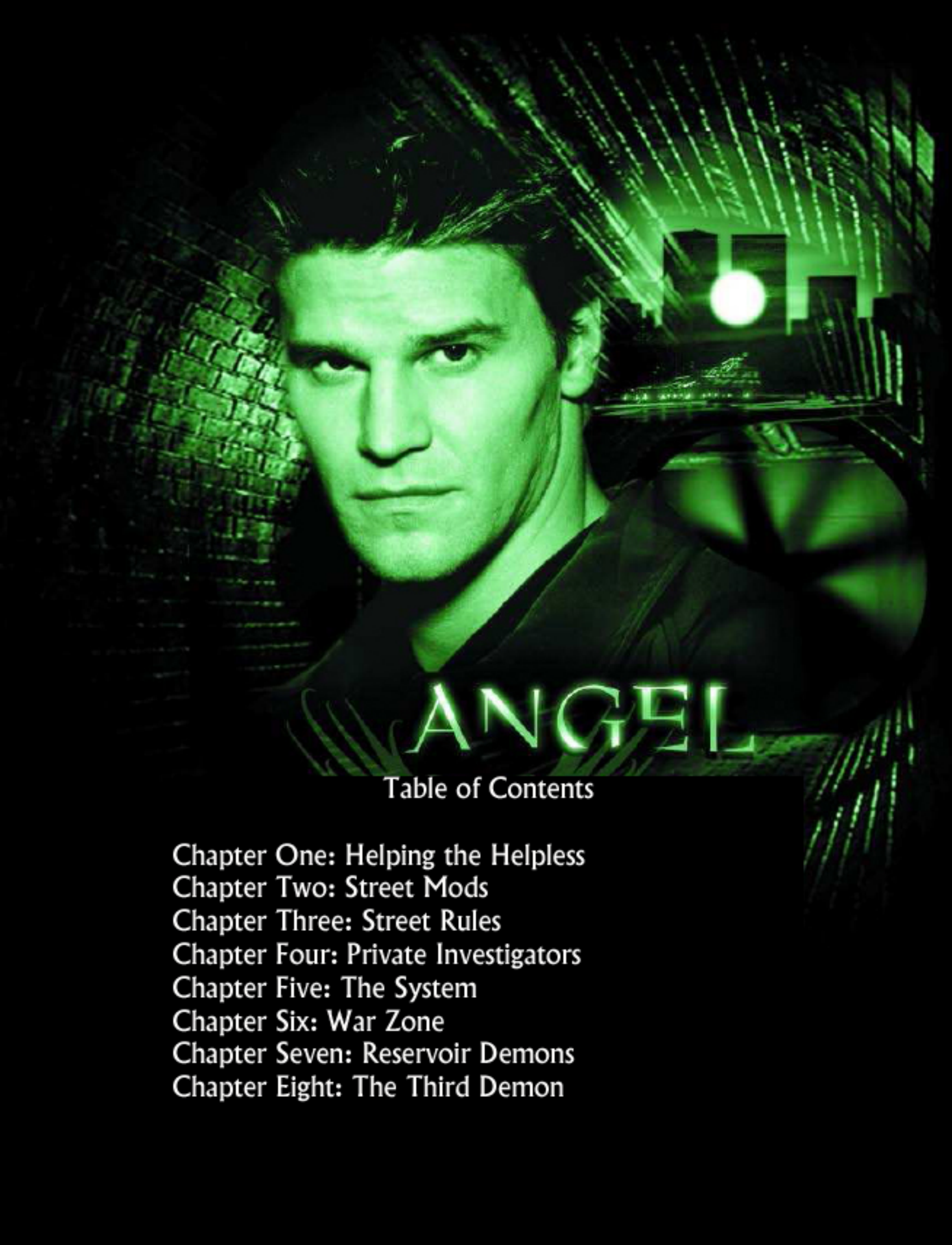


INVESTIGATOR'S
CASEBOOK

ANGEL

ROLEPLAYING GAME

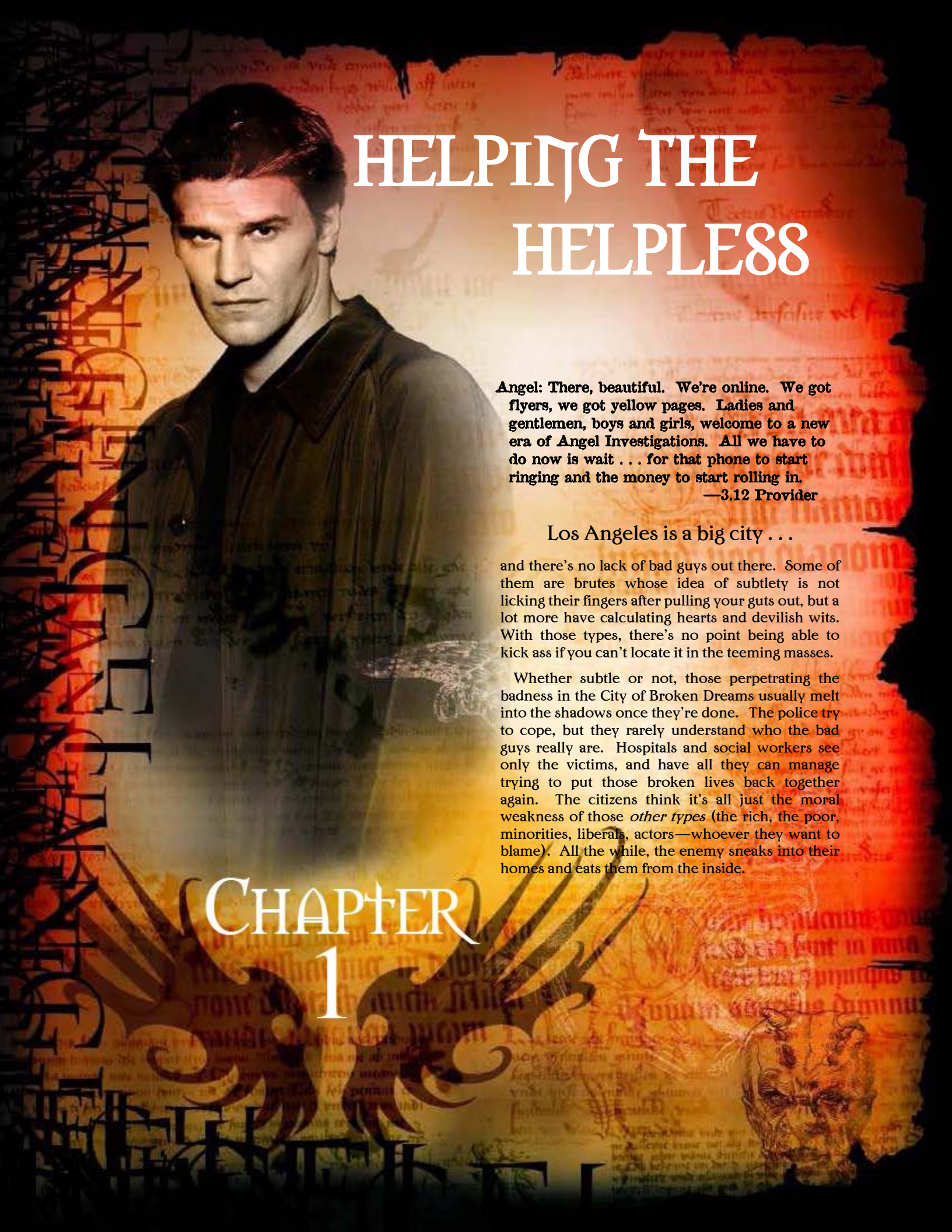




ANGEL

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HELPING THE HELPLESS

Angel: There, beautiful. We're online. We got flyers, we got yellow pages. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, welcome to a new era of Angel Investigations. All we have to do now is wait . . . for that phone to start ringing and the money to start rolling in.

—3.12 Provider

Los Angeles is a big city . . .

and there's no lack of bad guys out there. Some of them are brutes whose idea of subtlety is not licking their fingers after pulling your guts out, but a lot more have calculating hearts and devilish wits. With those types, there's no point being able to kick ass if you can't locate it in the teeming masses.

Whether subtle or not, those perpetrating the badness in the City of Broken Dreams usually melt into the shadows once they're done. The police try to cope, but they rarely understand who the bad guys really are. Hospitals and social workers see only the victims, and have all they can manage trying to put those broken lives back together again. The citizens think it's all just the moral weakness of those *other types* (the rich, the poor, minorities, liberals, actors—whoever they want to blame). All the while, the enemy sneaks into their homes and eats them from the inside.

CHAPTER 1



The people who try to make a difference are few and far between. There are cops who realize not everything out there is going to get its day in court. Certain private citizens decide they're not going to accept the easy answers, but instead strive to understand the underlying problem. There are even those who live in the squalor, but rise above it to cast the enemy out.

This is a book about hard choices in the streets of Los Angeles. Gang members, paramedics, demon snitches, vigilantes, and streetwalkers are all a part of the Angelverse, and they're all in here. Private detectives like the staff of Angel Investigations—with or without the painful hints from the Powers That Be—are discussed in detail. Armed with this material, your Cast can walk through the mean streets and track the enemy to its source. Then it's time to whip out the big hurt. Then again, that may not be the best solution. Hell, most times there is no "best solution."

As Angel Investigations has seen many times—and your Cast may discover the hard way—the enemy is indeed hard to find. That's particularly the case when the best place to look is in the mirror. Sometimes the real evil is the weakness, pain, and deception of the so-called good guys. We got you covered there as well.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

This book has two main functions. First, it acts as a sourcebook for Angel Investigations—the company set up by Angel to help the helpless—and also of Los Angeles itself, particularly the seedier areas. It enables players and Directors to use the locations you've seen on screen, and fold in their inhabitants. Second, and more importantly, it tells you how to create and run your own stories involving investigation, police work, and crime. It still takes its examples from the show, but talks about the sorts of crimes that are being committed by both human and demonic assailants, how they organize themselves, and the sort of personnel and methods useful in the good fight.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Most of this book has been written for both the Director and the Cast. If you're a player however, your Director may not want you to read certain bits. For example, if you're taking on the role of a detective or cop, the underworld of **Chapter Six: War Zone** might be off limits for the moment. If you're playing minor hoods trying to save your city from the monsters, the establishment presented in **Chapter Five: The System** might be the no-go area instead. As usual, it tends to spoil everyone's fun if you read the adventure in **Chapter Eight: The Third Demon** before playing it.





STREET LEVEL ADVENTURES

Fred: Okay, so he survived an unspeakable hell dimension—I mean, who hasn't? But you can't just leave him all alone on the streets of Los Angeles.

—3.21 Benediction

Chapter One: Helping the Helpless is what you're reading now. It includes these notes, a discussion of street level adventures, some character motivations, and background on Angel Investigations.

Chapter Two: Street Mods gives a slew of new character options and Archetypes to expand your game.

Chapter Three: Street Rules provides rules and background on working the street (not that way, you slug!). Information gathering, clue finding, crime scene investigation, forensics, profiling, evidence, courtroom drama, interrogation, gambling, even forgery—if it's out there, it's in here.

Chapter Four: Private Investigators has the lowdown on what being a P.I. is all about, and some tips on keeping your clients happy (while still getting paid). There're also some alternative career choices for working in private security.

Chapter Five: The System gives the lowdown on the Man—the government types who claim to run the city. There's lots of detail on official institutions like the police, the coroner, and even the National Guard.

Chapter Six: War Zone explores the seedier side of the street, including gangs, the mob, streetwalkers, and homeless shelters.

Chapter Seven: Reservoir Demons explains how the occult subculture works, from demon brothels to arcane bookshops to everyone's favorite karaoke bar and more.

Chapter Eight: The Third Demon is a ready-to-play Episode for your *Angel* game. Just add the Cast and start sleuthing!

The *Investigators Casebook* is all about running street level games in the Angelverse. By street level, we mean getting out among the humans (and non-humans) that reside in the city. A whole lot of hopes and dreams out there are being ground into nothingness by poverty, crime, and betrayal. Gangstas kill each other for meaningless territory, cops try to keep everything together with insufficient resources and little reward, the system reduces everyone to a number and a symptom, and most people just try to make ends meet in a world where virtue is spat upon. At the center of it all, metaphorically speaking, is the private detective. He hangs out a shingle for anyone who has a problem, and often finds himself crawling through the grime (and a little of the glitter) seeking the truth.

As seen on *Angel*, life on the street is hard and dangerous. And we're not just talking about those living out of dumpsters or pounding the pavement. Sure, there's fine food, good company, singing, surfing, and sex to be had by some, but it never lasts long—there's always a dirty little secret hiding behind the glamour.

And what glamour there is! The City of Angel is a beacon for millions of souls attracted by the celebrities, the beaches, the nightlife, and, most of all, the promise of fame and fortune. Those things exist, but they are surrounded by a whole landscape of crime, poverty, and despair. Following along with the *Angel* noir theme (more on that later), most of those who do get through the formidable barriers into that inner sanctum of bright lights and privilege pay a dreadful cost, having left behind their friends, humiliated themselves before strangers, and accrued debts that can never be paid. Still, they are counted the lucky ones by those who drift into the night. Rich or poor, Angel's L.A. is filled with thugs, junkies, pornographers, and the damned. If anyone wants to see a better world, they better fight for it.

Now, the *Angel*/TV show doesn't always operate on the street level—our favorite crew often finds itself trafficking at the apocalyptic gods-and-monsters level. You won't find that here though. This book is more about the world of Kate, Gunn, and Anne Steele than the likes of Wolfram & Hart, Jasmine, and electro-grrl Gwen. All that and much, much more is covered in our sister tome, *Lawyers, Gods, and Money*. That doesn't mean the two levels don't mesh; feel free to





use the two books together or separately. Doyle is a perfect example of the middle ground, being a conduit for the Powers That Be yet a little too familiar with the seedier side of the tracks. Makes sense really, since he was the catalyst for creating Angel Investigations in the first place.

ANGEL INVESTIGATIONS

Gunn: Sure glad to know we're not the sad people obsessed with demons.

Wesley: Well, we have to be a little obsessed, we're detectives who specialize in these things.

Cordelia: But . . . we're not sad.

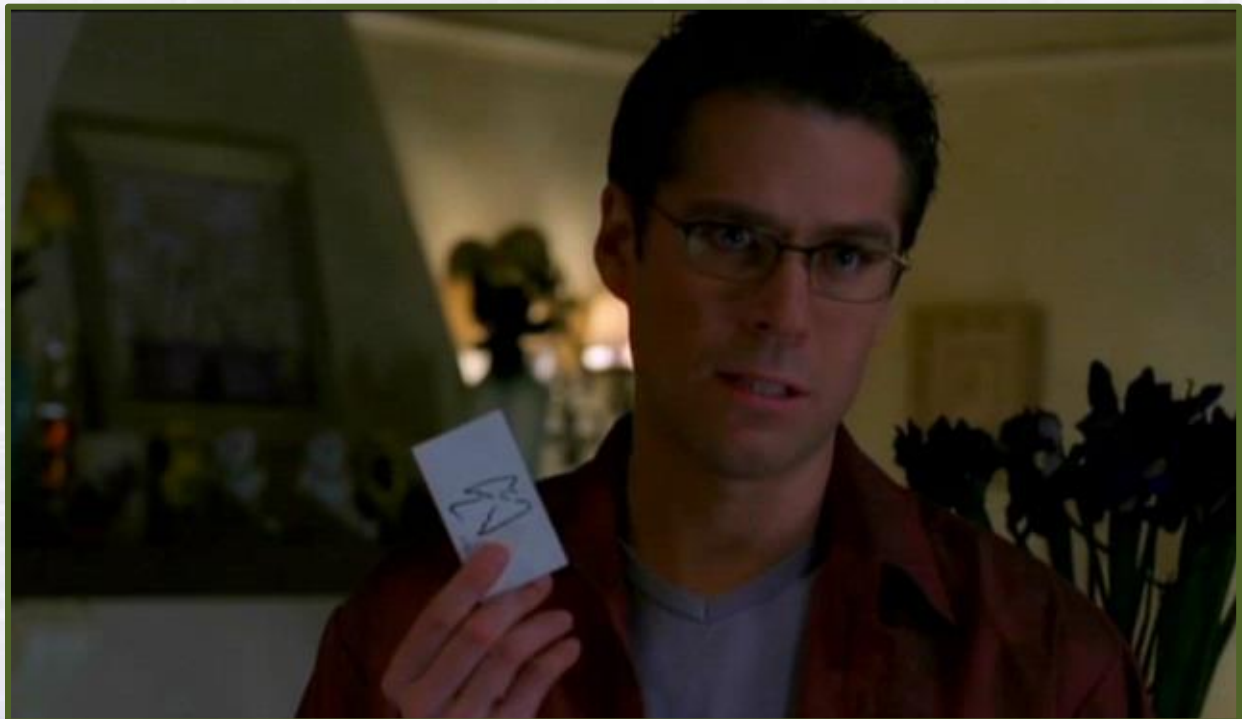
Wesley: No, no, we're a happy and rambunctious lot if I ever saw one. (beat)
Not going to humor me even a little, are you?
—3.1 Heartthrob

It started with a vision . . . literally. After coming to Los Angeles to try to do good, Angel found himself lost in the fight. He could save people from the demons, but he didn't know if he could save them from himself. So he held back, refused to get close to anybody. He didn't know who he was saving, or why. It was just an on-going façade of personal atonement, for crimes that could not be erased.

Then Allen Francis Doyle came into the picture. He was to be Angel's link to a higher purpose, but more importantly he was a link to the people on the street. Doyle understood those around them a lot

better than Angel, because he shared a lot of their foibles, their losses, and their hopes. This was a new perspective for the Brooding One. He and Doyle soon formed a partnership made in heaven (literally, give or take). Add struggling actress and fearless social commentator Cordelia Chase as a secretary (between auditions), and Angel Investigations was born.

As usual for the Angelverse, not everything worked out alright. Doyle gave his life to the mission, Cordelia got the visions, and they started killing her. Wesley Wyndam-Pryce threw off the mantle of "rogue demon hunter" to join the Agency. Much slapstick and anguish followed. Charles Gunn joined the team, for more ass-kicking and agony. The Agency disbanded when Angel fired everyone, was started up again by Wes, Cordy, and Gunn, and then returned to form (mostly) after Angel returned as an employee. They were subsequently joined by a leading-edge physicist/part-time cavegirl Fred Burkle (cue lovers' triangle, murder, and more anguish), and a resident empath, Lorne. The green-skinned demon was actually happier on the sidelines than deep in with the detective work, and as such missed out on the full complement of personal tragedy (but does have the memory of his mother to tide him over). Angel's son Connor was even more peripheral to the detective work, but for much of his time in L.A. he lived on the streets and defended people in his own emotionally-stunted way.





You probably know all of this stuff—if you don’t, we recommend watching some more *Angel* episodes. Setting aside all the personal and relational plots, we are going to concentrate on the actual cases the gang got to solve, and find out how they can be reflected in your game.

QUESTIONABLE CLIENTS

Angel: Moves more like a fighter than a victim, wouldn't you say?

—3.15 Loyalty

The motto of Angel Investigations is “We Help the Helpless.” It hasn’t always been so—it started as “We Help the Hopeless” and made a couple of strange detours, including “Home of the Wicked High Creep Factor” (2.14 The Thin Dead Line). But helping the helpless is what it’s all about, right?

Yes and no. That’s what A.I. is about. If you’re playing an *Angel* game, even if you’re not using the characters from the show, it’s likely to be a solid chunk of motivation for a lot of your Cast. But it’s not what the *show* is all about.

In *Angel*, there aren’t really any helpless to help, at least, not in center screen. That’s right, for all the helpless that exist on the mean streets of L.A., precious few seem to wander in A.I.’s door. No need to take our word for it though, have a look through the nearby sidebar of clients. All in all, it’s not been a good average for our heroes. It might even make your own Cast think twice about answering the doorbell.

Now, the sidebar list does not include the cases provided by the Powers That Be, via the visions. No need to go through them one by one, but most address impending monster invasions rather than focusing on the victim (which is fair enough). There are certainly exceptions, and happily enough they’re usually more positive than the client list. Melissa Burns (whose doctor was keeping an eye on her in 1.4 I Fall to Pieces) is a good example of a genuine damsel in distress who is empowered through Angel’s intervention. Rachel from 1.3 In the Dark is another (we don’t know if she sought out Angel, or vice versa). Then there is the case of the kid who was so scary even the demon inside him wanted out (1.14 I’ve Got You Under My Skin). The visions themselves are cryptic, sometimes dangerously misleading, and at one point (when Lilah hijacked them at the beginning of Season Three) completely phony. The motives of the Powers That Be have been questioned more than once.

What’s all this prove? We’re not trying to scare you off playing detectives, just pointing out that *Angel* takes a different tack from the usual murder-mystery

scenario that, for example, Sherlock Holmes is called in for. Of course, a more-often-than-not twisted client approach sets things up nicely for the Director. You players have to expect the worst from those that approach, but can’t get too ornery or suspicious because that undercuts the entire “help the helpless” mission. A fiendish Director mixes enough “true” victims into the cases to keep the investigators guessing.

FORGET IT, JAKE. IT’S CHINATOWN

Cordelia: Maybe it's time we pay your stoolie a little visit. Make with the chin-music until he canaries. (Off their looks) I've been watching a little noir festival on Bravo.

—2.1 Judgement

Of course, if the cases presented through Season Four aren’t always what they seem, neither are the investigators. Over the course of the show, Angel must struggle to control his dark urges as he is manipulated from all sides, and by the demon inside him. Oh, and just as an aside, the A.I. crew broke the law just by setting up a detective agency in the first place—more on that later (see p. [?]). The other characters face similar dilemmas, with few easy solutions.

The very nature of L.A., with its demon tribes trying to co-exist under the human radar, is much the same. It could all be viewed as a metaphor for a multicultural society and a prayer for tolerance of differences—but, then, even the seemingly friendly ones usually want to eat your brain or steal other vital organs.

All this highlights the major themes of the *Angel* TV show. They include dirty secrets hiding behind pretty or innocent masks; dark choices, and the never-ending struggle to rise above the past; redemption, and little things like that. It’s about how the best intentions can turn to catastrophe, and that giving your all for a cause may just not be good enough. These features place *Angel* squarely in the genre of film noir—among the best-regarded stories in the detective genre. From classics like *The Maltese Falcon* and *Chinatown*, to the supernatural and futuristic twists of *Angel Heart* and *Blade Runner*, these stories follow flawed but relentless detectives trying to cope with a maze of hidden agendas. There are no ideals, no innocents, and the central figure may find his own identity is as phony as the femme fatale who knocks on his door. At best, the protagonist takes the money and hopes he’s done right by his partners and himself. At worst, the poor sap succumbs to the deception and is damned.





Basically, film noir is *Angel* with a little more sepia and a little less kung fu. If all the players are familiar with the conventions and darkness, things should work out fine. If some of them are expecting more of a straightforward (and heroic) approach to fighting

crime, you should probably sort that out sooner rather than later. Even if you do go with mostly stand-up clients and mostly stand-up fights, it just wouldn't be *Angel* without a bit of darkness and deception.

Angel Investigations: The Clients

Barney (1.10 Parting Gifts): Barney asked for protection from a demon hunter, but turned out to be collecting body parts for auction.

Penn (1.11 Somnambulist): Only a quick deception, Penn posed as a client trying to pump Cordy for information about Angel.

Darin McNamara (1.16 The Ring): Darin asked for help finding his brother, but was setting Angel up for the gladiator ring.

Rebecca Lowell (1.17 Eternity): Rebecca's problems were all a PR stunt by her agent. In the meantime she managed to slip Angel a mickey, bringing forth Angelus.

David Nabbit (1.20 War Zone): The first client who did not betray the Agency! But since David's problem was the retrieval of incriminating pics taken in a demon brothel—and the fact his bank balance is measured in the billions—it's hard to classify him as helpless.

Harold Jeakins (2.5 Dear Boy): Harold asked Angel Investigations to look into his wife's alien abductions. After working out what was going on (that is, extra-marital affairs), Angel called off the chase and told them to just sort it out on their own.

Magnus Bryce (2.6 Guise Will be Guise): Magnus wanted a bodyguard for his daughter who wouldn't "pollute" her before he sacrificed her to the demon Yeska. His "helpless" quotient was immediately undermined when he sent thugs to insist on Angel's help.

Francine Sharp (2.14 The Thin Dead Line): She wasn't evil and was pretty helpless. Of course, she also refused to pay for the decoulation of her daughter.

Anne Steele (2.14 The Thin Dead Line): Turned out not to be very innocent or completely helpless, but she wasn't really a client since she just wandered in looking for Gunn.

Allison, Sam Ryan, and the Nahdrah (3.12 Provider): Everyone was using and abusing Angel Investigations in this episode, though the crew did manage to come out ahead on the deal.

Ms. Frakes (3.14 Couplet): Ms. Frakes was an honest-to-goodness satisfied customer, once her fiancé had been rescued from the tree demon.

Aubrey (3.15 Loyalty): Aubrey went undercover as a client to lead the gang into a vampire nest, all the while gathering information for Holtz.

Kim (3.16 Sleep Tight): Kim was another satisfied customer (though more of Lorne than the Agency). Fred was able to cure her demon infection and we assume she wasn't too broken up over the deaths of her demonic band mates.

Syd and Monica Frzylcka (3.18 Double or Nothing): These two were eventually satisfied by the removal of a squatting Skench demon from their lair.

Phillip Spivey (3.19 The Price): Phillip came in to find his missing dog, and left in a dust-buster, thanks to a moisture-sucking parasite.

In Season Four, no clients approached the agency. Most Los Angelinos were distracted by the reign of fire, the sun going out and the appearance of Jasmine.

Don't forget there's quite a few problems the group tackles off-screen as well. Mrs. Benson (filed under "F" for France) involved a runaway case, as mentioned in 1.12 Expecting, for example. You can do a similar thing with your game, having clients to boost the "statistics" of your agency without having to solve each one explicitly





VARIATIONS

Penn: You're right, *Angelus*, my work was getting stale. I appreciate the critique. So look for something new, innovative. Shockingly original. Just think of the worst possible thing you can imagine, and I'll see you there.

—1.11 Somnambulist

Like we mentioned, you don't have to go noir at all. There are a whole lot of variations in the books and movies showing law enforcement and investigation, including polite murder mysteries, *CSI*-type examinations, *X-Files*-type dramas, gangster epics, and the most sordid of serial killer hunts. *Angel* has played with a lot of these conventions, and when you've got a lot of story to tell, such as multiple Episodes making up a Season, variety keeps the Cast on their toes.

In 2.13 Happy Anniversary, Wesley got the chance to do the whole Miss Marple act, sifting through the clues and the motivations, putting it all together for his audience in the drawing room. We saw police procedural work in a number of episodes, mostly through the eyes of Kate, such as 1.16 Sense and Sensitivity and 1.19 Sanctuary. There have been some clever twists involving fingerprints and deduction, as in 2.10 Reunion and 2.18 Dead End. They did the *Silence of the Lambs* thing in 1.11 Somnambulist, when Penn was toying with the police and Angel found himself with a strange link to the killer. As for gangsters, we got Little Tony Papazian in 1.16 Sense and Sensitivity, Jenoff in 3.18 Double or Nothing, and the Las Vegas crowd in 4.3 The House Always Wins.

All these styles mesh together on *Angel*. You can concentrate on the ones you like, or shift between them. In general, this book defaults to the genres of film noir and police procedural. The first focus exists because it is so important to the mood of *Angel*. The second allows us to show a lot of detail about how things work, to provide a solid background for any investigative game.

