's emissions will also be detected by the gateway controller. It has been programmed to transmit an empathic signal to sensitive humans. Characters who have an Empathy greater than 0 will also have this dream (neither Janet nor the Nightsider will have this dream):

You are in a field of green. Beside you is a strong presence. It is not human, but it is friendly. It leads you into the woods and shows you a mound. It takes you inside and into a room of white walls, and shows you a machine that flows into itself and twists and moves. You sense that the machine is a weapon, a sword against the Dark. You wake up with a feeling of purpose. You must find the machine.

Characters having the dreams will have a vague notion where the places in the dreams are. This notion will grow stronger the closer the characters get to the location. They will recognize the places they have dreamed of if they see them. These dreams are intended to get the player characters involved as a third party in the search for the nosferatu.

Referee: How clearly a character experience the dreams depend upon how empathic the character is. Characters with low Empathy (0-2) will sleep poorly, but will not know why. Characters with average Empathy (3-6) will remember the dreams, but some of the details will be fuzzy. Characters with high Empathy (7+) will remember the details of the dreams clearly upon waking. In order to keep the plot moving; ignore the Willpower skill in regards to these dreams.

HISTORY: LOCAL LEGENDS

The following is an excerpt from *Monsters of New England*:

"One local legend tells of a trio of vampires arriving after a thunderstorm that had no rain. The Vampires plagued the area for a month until a second rainless; thunderstorm arrived.

A related story tells of a fur trapper who had been missing for a few days returning to the trading post and asking for help in righting three monsters. Three of the trappers took him up on it, and only one returned. He is reported to have said that the vampires had been locked away and that Couers (the trapper) was dead, as were his two friends. The young man's diary has been passed down from generation to generation and is currently at the University of Maine at Orono."

MORILL'S DIARY

The diary is located in the historical works section of the library. The PCs will only be able to see the original if they can get a professor to sign for them. However, they can get a copy if they ask. The diary details Morill's life and is fairly normal reading, except for one passage:

"Let it always be remembered by my descendants that a great evil rests under the ground not 40 paces, from the old tree. Couers buried the evil there, but died afore he could finish the three of them. I followed his dying words and brought his tool

to a resting-place to await the day when another could finish the job that we started. It rests in a mound a league from the trading post. Let its location not be forgotten. I pray this day and every day that the evil rest until a man comes along who can finish it for good."

JANET'S PAPERS

A man who served the nosferatu wrote Janet's papers. They consist of mostly insane ramblings in bad English, but a few separate passages are important.

"The masters are great and powerful. They say they are from beyond the sky, and I believe them, for they do things no man could do."

They drink blood—They do.

"Woe upon me! My Masters have been sealed into the ground by four men. I rejoice that only one came out of my Masters' den. I went into the den after they left, but my Masters' room was gone. I must remember the den is in the hole. I must come back and find my Masters!"

"I followed the man. He had some thing I could not rightly see with him, and he took it and buried it in the earth. I saw a mound rise up and fled at its sight."

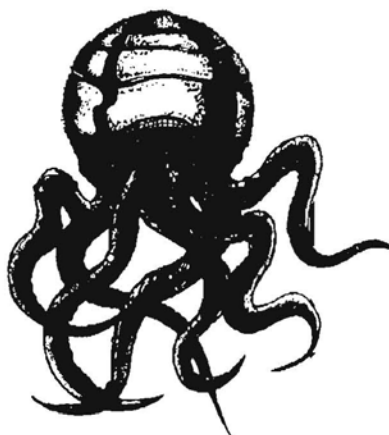
TECHNOLOGY

Several unique technological devices are present in this adventure. Many of these are in fact necessary for the successful completion of this adventure. These devices are described in detail below.



BLACK STONE (DARKTEK)

The black stone is a small (two-inch diameter), disc-shaped stone. In the presence of nosferatu it emits a red glow in proportion to their strength and distance. It can detect nosferatu at up to 100 meters. It is attuned to only detect nosferatu and not lesser nosferatu or nosferatu servants. User Cost: None Wt: Negligible Price: N/A (-/-)



NOSFERAFU CONTROLLER (DARKTEK)