Just for kicks, you don't have to play investigators or cops at all. It's a sordid world out there, and you could do your own supernatural *Godfather* game, perhaps with the players muscling in on Papazian's or Jenoff's turf once they've been eliminated. You could play a heist-type game as a group of con-men and thieves—maybe *Ocean's Eleven*, maybe *Reservoir Dogs*. You could stay on the wrong side of the law but the right side of the karmic scale by playing a gang who is just protecting its neighborhood. This book will help with a lot of those options. Some will be easier than others, but there are sections in the relevant chapters talking about the sorts of challenges and adventures that might be found.

In fact, more than just presenting variations, you could dispense with much of the noir in your *Angel* game. The world need not be as dire as suggested here. Real life isn't quite that bad (though some would disagree), and even in the TV show there have been times when the crew does pretty well for themselves. At the beginning of Season Two, we see Angel, Cordelia, and Wesley as a well-oiled team of investigators and demon hunters. It's soon undercut by Angel killing the wrong demon, but you can stretch out the moment a little further than that. Noir is a great way of telling dramatic stories, but you might want to set the default as buddy-cop adventure. Don't forget *Angel* softens the blow of its tragic tales with its use of humor and contrast, and the whisper of hope—though depending upon the situation, that can just make the darkness seem all the more absolute.

In the end it's all about you and your Director enjoying yourselves. That might be with operatic tales of grief, or cheerful capers pulling one over on the Man. Keep it lively, interesting and varied, and have fun.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Okay, so we know life isn't a picnic, and we've got gangsters, cops, P.I.s, and Joe Citizen all trying to make it through the night regardless. That's a whole lot of potential for conflict and drama, but doesn't really answer the question about what any of these people are fighting for. What is at stake for the Cast of your game? It's not just survival, because leaving the city would increase their chances remarkably.

We're going to get high-concept in the following pages. We're not talking about specific things your characters want to achieve, or the magic widget they are after in this week's Episode. All those details should be solid, with their own history, quirks, and hidden catches. Sometimes they are symbolic of greater things—a jewel-encrusted statue that is "the stuff that dreams are made of" or a briefcase with unexplained (but mysteriously glowing) contents. Most often it's about killing a particular demon, saving a particular client, not looking stupid in a karaoke bar, or collecting clues about the disappearance of your partner.

Nonetheless, the greater forces are close to the surface in the Angelverse. Here are a couple of the ones that are particularly relevant to life on the street. That doesn't mean they're not important anywhere else, and sometimes the definitions get a bit obscure. But whatever genre you're playing around with, they're likely to come up in strange and unexpected ways. These are the themes that Episodes in any good Angel Series will address.





LAW

Kate: This captain of yours, he's running things by the book?

Officer: I don't have to tell you who used to rule these streets, detective. The scumbags did. Hell, I was afraid to drive to work myself.

Kate: Oh, really?

Officer: We got a tougher policy now.

—2.14 The Thin Dead Line

In a way, human law is the most trivial force in Angel's Los Angeles. Nobody takes it seriously. Not the money end of town, not the street, not the criminals (big surprise there), not the police. Kate is a good cop (albeit with some emotional issues), yet in her first episode she illegally enters Angel's office, and admits as much to him, before she quite knows if she can trust him or not. There may be cops and lawyers who believe in the letter or the spirit of the law, but we haven't seen any on *Angel*.

The reason nobody cares is that the law is a big chunk of arbitrary rulings and special cases about mostly meaningless situations. If you put them all together, they more or less define the rules of "civilization"—but the devil is in the detail. Most of the time that detail is so complex that nobody's entirely sure what the right thing to do is anyway. They just go with what everyone else is doing, or what they saw on TV.

In the end, the law is important because it is the *only* force which can arbitrate disputes in a city of ten million people. The main purpose of law is to tell you, yes or no, if a certain action is allowed. It usually doesn't take into account mitigating circumstances, ignorance of the rules, or your position as the lead character of a TV show. If you are found to be guilty of a crime, you are punished, and it's at that stage when all those special factors come in. You might have been acting in self-defense, be mentally disturbed, or have good character references. These criteria and more help determine the punishment that is meted out.

As with all good theories, things usually don't really work like that. Many incidents are unreported or unproveable, the police take shortcuts to protect their own, and the courts wield their power against those they simply don't like. But it's the theory that people fight for—the ability to determine whether anybody, from a mobster-wannabe to the President of the United States, has broken a pre-existing rule, and to do something about it. Without that, there is no equality, no democracy, and the police are just hired thugs. It's a belief in the theory that differentiates the good cops from the bad cops.



JUSTICE

Lindsey (to Kate): And we can't be completely clear because, the law isn't clear on these matters, is it? I mean—take for example those creatures that murdered your father. They could never have been brought to any kind of traditional justice, even if they *had* survived. And personally, I feel that you were totally justified in taking whatever extra legal measures you found necessary.

—1.19 Sanctuary

Often, the law isn't enough. People who fight for a good set of laws claim they do so for the pursuit of justice but, in the Angelverse, that's not really accurate. Justice is about making things right on the cosmic scale, and otherworldly powers really do bring their influence to bear on an unsuspecting populace. It could be argued that they impose a more refined set of laws, but there's not much evidence for that.

Reality may indeed be just a bigger version of the Court that popped up in the middle of a L.A. street in 2.1 Judgement. To defend the innocent party before that tribunal, Angel had to fight for his life. Trial by combat is anathema to a court of law, but as we said, the law ain't the entire story. In Angel's world, justice is about fighting on the right side, even—or especially—if you don't have any clear guidelines (like the law) about what the right side is.

The trouble with justice is that it might all be a lie—there might not be competing sides, one representing the forces of good and the other evil. There might just be powers that want to bring about the end of things, and the vast weight of inertia standing against them. That would certainly explain why the Powers That Be are so cryptic, easily manipulated, and all but invisible. That's not been answered on *Angel*/yet, but in Season Four especially, things looked pretty bleak. Nonetheless, on the streets and in the gutters of Angel's L.A., the fight for justice is real and without it Angel Investigations would have fallen long ago. When the true path isn't clear, you've just got to make a call and see it through.





MONEY

Angel: Wolfram & Hart find out that you have that money. . .

Anne: I can find a way to hide it. (glances at the cash) What's this?

Angel: Blood.

Anne: It'll wash.

—2.12 Blood Money

Who needs all that fancy talk of law and justice? For most people, it comes down to money. It's not what the crime is, it's how much you got away with, or how much compensation you're owed. Sometimes it's about buying things—getting money means you can get medicine or a good pair of shoes or a companion for the night or a rival killed. It's a means to empowerment, with no strings on how that power is used.

We're shocking no one when we state that there's an unequal distribution of the little green bills throughout Los Angeles. In the streets where Gunn grew up, there is a lot of barter, favors, and five-finger discounts. In David Nabbit's world, actual cash is undoubtedly considered gauche, but those rising and falling bank balances determine almost everything that goes on.

As we mentioned, the best thing about money is that it doesn't come with idealism or strings attached. That isn't always true, but it *feels* true to most people. If they pay somebody for a service, they feel they are removed from the consequences of it. Likewise, if they have money in their hand, it doesn't really matter where it came from—it's pretty much the same as all those other billions of pieces of paper floating around the U.S. of A. Money enables Wolfram & Hart to operate in the modern world with all its interconnections—it doesn't mean that everybody in the system is corrupt, just that they each get their check whether the good guys win or not (and maybe it's a little big bigger if the good guys lose). That lack of emotional attachment doesn't have to be a bad thing. As Doyle explains to Angel in 1.4 I Fall to Pieces, if a client is helped by the agency and then pays in cash, a debt has been paid, and the client can get on with his life. In 3.12 Provider, Angel has to wrestle with the idea that money isn't everything, but works out it's a lot better than nothing.



SOULS

Lilah (to Wesley): So, your former boss has a soul, and you're losing yours. Why, you're just new all over.

—3.22 Tomorrow

Sometimes it's not about good guys and bad guys and the fate of the world. Sometimes it's sticking by your loved ones and sorting out the consequences later. When Angel was fighting to save Cordelia from Wolfram & Hart's trap at the beginning of Season Three, he wasn't doing it for justice; he was doing it for Cordelia. He worked as Lilah's lackey and freed a villain, and did it willingly (if not gladly). In some dramas, saving a soul may just save the world. In the Angelverse, it doesn't necessarily work that way.

Does that mean Angel did a bad thing? In a sense, but he also did the only thing that kept him sane. In 3.11 Birthday, we saw what might have happened if he and Cordelia never formed A.I. He had been driven insane, not by the visions (he's tough enough to withstand that), but by the lack of human contact. The fact that saving Cordelia and keeping Angel sane turned out to be part of a larger scam on the part of Skip (and his godlike master) proves the point—when it's about saving your friends or loved ones, the consequences and repercussions just don't matter.

We've talked about how nasty things can get in the Angelverse, especially in street level games. If your main characters don't have souls, there's not much point exploring all that darkness. With no soul or human dimension, it's all about robots shooting each other and not feeling the pain. Saving souls and keeping your own intact is what measures victory on the streets. Even when fighting against the apocalypse (in a street level story no doubt it's lurking in the background somewhere), preservation of peoples' souls is central to the measure of success.





CITY OF

**The Host (to Angel): You know where I belong?
L.A. You know why? NOBODY belongs
there. It's the perfect place for guys like us.
—2.22 There's No Place Like Plrtz Glrb**

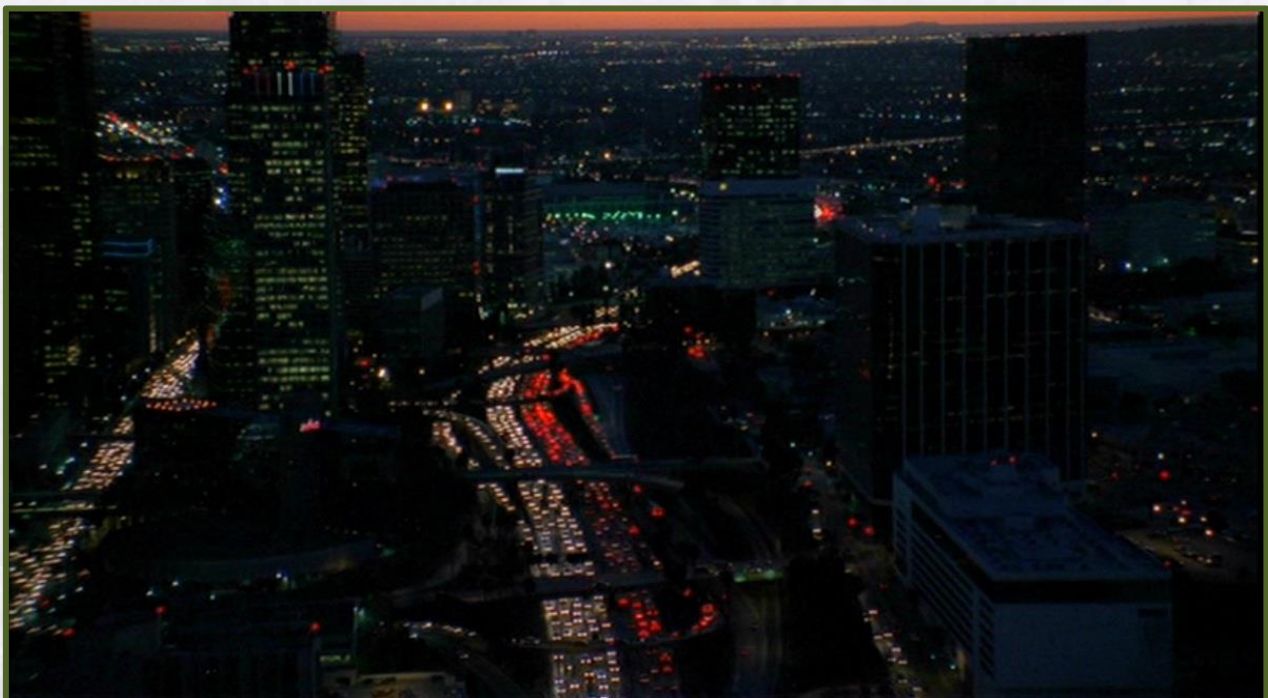
The streets of one big city are much like those of another. Clearly, you don't have to set your game in L.A. at all (see p. [?] for a few different ideas), but it's there that Angel hangs and it's the setting of the show. We'd be remiss if we didn't provide some tools for incorporating the City of Angels in your game. In a street-campaign, it's a good idea to know something about the streets of your town.

Various known as Movie Town, Lala-Land, the Big Orange, Silicone Valley, Double Dubuque (if you lived there through the 50s), and the First Citadel of Jasmine (a more recent appellation), L.A. is a big sprawling mess of a city and that's pretty much the way people like it. Why else would they put up with the smog, ghettos, dodgy electrical service, earthquakes, inadequate police force, fragile water supply, demons, lack of public transport (though there are special arrangements for pregnant vampires), and power-walkers? Okay, maybe "like" is too strong a word here, but it does give them the chance to see an Angel occasionally—Cameron Diaz if they're really lucky.

On the TV show, we usually see L.A. in a couple of distinct modes (we're not talking about named locations here, though many are covered later).

There's the familiar near-empty industrial wasteland, the flashy nightspots inhabited by a variety of desperate people (1.2 Lonely Heart and most demon clubs), the abodes of the ultra-rich (1.1 City Of, 3.6 Billy), family friendly attractions (such as the pier in 1.3 In the Dark, the market stalls from 1.22 To Shanshu in L.A., and the park in 3.14 Couplet), and occasional glimpses of (un)comfortable suburbia (1.14 I've Got You Under My Skin, 2.5 Dear Boy). Each locale has its own mood and types of monsters attached to it—the wasteland is often inhabited by packs of vamps, whereas suburbia attracts a more subtle menace under a façade of normalcy. You can use those sorts of places to continue the *Angel* feel.

The nice thing about roleplaying game stories is that lots of other places can be visited. Unlike the TV show, you're not constrained by a budget and filming restrictions. So feel free to use that means to eke out an Angel Series style all your own. You could visit the vast slums, most of which aren't empty at all (the barrios have the highest population density of anything west of Mississippi), the fully functioning industrial areas (L.A. is the largest manufacturing center in the U.S., particularly important for its aerospace industries), and the Santa Monica mountain range, with twisting Mulholland Drive and solitary mansions nestled in canyons. There're full-blown tourist attractions like Universal Studios and Disneyland, the famous (if somewhat grimy) Sunset Boulevard, huge sports stadiums, and "star maps" of celebrity homes. Even dead celebrities are not forgotten—some vast cemeteries are almost theme parks of the deceased, known or unknown (Holy





Cross, Hollywood Memorial, and Forest Lawn are examples). There's stylish West Hollywood, busy Venice, relaxed Long Beach, and the suburbs ever-expanding out into the desert (which are as racially mixed as the rest). Nearby is Palm Springs, Death Valley, and the Los Angeles Ski Resort. The wall of 404 dire wolf skulls on display at the La Brea Tar Pits is rife with story possibilities. You can't say you're not spoiled for choice locations, and some of those would be very strange indeed, once you add the conventions of the Angelverse.

We can't go into all this suburb by suburb (or even city by city, since there are plenty of other metropolises that have been swallowed by Greater Los Angeles over the years), but there are a ton of guidebooks available for that purpose. Below is a map of the city, providing a rough guide to many of the locations seen on the show (feel free to rip it out and stick pins in it—these can either be murder sites in your game or attempts to generate earthquakes via voodoo). We also discuss the various places our heroes have been found most often over the first four seasons. These are useful if you are using the original Cast or want to adapt their habitats for your own characters.

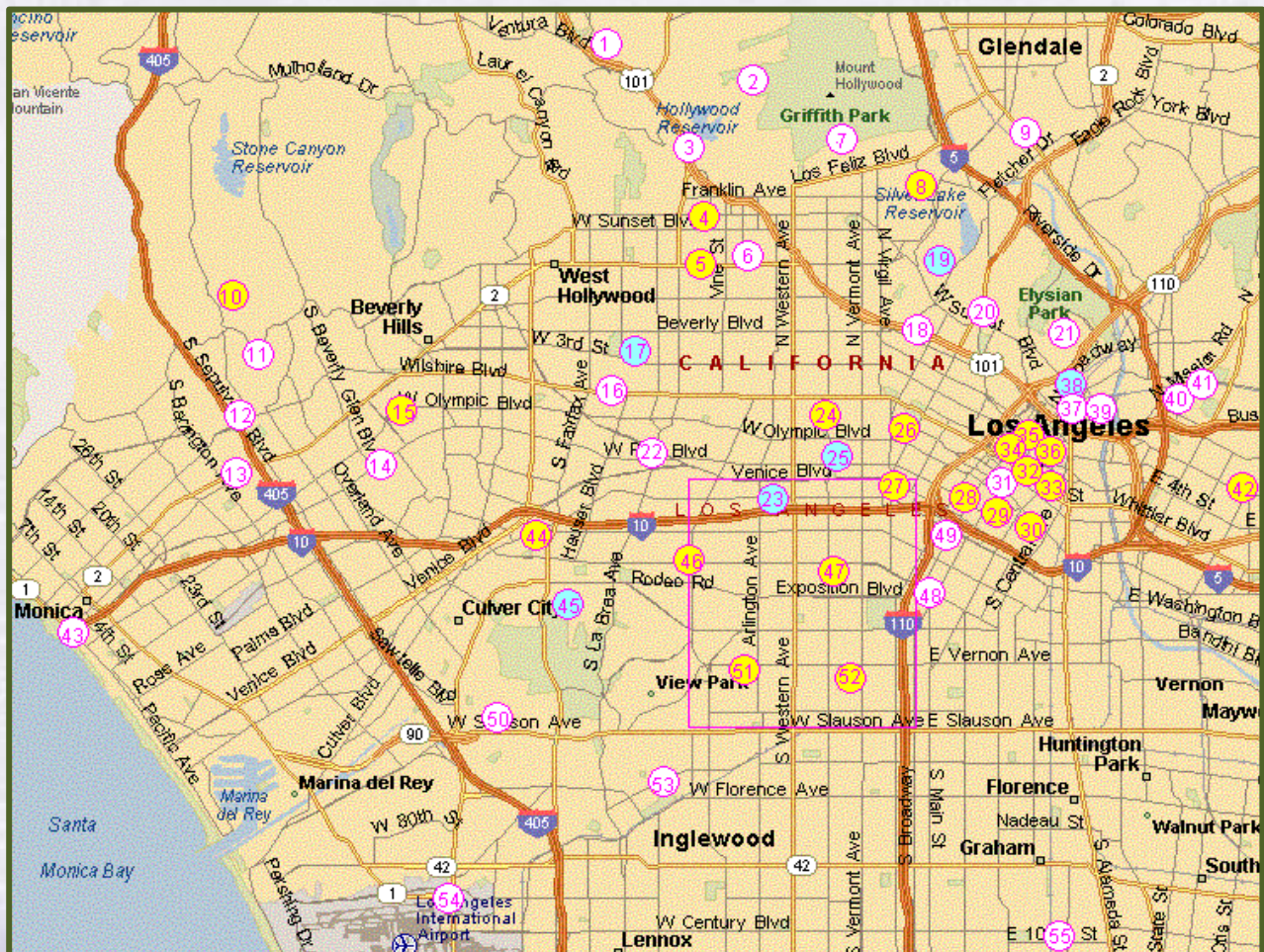
THE OFFICE

Cordelia: My glamorous L.A. life, I get to make the coffee and chain the boss to the bed. I've got to join a union.

—1.11 Somnambulist

Angel Investigations was originally located in a three-story office block somewhere just south of Koreatown. The company occupied room 103, down a short flight of stairs from the lobby, and could be called at 555-0162. Also located on the first floor was Casas Manufacturing (room 101), a dentist called John Folger (room 104), and one Herbert Stein (room 105), occupation unknown. If the building is used as a regular location, your characters might end up meeting a few of these occupants—they could be friendly, suspicious, or in occasional need of help.

The public area of the office had two rooms. The first was the reception area, complete with Cordelia's desk, a visitor's chair, a green leather couch, bookcase, filing cabinets, coffee maker, and water cooler. It wasn't large but it had lots of windows (with blinds to give that stripy noir look and save any vampiric occupants from immolation), cheerful



ANGEL



yellow walls, and plenty of plant-life. Angel's office was a bit sparser, with more records, some good brooding chairs, and a solid looking safe. The floor also had a tiny elevator and stairway down to the basement, and a pair of double doors that were never used (they could go anywhere . . . except Quortoth, we guess). The gang also had access to the roof, where they could look over the city and have infrequent meaningful discussions.

The basement was where the exciting things happened. It was a series of strangely connected rooms, a lot dingier than upstairs, with your basic brick sans-veneer and exposed pipework. It included a study, with bookcase and weapons' cabinet, a kitchen where Angel would cook eggs and toast after a long night's demon hunting, and his bedroom (complete with occasional chains). In the center, a big couch stood near a trapdoor down into the sewers, for those relaxing evenings and quick exits. As well as the elevator and stairs up to the first floor, there was a door to the car park and another one up a set of stairs that wasn't used. We suspect it goes up to another tenant's offices, and is kept locked (but again, it could go anywhere you like).

In 1.22 To Shanshu in L.A., the demon Vocah took a technological approach to the problem of Angel Investigations, and put a really big bomb in the weapons' cabinet. The offices were completely destroyed and it's likely the whole building collapsed or was torn down. That outcome provides another cheerful opportunity to interact with neighborhood residents as they seek answers and someone to pay

for the damages (see p. [?] for notes on insurance investigations). Alternatively, the place could have been rebuilt and be available for rent or purchase, or could already have a new tenant or owner (and possibly some ghosts or other mystical fallout from the previous A.I. residence). Finally, you could adjust things and drop the Vocah storyline—that would keep the place pristine (well, intact) for A.I. or another P.I. agency.

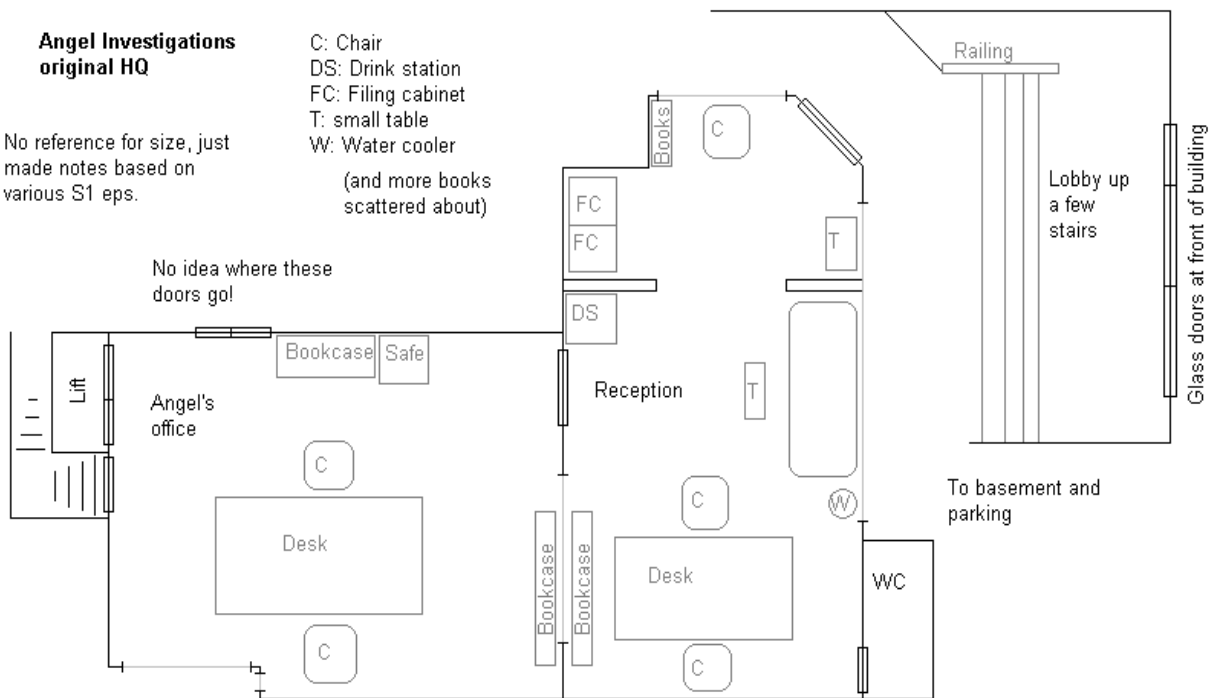




Angel Investigations original HQ

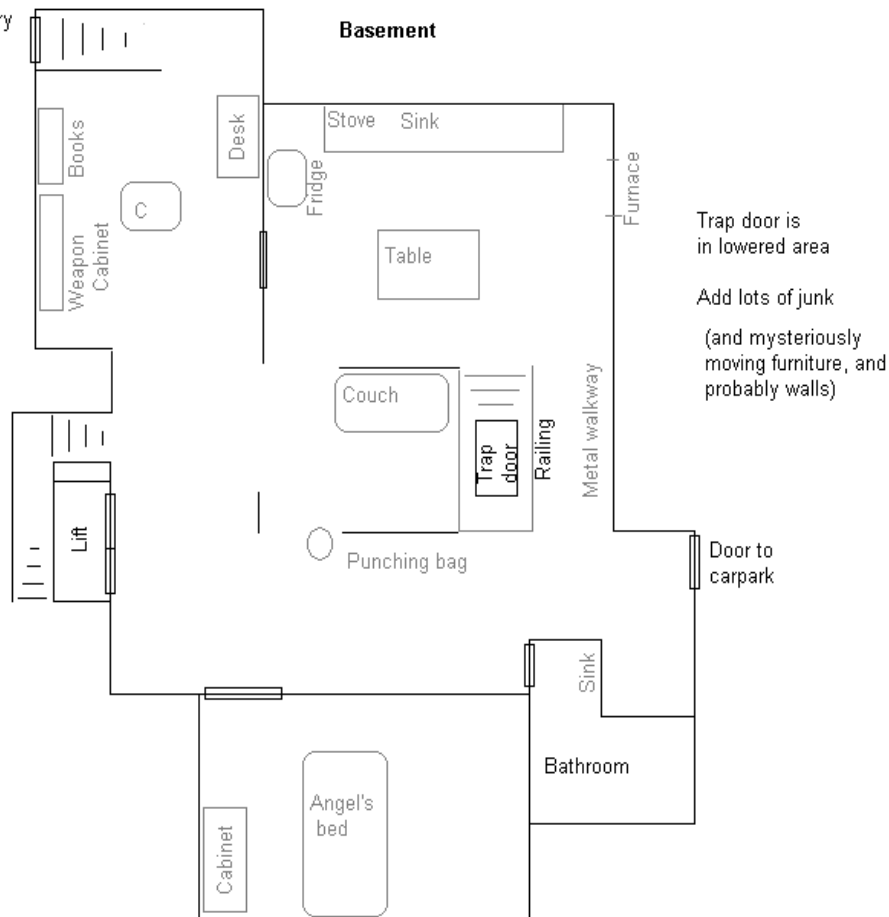
No reference for size, just
made notes based on
various S1 eps.

C: Chair
DS: Drink station
FC: Filing cabinet
T: small table
W: Water cooler
(and more books
scattered about)



Another mystery
door

Basement





THE HYPERION

Wesley: Angel, surely you more than anyone must appreciate how for the better part of the last century this place has been host not only to a malevolent demonic presence, but the very worst faces of humanity! This is a house of evil.

Angel: Not anymore.