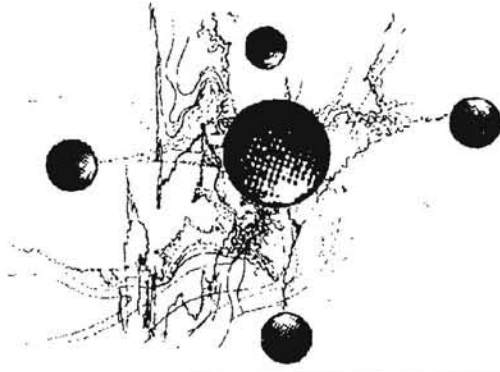
The nosferatu controller is a device that looks like a sphere of insect chitin with beslimed tentacles oozing from one end. The device is grasped in the hand, and the tentacles wrap around the hand and burrow into the nerves. The device enables the user to control a number of nosferatu equal to his Empathy divided by 4 (round down). The control is somewhat limited and basically involves making the nosferatu conform to certain goals. It cannot alter their basic nature. For example, it could be

used to prevent the nosferatu from attacking the wielder's party but could not prevent them from feeding on somebody. While this device has a Feed cost, it does not graft itself permanently to the user. It may be removed at will.

User Cost: Feed: 1

Wt: 0.6 kg

Price: N/A(-/-)



GATEWAY CONTROLLER

The gateway controller is a machine from the dimension that preceded the fragmented shadow dimensions. It has a variety of functions:

First, it can function as a dimension-walking device, generating a gate of up to ten by ten meters.

Second, it can also generate pocket dimensions of two meters by two meters by one meter. These dimensions, or cells, can be of three sorts: standard (like a normal gate), black (like the ones imprisoning the nosferatu), or white (like the one containing the gateway controller). Each pocket dimension requires a black sphere (the gateway remote) to maintain it. These dimensions last as long as the sphere is present. This use does not consume the sphere; the sphere is merely required to remain there to maintain the dimensional cell.

Third, the controller can generate a 60-meter sphere of the sort encasing the room the nosferatu are in. Each sphere consumes one remote.

Fourth, the controller can also seal a dimension. This makes it impossible for things to enter or leave that dimension by any means whatsoever. Each remote consumed in this process can seal a dimension equal in size to the closet dimensions that the controller can generate.

Fifth, the controller can consume itself to seal off fairly large dimensions. (This will be important in the "Off Ramp" part of Nightsider.)

The controller is operated using Computer Empathy skill (rolls are Average to operate the device), or Computer Operation or Empathy skill (rolls are Difficult to operate the device). The device can engage one function per round (treat as a firing action). It is semi-aware and will aid the operator. It cannot be used by any Dark Minion.

CAST: NIGHTSIDERS

If Fisk or Ruskin survive as the Nightsider use their stats from "The Dead Island." If not, use the following:

CAPTAIN WILSON SMITH

Strength: 6 Empathy: 13
 Constitution: 7 Initiative: 5
 Agility: 7 Intelligence: 8
 Education: 7 Charisma: 9

Skills: Melee Combat (Unarmed) 5, Small Arms (Pistol) 5, Small Arms (Rifle) 5, Stealth 4, Tracking 3, Willpower 9, Computer Operation 4, Act/Bluff 8, Language (English) 6, Human Empathy 4, Project Emotion 6, Project Thought 5, Willpower Drain 4, Darkling Empathy 6.

Equipment: An M9 with three clips, Kevlar vest, M16A2 with three clips, Yamaha Apache motorcycle, nosferatu controller.



Description: "Smith" is not human. He is a creature from a shadow dimension that is using the body that was stolen from Captain Smith. This entity has access to most of Smith's memories, enough to play his part convincingly. He is an evil being who has nothing but contempt for humanity. He will be playing the role of a tourist as his cover. His plan is to wait and let Janet do all the work. If his body is killed, the entity will return to its home dimension, where it will be tortured for failing its mission.

NOSFERATU

The Nosferatu are inhabitants of a dark realm. They are beings of energy that require bodies to operate in Earth's dimension. They feed upon the life force of terran creatures and are beings of great evil. There are three kinds of nosferatu: true, lesser, and servants.

TRUE NOSFERATU

Strength: *+4	Education: 1	Move: *
Constitution: *+4	Charisma: 9	Skill/Dam: 8/1D10
Agility: *	Empathy: 18	Hits: 20/40
Intelligence: 5	Initiative: 5	#Appear: 1

**As per host body.*

Special: Heals very quickly. Human Empathy 10, Project Emotion 10, Project Thought 7, Willpower Drain 10, Dardling Empathy 8.



Nosferatu occupy human bodies by attacking them with Willpower Drain until the Willpower of the victim reaches 0. Then the nosferatu can attempt to take possession of the body. This is done by rolling 5-6 on 1D6. A body possessed by a nosferatu has its Strength and Constitution increased by 4 and the body becomes very resistant to damage. The nosferatu feed on blood (as per bloodkin vampires, including the healing effects) and Empathy (by Willpower Drain). The body they possess looks pale white; its incisor teeth grow, and the eyes begin to glow dim red. The body is light sensitive (no extra damage, however), and hence nosferatu tend to hunt at night.

The nosferatu is very draining on its host body. A host body will last a nosferatu a number of days equal to the body's original Empathy rating. After that, the nosferatu must find a new body. A nosferatu without a body must roll over the number of days it has been without a body on 1D10 to avoid being forced back to its own dimension.

Nosferatu can create lesser nosferatu by draining a body to 0 Empathy and then opening a special channel to its home dimension. This sends the human's life force to that dimension and then brings it back, altered. If the human wishes to resist, he is entitled to a Difficult roll against his original Empathy. A successful roll avoids this fate and results in the death of the body, which is reanimated as a nosferatu servant.

LESSER NOSFERATU

Strength: *+2	Education: *	Move: *
Constitution: *+2	Charisma: *+1	Skill/Dam: *
Agility: *	Empathy: *+1	Hits: *
Intelligence: *	Initiative: 4	#Appear: 1

**As per human NPCs or as per original stats.*

Special: Averse to bright light heals quickly ages slowly Human Empathy 2, Project Emotion 2, Project Thought 2, Willpower Drain 2 (or higher if originally higher).

A lesser nosferatu is a human being that has been altered by a nosferatu. Whatever the original human was like, the new being is evil and twisted, and looks upon its former fellows as food. They subsist on blood, and it heals them as per bloodkin vampires. The process they go through strengthens the body and alters the life force, giving the new entity a stronger body and new mental abilities. Like their masters, these beings become pale and light sensitive. Light does not actually harm them, however. Lesser nosferatu can create servant nosferatu by draining a body of Empathy, then killing it. A channel is then opened to the nosferatu's dimension, and an animator spirit is drawn into the body. These spirits are as evil as their limited intellect will allow, but they will obey lesser nosferatu and nosferatu. Lesser nosferatu live 30 years for every point of Empathy they have, losing 1 point every 30 years. When their Empathy reaches 0, they collapse into dust.

NOSFERATU SERVANT

Strength: 9 Education: 1 Move: 2/8/15
 Constitution: 7 Charisma: 1 Skill/Dam: 6/2D6+1
 Agility: 3 Empathy: 2 Hits: 15/30
 Intelligence: 2 Initiative: 3 #Appear: 2D6

These beings are the product of a failed attempt of a nosferatu to create a lesser nosferatu, or the creation of a lesser nosferatu. They are evil beings, and appear to be very pale humans with glowing eyes and sharp teeth. They avoid daylight, but are not harmed by it. Being dead, they do not heal.

**JANET SAVAGE (LESSER NOSFERATU)**

Strength: 7 Constitution: 7 Agility: 6
 Intelligence: 8 Education: 10 Charisma: 9
 Empathy: 6 Age: 140 Initiative: 4

Skills: Melee Combat (Unarmed) 6, Melee Combat (Armed) 5, Small Arms (Pistol) 5, Stealth 8, Tracking 5, Willpower 6, Psychology 6, Observation 5, Stalking 5, Disguise 6, Act/Bluff 6, Persuasion 5, Human Empathy 4, Project Emotion 4, Project Thought 3, Willpower Drain 5.

Description: Janet is a striking beauty of a woman who was drained by a nosferatu at the age of 20–120 years ago. Since then, she has lived a life of feeding and art (her two great passions). She is a very intelligent and very evil being, and will use any means to reach her goals. Her main weakness is her vanity over her art. She will be loathe to destroy anyone who truly appreciates her art (or can convince her that he does).

Equipment: Browning HP-35 and three clips, S&W Model 36 and box of 50 rounds, Martin Dynatech Pacifier stun gun, box of 40 dart packages, Ford Escort.

**CONCLUSION OF PART TWO**

The adventure is finished when the nosferatu have been banished by sealing the dimension they are in with the gateway controller. This can be done from the outside. If the nosferatu are freed, they can be locked into a closet dimension cell by forcing their body into one, and then the cell can be sealed. A sealed cell cannot be entered or left. Of course, recapturing the nosferatu may turn into an adventure in itself. If the nosferatu are sealed off, Janet and the Nightsider will leave eventually. Janet will try to kill the PCs, but the Nightsider will simply leave. The follow-up to this adventure is "Off Ramp," which requires the PCs to have the gateway controller so be sure they retain it. They may have to capture it from Janet or the Nightsider, who cannot use it but will be looking for someone who can.