—2.2 *Are You Now or Have You Ever Been?*

After a few months working out of Cordelia's apartment, Angel stumbled upon the Hyperion Hotel by accident. Recognizing it as the scene of one of his attempts—and failures—to reach out to humanity while wandering lost for so many decades, he determined to return and see that wrong put to right.

Turns out the wrong had been a part of the hotel since it was constructed in 1928. A Thesulac demon had taken residence, and had been preying on the paranoia and base emotions of the occupants ever since—a rich and varied feast. Thanks to the wonders of electricity, the demon was slain, and Angel Investigations moved in.

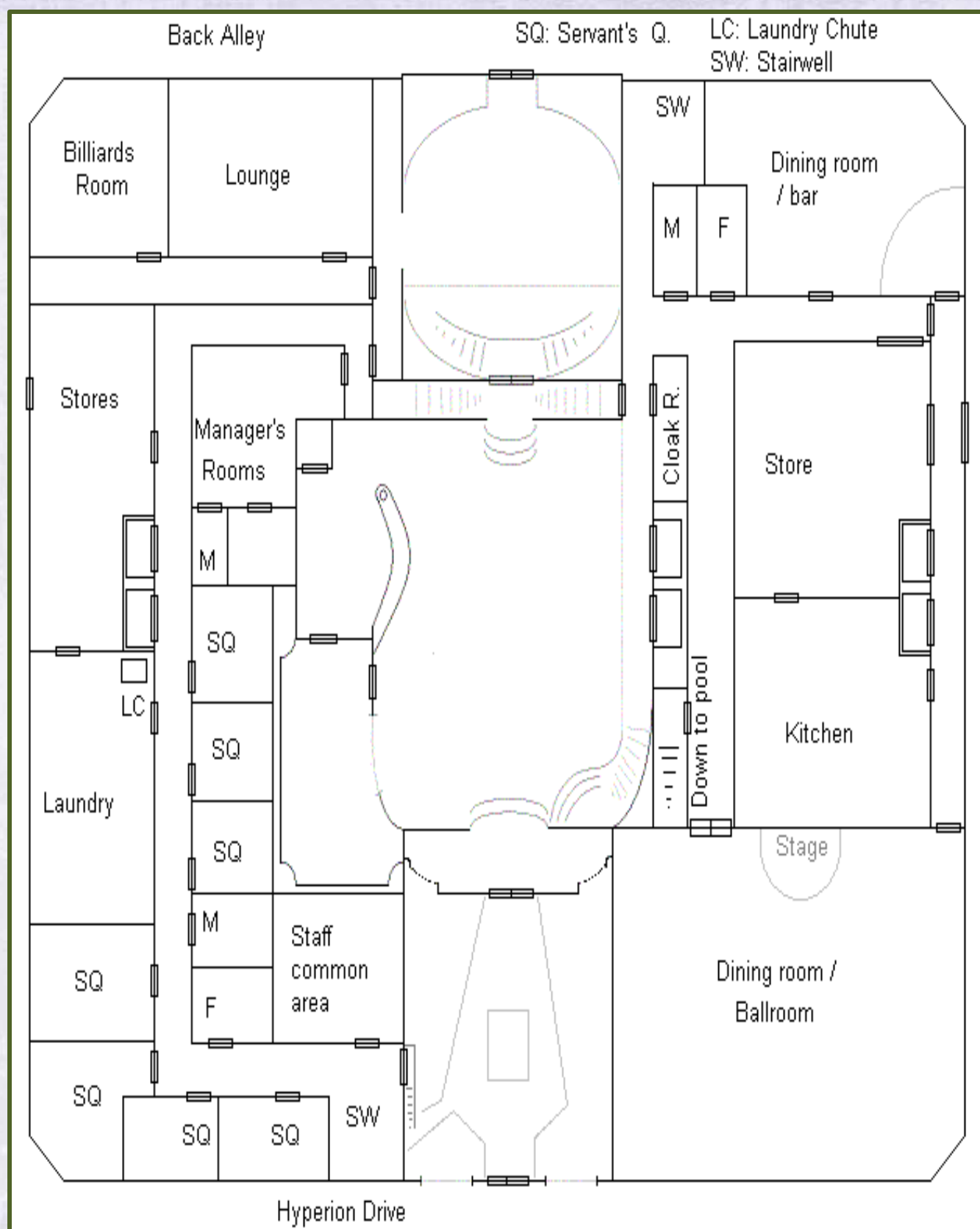
The hotel is situated at 1481 Hyperion Drive (same phone number as before, fax 555-0163), in what used to be a much trendier part of L.A. Now the area is a bit sparse, but has escaped the depredations of the poorest areas—there are some nice apartments and a juice bar across the street. The architecture is California Spanish with a healthy dose of art deco. It's five stories high (plus penthouse), and basically laid out in a large "H" shape, with the lobby separating the two wings.

The lobby got the most screen time—all swirling reds and greens, with marble-like walls and the cute circular couch in the center (occasionally trying, and failing, to hide the stain of a giant pentagram). Various doors, corridors, stairs, and a stately pair of elevators lead off from there. The reception area, main office (the center of Angel Investigations activity), and a bathroom (with a nice big mirror) are nearby. Behind the desk is Cordelia's workspace, with lots of filing cabinets and a place for coffee and other drinks.

The main office belonged to Angel until Wesley became the lead dog. It contains a desk, lots of books, a safe (behind the painting over the desk), a bulletin board for assembling clues, and lots of different maps of L.A. and California, with various notations pinned onto them. There is a portrait of Winston Churchill behind the chair, and a bust (possibly of Beethoven) on one of the bookcases. These no doubt provide inspiration for somebody or something. In all, it's done elegantly in a somber dark green.

There are enclosed gardens to the front and back of the lobby, though the back one was used more often. There's lots of greenery and a fountain built around the statue of a lady (which has a strange habit of sometimes being there, and sometimes not). This tranquil area is good for relaxation or for quiet conversations, and even has a shaded area to protect undead Americans from the sun. Most of the plants do not flower but there is a collection of jasmine, which famously flowers only at night, and provided the human name of you-know-who.





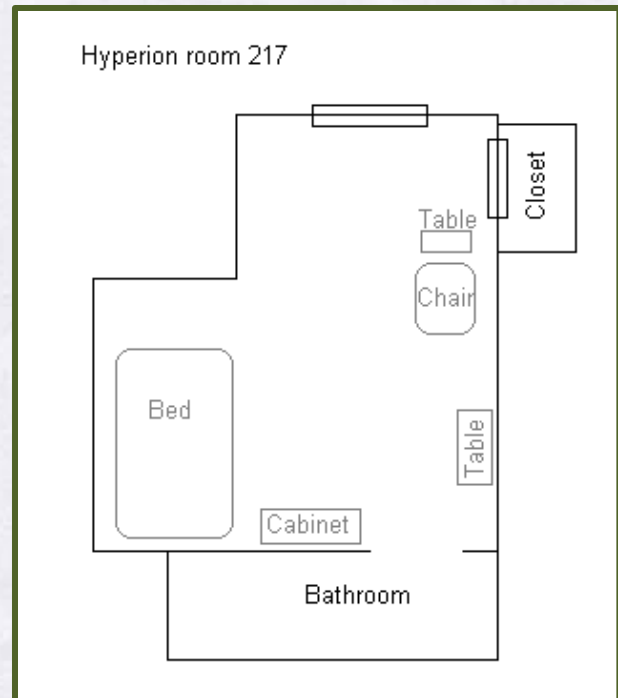


The various rooms of the hotel have been used as needed to accommodate guests or members of the agency. The first floor wasn't used very much, although we see some of it in 3.19 The Price. It has the usual hotel accoutrements like a dining room and big kitchens. We're also guessing the staff quarters and laundry are around as well (no point putting them upstairs when you can charge for the view).

Downstairs is the basement, which used to be a real mess, with graffiti and rubbish strewn everywhere (apparently the Thesulac didn't let the graffiti artists get any higher). Eventually it was cleaned out and a big cage was installed as a holding cell (Angelus got to spend some quality time there in Season Four). The area includes the ever-useful sewer access, the furnaces and, for nearly fifty years, a satchel of money gathering dust. There's also a swimming pool down there somewhere, under the dining room. The Groosalugg helpfully provided a link between the two rooms with a big axe, though we suspect that after stagnating for fifty years, the pool was not frequently visited.

Upstairs is your basic maze of corridors and guest rooms. It seems the first two floors of accommodation were more or less intact, with scattered examples of crumbling floorboards and gaping holes in the wall. The top two floors and penthouse were left uninhabited until Season Four, so were probably in a lot worse condition originally. Speaking of a renovator's delight, Bethany destroyed a lot of the north-side windows in 2.4 Untouched. Those may have been repaired or just boarded over.

As you would expect, the rooms are of many different sizes, from poky little spaces to full suites (they tend to get bigger as you get higher). The principal one we see is 312, Angel's suite. It contains a main sitting area with a bedroom, separate kitchen, and a balcony overlooking the city (not a bad view for the 3rd floor!). It was certainly nicer than the room he had in the 1950s (217, an ill-omened number), though it did take a beating from the earthquake and fire in 3.15 Loyalty.



ANGEL



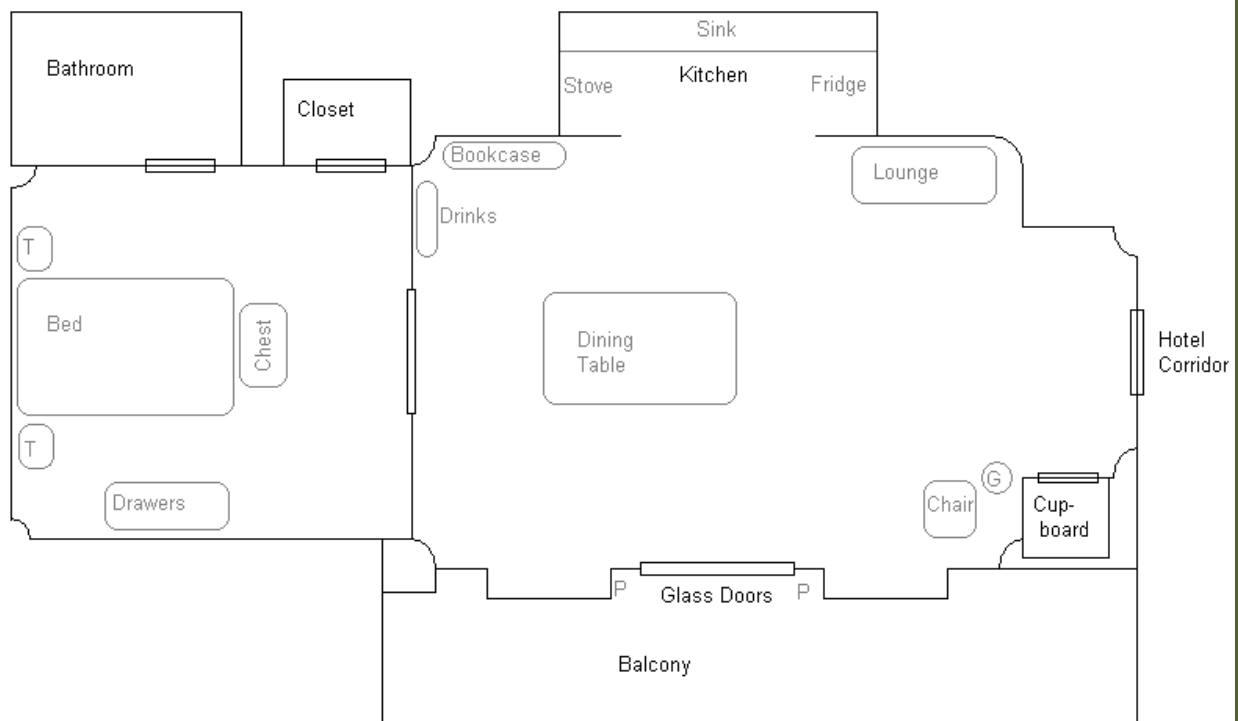
Angel's Suite (Hyperion Room 312)

See 'Sets feature' S2 DVD, 6:13
(and blueprints)

G: Globe

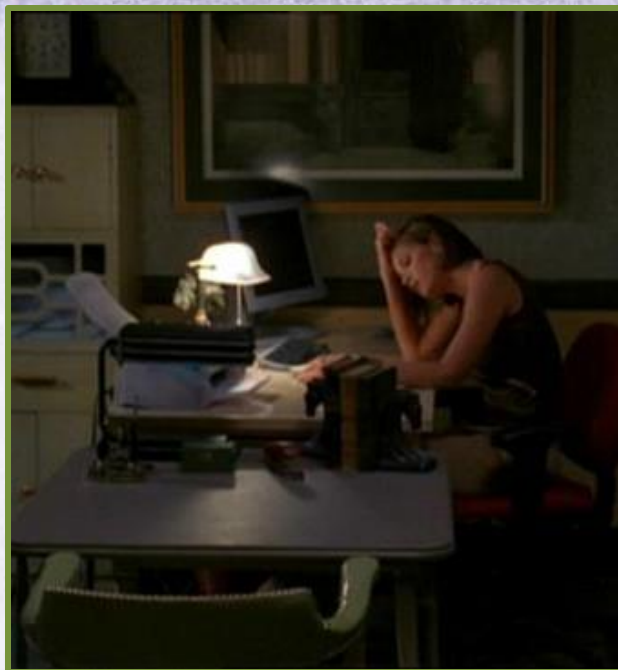
P: Palm Tree

T: Table with lamp



ANGEL

Even without structural damage, the other areas of the hotel become a lot messier very shortly after leaving the elevators, with scattered furniture and other debris (Fred's room started off fairly nice, but rapidly accrued a floor-to-ceiling makeover as she desperately attempted to organize her thoughts—it was repainted in 3.5 Fredless). A lack of reconstruction funds combined with large amounts of space meant that the gang tended to just move from room to room if one got trashed (while the cracks in the lobby were mostly ignored). That changed in Season Four. When Jasmine moved in, a lot of other people wanted to live there too. She was given one of the penthouse suites (room 619) in deference to her status, and a lot of tidying up and reconstruction was done. Under her reign, the Hyperion became the safest and most commodious it has been for fifty years—as long as you didn't mind being mindlessly enslaved to a body-and-soul absorbing demonic entity.



Running the Hotel

The Hyperion is a large and costly structure to occupy, especially if you're not charging any guests nightly fees. If your agency wants to use it or a similar location, you should consider some of the implications. As usual, it's a matter of what is fun for the game. One approach is to just spend the points (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 165) and not fuss the details. That tracks the TV show for the most part.

At other times, the details have been fussed. In particular, Gavin Park of Wolfram & Hart tried to use various legal means to take the hotel away from A.I. This was stymied by Lilah, who betrayed Gavin's plans to Angel—just as a bit of inter-office politics (W&H is nasty like that). Still, it's a good example of the use of many "real-life" laws as mentioned throughout the book. Such laws make the background of the show (or your game) more realistic, and are a good springboard for drama, even (or especially) if they are only mentioned obliquely, rather than exploring all the legal requirements, repercussions, and loopholes.

Other than the legal or financial ramifications, there is the problem of size. It's very difficult to protect a perimeter of that size from incursion. The two main gates can be reasonably well secured, but no doubt there are a number of extra service entrances. Anyone that can climb has an almost unlimited supply of choices and the fire escapes make it easier still (see 4.20 Sacrifice for a view of them). And it's not just the perimeter—the volume is a problem as well. There could be all sorts of things hiding in an unused room somewhere, perhaps a demon lying dormant who does not know the Thesulac has gone, perhaps something stranger still. Maybe the demon chose this particular hotel for a reason. That provides a neat hook for an Episode exploring some more of the hotel's past. A storyline exploring the origins and even construction of the place could be very interesting.

While on the issue of internal security, recall that Wolfram & Hart had the place bugged for sound and vision at the start of Season Three. We can assume the A.I. folks were able to remove the bulk of them (Lorne is able to sense the frequency of the bugs with his demon-ness), but a few could remain, perhaps only transmitting at irregular intervals.





REBEL HQ

Virginia: I'll call Patty and tell her you'll take the job.

Wesley: Uh, sweetie, no phone.

Cordelia: Also no lights.

Gunn: And there's a funky smell.

Virginia: I wasn't gonna say anything.

—2.13 Happy Anniversary

When Angel fired Cordy, Wesley, and Gunn from Angel Investigations, they set up their own office using the same corporate name (they couldn't agree on another one). The show never says exactly where it is, but it's probably not too far away from Hyperion Drive. We do know the number is 4521 (the door leads directly out to the pavement and a handy mailbox).

Cheap is the watchword for this location, though the electricity did start working eventually. This tended to emphasize that the interior decorators were insane. Green and yellow walls, separated by a red stripe; green and red linoleum on the floor. At least the back of the main room had some nice wood paneling (probably fake). A couple of bookcases and sad looking desks finished off the ensemble. The office also had a unisex bathroom to one side and a small room out the back, although neither was shown on screen.

The Big Bad Law Firm

Some of you may be thinking we forgot the biggest and baddest of all A.I. HQs, the Wolfram & Hart law offices. Oh, ye of little faith.

First off, as we mentioned earlier, this book only covers through Season Four of *Angel*. The move to the high life occurs in Season Five.

More importantly, Wolfram & Hart is a huge subject. It's not only a new HQ. Once the Cast has access to the full resources of W&H, the game changes in many ways. The temporal power is serious enough, but it's the boost in supernatural abilities that really separates the Nightstalkers from the Illuminati. Given all that, we have devoted an entire book to Wolfram & Hart, appropriately entitled *Lawyers, Gods, and Money*. Check back with us later.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Angel (about Cordelia and the Groosalugg): She took him home. Well, that's . . . good. At least we won't have to put him up here.

Place was starting to turn into a hotel.

—3.14 Couplet

Despite the fact the gang ended up having its own hotel as a base, most of them lived separately—just turned out to be easier, we guess, and helped keep some distance between work and play. Fred was the first to take up residence other than Angel himself (and it took quite some effort to get her to leave, even for just a movie). She did consider building an underground condo for herself, but stayed upstairs. Lorne moved in a few months later, since he figured they owed him for destroying his club. Twice. Cordelia also assumed residency of the Hyperion in Season Four (and didn't that go well?), as did Connor for a few nights (again, to everyone's regret).

As for the rest of the gang, here's a quick summary of the various homes we've seen. The most significant is the Pearson Arms—Cordelia's second apartment—as it was the de facto home of A.I. for a while and featured its own incorporeal Supporting Cast Member (and if you want to elevate Phantom Dennis up to a full Cast Member, perhaps with some gadget allowing him leave the building, go for it). Any of these places could be good rendezvous points, "safe houses," or scenes of late-night bonding (we mean with a friendly game of cards, of course). They can also serve as models for places of your own design. We haven't detailed Connor's various abodes, since he seemed to move around, and each had a distinct lack of interior decoration.

Cordelia's First Apartment: Well, we can be pretty sure it's not in Malibu, as claimed, but other than that all we really know is that it's Apartment 4B, and that it's a mess. The plumbing is shot, the walls are half-painted yellow, and bare boards show in the kitchen (which is just a corner of the main room). It does provide good protection from sunlight, which is handy for certain folks. There're also a lot of roaches, but at least it didn't smell of bong water.

Doyle's Apartment: Now we get to the bong water stench. This place was just as shabby but it had a much better vibe, thanks to the various knick-knacks Doyle picked up over the years (assuming you could find them among the mounds of unwashed laundry). The unit was in a small tenement block, some five stories high (though it does look bigger from some angles). Doyle had a view of a scenic brick wall and flashing red neon. We didn't see anything else but the main room, complete with bed, drawers and a bookcase, painted yellow, with more neon in the hallway outside. His phone number is 555-0189.



ANGEL



Unit 212, The Pearson Arms: This is the apartment Cordy found through Doyle's dodgy contacts, complete with a fifty year old murder mystery. Other than that, it turned out to be a beautiful and spacious Spanish unit at 141 Embury Street in Silver Lake (phone number 555-0175). The main area was divided into a living room and dining room, although the dividing wall turned out to be an architectural folly containing the body of Dennis Pearson, bricked up there by his mother (the room looks much nicer without the wall, or the body, although the spirit remains). A kitchen, with a patio, was located behind the main room. Across the hall from the living room was Cordelia's bedroom, adjoined by the bathroom. The unit has a good view, interesting neighbors (actor Steve Paymer lives down the hall), an airy interior, and cheerful yellow walls (again! What's with all the yellow—didn't any of these people watch *Millennium*?).

Just before and in the early part of Season Two, our heroes used this apartment as their HQ, although it always looked like a temporary affair. Other than a white board and some filing, A.I. didn't have much impact on the place. Cordelia was glad to see them leave, just to get a bit of privacy—for her increasingly scary medical reports if nothing else. After Cordelia's disappearance at the end of Season Three, Gunn and Fred kept up the rent, in the hope she would return. They had to let it lapse however, and when Cordelia did return, she moved into the hotel. The fate of Phantom Dennis is unknown, but presumably he is still in the apartment (and it's not as if the returned Cordelia wanted a ghost prying into her affairs).

Wesley's Apartment: This is a very stylish affair, reflecting its owner well with a mix of the old and the new. It has an astrolabe, some great globes, lots of arty light fixtures, and a restful blue color scheme. An ornate chess set sat on a table in the main room and fencing épées filled a stand by the door. A microwave could be used for those lonesome dinners, and there was certainly no lack of reading material (though the collection no doubt tended to esoteric subjects). There are also a couple of Thighmasters™ hidden away somewhere, unless they've been converted into some bizarre demon torture device. A shotgun is stashed in the closet, and an increasing number of strange weapons found their way there through the beginning of Season Four. Oh yes, Justine was in the closet as well. Mind the bucket.

Wesley lives at number 105, a first floor unit in a white Spanish-style block, with a Mrs. Starns living in the apartment directly above. It's opposite a nice park (we suspect Wesley isn't too fond of it, though) and is one minute from the Drew Medical Center (a "top infant care center").

Gunn's Home: This one's a bit of a mystery. He wasn't staying with his old gang, but it's not clear that he moved into the Hyperion, other than the occasional night with Fred. We see a little of his room in 3.3 That Old Gang of Mine, which shows a bed, a table with lamp and phone, a poster of a motorbike, and a leftover pizza box. Other than that, his place could be located anywhere.







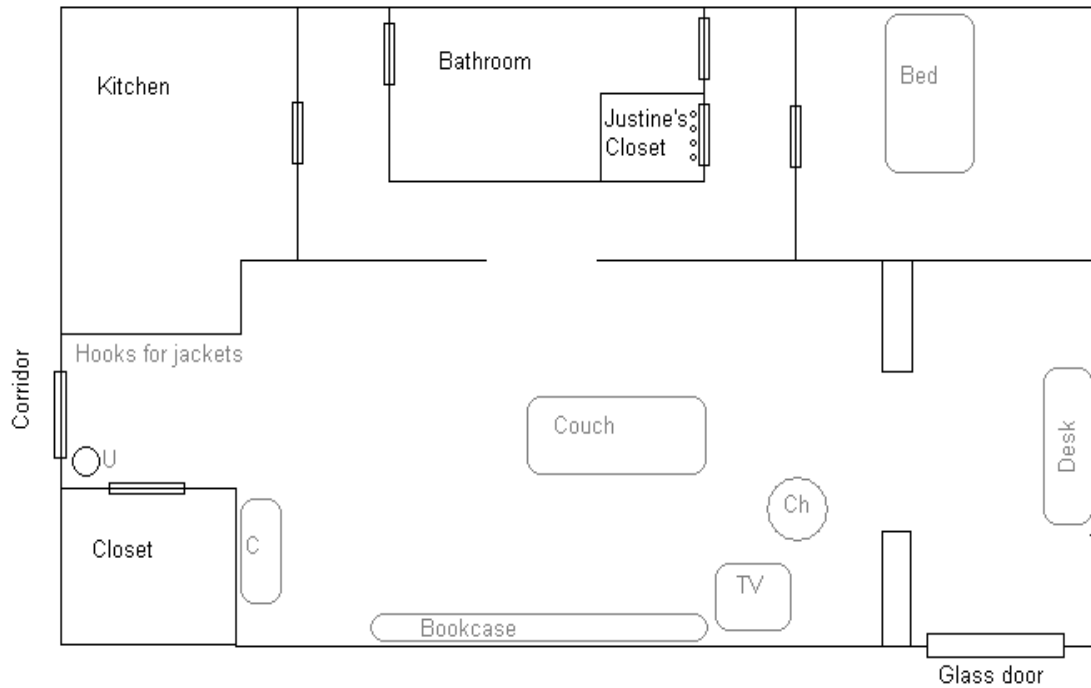
Wesley's Apartment

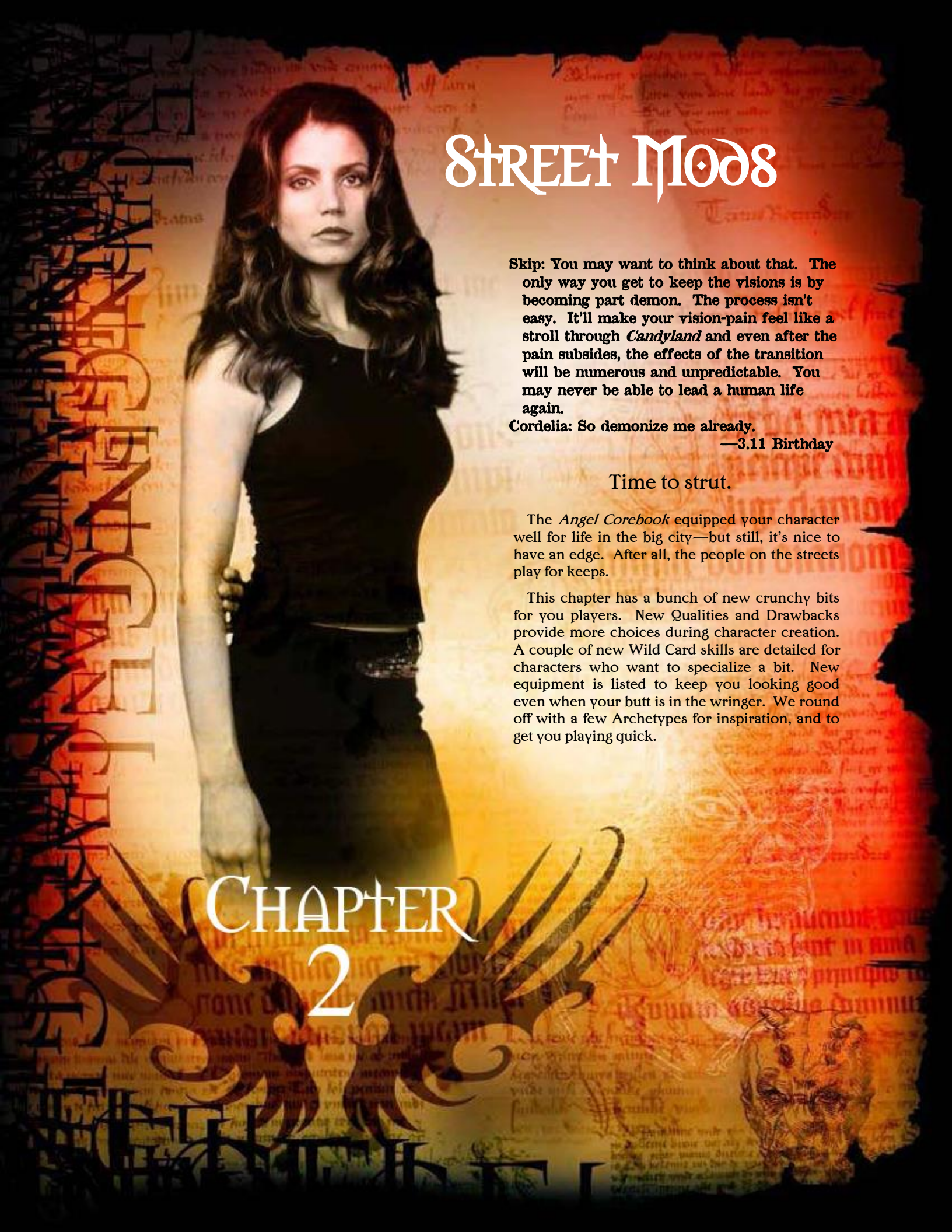
Based on layout from A New World and the Price, plus glimpses of the corridors in Deep Down.