PART THREE: OFF RAMP

The third part of the adventure begins on I-95 in Maine and ends up in a shadow dimension. This type of place is described in the Dark Conspiracy Referee's Guide Master's Edition (page 15) and is detailed below. The first portion of "Off Ramp," Nightwatch, takes place in the Massachusetts section of New Boswash. The area is a metroplex zone, with all that implies. While no specific action has been set in this area, a few side mini-adventures could be run. These can serve a variety of purposes. First, they can be used to build up the PCs skills and confidence. Second, they can get the PCs back into "normalcy" just in time for a trip into the extreme weirdness. Be sure to make the metroplex seem very humanly mundane through careful descriptions of normal urban life (which is unpleasant, but mundane). This should serve as contrast to the weird occurrences linked with the Nightsiders intensifying the strangeness of these creatures and their dimension. Once any desired mini-adventures are run, the PCs can have their meeting with the Nightwatch at MIT. The second portion of "Off Ramp," Down the Off Ramp, involves the characters in closing the gate between dimensions.

NIGHTWATCH

The PCs are not the only group dedicated to fighting the dark conspiracy that threatens Earth. One of these other groups is a secret organization based in New England called Nightwatch. It is very secretive and operates in accordance with the classic revolutionary style (for example, no one person knows more than six other members). Nightwatch often recruits people (without revealing who is really doing the recruiting) to fight the Dark Minions. In this case, it is the PCs being recruited.

GETTING THE PCS INVOLVED

One of the PCs (the best known or one with contact in government or the academic world) receives a hand-delivered letter (with thumbprint, blood type, and retinal check required):

Dear _____,

I am working on several projects involving multidimensional physics, and I have been informed that you have some unique knowledge on that topic. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to MIT so that I might discuss this topic with you. I believe that we are on the same side of a worldwide struggle, and I think we can be of help to each other. Enclosed is a map that will enable you to find my laboartory, as weall as passes for you and your friends. I hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,
Dr. Andrew Tover, MIT

Enclosed in the package are the map and passes mentioned. They already have the PCs' names and vital stats on them. Dr. Tover is famous for his work on dimensional physics. An Average roll versus Physics will allow a character to know that Dr. Tover's mathematical proofs for the existence of parallel worlds created a considerable stir in the scientific and philosophic communities. If any PC has contacts in the academic work that knows Tover, they will relate that Dr. Tover is brilliant, innovative, and also a good man. He is, however, known as a bit of an eccentric among his friends. His eccentricity takes the form of believing that the other worlds are inhabited and that these inhabitants may be unfavorable to humanity. If any of these contacts are solid, they will also comment that Dr. Tover hangs around with odd people (like mystics, street fighters, and ex-military types). will also comment that Dr. Tover hangs around with odd people (like mystics, street fighters, and ex-military types).

MEETING

The meeting is to take place in Dr. Tover's lab. The PCs will have to go through several layers of security (with all sorts of scans, checks, and sample-takings). Eventually, they will reach Tover's lab, where they will be checked by two guards (wearing full combat gear and armed with G-11s). Some of the devices used to check them will seem rather odd, but the security guards will not comment on them. Finally, the PCs will be allowed inside.

The lab is a marvel of modern science. It contains a vast array of computers, laboratory equipment, and many apparently hand-made machines of unknown functions. It is a virtual cornucopia of technology. On the walls are mathematical formulas, as well as computer printouts of odd geometric shapes. In the center of it all is a table piled with papers. At this table are Dr. Tover and Dan Moore, two members of Nightwatch.

Tover and Moore will introduce them, then Tover will explain that his work has shown him not only that other dimensions existed besides our own, but that these dimensions could be accessed. Of course, the mathematics also show that such

access was a two-way street. It was simply a problem of building the right device to open a door to another world. He will state that he has been unable to build such a device, but has constructed an instrument that can detect when gateways are opened. He will say that most of these gateways are opened from the other, non-Earth side. He concludes that he has been observing the PCs for some time.

Dan Moore will speak next:

"It was in 1992 that I was driving home late one morning. My car's engine and electrical system began to fail, so I started looking for an off ramp. I saw one that said "Middleston" and turned down it. However, I soon found out that Middleston is not a town in Maine. In fact, it's not on the Earth at all. At the time, I didn't know where I ended up, but I now know it was another dimension. To make a long story short, there is a whole town in there, including people. There are other things also. Things we call Nightsiders. The whole setup is a big trap designed to get the Nightsiders bodies and food. I saw people eaten by them, and I saw people taken over by them. We think you have run into some Nightsiders recently—Nightsiders in stolen bodies. An extremely powerful Nightsider runs the whole place. It cannot leave the dimension without a suitable host body. It said my body was suitable, but I was lucky enough to escape. I think I am the only one who ever has."

Dr. Tover will then add that his instruments indicate that the Nightsider dimension has been opening into Maine along I-95. He will say that the device, which was acquired by the PCs recently in Old Town, might be able to seal off the dimension. He will explain to the PCs the function of the device (see page 38 for details) and how to use it to seal the shadow dimension. According to Dr. Tover, this process will require that at least two remotes be placed in the dimension at least 800 meters apart, with a third set up in the gateway at least 800 meters from the other two. Then the gateway controller must be instructed to seal the dimension. Dr. Tover predicts that this process will consume the controller.

The meeting will conclude with Tover and Moore answering any questions the PCs might have. The PCs will be provided with a gateway detector (see page 45) and two "shadowbreaker" weapons (page 45). Tover will also provide them with a map showing the general location of the gateway, which is in Maine. If the PCs survive this mission, Dr. Tover and Dan Moore may be treated as contacts in later adventures.

Referee: If desired, the PCs can become involved in some side action at this point. The exact nature of this action is left to the referee. Some suggestions are that one of the PCs' devices is stolen and must be regained, or that a Nightsider or related attack occurs on the PCs. After all, the Dark Minions suspect Tover, so those who visit him are also suspect. This will make the PCs feel trapped—directly threatened by the Nightsiders. This will serve as an impetus for the PCs to get involved if they were undecided or it will emphasize the seriousness of the situation. Of course, you may wish to simply let them get about on their business, but very little in this world is that simple.

DOWN THE OFF RAMP

Once the PCs finish up in New Boswash, they will go to Maine. Tover predicts that the gate will be opened in three days, at night, along a section of I-95 between Portland and Bangor. This gives the PCs time to get ready by acquiring the equipment they need.

Tover's predictions will be correct. The gate will open onto I-95 at 12 A.M. If the PCs are using Tover's map, they will be close enough for the gateway detector to detect it. The gateway appears as a simple off ramp with a green highway sign saying "Middleston Exit." The gateway creates a disrupting effect in unprotected electronics (Tover knows this and will tell the PCs how to protect their equipment). Cars within 400 meters of the gateway will suffer brief spurts of electronic failure, and it will worsen as the car gets closer. If a car goes onto the off ramp, it will die out altogether about 40 meters down the ramp and will coast the rest of the way. Other electronic devices will be affected in a similar manner. Within the shadow dimension, electronics will work normally, except for those that have been damaged by the gateway. Electronics that are not turned on will be unaffected by a trip through the gate.

The shadow dimension is similar to the protodimensions described in Dark Conspiracy Referee's Guide Master's Edition (page 165). The main differences are that anyone can see the terrain of the dimension (much of it has been lifted from Earth via gates, anyway), and it does not correspond to any particular terran topography. It is actually a fragment from a much larger dimension that was shattered during a war between the inhabitants (see "Out of the Grave" for further details).

The interior of the dimension looks like a fairly normal town, complete with buildings, streets and trees. However, an Average roll versus Observation will reveal that something seems wrong about the layout—as if it were put together by an intelligence, but not a human one. The dimension is always dark, but working streetlights provide some light. The place should be described in such a way that the normal components make it all the more horrible. PCs with Empathy ratings greater than 0 will feel a malign presence suffusing the place and will sense disembodied intellects of an evil nature whispering through the streets. They will be "seen" as flitting shadows out of the corners of the PCs' eyes.

Once they enter the shadow dimension, the PCs will have plenty of action on their hands. The Nightsiders know when humans enter the dimension and will be waiting to meet the PCs. Fortunately, the Nightsiders suffer from extreme pride and cannot conceive of a group of humans besting them. As such, their first attack will be sloppy and will enable the PCs to escape into the town. What occurs next depends on the PCs' goals. If they are here to seal off the dimension, they will have to plant the remotes and escape back to their home dimension. If the PCs have blundered into the trap, their goal will be to escape before the Nightsiders can hunt them down.

MAIN MAP

The main map shows the layout of the entire dimension. The part extending out the farthest is where the gateway is located.

Street: These are conventional, two-lane streets. They are often lined with streetlights. The main street (the one the off ramp feeds into) is lined with cars. The farther one goes down the street, the older the license plates of the cars are. The oldest vehicles are from the 1930s. The vehicles are all dead and are in varying stages of decay. The side streets are devoid of cars.

Para-Dimensional Border: This area marks the limits of the shadow dimension. The border can only be penetrated at the gateway. An individual making a Difficult roll against his Empathy can only open the gateway from the inside. Such a character can lead others through. Each character may only make one attempt every 24 hours. The gateway controller automatically opens the gate.