C: Chest

Ch: table with chess set

U: Umbrella stand (with swords)





STREET MODS

Skip: You may want to think about that. The only way you get to keep the visions is by becoming part demon. The process isn't easy. It'll make your vision-pain feel like a stroll through *Candyland* and even after the pain subsides, the effects of the transition will be numerous and unpredictable. You may never be able to lead a human life again.

Cordelia: So demonize me already.

—3.11 Birthday

Time to strut.

The *Angel Corebook* equipped your character well for life in the big city—but still, it's nice to have an edge. After all, the people on the streets play for keeps.

This chapter has a bunch of new crunchy bits for you players. New Qualities and Drawbacks provide more choices during character creation. A couple of new Wild Card skills are detailed for characters who want to specialize a bit. New equipment is listed to keep you looking good even when your butt is in the wringer. We round off with a few Archetypes for inspiration, and to get you playing quick.

CHAPTER 2



QUALITIES AND DRAWBACKS

Magnus Bryce: You see someone in this town with looks and talent, chances are we provided one of them.

—2.6 Guise Will Be Guise

These new options help your character stand out from the madding crowd. Some of them are package deals, which give you a combination of benefits, often with a downside or two. As it mentions in the *Angel Corebook*, you usually can't take more than one such Quality per character, although your Director might allow it if you're very convincing (of course, as designers, we trample that warning to dust with some of the sweet dual-package Archetypes at the end of this chapter).

As always, your Director has final say as to whether these aspects are allowed in his game. Think of him as a gambling den—when it comes to the rules, the House always wins. Still, the object is for everyone to have fun (and no trading of souls allowed).

Addiction (Gambling)

VARIABLE DRAWBACK

Angel: I got two cherries. If I get another one, I get my quarter back.

—4.3 The House Always Wins

A person with this Drawback just can't say "no" to the chance to put his money on the line, be it a football game or an inside straight. If faced with a decision about staying around to gamble or going elsewhere to do something a little more responsible, he must make a Willpower (doubled) roll to resist the urge to stay, with the value of his Addiction as a penalty to the roll. (If it's a matter of life or death, no roll need be made.)

This Drawback doesn't determine how good or bad the poor sucker is at gambling (there are some Qualities to help him out there, see p. [?]). However, this Drawback is a hallmark of those who persevere even through a losing streak, convinced their luck is about to change. It normally doesn't end well, but that one win every now and again seems to make up for an awful lot—at least emotionally, if not for the bank balance.

The cost of the Drawback, between one and four points, reflects how much of a problem the character has. One point is a mild addiction, whereas four is extremely serious.

Addiction (Gambling) is different from the usual Addiction Drawback (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 29) in that there are no penalties for being "under the influence" (apart from a really short attention



span). That's the good news. The not-so-good news is that penalties for withdrawal are the same. The really bad news is that buying off the addiction is harder than a drug of the same value—the penalty for rolls to beat the habit are *twice* the value of the Drawback.

Similar Drawbacks can be formed for other activities. It might be sex, racing fast cars, or even hurting other people (in which case add the Mental Problems (Cruelty) Drawback as well). The latter is not recommended for Cast Members in most games.

Dependent (Guardianship)

2- OR 3-POINT DRAWBACK

Anne: Maybe you had a good reason for cutting off Lindsey's hand. I don't care. I care about the shelter.

—2.12 Blood Money

This is simply a version of the Dependent Drawback focusing on non-relatives or those whose dependent status is not created by birth. The guardian might run a shelter or a street mission. He could be a teacher or even a parole officer who takes an active interest in his charges. If your game is set around prison life, he might even be a guard who has a legal obligation to see no one is hurt on his watch. As with the Dependent Drawback, the value is two if it involves a single person, three if the oversight extends to more than one person.

Honorable (Hippocratic Oath)

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Doctor: All I hear is a normal, healthy little heart.

Angel: You don't understand. I-I got like really good hearing. I mean really good hearing.

Doctor: Well, most first time parents do.

—3.15 Loyalty



ANGEL



This is a version of the Honorable (Minimal) Drawback. Your character is a doctor who has sworn to uphold the principles of his craft, such as offering treatment regardless of the identity of the victim, respecting confidentiality, and working to prevent disease in preference to curing it. Of course, most modern doctors don't swear by "Apollo the physician, by Æsculapius, Hygeia, and Panacea" as Hippocrates did, but in the Angelverse, you never know. This Drawback is worth one point.

Licensed Investigator

5-POINT QUALITY

Kate: Well, you see, the thing about detectives is that they have resumes and business licenses and last names. Pop stars and popes, those are the one name guys.

Angel: You got me. I'm a pope.

—1.5 Rm w/a Vu

As Doyle says in 1.9 Hero, advertising your services as a private detective when you don't have a license is not a good idea (see p. [?]). For people who want to get on the right side of the law, this is the Quality for you. The requisite 6,000 hours of P.I. work gives your character +1 to any one Attribute, +1 to the Crime and Notice Skills, a one-point Contacts (Criminal) Quality, and a one-point Contacts (Governmental) Quality. The character also gets certain legal authorities in the State of California (or wherever the game is set), including the ability to start his own agency and quicker access to various information systems. **Chapter Four: Private Investigators** has a lot more information on this sort of thing.

Lie Detector

1-POINT QUALITY

Aubrey: To be perfectly honest with you, I could use a friend right now. Ever since my son was . . . it gets lonely.

Wesley: You're good. I like the "lonely" thing.

—3.15 Loyalty

A character with this Quality has a "sixth" sense about when others are lying. It might be because he has studied body language, has a mild psychic ability, or even the ability to smell changes in hormones (for those with Supernatural Senses). When making a Perception and Notice roll to sense if someone is lying, the character gets a +2 bonus. Lie Detector may not work on members of other species, people with psychic defenses, or other characteristics that somehow impede the operation of the ability.

Poker Face

1- OR 2-POINT QUALITY

Angelus: That's just drinking water.

Cordelia: Fresh from a mountain spring, delivered right to our door. Then blessed every second Tuesday by Father Mackie, the local parish priest, while you're down in the Bat-cave, sleeping through the better part of the day. You don't believe me? Have some! (Tosses water and runs.) And the Oscar goes to . . .

— 1.17 Eternity

This Quality allows your character to pull off the most brazen of deceptions with a straight face. For one point, the cool dude gets a +2 bonus to any opposed roll where lying is involved (the skill you use depends on the situation, but is usually Influence). For two points, your character gets the +2 bonus against supernatural and scientific tests as well, such as spells, polygraph tests, and sodium pentothal (see p. [?]). It also helps when playing poker, strangely enough (see p. [?]).

Rap Sheet

1-POINT DRAWBACK

Kate: Hey, looky here. Disturbing the peace, resisting arrest, G.T.A., assault. You've lead a rich full life, haven't you Charles?

Gunn: I get around.

—2.5 Dear Boy

If your character is being actively hunted by the law, you can buy yourself points of Adversary (Police). For many petty crooks or vigilantes, the cops have better things to do. However, they still make a note of anything that character has been convicted (or even suspected) of doing and can bring up that information when it suits them. That can make any interactions with the authorities a lot harder and is likely to cast suspicion on him, even if he's just an innocent bystander. It can also make other things, such as job hunting or credit checks, more difficult—although it might be taken as a sign of respectability in other parts of town.



ANGEL

The Rap Sheet Drawback represents those with felony convictions on their record (misdemeanors are bad but don't qualify for points; most people won't come down too hard on those folks).

If he's done the crime but hasn't been identified yet, you're looking at a Secret Drawback instead. If the character didn't actually commit the crimes on his rap sheet, there is no change in cost and the effects are the same. That sucks big time, but it's a dynamite story hook!

Special Agent

9-POINT QUALITY

Kate: Mulder is the believer. Scully is the skeptic.

Kendrick: Scully is the chick, right?

—1.19 Sanctuary

FBI agents have it pretty tough sometimes, but at least they get designer clothing and perfectly styled hair—or is that only on TV shows and in the movies? Anyway, this Quality represents those agents with more training, resources, and responsibility than your basic police detective. Oh, and they don't necessarily work for the FBI (see **Chapter Five: The System** for more information on the various agencies out there).

Special Agents get +1 to any one Attribute. They also get +1 to their Crime, Driving, Gun Fu, and

Notice Skills. Their position gives them two levels of the Rank Quality and a two-point Contacts (Governmental) Quality. As with Cops (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 32), Agents can conduct investigations, and detain or arrest suspects as long as they can justify it under the jurisdiction of their agencies (FBI types enforce federal criminal laws; ATF types deal with alcohol, tobacco and firearm regulations, etc.—this ability costs two points). Also like Cops, Agents get into serious trouble if they start disobeying orders or going off on their own—they serve under an Obligation (Major—Government). Ex-agents have a lot less authority (no rank or legal enforcement powers) and fewer contacts (drop that to the one-point version), but more freedom (no obligations), so the cost only goes down by three.

Secret (Undercover Cop/Informer)

3-POINT DRAWBACK

Merl: What do I want? Huh? I tell you what I want. I want back the three months I spent in therapy after being hung upside down in a sewer. That's what I want.

Cordelia: Angel, read the cards.

Angel: No. He's . . . he's right. He's right.

Every time I went to Merl for information he came through.

—3.3 That Old Gang of Mine





This version of the Secret Drawback represents the dangers faced by those people who are deep inside the criminal profession, but whose loyalty (or at least some portion of it) lies with the law. The character might be a cop working undercover, a lowlife informing on his associates (not so much loyalty as a way to get out of twenty years in prison), or a basically good person caught in a no-win position and trying to do the right thing (while keeping his body parts intact).

Police who go undercover for brief periods of time to trawl for information on a particular bad guy—like Kate in 1.2 Lonely Heart—don't get this Drawback. That's just part of their normal duties—one of the riskier parts. This Drawback is for those who actually have a life inside a gang or the mob, or who is an irregular but trusted member of their network. They can be called on at any time by both sides of the law, and have to juggle conflicting priorities, ethics, and even friendships. If they are ever "uncovered" (perhaps because of a mistake on the job, perhaps when it comes time to testify in court), this Drawback turns into an Adversary at a level commensurate with the power of the folks betrayed (a blown cover as a local syndicate bagman would create a four-point Adversary Drawback, for example).

A character with this Drawback must also take an Obligation Drawback of Important or greater to the infiltrated organization (gaining the requisite number of character points). He also must purchase one or more levels of the Contacts Quality of a type fitting the group (paying for those levels normally). If the organization is detailed using **Chapter Five: Cabals, Covens, and Agencies** from the *Angel Corebook*, the access granted is mirrored by the Obligation Drawback taken so no points are added or subtracted for either (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 159—that may be adjusted at the Director's discretion).

SKILLS

Cordelia: Look the truth is that my dating game skills are kind of rusty. You're the first person I've had over in a long . . . well, ever. So, I'm open to suggestions.

Wilson: Music?

Cordelia: Right. Music.

—1.12 Expecting

Several new and street-game-useful Wild Card skills are gathered here.

WILD CARD (ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE)

A good investigator knows his tools, especially his electronic tools. A full discussion of these techniques for the pros is found in **Chapter Three: Street Rules** (see p. [?]).

Still, any bozo can try to use surveillance equipment, provided that they receive instructions from a skilled individual. Absent the Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) skill, Crime or Brains -4 may be used for placing a bug, Notice or Brains -4 for locating bugs, and Mr. Fix-It or Brains -4 for interfering or noticing interference. Counter-surveillance is more difficult though; some Directors may decide that locating, interfering, and noticing interference can only be performed by characters that possess the Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) skill.

WILD CARD (GAMING)

This skill is like Sports for less sweaty games—poker, chess or Word Puzzle 3D for example (less sweaty unless you're playing for your soul, that is). Most games use Intelligence as the base Attribute, but some, notably poker, use Perception (in which case the Qualities Poker Face and Lie Detector each add +2 to the roll). Without Wild Card (Gaming), the character uses a Perception and Notice - 3 roll or the Brains Score - 3 instead. Gambling is discussed further in **Chapter Three: Street Rules** (see p. [?]).





WILD CARD (LAW)

This is good for running down precedents in court cases, finding weaknesses in a lawyer's argument, and sounding convincing before a judge. Without Wild Card (Law), the character uses an Intelligence and Knowledge - 5 roll instead (if you want to get tricky, you could use Intelligence and Crime - 5 instead for criminal law matters). Guest Stars and Adversaries use Brains - 5, unless they are lawyer-types, in which case they use Brains.

WILD CARD (PROFILER)

Psychological profiling is the science of understanding the motivations and psychological state of the criminal. By studying the clues left behind, the profiler hopes to gain insight into the criminal's identity and the forces that are driving him, so as to more easily catch him (see p. [?]). Profiling is a learned skill. Any character who wishes to use it must have received training (probably from the FBI National Academy in Quantico, but there are alternatives) and have some sort of real-life experience. Those without this skill can use an Intelligence and Crime -5 roll, or the Brains Score- 5.

WILD CARD (SAFECRACKING)

This skill covers opening safes, getting through vaults, and possibly earning some old-fashioned respect in the criminal subculture (see p. [?]). Without this skill, Mr. Fix-It - 3 can be used.

WILD CARD (TORTURE)

Pretty much what it sounds like—the impolite art of causing pain and suffering to get what you want (see p. [?] for more). Those without this skill can use a Dexterity and Doctor -3 roll or the Brains Score -3.

WILD CARD (WHIP)

This is used for attacking with chains and mantraps. You can also use it for whips and lassos, though you'll have to look elsewhere for details on that (see *Slayer's Handbook*, pp. 37, 39). The untrained can attempt a Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 4 roll or use the Combat Score - 4, if they've a mind to.

Law Library

As an optional new facility type for organizations (see Chapter Four: Cabals, Covens, and Agencies in the *Angel Corebook*), the Law Library ranges from an amateur lawyer's collection (level 1) up to a record of every precedent set in a United States courtroom (and then some), as collected by Wolfram & Hart (level 5). Each level costs one point, and adds +1 to certain rolls of the Wild Card (Law) Skill (as long as the character has access to the library, that is).





NEW EQUIPMENT

Gunn: I'm thinking James Bond never looked this fine.

Gwen: I'm thinking you're right.

Gunn: Of course, I'd feel better if we were packing some of his secret weapons.

—4.16 Players

Thinking you too need some special equipment? Well, it's more street than secret agent but the stuff presented here should be very useful for those pounding a beat . . . or pounding other things. There's even a bunch of goodies that don't involve physical harm (you can't always just lay into folks, much as they might deserve it).

Battering Ram: This handily shaped chunk of metal is useful when you don't have a different chunk of metal in the shape of a key (or even when you are missing a door completely). This allows two people to attack a door or section of wall at once, giving them each +2 to their breaking stuff rolls. In addition, their Success Levels are added together before any deductions are made for the strength of the inanimate object.

Bugs: Electronic surveillance equipment comes in a whole lot of shapes and sizes, and despite the claims of the manufacturers, most are fiddly and have small areas of effect. The three most common types are phone taps, hidden microphones, and parabolic mikes (for listening at a distance).

Placing, locating, or interfering with bugs requires various Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) rolls (see p. [?]). In some cases, an electronic detector may be used. The type of detector required depends upon the bug—it's no good detecting radio waves if the bug has an attached tape recorder, or just a long wire to its transmitter (though a so-called "non-linear junction detector" helps in these cases, detecting the presence of circuitry, even if it's not currently active). Sophisticated bugs store their information internally and then transmit only sporadically, making them even harder to detect, and not requiring a return trip by the bugger to retrieve the info. As for the legality of bugging, see p. [?].

Chain: A chain can be used as a poor man's flail . . . or a never-heard-of-a-flail man's flail. They have the advantage over other blunt weapons of hitting the target with more surface area, thus doing more damage, and being able to reach up to ten feet away (as long as the chain is long enough). In the hands of a skilled user, the links can bend around anything that might be used for defense. The disadvantage is that they are slower, coming into effect after other hand-held weapons in the Turn.

To strike with a chain, roll Dexterity and Getting Medieval - 2, or use the Combat Score - 2. It inflicts 3 x (Strength + 1) points (Bash type). Any attempt to Parry the chain strike suffers a -3 penalty. Should a defender attempt to use a solid object (such as a column, wall, or doorway) to avoid an attack, the chain ignores such modifiers (at your Director's discretion). Some welder nutjobs put spikes on their chains, to do Slash/stab damage.

Some people—notably Marcus in 1.3 In the Dark—take this weapon to the next level, using it more like a lasso than a flail. If your character wants to do that, and has both enough chain and enough space to swing it, roll Dexterity + Getting Medieval - 4, Dexterity and Wild Card (Whip), or use the Combat Score - 4. If successful, the target is grappled and can only roll Strength (not doubled) to escape. He also receives Strength damage (Bash type), double that if the neck is targeted.

Explosive Charges: As weapons, explosives are usually inefficient, dangerous, and tend to bring down a lot of unwanted attention from the authorities. When used for more focused applications, like blowing a security system or vault, they can be very useful however. In general, your character needs an explosive device (natch) and a detonator (either timed or activated remotely) to deliver an electrical charge at the right time. Setting up an explosive charge so as to cause maximum structural damage requires an Intelligence and Mr. Fix-It -5 roll. Three Success Levels are required to ensure the maximum effect; if your character only gets one or two Success Levels, the damage is reduced (by one-tenth or one-half respectively). If he fails the roll, he's messed up the trigger and the bomb doesn't work. Worse, it might explode. Roll Intelligence and Mr. Fix-It -5 again. Another failure places the demo man at ground zero.

Sensitive components (like nitro) or rough working conditions (not having the right tools) might require more rolls, just so you don't drop something at an inopportune moment (it's good to have a vampire with super-reflexes handy if you do). Plastic explosive is harder to get but safer to use (no extra roll needed to see if the bomb explodes).

Flare: Though not intended for use as a weapon, road flares can still be pretty unpleasant if you get one where the sun don't shine (like, um, in a warehouse). If a handheld flare is used hand-to-hand, it does Strength + 1 points of Fire damage. They usually last between twenty and thirty minutes each (that's a lot of Turns) and are ignited by striking them against their caps. If thrust at the face, the defender must beat the attacker's roll by three or more to avoid being blinded for a number of Turns equal to the shortfall.



ANGEL

Bright Example: Jason shoves a road flare at a vamp's face. His attack roll total is 14. The vamp's Combat Score is 16. The bloodsucker avoided the hit but not the blinding (he needed a Score of 17 for that—the attack roll total plus three). Since the bad guy is one short of the Score he needed, that's how many Turns he is blinded.

Flash Grenade: Police occasionally uses these weapons to shock the inhabitants of a property they are raiding. When one goes off, it creates a deafening bloom and a bright flash, overwhelming the senses of anyone nearby. Anyone within twenty feet (or in the same room) must make a Fear Test with a -10 penalty. The victim must also roll a Constitution (not doubled) roll. If failed, they suffer a -5 penalty to any Perception roll using vision for one minute and a -3 penalty to any Perception roll using hearing for twenty minutes.

Handcuffs: Putting on or unlocking handcuffs requires no roll. Breaking free of a pair of handcuffs is very difficult. Roll Strength (doubled) and drop the first four Success Levels. If any remain, make a note of them. Another attempt may be made after one minute. Once the bound one accumulates four total Success Levels, the link between the cuffs breaks. The wrist clasps are not removed but the restraint has been effectively eliminated. Alternatively, a character can attempt a Dexterity and Crime roll or the Combat Score to try to pick the lock (as long as he

has a bit of wire, a thin nail, or some other plausible lock pick). Ignore the first two Success Levels. Again, four Success Levels must be accumulated and each attempt takes one minute.

Getting out of handcuffs is a great use of a Plot Twist Drama Point. Perhaps a police officer comes close enough so your character can lift the key from his belt (or perhaps a friendlier police officer can appear, as Kate did in 2.10 Reunion).

Lock Picks: These days lock picks are a lot more sophisticated than a bobby pin, which is good because most locks are a whole lot better too. To use an electronic lock pick, roll Dexterity and Crime, or use the Combat Score. A standard good quality lock takes six minutes, divided by the number of Success Levels, to open. Cheap locks take a base one minute to get through. More sophisticated locks should be neutralized by stealing the key or blowing the bolt.

If you're in a hurry, a gun is a good lock pick substitute (see Kate in 1.2 Lonely Heart, for example). The trick is knowing where to aim—roll Intelligence and Gun Fu - 3 or use the Combat Score - 3 to hit. A good lock takes 15 points of damage, and has an Armor Value 4 (the Director should adjust those values as he sees fit depending on the quality of the lock). Your character can fire more than once, but if he only partially damages the lock, he's jammed it but good. It'll probably need to be cut out with a blow torch (or an automatic rifle) at that point (lock picks aren't going to do squat in that case).



ANGEL



Mace: Not the big weapon with a metal ball on the end, the little can that could. Getting on the wrong end of this spray can be pretty unpleasant. There are several variations, but most immediately cause coughing, choking, and a burning sensation in the eyes, nose, mouth, and other sensitive tissues of the victim. The attacker rolls Dexterity and Gun Fu, or Dexterity and Kung Fu, or uses the Combat Score to hit (normal range is about two yards). If successful, the victim suffers a poison Strength 4 attack affecting Dexterity (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 134). Because mace incapacitates mostly due to pain, any levels of the Resistance (Pain) Quality are added to the roll against the poison. Only two poison rolls are made, the first on the Turn in which the spray hits, the second on the Turn after. If Dexterity is reduced to zero, there are no other effects, apart from the subject rolling around helpless on the ground. Dexterity

returns at the rate of one point per five minutes (faster with a face wash). Regardless what happens with the victim's Dexterity, mace significantly impairs vision. As long as Dexterity is impaired by the poison, the victim suffers a -4 to all actions requiring any degree of sight. Carrying mace is legal in California except for minors, drug addicts, or convicted felons. A more effective spray is only legally usable by police, and has a poison Strength 5.

Mantrap: These devices sport a chain or wire at the end of a good length of metal or solid wood. They are used to restrain someone while keeping them at a distance, useful if the rabid dog is diseased, a vampire, or just smells real bad (Wolfram & Hart used them on Angel in 3.9 Lullaby, if you remember). A successful

attack requires a Dexterity and Getting Medieval -4 roll, a Dexterity and Wild Card (Whip) roll, or just uses the Combat Score - 4. Once snared, the target is grappled and can only resist using a Strength (not doubled) roll. Mantraps are difficult to transport discreetly and most definitely illegal to employ against humans.

Sodium Pentothal: While commonly understood to be a "truth serum" drug, Sodium Pentothal is actually a trademark for thiopental sodium. With the right dosage, this drug inhibits the will sufficiently that lying becomes more difficult. To tell a deliberate lie under the influence of this solution requires a Willpower (doubled) roll - 4 or the Brains Score - 4 resisted by a Willpower and Doctor roll, or the Brain Score of the person performing the test (Supporting Cast Members may also react as dictated by the Director).





Questioning Under the Influence

There are several other drugs that have similar effects to Sodium Pentathol. None of them are particularly effective and they are lethal in the wrong dosage. Even though they make it harder for the subject to lie, he is just as likely to agree with whatever is asked of him or spout random nonsense. The rules in the main text give the drug a more cinematic slant.

Information received through the use of Sodium Pentathol, polygraph tests, or hypnosis is admissible in a court of law only under certain circumstances. To summarize, the subject must agree to undergo the procedure, it must be performed by a qualified doctor or technician, and all questions and answers must be recorded. Only the person performing the technique can ask questions, though other people can request questions (by passing notes, for example), and the subject must not be lead towards any conclusion. A session under Sodium Pentathol must be carried out in a hospital (and is quite expensive). Even if admissible, the jury need not believe what's stated under the influence.

Information discovered by similar methods but not in strict accordance to the rules cannot be presented as evidence in a court of law. It can be used to point an investigator towards other lines of enquiry, but a clever defense lawyer might be able to have that thrown out (assuming he finds out), claiming it's tainted by the inadmissible evidence.

Certain drugs can be taken beforehand to counter the effects of this procedure (assuming you know what you're in for). There are two types. The first provides complete immunity from the effects (which are very rare, and possibly supernatural in nature). The more common type blocks the effects to a degree, allowing a Willpower (doubled) roll (no penalty) to resist. In either case, the questioner may not be happy if he detects the subterfuge.

Tear Gas: A tear gas grenade may be launched or thrown using a Dexterity and Gun Fu, or Dexterity and Getting Medieval roll, or the Combat Score. The effect is the same as mace (poison Strength 5) but affects a wider area and stays around longer. Each canister dispenses enough gas to affect everyone within a ten-yard radius (or whoever gets covered with the cloud at the Director's discretion). If used indoors, the stuff makes any number of connected rooms basically uninhabitable for up to an hour.

Tricks of the Trade: Most of the equipment that is used by P.I.s and crims is pretty standard stuff. A camera, tape recorder and good set of bolt cutters can get you a long way. Some people like to be a bit more creative—you can get cars with revolving number plates, suitcases with hidden cameras, and smoke bombs for throwing off your tails. Since it's illegal to open mail, you can get a spray for making envelopes translucent (and yeah, that's illegal too, but harder to detect). Glass cutters are useful (especially if the door isn't unlocked), and if you can pull a variety of IDs from your wallet you are doing well. If you are a P.I., it's good to have a separate phone line for use by your fake identities (so no-one answers the phone announcing your real occupation—we see Angel Investigations using this trick in 1.4 I Just Fall To Pieces). Basically it's a matter of how imaginative you want to get, balanced by how pragmatic you want things to stay (something the real-life P.I.s don't always take into account).

NEW ARCHETYPES

The [fill-in-your-local-municipal-nickname] city has a million stories, and here are a couple more. Each of these characters, complete with history and motivation, can be used as ready-to-run Cast Members to get you straight into the thick of things, or modified by players as they see fit.



EX-COP P.I.

ARCHETYPE

Life Points 47 Drama Points 10

CHAMPION

Attributes (20)

Strength 3
Dexterity 3 (1 level part of Ex-Detective Quality)
Constitution 4 (1 level part of Licensed Investigator Quality)
Intelligence 3
Perception 5
Willpower 4

Qualities (20)

Contacts (Criminal) (3) (2; 1 level part of Licensed Investigator Quality)
Contacts (Governmental) (3) (Part of Ex-Detective and Licensed Investigator Qualities)
Ex-Detective (5)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Hard to Kill 3 (3)
Licensed Investigator (5)
Resistance (Pain) (3)

Drawbacks (7)

Addiction (Habitual drinking) (1)
Adversary (Corrupt cops) (2)
Attractiveness -1 (Scarring from accident) (1)
Humorless (1)
Physical Disability (Missing foot—uses prosthetics) (2)

Skills (30 + 7 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 2	Influence 3
Art 0	Knowledge 3
Computers 2	Kung Fu 3
Crime 3 (2 levels from Ex-Detective and Licensed Investigator Quality)	Languages 0
Doctor 1	Mr. Fix-It 0
Driving 4 (1 level from Ex-Detective Quality)	Notice 5 (1 level from Licensed Investigator Quality)
Getting Medieval 2	Occultism 0
Gun Fu 6 (1 level from Ex-Detective Quality)	Science 2
	Sports 0
	Wild Card (Law) 3
	Wild Card (Profiler) 3

Manoeuvres

Bonus

Base Damage

Notes

Big Pistol	9	15	Bullet
Dodge	5	—	Defense action; includes Physical Disability
Punch	5	6	Bash; includes Physical Disability

BACKGROUND ON THE EX-COP P.I.

When I was on the force, I liked to move around a lot. I volunteered to work in different areas of the city, and got to know as many officers as I could. Even after getting bumped up to the Detective Bureau, I moved from division to division every couple of years. It was a deliberate strategy on my part. That's the sort of career they like to see if you're aiming higher—shows you understand how the Police Department is run across the board.

Turned out to be a waste of time. All my plans ended when some joker put a booby-trapped grenade in evidence. I was in Professional Standards at that point, and maybe I was getting cocky, thinking I'd avoided making any real enemies. I knew the explosion wasn't an accident—I just couldn't prove it. By the time I got out of hospital everything was swept under the carpet, and the unofficial story was that I'd screwed up. I got offered a desk job—they wouldn't let me walk any beat on what remained of my right leg. No one had to explain to me that this was an embarrassed sideways shuffle rather than any kind of advancement.

So I handed in my badge instead. I was pissed off, and maybe not thinking straight, but the bastards had tried to kill me. Inter-office rivalry is one thing; this was attempted murder.

Once a cop, always a cop—I didn't know any other kind of life. I may be in the private sector, but I'm still chasing down the bad guys. That's what I do. It's different out here though. You see more—if you're quick, you can be there when the monsters come out to hunt. I've learned that a few corrupt and cutthroat cops are the least of this city's problems. Hell, what I've seen since I left the force makes those jokers look like serious small change.

Quote: "You expect me to believe that for less than \$50 an hour?"

ROLEPLAYING THE EX-COP P. I.

You're tough and have a wide variety of experience, but still twitchy and a little paranoid from the "accident." You've been drinking more too, but tell yourself it's just the pain in your leg. Your thinking remains conservative, but you take your profession seriously. If that means taking on some weird purple guy as a client, you'll at least consider it.

MOB DOCTOR

INVESTIGATOR

Life Points 34 Drama Points 20

Attributes (15)

Strength 2
Dexterity 2
Constitution 4
Intelligence 2
Perception 2
Willpower 3

Qualities (10)

Contacts (Criminal) (3)
Contacts (Governmental) (2)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Poker Face (1)
Resistance (Poison/Disease) 1 (1)

Drawbacks (6)

Emotional Problems (Fear of Commitment) (1)
Honorable (Hippocratic Oath) (1)
Obligation (Important—FBI) (1)
Secret (Informer) (3)

Skills (25 + 6 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 4	Knowledge 3
Art 0	Kung Fu 2
Computers 1	Languages 1
Crime 3	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 5	Notice 4
Driving 1	Occultism 0
Getting Medieval 0	Science 2
Gun Fu 1	Sports 0
Influence 4	Wild Card 0

Manoeuvres	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	6	—	Defense action
Punch	4	4	Bash
Scalpel	2	2	Slash/stab; as Pigsticker

BACKGROUND ON THE MOB DOCTOR

I grew up in the barrios and saw a lot of crazy stuff. You know the score. It was dangerous and electric, and I liked it. There was an excitement in the air, a vitality, an edge. It was only later I understood the vitality was desperation and the prayers of terrified parents. My own parents wanted me out of the life, and I honored their hard work and savings with hard work of my own. A scholarship helped, and there I was, on the way to med school.

When I came back as a paramedic, I learned a few things. Seemed my parents weren't just honest working joes. Seemed my sister was heavily involved with an OG, almost a partner in running a gang. I was appalled—but it was my sister. It was my *world*. The long hours, the lack of sleep, the people dying in my ambulance—it was hard to keep things straight. When sis asked me to provide medical expertise for “friends,” what was I supposed to do? I said that I was just doing it to save lives, but it felt like paying my debts. So I fixed gunshot wounds and resuscitated ODing kids. I passed on supplies from the hospital. More than once I “rescued” contraband from a dead body.

Then the Feds got me.

You might think I rolled over because they threatened me with jail. Well, you would be just plain wrong. Just talking to the cops showed me what I'd forgotten—I'd been thinking crime was a cultural thing, somehow noble if unpleasant. And sure it's got a lot to do with oppression, but the gangs aren't a rebellion, they're my people killing each other. So I keep fixing the gunshot wounds, but now I pass information back to the LAPD and try to stay alive. I think the stress may be getting to me though. Lately, I've started seeing stuff that makes no medical sense.

Quote: “Don't worry about the cash, hold the tourniquet tight, godammit.”

ROLEPLAYING THE MOB DOCTOR

You're serious and driven for the most part. Though you joke around sometimes, you are always aware of the tightrope you navigate every day. Because you are keeping your eyes open and asking a few more questions, you are starting to see evidence of a disturbing darkness beneath life in the barrio. You're starting to think that if you can get both sides working against that darkness, maybe you'll achieve something after all.

SOCIAL WORKER

INVESTIGATOR

Life Points 26 Drama Points 20

Attributes (15)

Strength 2
Dexterity 2
Constitution 2
Intelligence 4 (1 level from Artist Quality)
Perception 4 (1 level from Artist Quality)
Willpower 3

Qualities (10)

Artist (2)
Contacts (Financial) (1)
Contacts (Governmental) (2)
Contacts (Supernatural) (2)
Lie Detector (1)
Resources (Middle Class) (2)

Drawbacks (3)

Dependent (Guardianship) (3)
Honorable (Minimal) (1)

Skills (25 + 3 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 2	Knowledge 4
Art 2 (1 level from Artist Quality)	Kung Fu 2
Computers 1	Languages 1
Crime 3	Mr. Fix-It 0
Doctor 3	Notice 3
Driving 1	Occultism 0
Getting Medieval 0	Science 3
Gun Fu 0	Sports 0
Influence 4	Wild Card 0

Manoeuvres

Bonus

Base Damage

Notes

Dodge
Punch

4
4

—
4

Defense action
Bash

BACKGROUND ON THE SOCIAL WORKER

I started off as a schoolteacher, and I loved the work, even if the neighborhood was a tough one. But I got restless—over-ambitious, as my father always said about me. I was helping some kids, but there were more I wasn't reaching—and would never reach with my math or history lessons. Once I was called out to visit a student in juvenile detention. He'd hijacked a car and was behind the wheel during a drive-by—a fourteen year old!—and he just didn't seem to care.

These were real problem kids and I couldn't ignore them. Some of the guys who worked at the detention center—the gang de-programmers in particular—told me all about the work they were doing, and I wanted in. I applied for part time work there, and ended up trying to teach some of the kids painting as a way to bring some calm and creativity to their lives. At the same time, I continued my own studies in psychology. Between that and my own toddler, it was a hectic and often frustrating time, but I saw some results. That made it all worthwhile.

When I got my degree, I didn't stop there. Some of the pictures my kids had been drawing showed a strange consistency, with hellish streetscapes populated by strange mutants. I started looking for the source of these painful images. When I found it, I went home and hid for a month.

So, demons are real and among us. So what? I'm a professional. It was time to start acting like one, not just hiding behind my fancy certificate. Thinking beings needed me, so I went out and tried to help them. I tend to the scarred and agitated who wander the city, human and non-human alike. I can't always help, but every so often I make some real progress with someone, and those successes spur me on.

What really scares me is that the more I try to help, the more I learn. And there's always more to learn. Lately, I've been hearing tales of an apocalyptic battle hidden beneath the façade of these ruined streets. I wonder if I'll have the courage to step up, yet again.

Quote: "I know you're afraid. But let me show you that you don't have to be afraid all the time."

ROLEPLAYING THE SOCIAL WORKER

You're level headed, optimistic, and always try to remain calm. You can't really cope with violence, so you keep an eye on escape routes, even as you visit the victims of demonic attack. You're still a bit freaked out that some of those victims are demons themselves, but you're coping with it as best you can. Still as ambitious as your father believed, you are starting to wonder if you are already over your head.

STREET KID

ARCHETYPE

INVESTIGATOR

Life Points 39 Drama Points 20

Attributes (15)

Strength 2
Dexterity 4
Constitution 3
Intelligence 2
Perception 3 (1 level from Occult Investigator)
Willpower 3 (1 level from Occult Investigator)

Qualities (10 + 5 from Drawbacks)

Contact (Supernatural) (1)
Hard to Kill 3 (3)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Occult Investigator (4)
Photographic Memory (2)
Situational Awareness (2)

Drawbacks (10)

Mental Problems (Severe Phobia—Fire) (2)
Resources (Miserable) (8)

Skills (25 + 5 from Drawbacks)

Acrobatics 4	Kung Fu 3
Art 0	Languages 1
Computers 0	Mr. Fix-It 0
Crime 5	Notice 4
Doctor 2	Occultism 5 (2 levels from Occult Investigator)
Driving 0	Science 0
Getting Medieval 2	Sports 0
Gun Fu 0	Wild Card (Torture) 2
Influence 4	
Knowledge 0	

Manoeuvres

Bonus

Base Damage

Notes

Baseball bat	6	12	Bash; used two-handed
Chain	4	9	Bash; goes last in round
Dodge	8	—	Defense action
Punch	7	4	Bash

BACKGROUND ON THE STREET KID

I don't really want to talk about it.

I remember fragments of my parents' death—a burning house, a breaking window, shocking cold at my back. I remember this guy called the Host who ran a karaoke bar helping me to my feet. He had horns, and sad eyes, and he asked me to sing. Then he told me stuff about myself that I really didn't want to hear.

Life on the street was bad. You'd scramble for change, for crusts, for junk, and give yourself to strangers just to do it again. Some of the strangers were stranger still, inhuman beasts who would suck on the marrow of my friends and drag me kicking into their lairs or their mansions and swap me for trinkets. Others put whips to my legs, and then burned my skin because they sensed—could feed on—my fear of the fire. I escaped from some of these monsters. Others kept me until they were killed, recruited, or drifted away. Through it all I survived, living long enough to be taken by another creep.

I lived—not because I was quick (and definitely not because I'm strong), but because some died and some lived, and I happen to be one of those that lived. Those that died are not here to tell their stories. But I remember them, and what was done to them.

The Host told me this remembering of things was my path, and that I would double back upon it and attempt to put the wrong things right. I told him I wanted to die; I wanted this all to end. He told me my path was harder still, but that I did not have to walk it alone.

So I'm searching for people who can go into the places I've seen, can help me turn the tide against the monsters that continue the horror there. I don't want to talk about it, but maybe I could show you the scars.

Quote: "This is where the body lay. Right. Here."

ROLEPLAYING THE STREET KID

That you have kept your sanity is almost as much of a miracle as your continued living. Hell, a genuine personality might still emerge given your newfound focus. You want to be with people, to have friends and maybe a true love, to get involved in the things they want to do. But you are also haunted by your memories, and the path on which you have been set.



STREET RULES

Angel: Where is she?

Merl: Look, if I knew, would I be hanging
around here getting strangled by you?

—2.1 Judgment

There they go with the rules again . . .

A lot can happen in a street-level game, and this chapter provides some suggestions for how to handle a good chunk of it. We'll talk about how characters hunt down clues, tail suspects, and interrogate them (the easy way . . . or if things are getting desperate, the hard way). We'll even show how to make a case, if you've a mind to afford the bad guy a day in court. Then there's gambling, forgery, disguise, and more. Yep, we've got a little something for everyone here.

You Directors should make it your biz to know this stuff. Streetwise characters (and their players) should know some of this stuff in order to go about their jobs. Share it at your discretion.

CHAPTER 3



INVESTIGATION

Angel: Come on guys. We are a detective agency. We investigate things. That's what we're good at.

Cordelia: That's what we suck at. Let's face it, unless there's a web site called www.ohbythewaywehaveDarlastashedhere.com we're pretty much out of luck.

2.7 Darla

Cordelia overstates a bit (shocking, no?). Angel Investigations turns out to be fairly good at the investigative business—though they do have a tendency to rush in without all the facts (or much of a plan). Still, they could be better . . . and so can the Cast in your game.

The first principle of investigation is that everyone and everything leaves traces of themselves behind. The point of investigative sessions is to find those traces and discover the truth behind the mystery. It's a big subject, so we've divided it into a number of sections.

First, we'll give you the basics: clues and ethics. Next, we cover various ways that characters can find out stuff, from looking it up on web sites to matching fingerprints to beating up Merl (again). Then, we give some suggestions about how to create and run adventures using this information (don't sweat it if players read along too—they still won't know exactly what's

coming). Finally, we talk about using evidence to convict a suspect in a court of law. If your players think justice is only about who has the biggest axe, you need this section most of all.

These “detecting” guidelines can be useful whether the Cast is made up of private eyes, police detectives, mob enforcers, or simply concerned citizens. If your adventures require more than just going into a room and beating up the bad guy (a fine tradition, admittedly), you should find lots of inspiring stuff here.

Differing applications come from how rigorously the characters want to enforce society's rules, and which details you want to emphasize. If you're running a murder mystery, following the web of clues is important. If the characters are men of “the man,” they better be concerned with making sure all the evidence is admissible in court. If you're more into the serial killer genre, the characters still have to work out whodunnit, but they should concentrate on the psychological aspects rather than the legal ones. Often finding out things is just a part of a plot, rather than the whole shebang (for example, finding where Spike is hiding out, or where Darla's corpse has been hidden). In that case, it's still better roleplaying if the process is interesting, rather than you simply saying “you ask round town for a bit, and this kailiff demon tells you what you need to know.” Easy, yes; fun, not so much.





CLUES

Angel: In case you're wondering, this is me looking for a clue. Feel free to join in any time you want.

—1.10 Parting Gifts

It's all about the clues. A clue is a discrete bit of information that tells the Cast something about their current situation. It could be as subtle as the pattern of blood spatters on a wall, or as obvious as the bad guy's business card (see 3.18 Double or Nothing)

By dividing information up into separate clues, it makes it easy for you to control adventures. Each clue gives the players something extra to work with—although it might not be obvious what that is when the clue comes to light. The blood spatters might indicate whether a dying body was moving or not, for example. That might not help immediately, but combined with other clues, the events being investigated start becoming clear.

PURPOSES

Clues come in all shapes and sizes but they all serve a purpose (otherwise, they are random pieces of information, not clues). Here's some purpose ideas, and some samples that go along with them.

* Reveal a location where more investigation or an arrest can be carried out—a discarded matchbook might lead to a hotel where the criminal stayed.

* Suggest a particular suspect as the criminal or reveal a fact about him—a ransom note made up of newspaper cuttings might have a word spelt in British English rather than the American way.

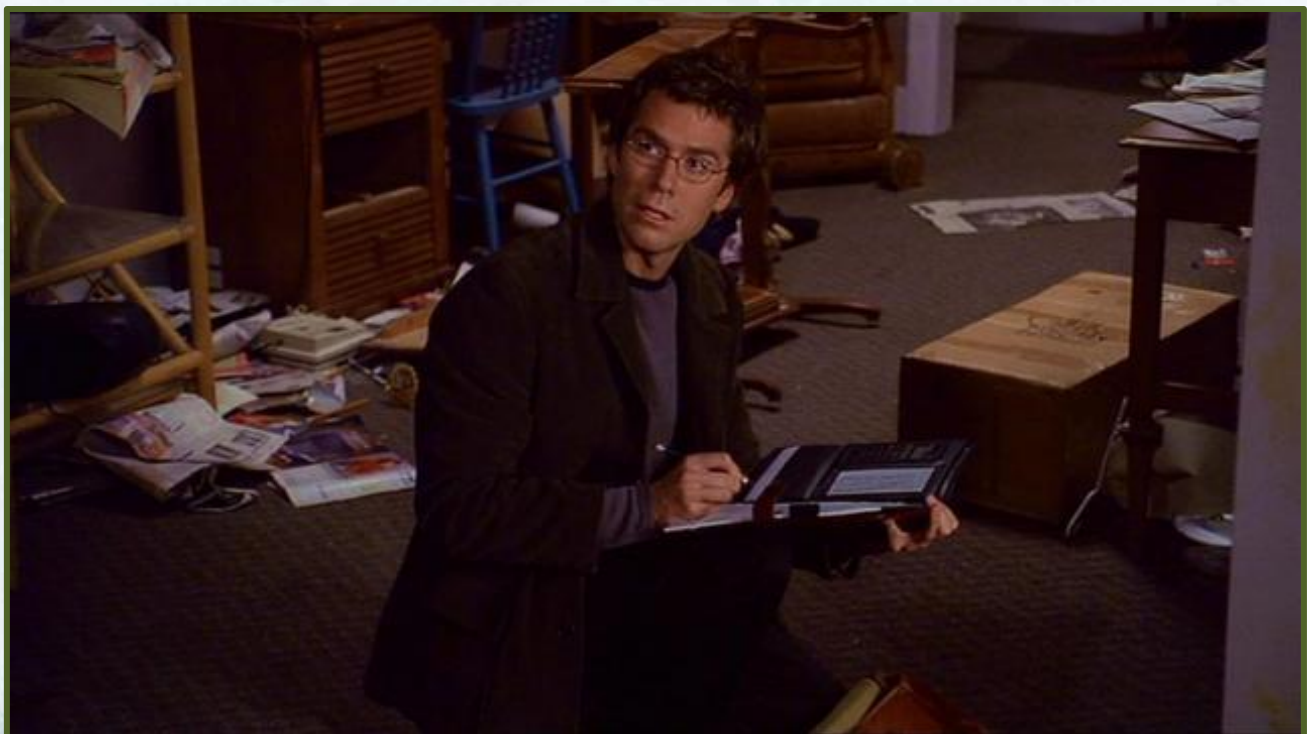
* Provide a way to trap a suspect into revealing his guilt—with the email address of a known associate, an investigator could fabricate a message to the suspect encouraging him to act in a certain way.

* Serve as part of the explanation to a larger mystery—the characters could find a long dead cat in a locked murder site. They could later discover a spell that requires an already dead cat when casting. If the spell has only a limited range, this could lead the crew to search the area at a given distance from the murder site for further clues.

* Be a false clue leading in an unproductive direction, called a red herring (see p. [?]).

* Act as evidence against the subject in a court of law (see p. [?]).

The less clues there are, and the more obvious that these clues link one scene to another, the more straightforward the investigation will be. Some players just want to find the bad guy and shoot him. For them, a more direct path of clues keeps their interest from flagging. Others want to unravel a mystery strand by strand. For them, the more elaborate the clue path the better (as long as the clues aren't so subtle that they lose the trail completely). Often, gaming groups are made up of both types, and it's up to you to balance the preferences of the group.



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Remember that clues are those bits of information that affect the flow of events in the adventure (red herrings fit in this group because they are planned diversions). Other, non-clue information should be conveyed to the players, though. Background detail, conversations, and other historical facts are important for dramatic storytelling, and shouldn't be forgotten. The mark of a good investigator is an ability to separate out the telling information from the "background noise." Burying your investigators in trivia can lead to frustrated investigators (so don't do that), but giving them only pertinent information overly simplifies the discovery aspects of the story.

RED HERRINGS

The real world is a messy place—the average crime scene has hundreds of fingerprints (mostly uninteresting), stuff piled here and there, blood stains, litter, bored-looking cops, and other distracting details just lying about. If you describe all that to the players, it's going to take a lot of time and they're likely to miss the cunning hint hidden in the midst of it all (though that more realistically portrays the life of an investigator).

As usual in fiction, we just assume the characters are doing a lot of looking about and discounting of uninteresting detail, zooming in on the things that might be significant. Whether they find exactly what they need depends in part on their stats, and the roll of the dice (we'll talk about that soon).

But just finding something that looks significant isn't enough. Like carbohydrates, clues can be good or bad. Bad clues are called red herrings—significant-looking information that turns out to be unconnected to the event under investigation.

Something Fishy: Maybe some strange loose hair was found on the dead body. Upon analysis, it turns out to be ape hair. The Cast spends time door-knocking pet shops trying to find out who owns this sort of animal. It could turn out to be the victim's neighbor, and have nothing to do with the murderer at all. The time they spend on that lead gives the murderer a better chance to cover his tracks and kill again.

Red herrings have a special place in detective fiction and should not be ignored. However, they do have to be treated with some care. The good news is that players will likely confuse themselves quite enough without you adding anything to the mix. If you have a well-realized campaign world with interesting Supporting Cast Members, there should be enough going on that your clues can be quite blatant and yet just be a small part of the whole experience.



In general, clues specifically designed to be red herrings should perform one of these functions, or they might be more trouble than they're worth in a game.

Smoke Screen: This is something obviously weird about a crime scene, but fairly easy to discount. Maybe the Cast finds the ape hair and has already seen the ape! They go and investigate that, and discover that it seems unrelated. However, if they're smart they would have kept looking at the scene to find other details that are more relevant. Maybe the genuine clue is next on the list of things to find, and is still available if they return to the scene (although seems a little harder to interpret now that some time has passed). In that way, the players are introduced to red herrings or see more layers of detail, but don't waste too much time.

Subplot: While the ape is unrelated to this adventure, if you're spending game time in investigating it, that should create some pay-off later. Maybe the ape saw the murders and later on decides to copycat, to the Rue of the Morgue.

False Herring: Now we are getting really convoluted. This red herring leads to an obvious dead end like the smoke screen, but later on turns out to be the right track. The Cast follows the clue path, discovers its apparent end, and discounts it. A couple scenes later they come across another clue that brings them back to the red herring and it turn out to have been the right track. Let's say the ape was infected with a rare tropical disease that only manifests if the victim was messing with certain sorcerous practices. Until the Cast reveals the victim's odd pastime and isolates the pathogen, there's no reason to see the ape bite as important.

PUZZLES

Some folks like to figure out things for themselves. This happens in small ways all the time. You describe a scene and the players interpret your words and act on that understanding.

This approach can be expanded for sleuth-like players. Instead of a normal investigatory scene, you might create a more obvious puzzle designed for gray-





matter, not plastic polygon, solution. We're talking about puzzles that exist within the game world, and therefore should make sense in that world. A room with large black and white alternating tiles might make a very cool dramatic situation—if the Cast steps wrong, bad things could happen, like a demon attack. When the Cast finds such a room, they are entitled to wonder what sort of weirdo set this up in the first place (and what the demon does for lunch when there aren't any adventurers about). You'll need to think about the backstory of the puzzle. That might even lead you to other story possibilities. Certainly, there are ways similar things could happen, such as Fred's puzzle in 3.12 Provider (in that case the demons jumped her because she solved it).

Puzzles are nice for group dynamics; they allow everyone to get involved, even if only one character is at risk. If you were running the Provider scenario, give the puzzle to the players as a group (presumably one not as hard as the one Fred solved, unless your gaming group is very, very smart). Everyone can contribute to solving it, but Fred (or her Cast equivalent) is the one who takes point in the game world. If the players get stuck and one or more characters gets into a sticky situation as a result, you can always fall back on rolling to solve it.

If the players do solve such puzzles, everyone who contributes should get some XP or Drama Points as you deem appropriate to the difficulty of the challenge, even if their character was not really involved. An example of an in-game puzzle for players is found in **Chapter Eight: The Third Demon** (see p. [?]). It's potentially a difficult one, though, so extra notes on how to use it are given.

THE ETHICS OF INVESTIGATION

Cordelia: That man will do **ANYTHING** to save a life.

—2.1 Judgment

Some of the methods we're going to talk about here are illegal or improper—some for certain people, some for everybody. Whether the characters are worried about that depends upon their moral code, and the circumstances. Busting into privileged records to avert an apocalypse is a no-brainer, but the characters' ethical decisions get a bit tougher if, say, you require them to track down somebody in witness protection to get a clue about a killer. They have to weigh the potential harm of leaving this avenue of investigation untapped against the potential harm that might come to the witness by unearthing him.

Ethical dilemmas usually fall into two categories—moral and legal. Morally, the character has to decide what he is willing to do in the current situation. If he has the Honorable Drawback, his options are more limited. Even if he isn't so constrained, he should think twice before doing something like convincing an innocent to do something to smoke out a bad guy without warning him of the danger. Something has to separate the good guys and the bad guys. That's usually a moral question of what means should not be employed, even in dire circumstances.

Whether the character breaks the law has a moral dimension, but other factors must be considered. First off, breaking the law can lead to arrest, trial, and imprisonment. That puts a major crimp in investigatory activities and fighting the good fight. More subtly, if the investigator expects help from Contacts in the police force, he might want to keep his nose clean, even in minor matters that no one will drag him to court for (on the flip side, though, the police might be working with him because he can perform such minor misdeeds with less concern for the consequences). Also, whether the character is part of the police force or not, accusing someone of a crime can result in being accused right back. That's certainly going to complicate matters if the first crime was based on trumped-up charges.

Many professions have guidelines to help them make ethical decisions. Some of those followed by private detectives and officers of the law are covered in the next two chapters. Journalists have to identify themselves before taking down any information they can print publicly (undercover reporting has its own rules), but they also get the right to keep their sources private if needed. Priests, lawyers, and doctors have extra responsibilities if people come to them for help. Anything said in confession, in the course of an attorney-client relationship, or within the doctor-





patient relationship cannot be revealed to others, even if lives are at stake (the law has certain tricks on its side when it comes to revealing medical records, but it has more trouble with the lawyers and the Church). These issues may complicate (and add interest to) the game, whether the characters are subject to the restrictions, or are trying to get information from somebody who is.

Ethics is one factor in deciding information-gathering methods. Others can add a bit of spice as well. Do the characters have what it takes to go undercover in a vampire bar? Do they have the conviction needed to release their inner demon—and then interrogate it? And can they come up with a solution that doesn't involve singing karaoke?

THE SOURCES

Angel: What've you got?

Cordelia: The weebies. This guy clearly has anger management issues. You've got victims and victim parts washing up all over the southern California coast.

Angel: Long Beach, San Pedro, Carlsbad . . . Pull up the tidal flow charts for the last ten months. Match them to the dates of these murders.

Doyle: Tides? What, you think this guy has some primary dumping ground? Maybe all these victims originate from the same spot?

Angel: Somewhere Little Tony feels safe.
—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

Now that we've covered what clues are, how do you go about finding them? Here we'll go through various methods the Cast can use to analyze the situation they find themselves in. Some information can be discovered by making rolls; other bits might be found just by asking the right questions.

PUBLIC RECORDS

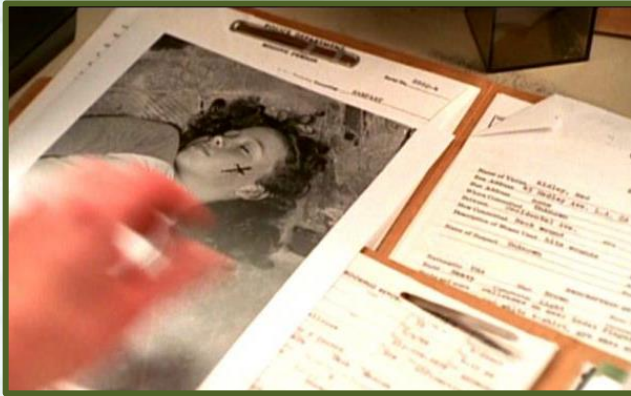
These days, an incredibly large percentage of work by investigators is done on the web, by accessing various databases, or consulting publicly available records. While we only saw it on screen once in Season One *Angel*, the library is a detective's most comprehensive stoolie.