Woods: The woods are conventional terran trees.

Buildings: The buildings are from various times and locations. Some are commercial buildings, and some are residential, all mixed together indifferently. Some are in good shape, but others are in disrepair. Several generic maps have been included to make combat easier (see page 23). Any important structures may be detailed prior to play, if desired. The stores and houses will sometimes contain things of use to the PCs (like dried food, camping equipment, and weapons). The exact contents of a structure are left to the referee. Oddly enough, the water and power work in most of these structures because the houses have been linked up to the ruins of the civilization that was here prior to the fragmentation. Buried deep in the soil are structures from an ancient, nonhuman civilization that was the forerunner of the inhabitants of this dimension.

SETTING THE MOOD

While this dimension seems normal, its very normalcy makes it terrifying. Be sure to describe the place properly. For example: "You see a street stretching out into the distance. Under the dim light of the streetlights you can make out the decaying shapes of cars. Down the street, you see lights in a restaurant and hear voices laughing. But far from comforting you, the voices strike a chord of primal fear in your being."

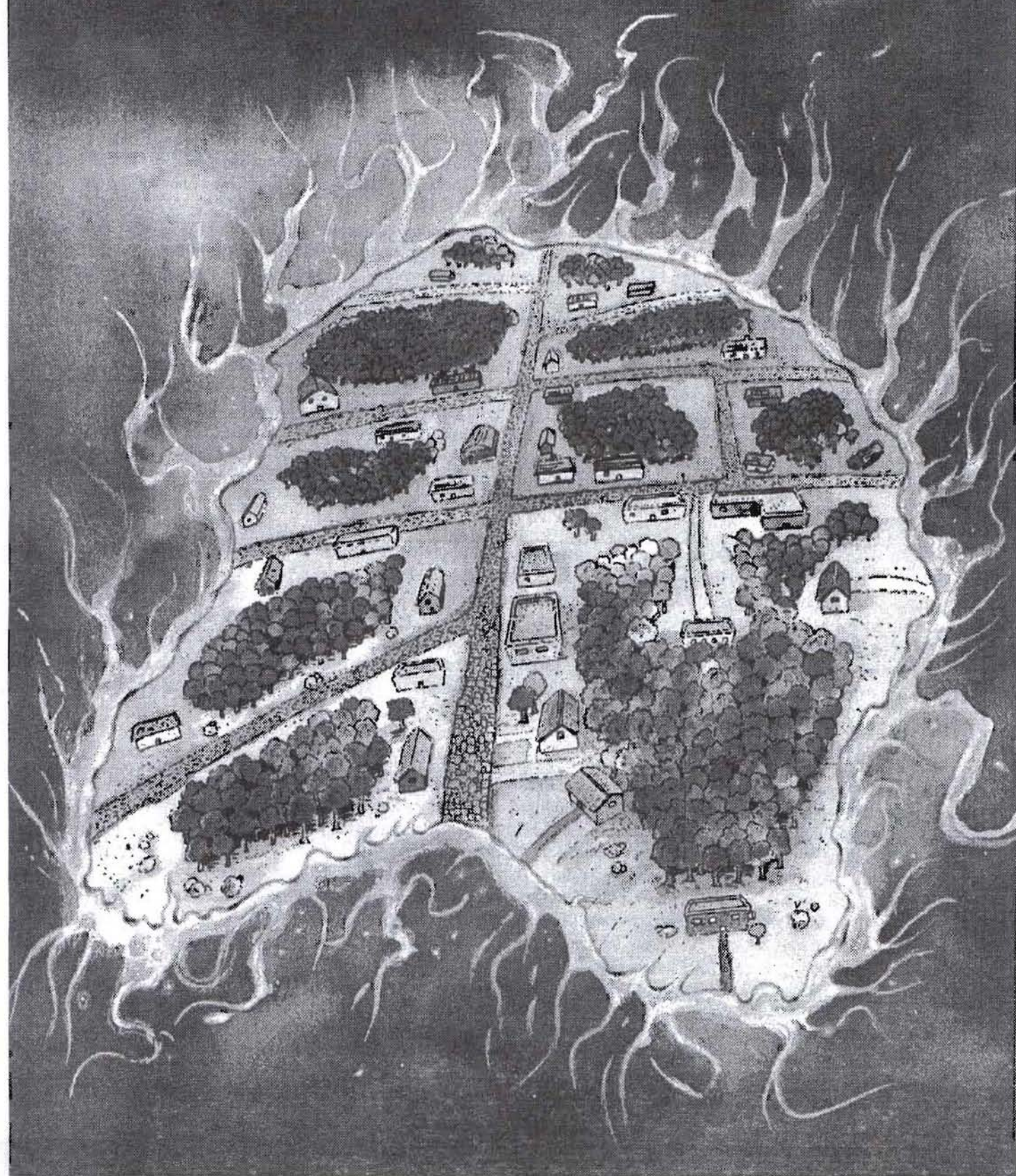
Be sure to keep the PCs under a great deal of stress by having them constantly pursued by the Nightsiders. The Nightsiders are utterly inhuman, and it is important to convey this to the players. For example, "They look normal, like you and me. But something is wrong. There is a feeling of the grave about them, a feeling of malign emptiness and great wrongness..."