While not usually as simple as going to www.lapd.org and searching through the mug shots (see 2.6 Guise Will Be Guise), more and more details about corporations, individuals, city infrastructure, the workings of government, and law enforcement are being placed online, sometimes in unexpected locations. Many newspapers have archives (often charging a fee to offset their free daily coverage) that are easily searchable. In *Angel*, the newspaper of choice is the Los Angeles Globe-Register, with online records going back to at least 1929. Cordelia also makes good use of a web site called www.searchcenter.org in various episodes.

The main trouble with online information is the sheer volume of it. Most of the investigatory effort involves winnowing through mountains of minutiae, and even good search engines need a little expert guidance. Sometimes the raw data is available (we'll assume the



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A.I. gang had a good web site for the tidal patterns consulted in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity), but the intuitive leap needed to even go looking for it is the hard part.

Problems with online access go double for paper copies or offline digital records (or even more liable to cause headaches—microfiche, small film copies of papers that must be viewed through a special back-lit machine). Good indexing is often a rarity, at least for terms that the investigator is interested in. Wolfram & Hart has its own expert to interpret its voluminous filing system (see 3.10 Dad)—it is a lucky investigator who can find a public librarian with similar recall. Then again, depending on the information sought, it's not always that difficult. For example, many libraries have reverse directories making it simple to find a name and address if all the character has is a phone number.

Searching voluminous records often requires the Computers skill. All-night sessions with stacks of documents or in front of a terminal or microfiche reader may require a Constitution and Notice roll. Intelligence and Notice or Intelligence and Knowledge is good for finding information that needs a bit of lateral thinking. For instance, after having no luck with the mug shots in 2.6 Guise Will Be Guise, Cordelia found who she was looking for in the pages of celebrity magazine *Bio*.

Official Channels

Wesley: Where did you get the police radio?

Angel: Police car.

Wesley: Oh dear!

—1.11 Somnambulist

Up-to-date building plans, coroner reports, a Social Security Number trace, or the date of an upcoming diamond shipment are some examples of information that might require official access or a little hacking to get to. If the character is authorized, the access part is easy; if not, he has to beg, borrow, or steal access.

Some systems, like the local Department of Motor Vehicles have a well-defined route of access (see p. [?]). Systems such as VICAP—the Violent Criminal

Apprehension Program that shares information on criminals between state, Federal, and even international authorities—have much tighter controls. It must be accessible by a large number of people, and is somewhat vulnerable to attack, but security is nonetheless high, passwords are changed regularly, and anyone accessing it illicitly has to be very careful they're not leaving more information (about themselves) than they are gathering.

Sometimes it's not computer data that is desired, but other official perks. Evidence for the crime a character is investigating might be stored in a police lockup, or maybe he needs an official warrant to search a particular location. If the gang is trying some scam to scare the criminal out of hiding, having access to official IRS letterhead can be very useful.

Computer Crime

Computer crime is becoming more and more prevalent, and even some demons are getting in on the act. In 3.14 Couplet, HotBlonde37159 lured men with steamy emails, and turned out to be a very nasty tree (leading to the disturbing possibility of ent porn). We haven't seen many other examples on the TV show, but telecommunication fraud, identity theft, and even software piracy are all possibilities. Increasingly, the computers of suspects are being used to find evidence of their wrongdoing, such as chat session where they discuss their crime, copies of photos they took in preparation, or even a name in an address books to prove a connection. For someone with sufficient Computers skill and access to the machine in question, those things are rarely hidden by just hitting the "delete" key.

If a character can't persuade someone in officialdom to give him the information he needs, he could try some computer crime himself—roll Intelligence and Computers. Hacking into records seems fairly easy in the Angelverse, though if the character is going after something like VICAP, he's probably looking at a -5 penalty on his rolls. An ultra-secure facility with only limited points of access might impose a -10 or more.



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For most computer systems, the weakest link is actually the human operator. One advantage that detectives on TV (and sometimes in real life) have is that most people use really easy passwords to protect their stuff—like the name of their girlfriend, their birthday, the codename of their secret project, or the ever popular EDENL33T.

If a character spends some time researching all they can about a person, you might allow the player to roll Perception and Knowledge to have the character stumble on some not-so-subtle password. You could even apply a penalty to the roll for a target who takes some care in selecting passwords, but stops short of using random sequences. Better yet, give the players the target's background information and have them puzzle it out for themselves. Psychic powers might help here. For example, a Psychometry roll might help determine the emotional resonance of the password. You could add its Success Levels to the Perception and Knowledge roll, or provide another way to narrow down the choices when forcing the players use their gray matter.

Biometrics security is a different matter entirely, though once again it's easier to get round this stuff on TV. A character can beat a retina scan by just bringing out a specially made set of contact lens—or the plucked eye of a person with access (getting either might be an adventure in itself, however). Those methods don't usually work in real life, probably because the people who design them also watch James Bond movies (not to mention that plucking an eyeball tends to distort blood flow through the retina), but where's the fun in that?

Other security measures include fingerprints, voice recognition, DNA scan, or even the particular rhythm of keystrokes when the person types a password. There's cinematic ways around all of these but they begin to stretch credibility as they get more sophisticated. At some point, it may be better storytelling to work the folks who have access rather than working the access.

Hitting the Streets

Unfortunately, not all information is sitting patiently in a database waiting for somebody to come across it. Also, relying solely upon information in a book or on a computer screen can be a recipe for disaster. The records may be out-of-date, incorrectly entered, or even deliberately misleading (having the bad guy devise his own centuries-old prophecy to turn investigators against one another is an extreme case, but it does show the power of misinformation from a trusted source). Sooner or later, an investigator should shut off the computer or leave document storage rooms.

Criminal and Occult Contacts are a good start for getting information from the streets. Of course, that probably won't do the job in all cases. Paying snitches, canvassing door-to-door, or a quick bit of spontaneous deception ("tapdancing" as it is called in the investigative biz) are all strategies which might be used. Tailing cars and long hours of waiting at possible contact points is another large part of most investigator's lives. Some of this is easier done if you've got a taskforce of rookie cops at your beck and call, or if your stomach is particularly resilient to the "hard cider" they serve in demon bars. The trick is to be flexible and open-minded, and to look like you fit in.





These sorts of activities bring the Influence skill to the fore (as well those points spent in Contacts). The Crime skill is also useful for skulking around or lifting evidence. Other methods of information gathering such as electronic surveillance (see p. [?]) and tailing people (p. [?]) are discussed later.

There's also the matter of recording what the character finds. No convenience printer buttons with a street snitch. For many investigators, a photograph or sound recording of the suspect doing something he shouldn't is the meat of the job. Got to make sure the digital recorder, the camera, or the laptop is ready to go. These days you can openly buy all sorts of miniaturized cameras, GPS tracking devices, night goggles or what-have-you, for little more than vast sums of money. If the characters have the resources, someone will probably sell them what they need, though we'd recommend they test anything carefully before putting too much trust in it. If they can get proper NSA gizmos, they're justified in adopting a fair amount of swagger.

Invasion of Privacy

Although hard evidence in the form of sound recordings and photographs is prized in investigative cases, it opens up a minefield of potential legal problems. To summarize, sound and image are treated in two different ways, even for video equipment that might combine the two. Without a court order it is a violation of privacy to record a conversation without the consent of a least one participant (which is one reason why informants wearing wires are so common, although the bug need not be on the person).

Photographs are a bit freer, and may be taken by anyone who is not trespassing to do so, with various exceptions, mostly involving pornography, threats of extortion, or potential breaches of national security. The trouble is that sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between these illegal activities and legitimate investigation (at least for a jury). That's just one case where being an unlicensed P.I. can get you into a lot of trouble.

Privacy violations aren't a big deal if the objective is simply discovering information. If the character is trying to secure a criminal conviction though, information gained by violating someone's privacy rights can be put aside. It's called "suppressing" the evidence and it's the kind of thing that leads to "gotten off on a technicality" statements.

Smart crooks are aware of these devices. At least, they should have heard of the possibilities of cameras in mobile phones—if they catch an investigator and don't kill him, they certainly will smash his mobile. Now, the P.I. may still have phoned the images back to base (or wherever—assuming he gets coverage in the area).

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

Kendrick: We're lifting prints now. My bet is we get a match.

Kate: Anything else?

Kendrick: That's it. You mind telling me why you're here examining a crime scene that wasn't assigned to you?

Kate: It looked interesting.

—1.19 Sanctuary

A whole lot of detective work, official or freelance, is about finding out what happened at the scene of the crime. Since most criminals aren't inclined to leave detailed descriptions (though some can't seem to resist the urge), that involves trying to analyze small and obscure clues in new and cunning ways. If this really grabs you, set your game in Las Vegas, call it *CSI*, and bring on the science geeks!

CSI is traditionally carried out by taking note of the physical traces of the perpetrator at the scene, in an effort to learn his identity (it's also used occasionally to find out who the victim is, and whether there has actually been a crime committed at all). Those traces could be one of a long list of things. Here're some possibilities:



Fingerprints: These, not to mention palmprints or even earprints, turn up all over the place, and are said to uniquely identify their owner. Interestingly, no one has been able to prove that—then again no two people have ever been discovered to match.

Footprints: This might indicate all sorts of things about the imprinter, depending upon the surface the marks were found in. How fast he was going, whether he was injured or carrying a burden, and what brand of



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shoe he prefers are all possibilities. Sometimes individual shoes can be identified from tracks based on how they have been eroded or otherwise damaged.

Bodily Fluid: Blood, saliva, sweat, demonic slime, or ickier possibilities can be left behind. DNA analysis can be used to match this up with the person it came from, and other information such as blood type, toxicology, and the nature of an injury might be determined. A whole science of studying blood spatter marks exists, for example. Note that many detectives wear masks at crime scenes, to stop saliva from their breath contaminating DNA evidence (the side benefit of curtailing the smell is an added bonus). An interesting tidbit is that only 60% of people (called “secretors”) leave their DNA behind in sweat and most other bodily fluids.

Teeth: Dental records can identify corpses if there’s not much else left. Identifying the perpetrator is only possible if an imprint can be isolated—in the interest of our weaker-stomach readers, we’ll go into no more detail there.

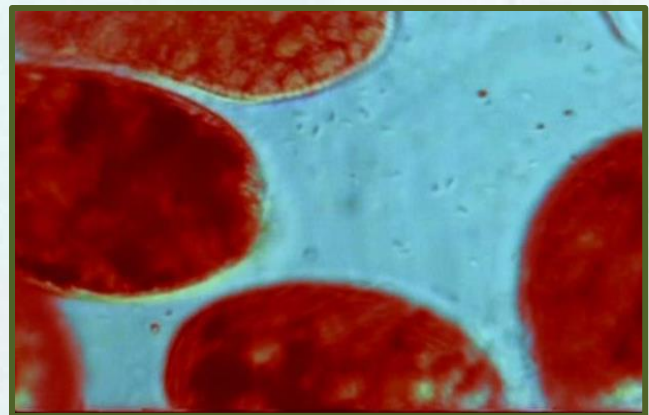
Hair and Fiber: These might help identify the perpetrator, or at least identify where he has been. Clothing or other objects used in the crime can be identified. It is sometimes possible to retrieve DNA from hair, but not often.

Firearm Residue: Working out the type of gun used in a shooting is sometimes difficult, especially if the bullet is nowhere to be found. If the bullet is found, it is sometimes possible to identify it as being fired from a

particular gun. Things like trajectory, the characteristics of a wound (both entrance and exit), gunpowder stippling, and such can give information as to the gun and perhaps how it was used.

Handwriting: Handwriting is usually as individual as a fingerprint, and can reveal a lot more about its owner including some aspects of personality, or just the school system he went through. Typewriters (remember those?) are also easy to trace once they’ve been used for a while (it’s also possible on some printers, but generally not).

Random Detritus: Things like soil samples fallen from shoes, powder from clothing, and the remains of aftershave are all potentially valuable clues. To be of use, they must be unusual enough to identify an area of origin, or type of person that would have such material on him.





An investigator's challenge is getting the right information, which usually means being able to tell if something is potentially interesting, and then collecting it (or otherwise recording it) without destroying it in the process. This is potentially a lot of stuff, so have plenty of plastic bags on hand. More sophisticated equipment is often useful as well (it's hard to record fingerprints without a kit, although an object with the print in situ could be removed from the scene and brought to a lab). Roll Perception and Notice to find interesting bits and pieces; Perception and Science to notice blood patterns or other scientific evidence; Perception and Knowledge to identify background details. The meaning of some clues is evident when found, otherwise they need to be taken away for analysis—see the next section for that.

Remember that using CSI in the Angelverse is all well and good against the usual perps, but how often are the perps "usual"? How well do the methods of modern forensics work to track down supernatural creatures? Fingerprints are created when the natural oils and salts in a person's skin are transferred onto a surface. Do vampires have such oils, or similar substances that can leave prints? Is there enough of a relationship between their teeth in human form and in their "game face" so that an investigator can match one to the other? What about shapeshifting demons—can they duplicate fingerprints; can they leave two sets of prints at a crime scene?

You are the go-to guy on these questions, and your answers depend on how much emphasis you want to put on science. Based on what we've seen on the *Angel*TV show, demon forensics is possible, but requires a lot more research to get right. Some species might be susceptible to these methods, others might not, depending on the needs of the adventure.

First Things First!

Investigators shouldn't be getting out their latent print kit if injured people are unattended at the scene, or if an uncontained hazard threatens everyone's safety. It's also bad form to spend so much time searching for fibers that the bad guy drives off unchallenged (if he's driving the ambulance that is taking away the injured, boy will there be hell to pay).

This advice is more useful to police, who are usually first on the scene, armed with their rolls of yellow tape. None of it is applicable to P.I.s who bust through the tape later that night to find the clues the police have missed or ignored (silly police).



EXPERT ANALYSIS

Sometimes finding information is the easy part. Understanding it is the big hurdle. Expert analysis can be sought in that case. This is often the follow-up step of CSI, although there are other ways of getting the raw material.

Basically, if a character finds a suicide note that may have been faked, or needs to find the likely origins of the perfume on a bloodstained shirt, he is going to need more than Google. Wrangling experts is usually thought of as being police business, but it is by no means exclusively a government affair. In fact, while government agencies need to be flexible to cover a lot of possibilities, private businesses can afford to be more specialized. Just as some private detective agencies concentrate on celebrity protection, others make it their business to collate as much information of a particular sort. It could be soil samples taken from different mainland states, a database of stolen yachts, or simply a damn good occult library. These specialists can often accrue more information and, more importantly, understand that information far better than their colleagues. If well known and trusted, they could be called on as expert witnesses in court cases or receive a contract from the FBI to undertake regular analysis work.

This could mean a few things to a Cast. If they are faced with the need for such analysis, avenues exist to get it without necessarily involving official channels. In general, this costs money (though there are other ways to get people to help out—both legal and not). And if the Cast runs their own agency, specializing in some technical area (say demon secretion analysis) increases their rep, and makes it more likely they'll be approached with appropriate work. If they are part of the police force, they might turn to a private firm if they think their own facilities are inadequate (just make sure W&H is not a shareholder!)



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The increasing sophistication of crime-fighting techniques, along with criminals who understand more about how to combat them, means that many types of analysis involves very expensive equipment—from spectrometers to DNA sequencers. Having a good relationship with the local university or other non-affiliated research organization may get a Cast access to such equipment with fewer questions asked. Interpreting the results may still cause problems.

There is no standard game mechanic for identifying and securing expert analysis. It may require good Contacts, Clout, a Computers, Doctor, Knowledge, or Science roll depending on the particular field (usually made with Intelligence).

One expert with the potential to appear regularly is the Coroner. This gent (and his staff) looks for physical evidence on or within the corpse of the victim (or other relevant dead body). The techniques are similar to a doctor's, but require specialized training (apply negatives to a Perception and Doctor roll for people who don't have the appropriate background) and are, well, wetter (see p. [?] for more information). Even in this line of work, private companies are getting in on the act these days.

SUPERNATURAL DETECTION

The supernatural abilities in the Angel Corebook (see p. 49) provide a number of otherworldly options for helping an investigation along. Hypnosis, Psychic

Visions, Psychometry, Supernatural Senses, and Telepathy are the obvious ones, but other abilities can also be useful. With Emotional Influence, a character could better persuade people to divulge information, Invisible might allow him to witness things not easily witness-able (even little things like watching someone type their password in), and Supernatural Form might be good for saving money when talking to snitches (at least, the ones that don't know about demons).

PROFILING

Kate: Our suspect will be a white male. To the observer he will not seem a monster. His victims put up little or no struggle, so it's likely that he is charming, attractive, but at his core he is a loner. Possibly a dual personality, who once the crime has been committed, retains no memory of the act. He will not view his victims as subhuman, rather it's himself that he views as something other than human, more than human, a superior species.

—1.11 Somnambulist

A police officer who starts a briefing with a bunch of psychobabble has probably received training as a profiler, or has watched too many serial killer movies. Psychological profiling is another method of crime scene analysis, but one that works with clues less tangible than eyewitness statements and body fluid. In crime flicks, it often seems to work like Psychic Visions,



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except backwards. The profiler sees the crime as a series of fragmentary images, from the point of view of the perpetrator. In doing so, he tries to work out why that particular target was chosen and why the attack happened in the way it did. Hopefully, it also reveals clues as to the perp's identity and present location.

Profiling does not provide information about physical characteristics, such as what hand was used to hold the weapon or the color of the perpetrator's hair—that's the job of the forensic analysis team. It reveals psychological states, which potentially include such matters of self-identity as the perpetrator's vocation (photographers and dress-makers seem popular in this area), disabilities he suffers from, and the ever-popular ethnicity, gender and sexuality (in the Angelverse you can add species as well). Those clues might lead the investigators to check certain types of workplaces in the local area, or hospital records for a history of treatment. If the bad guy kills in his house and dumps the body elsewhere, it says something about the sort of house it is, and also how he considers his family life. If he kills only male police in humiliating ways, it may be because he sees himself persecuted by the law (if he doesn't now he soon will be), or perhaps has father-issues. An important use of psychological profiling is to pick up on these sorts of patterns that might not be obvious to mere physical investigation. By identifying why and when he chooses his victims, it can allow the police to protect the most likely targets and maybe set a trap (as happened in 1.11 Somnambulist).

To gather any information that might be found with this methodology, roll Perception and Wild Card (Profiling) (see p. [?]). The exact information recovered

is for you to judge, again depending on the needs of your current storyline.

Note that, despite the enthusiasm shown by modern fiction, not everyone is a fan of this technique. Many police, particularly the older ones, see it as faddish, inaccurate, and lazy. This could be a source of conflict in your game, within the department or between officers and FBI agents. One thing film and TV probably do have right is that trying to profile the supernatural is a bad idea—for the profiler, if nothing else. It's traumatic enough normally, but getting in the head of a demon can drive anyone over the edge.

BEING ALERT†

Wesley: That's the third time that truck's passed by.

—2.16 Epiphany

Successful investigators have to do more than just seek out information, they have to be open to it at all times. They may have enemies out to settle scores (give it a while before you drop this in your Cast's lap—say, maybe the second episode or so), or people may be calling for help, not able to send a clear signal. Small, barely noticeable ripples may presage larger, even apocalyptic, events to come. There are also bits of trivia that might help in an investigation somewhere down their line (though most likely don't, of course. If you're lucky they can make good dinner conversation).

It is natural in roleplaying games for players to latch onto anything you say as being potentially significant. As we mentioned, you should throw in a few red herrings and background noise, but don't bombard



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players with too much unrelated data. Information overload is a factor in real life and it leads to frustration and wasting time. A measure of this makes the ultimate payoff all the sweeter; a load of this makes the game a chore (can't have that).

To simulate the “being alert” aspect of an investigator, you might make an occasional Perception and Notice roll for a character to see if he latches onto something seemingly unimportant. Alternatively, you could modify your description of an event or situation depending on the level of a character's Notice skill. This could be done in front of the entire group (in which case the disparity will be highlighted for the crew) or by taking the players aside before relating what their characters experience (relying on the players to communicate their character's views in order for the discrepancy to be noticed—a useful technique, although best used sparsely). You can also ask a player to roll his character's Intelligence and Notice to remember relevant details at the right time. If a character's skills aren't the best (or even if they are), but his player emphasizes that the investigator keeps detailed notes and files them neatly, you might give him a bonus on his rolls.

OTHER SKILLS

Some clues don't require the usual suspects on a character sheet, Notice or Knowledge. If a character is tracking down a master forger, you may ask for Perception and Art rolls to discover what's going on. Perception and Mr. Fix-It might determine whether someone's been fiddling with the character's car engine. Perception and Languages might be used when

looking through someone's notes about an obscure prophecy, looking for holes in the translation (as Fred and Gunn were doing in 3.17 Forgiving—though Intelligence and Languages would be the culprits for a character doing the translating himself). Perception and Notice is the default roll for searching or discovering, but it should give less information about a situation if a different, more precise skill could be used.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Wesley: But only one person knew the secret that would allow them to blackmail Kevin for the rest of his life. Only one person took pains to hide their muddy shoes. Only one person reeked of foxglove and hellebore. Only one person was responsible for the death of Derek Bointon—his own sweet, doting Aunt Helen!

Father: Helen!

Cordelia: Not so fast, sister.

Gunn: That was cool.

Wesley: It wasn't that difficult. You just have to keep sifting the evidence until the truth finally hits you.

—2.13 Happy Anniversary

All of the methods discussed already are useful for finding information, but they don't tell the whole story. For you Directors, the methods might give hints on how a scene plays out, but they don't do much for explaining how the detective story as a whole evolves. That's what we're going to look at here.



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THE INFORMATION TRAIL

Sometimes searching for information is like looking for a spell—the Cast knows it is somewhere in a collection of occult books, but you don't want to spend valuable game time detailing each tome individually. On the show, that process is often reduced to a quick shot of turning pages, a picture of a scary demon, the Cast Member looking frazzled, and then the final result. The *Angel* Corebook talks about this kind of quick and easy research (see p. 116). On the other hand, if the Cast is faced with a locked room mystery, you may decide it's not much fun to simply roll a few dice and tell them the answer (the Big Kahuna demon in the kitchen with a briefcase).

As with most things, it all depends on the storyline. The detective work could be a simple clue to get the team to the next fight scene or outrageous stunt (this could be called the James Bond option). Or it could be more Agatha Christie, where intricate details are analyzed to reveal the hidden truth. There's no need to stick to a consistent style in every one of your sessions, and the *AngeTV* show moves between the two as needed (tending more towards the first than the second).

As Seen On TV: In 2.10 Reunion, the A.I. team has to discover where Darla has been buried. Angel starts by looking for Lindsey, getting some valuable info from his former landlady. This is combined with his knowledge of Drusilla (her love of the stars) and a computer search for businesses with connections to Wolfram & Hart. It's a little too late to save the girl, but at least he didn't have to spend the night cruising cemeteries fruitlessly.

THE PLOT SICKENS

The example of the search for Darla helps highlight one of the pitfalls of this type of game. What if Angel had not stopped to ask the landlady questions? He would have missed the big dramatic rebirthing, and a good fight scene. The TV show is scripted so that sort of

thing doesn't happen. The investigators don't always succeed, but whether they succeed or fail, suitably dramatic things happen.

In a roleplaying game, it's not that easy. What if the player didn't think to ask the landlady questions (he might assume she is unimportant, or in a moment of paranoia assume she is a W&H agent)? What if the Cast do their computer search, and everyone manages to fail the roll? They're stuck, and you have a big dramatic scene that can't be used. Even worse, what if, instead of Darla's rebirth, they got stuck on the way to stopping Gene Rainey trying to freeze that last moment of happiness with his girlfriend (as seen in 2.13 Happy Anniversary)? Oops, the world ends.

Less often, but still problematical (especially if obscure hints turn out not to be as obscure as you hoped), what happens if the players get too smart? What if the team had managed to quickly intuit the real killer of Manny in 4.9 Long Day's Journey? Again, there goes a large chunk of the season.

We suggest several approaches to this problem, but you're never going to eliminate the tension altogether. The world of *Angels* is a dramatic one, and the stakes are high. If you simply declare that the world doesn't end even if the Cast makes all the wrong decisions, and can't roll higher than three all evening, the players should rightfully get the feeling that they are superfluous. That undermines the whole game.

THE WEB OF CLUES

Your first defense against stymied investigations is to consider the clues as a web rather than a fragile chain, dependent upon each link. This means having more than one piece of information point to the same conclusion, and clues that can be useful regardless of the order in which they're found. This sometimes requires a bit more work, since you've got to come up with more clues, but not always. Detective scenarios require more detail than most, but you can make things seem more complicated than they are—that cuts down on the work.

A good trick is to look at the different ways of finding information (see p. [?]), and decide which of them are going to be fruitful. If the players rely on a particular type—a favored snitch, for example—you may want to exclude that option this time round (or even better have it lead to a red herring) to add variety.

Once you've identified the possible sources, you can engineer your adventure in two different ways. One is by thinking about the bad guy, and deciding what sort of clues he will leave by his very nature. Does his psychology suggest a certain pattern to the crimes (or whatever else is under investigation)? If it's a demon, does its species have any identifying characteristics that



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can be alluded to? The other is deciding what sort of clues might be interesting for this adventure. Maybe you want some computer hacking this time round, to build on a theme you're developing. Maybe everyone loves crime scenes, and you've thought of an interesting variation to add to the mix. By going in both directions, you add complexity and different strands for the players to follow.

Unassailable Example: Let's say you are fashioning an adventure around the idea of a vamp getting a hold of the Gem of Amarra (the one that makes them immune to death-by-anything, see 1.3 In the Dark—somehow getting around the Angel-destroyed-it factor), but was smarter than Spike or Marcus. The vamp knows he is still vulnerable if he loses the ring, or is trapped somewhere, so instead of being obvious he plans a series of dazzling raids that make full use of his ability to withstand any damage thrown at him. He also doesn't want to be obvious about his vampiriness—he is known in the demon bars of L.A. and wants to throw suspicion off.

There's your bad guy. He's not incredibly powerful (being able to take damage doesn't equate to being able to dish it out), but he's flexible and smart. Are the players going to be smarter?

Two lines of enquiry immediately suggest themselves. One is physical—by examining the scenes of the crime, the Cast might be able to detect traces of his hiding place and clues as to what he can and can't do. The other is psychological—by examining the types of crimes he is committing, they can try to work out who he is and where he will strike next. You decide the vampire is subconsciously choosing targets that resonate with his human life, which provides some interesting clues.

So what about computer hacking? Can we add that to the mix? Okay, maybe that relates to how the vampire got the Gem in the first place. Maybe the players identify a particular company that seems to be the felon's first target, even if it doesn't match all the parameters. They discover some incongruities in the company's background and hack in to their system, discovering they are a front for importing certain artifacts to Wolfram & Hart. This vamp raided it by accident and got away with the gem. There, another line of enquiry that can give them more information and expand the plot. Once the Cast figures out the Gem is involved, they know the bad guy is a vampire, and have a lot easier time tracking him down through the supernatural underground.

While this plot summary doesn't tell you the exactly what the clues are going to be, it puts you in a much better position when you design your individual encounters (that might be a single crime scene or, with this villain, maybe a series of them spread over several Episodes). Not only that, but because you know the general information you want to come out of the encounters, you can put several hints in, and see which one the party latches onto first. If you're quick on your feet, game-wise, you can drop in the clues during the encounter, based upon what approach the characters take to your scene. If you're less confident, it might be better to write down one or more important clues that may be found beforehand, and leading (as subtly as possible) your party in that direction.

Just because there are different solutions to a problem doesn't mean that you have to give them all the players. You want to create the illusion that the puzzle is a difficult one. That may mean that you drop out additional clues to the same information once they become superfluous. If it's a good illusion, it doesn't really matter if your players know that's what you're up to.



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GETTING A CLUE

Cordelia: What is this stuff anyway? Kind of pretty!

Wesley: Uh, it's the bodily excretion of an Ethros demon.

Cordelia: No one could have said demon poo BEFORE I touched it . . .

—1.14 I've Got You Under My Skin

Another counter to investigator failure is to minimize rolling. We suggest you not require a roll when the Cast searches for the raw material of clues. Instead, whether the Cast finds a clue might depend upon their equipment, their background, and what the players specifically say they're examining during the game session. Thus, if there are shards from an ancient Ming vase at the scene, they should find it as long as someone says something as obvious as "I examine the area around the body." If they have a fingerprint kit (and know how to use it), they can find fingerprints. If an eyewitness saw something interesting, they just have to talk to him. If the clue requires no special expertise to find (the victim was found draped in the Australian flag), just describe it as part of setting the scene.

Two main exceptions to this rule exist. The first is if the bad guy deliberately tried to disguise or hide the evidence. In that case, Perception and Notice (or whatever combination is appropriate) should be rolled against the bad guy's cover-up skill (or Brains Score). This should still be a fairly easy roll, though. For example, if the clue is inside an encrypted file, this roll

is made to discover where the file is. Breaking into the file may be a more difficult matter—it too could be rolled or you may require the players to come up with a clever way of discovering the password.

The second exception is if the potential evidence is spread over a wide area. In that case, the Cast shouldn't automatically find everything interesting. You might also leave it to the players to narrow things down via the description you provide. If they don't, ask for a Perception and Notice roll as a replacement (perhaps with negatives). This rule is to encourage them to take an active interest in investigation, but still allow a back-up for the odd vapor-lock evening.

Sing It, Baby: Say a mysterious murder has been committed at Caritas and the Cast has been called in. They've found the weapon and want to search the place for any other signs of the murderer. That's a tall order, but a roll could be made to find the other clues you've placed (probably with negatives, given the size of the place and the vagueness of the search criteria—not to mention Lorne taking witness arias in the background). If instead the Cast wonders how the weapon was smuggled in past the sensor at the door, they could immediately search the loading bay (to see if it might have come in the back way) and examine the sensor itself. In that case, they find the sabotage of the sensor immediately—no roll required.





UNDERSTANDING A CLUE

Each clue implies something about the case. If the Cast put the pieces together and solve it themselves, that's great. Maybe you gave them information previously that now makes sense, or they call in an expert (say Willow) they know can crack the code. Again, no roll required.

If that doesn't happen, rolling is a good fallback position. A roll can help the players put the clues together when they've left their brilliance in their other pants. This is treated like a research roll (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 116). In general, ask for an Intelligence and Knowledge (or more appropriate combination—Intelligence and Wild Card (Profiling) if they're trying the psychological approach), and the number of Success Levels tells them how much information they get. If there's plenty of time and no distractions, add the Success Levels of all the participants; failures are irrelevant. If some kind of pressure is involved—time, limited resources, drooling demons—helpers grant a +1 bonus per Success Level to the leader's roll; failures subtract two from the leader's roll.

If, after rolling, the Cast feels there's more information to be had, they have two choices. They can keep rolling, adding their Success Levels onto their previous total. Unfortunately, new rolls require more time—maybe hours, maybe days (whatever you feel is appropriate).

The second option is to take the information they have and try a different tack.

Switching Gears: With minimum successes, the Cast has worked out that the shards previously found come from China. Instead of more rolling, they start looking for suspicious activity in places that deal in such commodities (unfortunately, there's a lot—time to make another research roll for hitting city records). If they discover that the pattern on the shards places the vase in a particular collection recording scenes of demonic invasion (either because the original roll was better or through extended grunt research), they can find the person who handles those matters almost immediately, with any sort of knowledge of (or Contacts in) demonic society.

DRAMA POINTS

Another way to short-circuit busted investigations is to use Drama Points, in particular Plot Twist (See *Angel Corebook*, p. 140). If all the players' rolls are coming up bad, or if they have a pressing deadline before the world ends, having a player spend one of these babies should curtail a lot of heartache.

A Drama Point basically reveals the maximum amount that can be discovered from a single clue in record time. A Cast Member might suddenly recall a newspaper article he read a couple of weeks ago, or the appropriate Contact's phone number might fall out of his wallet by accident.

If the Cast hasn't found the clues to start with, maybe because they have been looking in the wrong area, a Drama Point allows them to find a good clue, and also to understand some of what it means.

Alternately, a Drama Point opens up a new avenue of exploration altogether. Perhaps an investigative journalist contacts them for an interview, but has information of his own. Perhaps the villain telephones to gloat, and the sounds in the background of the call become a new clue to interpret.

On the flip side, you might want to restrict the use of Drama Points in some games to get everyone in the right mindset. With the full cinematic rules system in play, the players may be conditioned to just wade in flailing rather than look around for a better way. If the Cast doesn't know who the bad guy is, you don't have a problem. Where they do, watch out (an example of the latter type of plot is found in **Chapter Eight: The Third Demon**).

One approach is to disallow Drama Points in combat, but keeping them around for adding bonuses to information-gathering and other non-combat rolls and Plot Twists (I Think I'm Okay could still be used, but only after the characters are out of immediate danger). If you do restrict usage like this, you might also want to decrease the amount of points characters receive, to achieve a good balance of Drama and hard work.

Another solution is suggested in the Corebook (see p. 139)—don't use Drama Points at all. Dropping Drama Points would certainly bring home the gritty in gritty street games.

FAILURE AND RESPONSES

Lindsey: How did you think this would end?
—2.9 The Trial

In the Angelverse, not everything works out—not by a long shot. Sometimes Angel kills the wrong person and sometimes he fails to solve the mystery before it's too late. Sometimes the bad guys turn up in overwhelming numbers or the good guys turn on each other. The Original Cast has stopped the world from ending once or twice, but there've been a lot of bad things on the way (evil Cordy probably did more damage to L.A. than the normal population of demons has, combined).





Despite all your preparation and tricks, your players and their characters may not solve the investigation or save the day. Don't get too depressed. Such events are certainly within genre, and they can always be treated as opening new challenges and opportunities. If the players roleplay their failure well, it can count as The Agony that is Life, and get them a Drama Point (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 143). But that doesn't answer the questions posed in the introduction of this section. What if you planned a dramatic moment that the characters fail to get the clues to? What if the world is at stake?

That's when a little dramatic license comes into play. The players should always work for their goals, but you can reduce the effect of bad rolls by reducing the requirements for them. If the Cast is looking for clues, they may not need to roll at all (as already discussed). When they do find them, you can make them more understandable, so they're not going to require lengthy research. They might find a matchbook with an address on it, or they are told they recognize the scrap of material as being from the iridescent toga they saw a demon wearing last night. That doesn't mean you only give out easy clues when the stakes are high (you should mix and match the type and difficulty of clues for variety and interest), it's just that when the stakes are high, you lean towards the more obvious end of the spectrum.

Also, in an investigative game especially, try not to plan too far ahead, and keep flexible as to the path the game is taking. If you have a season planned out with specific set pieces along the way, forcing the players into them no matter what they roll or the decisions they make will cause frustration and perhaps rebellion. You still have a lot of control over the game world, and can build towards a dramatic climax in a number of different ways, but this is collaborative storytelling we're talking about here. If player decisions cause them to arrive too late to miss Darla (going back to 2.10 Reunion again), then that's what happens. Maybe she'll ambush them instead, or cause havoc for the players to investigate. When they do arrive at the nursery, perhaps they find a security camera, and so can still witness the event after the fact.

Occasionally, you will make a mistake (unbelievable but true). You give out a clue that reveals too much, or not enough. Perhaps the players discount the direction that you are trying to nudge them in because they think it doesn't make sense. In that case, you might have to back up and talk about things. Don't be afraid to ask for some time to think about the implications and devise a good response. Try to smooth things over in game as the first step; if one clue doesn't work, add another, for example. Otherwise you might have to explain your assumptions in "time-out" mode, or even back up and

retroactively change something. That can be awkward, but it's better than the foundations of the adventure falling flat. Then get back on the horse and keep having fun.

THE LAW ANGLE

Gunn: Oh, and I got copies of their telephone bills, too.

Angel: Hey, isn't that illegal? I mean, don't these guys deserve a little privacy?

—3.4 *Carpe Noctem*

Following the clues to discover the truth is only part of the job for government officials, police officers, attorneys, and P.I.s who plan for a day in court. In both real life and cop shows, a lot of effort is put into creating a chain of evidence to link the bad guy to the crimes he has committed. Without evidence there is no legal proof and no state-sanctioned punishment can be meted out. Criminals are also concerned with the chain of evidence, so they can circumvent it, destroy it, or point it off towards some other poor sucker.

This section discusses using evidence in your game, no matter which side of the law the characters are on. We've already talked about clues acting as narrative pointers in your game. This gives the concept a bit more rigor, so that clues have a value that indicates how good they are in proving a case. *Angels* is a dramatic TV show that shortcuts a lot of procedure and red tape, and allows for impassioned speeches and crafty underhand maneuvers—these rules resonate with those tones.

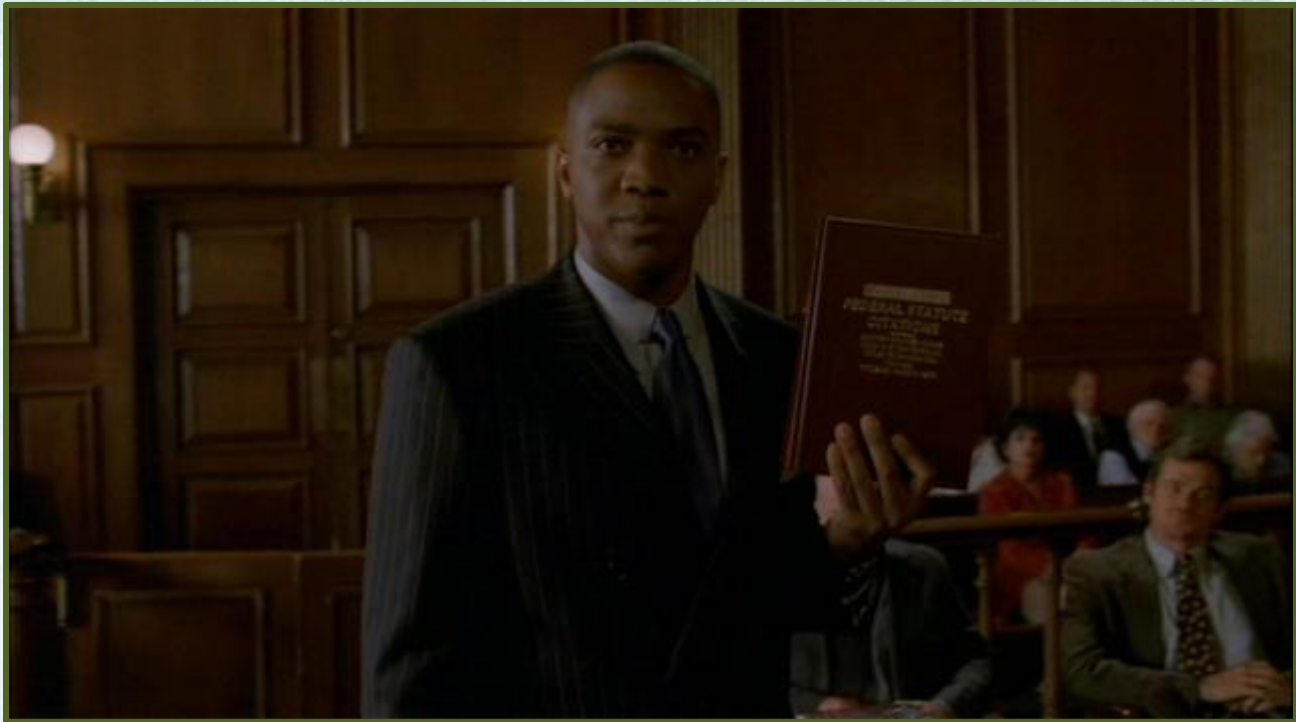
THE BASICS

Evidence is a clue that is admissible in court. Any piece of evidence is a clue, no matter how tangential. On the other hand, not every clue is allowed in a legal proceeding as evidence. A number of laws have been established to help ensure that evidence is reliable and relevant. For example, beating someone into confessing does not produce an admissible statement; society judges that such evidence is not reliable. A number of other laws have been enacted to police the police by restricting evidence. Any clues gathered by police after breaking down someone's door (without a court's permission) cannot be used in court; society wants folks to be secure in their homes.

Using clues as detailed previously provides a very freeform system that allows you to design detective adventures. Evidence is a more stringent system that better duplicates police and legal procedure. You can use either or both, as takes your fancy, perhaps at different stages of your game.



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EVIDENCE RULES

Like other aspects of the game, evidence and its impact can be handled with a couple of dice rolls. Each bit of evidence about a particular crime is worth a certain number of points that act as modifiers to those rolls. For example, if you have an eyewitness account of the accused at the murder scene, that's going to help the case of the prosecution. How much it helps (i.e., how big a modifier it provides) depends upon the circumstance of the case. How much did the witness see and how reliable does he sound on the witness stand? All that is encompassed in a single number.

The exact value of the number doesn't affect how difficult it was to track down that witness in the game. For police procedure heavy games, the Cast might interview a number of witnesses, sort out conflicting stories, and decide upon the person that best makes the case they want. For more dramatic games, the Cast might first learn about the case when they save the witness from being eaten by a demon. They can then bundle him off to a lawyer, content to let the legal system do its thing off screen. Note that one of the Cast members might actually be the witness and the trick is to survive long enough to see justice (or whatever passes for it) done. A variation on this theme was seen as a subplot of 1.18 Five by Five, when Angel saves a witness against a Wolfram & Hart client. Half the trick was persuading him to testify, despite the demons trying to kill him.

The total bonus of all pieces of evidence is imaginatively called the Evidence Total. Both sides of a case have their own Evidence Total, which might go up and, less often, down during the course of an adventure. The trick is for one side's total to be 10 points higher than its opponent's—then it doesn't matter what the dice roll. The good news for the defense team is they get an automatic 10 points ("innocent until proven guilty"—perhaps you've heard of it), and if you're playing a simple game where the Cast's job is to track down a bad guy, that total is not likely to change much. So the Cast's aim is to find 20 points of evidence in order to get a conviction.

How the evidence is divided up depends upon the adventure that you design. If there is one big piece of evidence—like the sole witness—he might be worth 20 all on his own. A more likely scenario is that two or three bits of evidence are needed, worth six or seven points each, and perhaps some extra scrambling can win the day even if all the evidence available is not found in time. As you'll see there's plenty of scope for creativity and dirty tricks throughout the process.

Here's a couple of other things to keep in mind.

Evidence Is Not Guilt: The weight of evidence is defined by how much good it would do a lawyer presenting it in court. For instance, a witness that places the suspect at the scene of the crime should help sway a jury and so might be worth five points. It's worth that amount even if the suspect is innocent of the crime—it's certainly possible to gain enough evidence to convict the wrong person (especially if there are more dirty tricks than forensic analysis going on).





Evidence Can Be Lost: Just because the characters find a witness doesn't mean he survives long enough to reach court. Dead men tell no tales, as the saying goes (or, at the very least, they have a lot more trouble swearing on the Bible). In more detailed games, skillful cross-examination might discredit the witness or his testimony could be ruled inadmissible on a technicality (those pesky societal rules about beating confessions, for example). Crucial evidence could go missing (this happens quite a lot if it happens to be drugs). If the Cast Members are criminals, or if they are caught in a crossfire between law and justice (such as knowing that an innocent is being falsely accused but unable to prove it), they might be concerned with destroying evidence rather than preserving it.

Because single bits of evidence can be removed or modified, it's a good idea keep a list of all the different pieces and how much they're worth, instead of just remembering the total.

Evidence Can Be Created: This might be real information based on less tangible clues, such as psychological profiling or character witnesses (folks who say what kind of person the defendant is), or it might be completely fake. Evidence is anything that sways the verdict of a case—that includes things like jury stacking or a planted weapon.

WHEN TO USE EVIDENCE

Lindsey: While the arguments that the district attorney here has presented are somewhat entertaining, this case hinges on the testimony of witnesses that they have been unable to produce.

—1.18 Five by Five

Evidence use is a lot more *Law and Order* than *Angel*. **Chapter Five: The System** goes into some detail about court procedure if you want to play things that way. But you don't need to do that to make use of these rules. Here are some of other options:

Investigation: You can automatically assign evidence values to the clues the Cast finds. If they determine the approximate importance of the clues (you could tell them or require an Intelligence and Wild Card (Law) roll), they get a good neutral indicator of their progress toward catching and convicting the bad guy. Even if they aren't going to take him to court, it's best to know if they're justified in lopping his head off (inappropriate head-lobbing causes all sorts of problems).

Persuasion: In 2.5 Dear Boy, Kate was convinced Angel had killed an innocent man (well, an actor anyway), but it was all a setup by Darla. By noting various clues, Wesley and Gunn were able to change her mind. When handling that sort of scenario, you could keep all the numbers hidden, but tally up the strength of the argument to see if it would persuade the judicious. You might analyze things like this: Angel couldn't enter because he hadn't been invited—that's half way there, Kate is wavering. But they haven't



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checked the marital status of the deceased yet. Oh wait, they've pulled out a century-old picture of the wife (Darla) to show Kate, that's gotten to her. Mmm, Julie Benz . . . uh, where was I?

Emphasizing the Details: Evidence numbers are a good way of focusing on the Cast's own actions. If the characters have to break into a mansion to steal a vital prophecy, they are going to want to cover their tracks, so the law (or the demons summoned by the collector) don't know who to go after. This system gives them an idea of what traces they leave behind, so they can calculate their risks and prepare. For example, if they don't spot a camera, they might end up being filmed, which is obviously bad. When they do realize what has gone wrong, they have to destroy the tape somehow without betraying themselves further.

They don't have to know the numbers involved—it's probably better if they don't—but just thinking of things in that way will make them more methodical, if that's the sort of game you want. Then again, you might occasionally say "the camera's obviously got good pictures of you guys, so I wouldn't recommend leaving unless you've taken care of that. And (rolls dice), Karen, you've just realized you left tracks in the garden with the same shoes you kicked that demon to death with. That's worth five points if someone makes the connection. Oh wait, you think you hear the front door."

Wesley did a brilliant bit of evidence juggling in 3.7 Offspring, in a standoff against just such a collector. He points out that Muslok Trancing Amalgam is almost identical to the date-rape drug rohypnol, and so he won't dare call the cops on them (at least until after he kills them). The funny thing is it may have all been a giant bluff—the collector probably had no idea whether his powder had any similarity to rohypnol at all.

Ignoring It: As with all the systems in this book, these are optional rules and are easily ignored. Somehow legions of roleplayers have got through life without them, and you just might too.

TYPES OF EVIDENCE

Wesley: No. Something's missing. We're missing one of the evidence bags. Seven, eight, nine, yes, here's ten—here is twelve, but where is eleven? What was eleven?

—3.3 Old Gang of Mine

Here are all the different types of evidence that might be found in a game. Some of this isn't evidence in the strictest sense of the word, but provide modifiers to the final dice roll. Many of these categories talk about extra legal requirements for the presenting of evidence in court, but you don't have to worry about that if you're not playing a procedural game. Some of these types of evidence are only used for long court cases (see p. [?]).

Physical Evidence: This is actual evidence collected at a crime scene or elsewhere that provides clues to the identity of the criminal or the nature of the crime (the murder weapon is always a good thing to have). Keeping the chain of evidence is important for police work. Each piece must be kept in the personal possession of a designated officer at the scene until it is collected and signed for by someone else, finally reaching dedicated storage facilities in the police station. If evidence is left unattended, the defense can create doubt about its validity.

Eyewitness: It's possible that someone saw the evil deed, or perhaps saw the perpetrator on his way to or from the scene (carrying a hacksaw, no doubt). The trick with witnesses is to make sure they come clean and say what they actually saw (or at least what your side wants them to say). If the person they're testifying against has a reputation for murder and mayhem, that might not be so easy. Defense lawyers can also call witnesses, perhaps to provide an alibi for the accused, or as a statement of good character. (Character witnesses aren't worth a lot of points—one or two at most—unless it's a well known and respected person doing the recommending.)

The credibility of any witness may be called into question under cross-examination, which could remove all or part of the Evidence Total benefit they are supposed to provide. In a worse case scenario (and regularly in court-room drama shows), they break down under the attorney's skillful questioning and actually add points to the opposition's total by, say, admitting that they did see another guy at the scene or that they lied previously.

Confession: Having somebody admit to a crime is always a good thing, and can save lots of trouble and expense. Unfortunately it's also dangerous for the investigator. A confession is the first thing the defense team tries to overturn, and if they do the consequences can be very bad (see p. [?]). In addition, people sometimes say they're guilty when they're not. They



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might be pressured into it, might feel guilty for unrelated reasons, could be genuinely confused, or could be protecting someone else. It's not easy being a cop.

Precedent: This is a special type of evidence that only surfaces within the court room itself. Most criminal law in the United States is known as Common Law, which roughly means that the rules are derived from the results of previous court cases. If a character finds a previous case with a situation close enough to the present one, and the opposition can't counter it with a more recent case that overturned or contradicted the ruling, the judge may be influenced towards that point of view. Each side can bring forth one precedent during the trial, in which case their opponent tries to rebuff it (we allow only one each for game balance. It could actually be a series of precedents all wrapped up into one roll if you want to get technical about it). Each side rolls Intelligence and Wild Card (Law), modified by the Law Library Quality. The one offering the precedent gains a bonus depending on your determination as to the strength of that precedent (ask the player to make up some convincing precedent or just default to +2 if you don't want to get into that level of detail). Both sides get to add their Success Levels to their Evidence Total. You might allow extra bonuses to the Cast for coming up with a particularly inventive or appropriate precedent.

As Seen on TV II: Lindsey pulls out the old "sacrificing goats in an apartment block is a cultural tradition" trick (he always wanted to be Keanu Reeves in *The Devil's Advocate*), finding a precedent to support his claim. Lindsey's Brains Score is 17, with an extra +2 because he is offering

the precedent, and +5 because of the size of W&H's Law Library. That's seven Success Levels added to his Evidence Total. The good guys try to counter by pointing out the weaknesses in the analogy, rolling Intelligence and Wild Card (Law) gaining three Success Levels. Lindsey gained four more than the good guys on that round. The good guys better come up with some telling precedent of their own.

The Lawyer: The skill of the lawyer helps sway the jury, often in dramatic fashion (at least on TV). The lawyer rolls Willpower and Wild Card (Law), modified by the Law Library Quality to the Evidence Total.

The Judge: If the judge has a reputation for being lenient or strict on certain types of cases, you can apply a +1 or +2 bonus to the side he favors.

The Jury: The criminal law process depends heavily on the twelve civilians who have been dragged into proceedings and are now sitting there with a mixture of boredom and fascination. A jury that is completely under the sway of one side—possibly because they have been paid off, threatened, or been replaced by doppelgängers—renders all other evidence obsolete. In most cases, less blatant biases affect the outcome, and the lawyers have some control over that during the procedure for choosing the twelve (see p. [?]). You can also decide that events in the courtroom that aren't directly counted as evidence might win the sympathy of the jury one way or the other, giving a bonus of +1 or +2 to one side. For example, a side that suffers a significant legal setback might gain the jurors' sympathy, or distrust, depending on how it is conveyed. Alternatively, a lawyer that is snotty, rude, disrespectful, or even insufficiently religious, might put off a particular member of the jury.





Drama: Remember the scene in 1.22 Blind Date when Angel throws the sunglasses at Vanessa Brewster, and she catches them, just as Lindsey is explaining that she is a poor tormented blind woman? Well, it's those sorts of moments that add spice and excitement to the whole process. Most of the time drama is just a natural consequence of playing through the procedure. A game session shouldn't be about legal jargon (though in moderation that too can be fun—see Gunn in 5.1 Conviction, to duck out of our seasonal jurisdiction briefly). Focus on the bits of evidence that are going to take the court by surprise, and the cunning tricks used to undermine the opposition's own evidence. If there isn't any of that sort of thing, it should be a real-short trial. Like "You hear that they threw the book at Holtz. Seems he won't be getting out of San Quentin unless it's in a box".

So the sunglasses trick could just be a great way of reducing the "evidence" that suggests this particular woman couldn't commit the crime. It introduces enough doubt to halve the weight the jury put on the blindness factor. If it had been worth 10 points, W&H's Evidence Total just lost five.

Any time a Cast Member can gain a point against the opposition, his player can elect to spend a Drama Point

The Poisoned Tree

This is yet another optional rule that helps provide the feel of real police procedure. During investigation, evidence often leads to other evidence—the confession of a suspect might lead to the finding of the murder weapon. If the confession is ruled inadmissible—say W&H creates the impression there was some skull-denting going on during the interrogation—any evidence that followed on from that is also inadmissible. This would include the very existence of the murder weapon (let alone that the person knew where it was) and can shred strong cases in seconds. Such evidence is referred to colloquially as fruit of a poisoned tree.

To simulate this requires a bit more paperwork, since you not only have to note how much each piece of evidence is worth, but what follows from what. If the poisoned evidence is only one or two steps removed, that shouldn't be too difficult. In a truly labyrinthine scenario though, both you and the players should be taking careful notes.

to do so with that much more style. Make a roll relevant to the situation (maybe a Willpower and Influence roll, though in Angel's case it's more likely Dexterity and Kung Fu to represent the thrown shades), getting the normal +10 for the Drama Point. The Success Levels gained add to the Evidence Total, usually in the form of impressed jury members. If Angel had gotten nine Success Levels, Lindsey's case would have lost 14—five for the compromised evidence and nine for Angel's chutzpah. On the other hand, don't forget bad guys get Drama Points too (or that too many stunts risks the judge coming down on the character for contempt of court).

Assigning Evidence Weight

Just how much is any one piece of evidence worth? That depends upon how much it is likely to sway a jury for or against the accused. You can have as much evidence as you like in a case—the more types of evidence there is, the more complicated the case (and therefore the adventure) is.

A good rule of thumb is to say that the total of physical evidence and eyewitness testimony that can be gathered against the actual villain is 20 points, and the total evidence in favor of the villain is zero (that doesn't mean he can't have an alibi, for example, but that the Cast can legitimately prove that the excuse is a phony and so remove it from the game). All these details could be worked out beforehand, although some folks like making these sorts of things up as they go, reacting to the line of investigation taken by the Cast.

If the adventure is all about protecting a certain witness, just assign him 20 points and he'll be what both sides are after. If things are a little more complicated, the witness might be worth eight, the presence of the murder weapon in the accused's swimming pool four, documented evidence that the victim had good motive four, and traces of a certain rare brand of cologne found at the scene another four. (We're presuming these items are credible enough that they are acceptable to some degree to the jury—or good enough to satisfy the Cast that they aren't making a mistake when they come a'calling with heavy weaponry.)

Evidence values vary over time and with surrounding circumstances. The following examples give some basic guidelines for assigning values.

Slam Dunk (20): A highly credible witness who personally saw the suspect commit the crime; a full confession.