HUMAN INHABITANTS

Surprisingly enough, there are humans living in the shadow dimension. These people came down the off ramp and never left. They divide into three groups. The largest group is comprised of the people who have lost all hope or sanity. These people continue to live physically, but gave up the psychic and spiritual ghosts a while ago. Or they simply go catatonic and starve to death, and will do nothing to aid each other or the PCs. There are 82 of these people, who are normal human NPCs. The second group consists of those who are willing to serve the Nightsiders. They can be considered to be Igors (see page 10 of Dark Conspiracy Player's Handbook Master's Edition). There are 12 of these people, and they are armed with handguns, clubs, and knives. Despite their cooperation, the Nightsiders have no qualms about using them for food or bodies. The third and smallest group consists of people who resist the Nightsiders. There are currently three of them. They are Tonya Yarvis, an eco-warrior (armed with an Ingram M10 .45), David "Slash-Head" Jones, a Ganger (armed with an M-16A2 and a variety of knives), and Father Donovan, a Good Samaritan (page 406, Dark Conspiracy Referee's Guide Master's Edition). They will be willing to cooperate with the PCs. The referee may want to kill them off after the PCs get to know them, preferably in a brutal manner.

New people will occasionally enter the trap-but no more than five vehicles per night. They can be used in a variety of ways. First, they can provide a useful distraction for the PCs. If the PCs are having a tough time, a van or a car could come in full of easier prey. This will distract the Nightsiders and enable the PCs to escape. Second, they can provide people for the PCs to save, enabling them to feel heroic. Third, they can provide demonstration material to show what the Nightsiders can do.

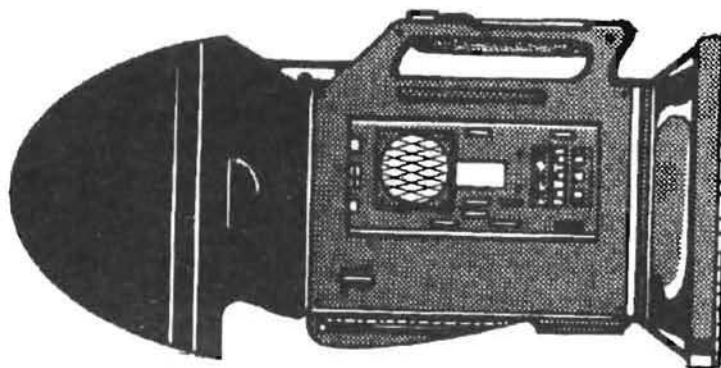
Off Ramp



NIGHTSIDERS

There are three types of Nightsiders—the lesser, the true, and the Nightsider master. All Nightsiders are nonmaterial beings who need to inhabit human bodies in order to manipulate objects. They cannot leave their dimension except in a body. If they are “killed” outside of their dimension, they will return to it. Outside of a body, they move as ghosts, appear as vaguely humanoid shadows, and can only be attacked by Empathy-based skills or by special energy weapons (like the shadowbreakers). The Nightsider master is the most powerful of the shadow beings. For details on the Nightsider master, see page 47.

EQUIPMENT



GATEWAY DETECTOR

The gateway detector is a device about the size and shape of a MST 3000 Motion Detector (see *Dark Conspiracy Player's Handbook Master's Edition*, page 218). The device weighs three kilograms. It has the following functions: First, it will indicate, with an arrow display, the direction of the largest gate in the area, with a range of two kilometers. It can be adjusted to indicate the gates of lesser strength by adjusting the detection range. The second function is to display the size and location of the gate on a grid map, which shows the position of the detector. Unlike the first function, this can be adjusted to scan for smaller gates. It has a range of 400 meters. It requires an Easy skill check versus Electronics to use these functions. The gateway detector's battery pack is good for four hours of use. The pack can be recharged or replaced.

Wt: 2 kg

Price: N/A (about \$4000 to construct) **Availability:** (–/R)

SHADOWBREAKER

The shadowbreaker is a special weapon designed by Dr. Tover to induce instability in certain types of energy fields, causing them to lose coherence and dissipate. The weapon is effective against bleaks, haunts, poltergeists, nosferatu, and Nightsiders.

The weapon's attack is handled in game terms by doing damage to the creature's Empathy rating. The to-hit roll is normal, and a successful hit inflicts 1D6 damage to the creature's Empathy rating. At 0, the creature is destroyed. If the creature inhabits a body, it can still be attacked. Armor has no effect on the shadowbreaker. A “wounded” creature will regain Empathy at the rate of 1 point per hour. The weapon looks very much like a laser pistol and uses a 15-shot belt power pack.

Ammo: –

Wt: 5 kg (pistol weight: 1.5 kg; belt power pack: 3.5 kg)

Mag: 15 shots per power pack.

Price: N/A (about \$4500 to construct)

Availability: (–/R)

SHADOWBREAKER STATISTICS

Weapon	ROF	DAM	PEN	BLK	MAG	RECOLL	RNG
SB	(1)*	Special	N/A	3	15	N/A	25

CAST

DR. JAMES TOVER

Strength: 2 **Education:** 10
Constitution: 2 **Charisma:** 5
Agility: 2 **Empathy:** 5
Intelligence: 10 **Initiative:** 1

Skills: Electronics 8, Forgery 4, Willpower 7, Biology 2, Chemistry 2, Computer Operation 7, Engineer 7, Physics 10, Instruction 5, Human Empathy 3, Foreboding 1.

Description: Due to a severe childhood injury, Dr. Tover, age 51, is confined to an electric wheelchair. He has fitted his chair with all sorts of devices, which enable him to function as well as a normal individual. He is perhaps the most brilliant human mind in the area of multidimensional physics and mathematics. His work led him to be an investigator as he discovered that these realms were inhabited—and inhabited by beings inimical to humanity. Dr. Tover is very concerned about stopping the Dark Minions and does everything in his power to do so. He joined Nightwatch five years ago and has been providing them with special devices, insights, and good advice since then. He is polite, but somewhat quiet. He will allow Dan Moore to do most of the talking.



DAN MOORE

Strength: 5 **Education:** 7
Constitution: 6 **Charisma:** 6
Agility: 5 **Empathy:** 8
Intelligence: 7 **Initiative:** 3

Skills: Melee Combat (Unarmed) 2, Small Arms (Pistol) 4, Small Arms (Rifle) 2, Stealth 2, Vehicle Use (Wheeled) 3, Willpower 6, Business 6, Computer Operation 5, Leadership 5, Luck 3, Foreboding 4, Human Empathy 4.

Description: Moore, age 47, is a founding member of Nightwatch, which began soon after he escaped from the shadow dimension. Moore runs a computer store in Portland, which also serves as a cover for hacking operations against Dark Minion computers. Moore's experience and skill enable him to contribute a great deal to Nightwatch. He is completely dedicated to defeating the Dark Minions and has been involved in numerous operations against them. He doesn't like to drive since his experience in the shadow dimension and generally flies instead. Moore is cordial, but serious.

Equipment: Moore always carries at least one pistol, generally an S&W Model 36 if he needs to conceal it and a Desert Eagle .44 when he doesn't. He owns an MP-7 and a C3.



LESSER NIGHTSIDER

Strength: 9* **Education:** 3 **Move:** 2/8/15/30*
Constitution: 7* **Charisma:** 5 **Skill/Dam:** 5/2d6*
Agility: 3* **Empathy:** 3 **Hits:** 15/30*
Intelligence: 5 **Initiative:** 2 **#Appear:** 2D6

**In a body.*

Special: Human Empathy 2, Project Emotion 2.

The weakest of the Nightsiders, these entities can only animate a dead body. Like their greater brothers, they are evil and have nothing but contempt for humans. They are rather vile and enjoy consuming human flesh and blood, even though they cannot digest it. A true Nightsider using its special ability can in turn, possess them. There are 32 "embodied" lesser Nightsiders (inhabiting dead human bodies) and 25 disembodied ones. The embodied ones spend their time torturing and killing the humans.

REFEREE'S SCREEN

DARK CONSPIRACY SECOND EDITION



ICE DAEMON



Nightsider

This three-paneled referee's screen (33" x 8.5") is beautifully illustrated by fantasy artist Larry Elmore. This Referee's Screen has everything a Referee needs for quick reference to speed up game-play.

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