Next Best Thing (15): A highly credible witness who personally saw the suspect grab a murder weapon and head out in the direction of the crime scene shortly before it happened; the suspect was found at the crime scene holding the bloody murder weapon.





Solid (8): A highly credible witness who personally saw the defendant at or near the scene of the crime, or coming to or going from the scene of the crime; an instrumentality of the crime (lock picks, murder weapon) found at the crime scene with the suspect's name and address stenciled in the handle; the confession of the suspect's girlfriend that she lied when she said the suspect stayed at her house the night of the crime.

Circumstantial Evidence and Hearsay

TV and movie lawyers regularly rail against "circumstantial evidence and hearsay" (sometimes they label it "rank" hearsay which we're guessing is really smelly hearsay) when trying to get a case thrown out of court. Your players or characters can simply use such language to sound good when roleplaying but it does help to have some clue what they mean. We're only scratching the surface here (legal treatises have been written on the subjects) but this should get you far enough for roleplaying purposes.

Circumstantial evidence suggests a conclusion rather than proving anything. In many cases, this is the only evidence available (no eyewitnesses can be found). A murder weapon found at a suspect's apartment is pretty damning circumstantial evidence, but it does not remove all doubt that the suspect used it to commit the crime. Circumstantial evidence should rarely be worth more than four points. A case based on such evidence needs to keep piling it on to reach conviction range.

Hearsay is a pretty complicated subject but it's essentially offering proof based on what the witness has heard, rather than experienced directly. The law believes that if the witness heard something relevant from someone else, that person should be compelled to come to court and state what he knows. This helps avoid the "pass it along" problem of garbled messages. There are lots of exceptions and permutations (what happens if the original speaker is now dead?), but the best way to handle this is to severely discount the value of this kind of testimony.

Usual Suspects (4): A witness with some credibility baggage (can't remember clearly, didn't see clearly, has not been entirely truthful in the past) testifies about the defendant's presence at the crime scene; evidence of a reason for the suspect to want to commit the crime (motive); carpet fibers from a relatively rare brand found at the crime scene and the suspect's apartment.

Questionable (2): An expert witness discussing the suspect's obsession that might have lead him to commit the crime; the suspect's ownership of a relatively common knife like that used in the crime; cloth fibers from a common brand of jeans owned by the suspect found at the crime scene.

Inadmissible (0): This is stuff that can't come in at all. Maybe it's the product of an illegal search, or a stationhouse beating. Maybe it's hearsay or evidence of a similar but totally different crime. Whatever the case, the judge won't allow it before the jury. On the other hand, these clues could help prove guilt and be assigned a value if the Cast has no intention of allowing the suspect to see the inside of a courtroom—it's a dark world filled with dark choices.

Tell It To The Judge: Say a judge has been found murdered, and a witness was able to identify a woman standing on a street corner outside his house—a woman who turns out to be someone the victim had previously sentenced to jail. A gun is found in her swimming pool and she is arrested. The current evidence places her at the scene (+8), gives her motive (+4), and shows her access to a murder weapon (+4). Looks fairly good for the prosecution, nearly an open and shut case.

Our sterling heroes are suspicious that W&H is at work here—they know the judge had a history of deciding against the law firm. They investigate for the defense, and find traces of cologne at the scene that they track down to an import company that W&H uses to bring assassins in from overseas. It turns out that a phone call was made to the accused's house on the afternoon of the murder, from a pay phone outside the import company. Suddenly the case looks different, and with extra questioning, the witness says the woman seemed to be waiting for someone, and he remembers he saw another man—now identified as an employee of the import company—in the street. The defense argues that the woman was set up because of her previous life of crime, and shows evidence that she would be a lot more careful hiding the murder weapon had she been the culprit. The jury is not sure, but halves the importance they put on the witness testimony and discounts the weapon entirely. Now the evidence is witness (+4) and motive (+4), versus the default score of any accused (+10). W&H probably hasn't run out of legal tricks they can give



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the prosecution, but now it looks like the woman is going to get off.

In the end, bringing the real assassin to trial is a different matter, and proving W&H's involvement is most likely impossible. That's the way it goes on the dark streets of the city though. Of course, the killer likely tries to off the heroes for their interference (most likely without W&H's approval), only to expire messily instead. Such is a life of crime.

ROLLING THE DICE

All we've discussed so far is about accruing bonuses for a dice roll. Now we (finally) come to the actual roll itself. You have three options, depending upon how important the legal process is to your game.

Reject the Roll: How's that for pulling the rug out from under you? All this bonuses stuff and wham! nothing to modify. Still, if you are just using the evidence rules to categorize the clues and help build the investigatory revelations-maybe the Cast is trying to determine the identity of a demon con artist, or discover the location of a deathtrap in which a kidnapped street kid has been placed-nobody needs to roll anything. Finding individual clues might require Perception rolls, Influence rolls, or something else, but once they are satisfied they have enough information, they can act.

Even if the case is going to court, you still need not worry about rolling. Just declare the winner by seeing who has the highest Evidence Total. In the example of

the murdered judge, compare the totals of each side: the defense has its automatic 10, and the prosecution is beaten down to eight. Defense wins.

Simple Court Case: Often the Cast doesn't care much about the processes of court. The investigators collect the evidence during play sessions, the lawyers do their stuff off screen, and no one worries about the details (the defense is still likely batting at 10, especially if the Cast is on the side of the prosecution). Maybe a Cast Member turns up in the courtroom for a single scene of dramatic evidence, if it is necessary to tip the scales.

To determine the result in this situation, add the Law Library value of each side to their Evidence Total. This gives some weight to the level of representation used (that's +1 for a public defender or normal small law firm, +3 for a large local player, and +5 for Wolfram & Hart). Then each side rolls d10 and also adds this to their total. Highest value wins, ties go to the defense.

Tell It To the Judge II: Following up on the fate of the woman accused of judge murder, first add the Law Library modifier. The defense gets +1 (total 11), the prosecution +5 (total 13) (nice to have W&H working on your side). The bad guys are favored now, and each lawyer rolls. The defense rolls five (total 16), the prosecution rolls four (total 17). The accused takes the fall.

Complicated Court Case: This is where you worry a bit more about the procedures in the court room, which might mean you have lawyers and defense investigators amongst the Cast, and you want to use the full rules of the system. In this case, handle things in three different





stages: the preliminary hearing (see p. [?]), the beginning of the trial, and the final verdict.

At the preliminary hearing, the two opposing lawyers roll Willpower and Wild Card (Law), as modified by the Law Library to represent their skill. Add the Success Levels gained to each side's Evidence Total. Then, they each roll and add their Evidence Total. If the defense beats the prosecution by more than five, the case is thrown out and never reaches trial.

At the beginning of the trial, the lawyers try to pick jury members that will be sympathetic to their side. Each lawyer rolls Perception and Wild Card (Law). The resulting Success Levels add to their Evidence Total. This represents the initial bias of the jurors.

At the conclusion of the trial, each lawyer rolls Willpower and Wild Card (Law), as modified by the Law Library again. Again, the resulting Success Levels are added to the Evidence Totals. Finally, each rolls and add their final Evidence Total. If the prosecution beats the defense, the accused is found guilty.

The three steps are included in a complex court case to emphasize the usual length of legal proceedings. Feel free to allow lots of game time to pass between stages. You can sprinkle in side adventures to keep the Cast occupied, or allow them time to prepare extra defenses, find new evidence, or engage in dirty tricks. Each side can bring in extra evidence at any time between the first and last roll, so the totals might raise and fall dramatically between these stages (precedents can still only be called upon once per case, see p. [?]).

Here Come Da Judge Case: Before the preliminary hearing, the total evidence for the prosecution is 16, and the defense is still at 10. Both lawyers roll and get Success Levels of six and three respectively. The totals are now 22 and 13. The prosecution is now so far out in front that the case can't be thrown out of court (not much point rolling here).

After some preparation, the case starts and it's not looking good for our heroes. They have made strides tracking down the truth, but aren't there yet, and W&H is pushing the District Attorney for a speedy trial. Meanwhile, each lawyer makes his jury-stacking roll. The prosecutor gets four Success Levels (even without the aid of W&H's library he's doing well), and the defense gets three. The totals are now 26 and 16.

During the case, W&H offers the prosecutor an unexpected precedent and this gains the State an extra five points advantage. The defense can only muster two Success Levels for their precedent (totals now 31 and 18). At this point, the Cast presents their shocking evidence in a highly

dramatic fashion (including a Drama Point expenditure which adds another seven Success levels of jury impression), and things are thrown into turmoil. Eight is removed from the prosecution total (four for the witness, four for the weapon), and seven is added to the defense. Suddenly it's 23 versus 25 and the good guys are finally out in front.

It's still very close, but the judge is starting to have his suspicions. He becomes much stricter on the prosecutor's inflammatory comments to the jury (+2 to the defense, their total now being 27). Now it's time for the final trial and summation lawyering roll. The prosecutor rallies and gets six Success Levels; the defense lawyer stumbles under the turbulent events, only getting two Success Levels. It's neck and neck at 29 each (if you're not finding this exciting, this probably isn't the option for you). Each side rolls d10 and adds it to their total. And the winner is. . .well, that would be telling.

TAILING

Angel: What did you find out?

Cordelia: First off, I hate following detail.

Wesley: The voyeuristic aspect is rather unseemly.

Cordelia: Uh, can I mention traffic? And parking or the complete lack of it?

Angel: Not like in the movies, is it?

Cordelia: No. But fortunately I am.

—1.15 The Prodigal

There's a definite art to following somebody, whether it's on foot or in a car. In busy traffic, it's often hard enough to tail someone who wants to be tailed. It's easier on a clearer road, but the tracker then has to worry about remaining unnoticed. Fortunately, most people don't pick up a potential tail with a single glance in their rear view mirror (it takes two or three for the TV stars).

Whatever mode of transport used, two types of contested rolls can be called for. The first determines if the person being followed (we'll call him the subject, just to sound professional) notices, and if the person following (the tail) can keep up. If the subject wins two rolls in a row, he notices the tail. If the tail gets even one roll without any Success Levels, he's lost sight of the subject. Otherwise keep rolling at convenient intervals until the subject gets where he is going. The second roll is made only if the subject notices the tail and makes a sudden move to try and shake him. If that doesn't work, the situation likely turns into a chase (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 115), or devolves into combat.



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If a character is tailing a bad guy on foot, he needs to succeed at a Perception and Crime roll (or uses the Brains Score). If so, he follows successfully. The subject compares his Perception and Notice (or Crime) roll (or the Brains Score) to determine if he spots the tail. In a car, the following roll is Perception and Driving; the spotting roll is the same. If the tail is "burned" (discovered), the opponents roll Dexterity and Crime or Dexterity and Driving roll (or use their Combat Scores). If the subject wins, he loses the tail by ducking into the crowd or unexpectedly swerving off the freeway, or whatever.

All sorts of modifier can be applied to these rolls, but it's best to use them sparsely. The Tailing Tables summarizes the most likely situations. More creative maneuvers (such as in 4.19 Magic Bullet, when Fred lent her distinctive jacket to a suitable passerby, so as to lose Wesley and Gunn), are definitely encouraged. Professionals with the resources and prep time prefer to use multiple teams. For example, to tail a driver, they may use three vehicles with teams of two, linked by radio, covering side streets and swapping occasionally so the subject doesn't get suspicious of a single vehicle constantly in the rearview.

Of course, it's much easier if the tail can plant a homing bug in the subject's car and hang back a mile or two. The lack of visual contact though could lead to the subject pulling a switch and leaving the tail to follow an overnight shipper to Kansas.

TAILING TABLES

On Foot

Crowded Area:	-2 to notice tail; +2 to lose tail.
Deserted Streets:	+2 to notice tail; -2 to lose tail.
Rooftop Tail:	Tail must make a Dexterity and Acrobatics roll (or use the Combat Score) at -4 to stay with subject; -4 to notice tail; -2 to lose tail.

On the Road

Heavy Traffic:	+2 to notice tail (tail has to keep very close); -2 to lose tail.
Deserted Streets:	+2 to notice the tail.





ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE

Lorne: Speaking of hearing things—are there any fluorescent lights in here? I keep hearing this hum. Plus, fluorescent—green light, green skin—it's all bad. I'll take the blank stares as a big fat no.

—3.10 Dad

There's lots of high tech devices out there for spying on people. If your characters want to get all NSA on someone, we got you covered here.

Placing a bug requires an Intelligence and Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) roll. The Success Levels determine how hard it is to locate the bug and how effective it is at transmitting data. If the character gets at least three Success Levels, it's placed in an ideal location. If he only gets two Successes, any rolls associated with the bug suffer a -2 penalty. With only one Success Level, this penalty is increased to -4. If a complete failure, either no information can be gathered at all or the cleaning lady finds it during the next day's dusting.

Using any sort of surveillance equipment requires an Intelligence and Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) roll. In some cases—like a microphone bug—this is a simple success-or-failure roll. With more complex systems, the number of Success Levels may affect the quality of information received.

Those trained to perform surveillance can also block it. Locating bugs is a Perception and Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) roll. This result is resisted by the bugger's placement roll or Score. Depending on the complexity of the bug, a sharp-eyed anyone could try and find it; trickier high-tech bugs might only be located by someone with training and equipment. Note that Lorne was able to detect surveillance in the Hyperion because he could sense the frequency of the bug transmissions (see 3.10 Dad). That's probably a rare ability (W&H would be better prepared if lots of

demons could do it), but you could rule that species with appropriate mystical characteristics—like aura reading associated with sound—can detect certain tight ranges of frequency.

With the proper equipment, a character can make an Intelligence and Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) roll to attempt to track, isolate, jam, tap into, or otherwise interfere with surveillance devices. The Success Levels needed depend on the complexity of the equipment to be affected. One Success Level is enough for a standard bug, two or three for something that's been upgraded against interference, four or more for really boffo stuff. If a skilled operator has adjusted the device to prevent or reveal tampering, use the greater of the device's inherent Success Levels due to complexity and the Success Levels from his Intelligence and Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) roll (if the operator screws up, the device either doesn't work or the Success Levels needed for tampering are lowered!). In the end, you should make the call on Success Levels with an eye toward the plotline. How easy do you want tampering to be?

If a character does succeed in tapping into a bug or redirecting the signal—setting up a looped image on a security camera, for example—the person monitoring the device makes a Perception and Wild Card (Electronic Surveillance) roll resisted by the bug interferer's result.

INTERROGATION

Kate: Where is Little Tony?

Spivey: Burbank, Stockholm, the Planet Mongol .

. . I have no idea where he is! I'm losing patience with this crap.

Kate: I'm not. I'm just getting started. I had a big breakfast. I could do this all day.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

Interrogation is a test of patience, wits, and stamina between the questioner and the subject. The interrogator cannot be sure if the subject knows anything, is likely to give it up, knows he knows something relevant, or even can understand what the interrogator is after. In the case of Kate's interrogation, Spivey likely knows something, but has little incentive to reveal the information. When Wesley was interrogated by two officers in 2.8 The Shroud of Rahmon, he was innocent of the crime, but was too confused to understand what is going on.

These rules should only be used in the case of active resistance to the interrogation—otherwise it's just a matter of roleplaying, or you saying what the results are. For Spivey, the rules are obviously relevant. If Wesley was a Cast member, you wouldn't need the rules for The Shroud of Rahmon scene (you might



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instead be rolling to see if he can throw off the influence of the Shroud and say something coherent). If the police were the Cast Members in that situation, you might play the scene through with rolls, because the players couldn't be sure if they were being met with active resistance or not. This same mechanic can also be used when trying to get a criminal to betray his colleagues, or to question a suspect already in jail to find out what he knows about a current case (can you say quid pro quo?).

The interrogator rolls his Willpower and Influence (or uses his Brains Score), and is resisted by the subject's Willpower and Influence roll (or Brains Score). This can be rolled multiple times—add the Success Levels of the interrogator and subtract those of the subject to get an on-going total. One roll can be made every hour.

When the total Success Levels reaches the subject's Willpower, he gives up information that he'd want to keep secret, admits to a misdemeanor, or admits to an action he is ashamed of. When the total gets to three times his Willpower, he gives up any piece of information, admits to a felony crime (see p. [?]), or even admits guilt to a crime he didn't commit, just to get out of the room.

As always, several modifiers can be used. They all affect the roll of the interrogator (so negatives help the subject).

If the modifiers are more than five (plus or minus), or if dice rolling interrupts the flow of the session, you might just declare the result a foregone conclusion, one way or the other. You might quickly describe hours of

frustrating questions that lead nowhere, or the subject being worn down and spilling the beans

Subject believes that if he gives up information, he will be killed by his colleagues: -6

Subject has Nerves of Steel Quality: -4

Subject believes that if he gives up information, he will be injured (but not killed) by his colleagues: -3

An interrogator is replaced because of fatigue or over-stepping the mark: -3

Subject is a seasoned operator who has been the subject of interrogations before: -2

Subject is confused (possibly on drugs, bewildered by supernatural forces, or has poor language skills): +2

Subject has been subjected to verbal threats and abuse (but not physical violence) by police: +2

Two interrogators work on the subject (good cop/bad cop): +3

Subject has been subjected to physical violence by police: +4

Note that interrogation need not always be cops on crims. Anyone may want to ask pointed question in a coercive atmosphere and anyone could be subject to such questioning.



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CALLING A LAWYER

Lee Mercer: Mr. Papazian is a very important client at Wolfram & Hart. Any further violations of his rights and there will be serious repercussions.

Kate: And what exactly the hell does that mean?

Mercer: It means that we will open this case to the court of public opinion. It means that we'll shine light into the darkest corners of this precinct and give the people a clear view of the brutality and callousness of this police force that will make Mark Fuhrman look like Gentle Ben.

Little Tony: Everybody should have a lawyer like this one.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

Everyone has the right to have a lawyer present at an interrogation, but they may refuse that right, or be denied it illegally. If a lawyer is present, he can substitute his Willpower and Wild Card (Law) or Willpower and Influence roll for the subject's Willpower and Crime roll. The lawyer also makes it all but impossible for verbal or physical threats to be carried out against the subject, and any modifier for such actions that occurred before the lawyer arrived is halved.

If a lawyer discovers any impropriety in the interrogation technique (or manages to manufacture the appearance of impropriety), he can have the entire results of the interrogation declared inadmissible (evidence value zero).

MAKING AN OFFER

If things are going badly (accumulated Success Levels dipping into the negative level), the interrogator might want to offer the subject some incentive to answer the questions. This is usually something like an offer of a reduced sentence for a guilty plea, a lesser charge in exchange for wearing a wire, witness protection in exchange for testimony, a bribe (in money or goods) for questioning not intended for a courtroom later, or a yearly visit to Anthrax Island (some subjects have strange tastes). To legitimately make an offer, the interrogator must have the authorization to do so (or arrange it hurriedly after the fact). The tactic can also be successful if the subject only believes that the interrogator has authorization. The offer must also be a credible one. For example, if the FBI offered a member of Magnus Bryce's organization (see p. [?]) witness protection, he'd likely reject it out of hand. He'd believe that the occult powers controlled by his boss would be able to find him despite any amount of government protection.

Whether an offer is accepted or not could simply be a roleplaying decision. If you want to keep up with the dice rolling, immediately return any negative accumulated Success Level total to zero if the offer is a tempting one, and assign a bonus to further rolls (your choice).

You Have The Right To Be Exampled: Let's look at what happens to Spivey in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity if Kate had an extra card to play. She likely tries him for a while to see if he'll break



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anyway, but eventually she'll have to make her offer: the reduction of a charge of trafficking down to possession, in exchange for Tony's location. You decide that Spivey wants to avoid a long jail sentence and is tempted. He asks if the police can credibly provide a cover that purports to give them the information another way, and Kate agrees. He's still not entirely sure he trusts them, but you think the offer is worth a +4 to Kate's rolls. The accumulated Success Level total is reset to zero, and she tries again.

TORTURE

Faith: Come on, Wesley! Where is that stiff upper lip? Now, we've only done one of the five basic torture groups. We've done blunt, but that still leaves sharp, cold, hot and loud. Have a preference?

—1.18 Five by Five

Pain is a powerful motivator. The deliberate use of it to control or just torment somebody else is an act of cruelty or desperation, or just the complete abandonment of concern for others. Torture is one of the things that really hammers home the darkness in a dark storyline. In 1.3 In the Dark, Spike hired Marcus, “an expert, some say artist . . . a bloody king of torture,” to get the location of the Gem of Amara out of Angel. In 1.18 Five by Five, Faith shows she's picked up a few pointers from the professionals herself, torturing

Wesley to get Angel “in the game”—so he would kill her. In 3.12 Provider, Holtz nails Justine's hand to a tabletop to give her a lesson in discipline.

In truth, these examples show that torture doesn't work too well—at least for purposes other than causing pain. Angel is too disciplined to cave to Marcus. Faith wholly fails to convince Angel—or herself—that she is irredeemable (though Wesley is more than willing to believe it). Torturing someone to find out what he knows more likely reveals what he thinks the torturer wants to know. As Wesley himself knows (see 1.16 The Ring and 4.14 Release), that might just be enough.

Pain can also be a focus, a way of purging fears and weaknesses—the whole nailing the hand to the table thing. Holtz undoubtedly thought he was doing Justine a favor. Some people do it to others, some do it to themselves. It's a crazy world out there, and not usually in a fun, madcap way.

As usual, the rules shouldn't get in the way of drama, and nor should the dice be used needlessly. For example, Marcus torturing Angel would require rolls, since it's a classic Resisted Action with two characters in conflict over a definite goal (the location of the Gem). Faith torturing Wesley probably doesn't need any rolls—the point is not how well she tortures Wesley, the point is that she is doing it at all. Between Holtz and Justine, the actual drama is whether Justine can resist the urge to remove the pain (and the screwdriver). Thus it is a normal action (Willpower roll), not a resisted one.



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A Word of Warning

Okay, we're not going to tell you that Cast Members should never torture anyone in your game, because we know the characters on screen have done it on occasion (on rare occasion). Nor are we going to tell you to always fade to black, when we've seen Marcus lovingly plant hot pokers through Angel's naked torso. But the torture of one person by another is not a trivial thing, and we ask that you and your players not to treat it so. Understand that other members of your gaming group may have different tolerances for depictions of cruelty, and respect those limits. If one of your characters ends up in a situation like Wesley's, ask the player if he objects to such a potentially character-changing situation being wholly out of his control. If he does mind, change the results—the character is rescued in time, or the bad guy is distracted by something. Drama Points (both spending and receiving) are great for these situations, but you should cut him some slack regardless.

Remember that the scariest scene in 1.18 Five by Five is probably after the event as Faith, tired and waiting for restitution, almost casually drops the bloodstained shard to the street below. Even if you don't depict such things graphically, the use of torture should not just be a throwaway plot point. It should have consequences (not necessarily just the game effects listed), and be a chance to look at the Cast and their motivations a little bit deeper than normal.

CAUSING PAIN

If a character has somebody properly bound or grappled, and is relatively free to act (he isn't being attacked, for example), he can try to inflict pain on his victim. That calls for a Perception and Wild Card (Torture) roll. The victim resists with Willpower (doubled), or his Brains Score. This assumes that a suitably sharp or otherwise painful object is available. If not, the tormentor receives extra penalties to his roll, at your discretion.

Each level of the Resistance to Pain Quality possessed by the victim grants him a +1 bonus to his roll. If he has Nerves of Steel Quality, +2 is added (the Quality is really about being immune to fear, but that's half the battle). If a person is being tortured while in a grapple, he gets +3 to break the hold.

Like interrogation, torture may call for multiple resisted rolls. Each time a roll is made, add the number of Success Levels of the torturer, and subtract the Success Levels of the subject.

One extra Success Level by the torturer over the victim causes the victim to give up information he has no particular interest in (perhaps he was only holding out for a short time to convince his boss that he wasn't in league with the enemy, or maybe he wasn't taking the questioning seriously). If the torturer gains extra Success Levels equal to the victim's Willpower (possibly in multiple rolls), the victim betrays colleagues, but still keeps to his dearest-held ideals. The problem (for victim and tormentor) is that the pain starts to blur what is true or false (the rational mind is becoming submerged beneath the animal-brain struggling to escape). Three times the victim's



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Willpower in extra Success Levels means he gives up anything or anyone to be released.

Often physical pain isn't actually necessary. Sometimes the threat of pain is enough (see Angel with Linwood in 3.17 Forgiving), and sometimes other approaches are more profitable. Whether it's threatening family members or the old rat in the cage trick (a little reference for those who know Big Brother isn't just a TV show), psychological pressure can be the cruelest cut. This usually requires more preparation, or at least good research. When ready, the tormentor rolls Perception and Wild Card (Torture) (or Perception and Influence -3, or uses the Brains Score -3). If the methodology coincides with a particular Obsession, Obligation, Mental Problem, or other character trait that makes the victim more susceptible to the pressure, the resisting roll is Willpower (not doubled).

Ve Haf Vays: Say Wesley has Wild Card (Torture) 2 (at least for gritty street games), and is "questioning" a thug with a Willpower 2 and Brains 9. Wesley's player rolls Perception and Wild Card (Torture) for a total of 12. That's two Success Levels, but the thug's Brain Score 9 means he subtracts one Success Level, leaving a total of one. Wesley has done enough damage to cause the thug to give up trivial information, and only needs another Success Level to get information that will betray his current colleagues.

TAKING IT

For a torture victim, the true moment of crisis occurs when his is finally safe. That is when he discovers if he can regain his strength and get on with his life. At that time, make a Willpower roll. It is usually doubled, but if the character gave up something integral to himself, use Willpower (not doubled). If the roll fails, the victim receives at least three points of Drawbacks. These might include Emotional Problems, Mental Problems, Recurring Nightmares, or an Addiction. He also needs to make a Willpower (doubled) roll to take any direct action against the person who tortured him (count this as an addition 1-point Drawback that might be worked off over time). If the Willpower roll succeeds, but only with one or two successes, the character receives a single-point Drawback. Either way, he also earns Drama Points—at least one, but more if it was played well.

The torturer doesn't get off scot-free either—not in the Angelverse or any other sane reality. Any Mental Problems (Cruelty) Drawback increases by one level (if he didn't have it before, he does now). If there was no pressing need for the torture, he automatically gains Mental Problems (Deranged Cruelty). He also make a Willpower roll and, if failed, takes three points of

Drawbacks. This does not apply to evil demons, vampires, or humans who have gone over the edge (which means they're no longer sane enough to be playable). The torturer doesn't get automatic Drama Points for his actions, but a player might earn one by impressing the group with his roleplaying through the procedure.

Once three points of Drawbacks have been received for either applying or receiving pain, no more are likely to be gained in further torture sessions (that character is pretty far gone by then), without a significant reason (at your discretion).

HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION

Connor: You might not want to move. Everyone's rigged. Can't save 'em all, dad. Don't know who's gonna be first. Could be any one of 'em. Could be me. (points to Cordelia) Could be her.

—4.22 Home

Hostage negotiation requires roleplaying and/or resisted Willpower and Influence rolls (or the Brains Score) as appropriate. These situations are ideal for adding great dramatic tension to your game. You can set up a situation where the characters don't want to, don't have to, or just plain can't shoot the bad guy.

Their only recourse is to talk him down. A similar approach could be followed when dissuading potential suicides, or herding confused civilians out of the path of danger (serious time pressure there).

Depending on the circumstances and how long you want to keep the scene going, you could call for a single roll by a Cast Member, a single set of resisted rolls by the Cast Member and opponent, or a series of resisted rolls. If you use the latter, each time a roll is made, add the number of Success Levels of the negotiator, and subtract the Success Levels of the target. As long as the accumulated Success Levels are positive the target keeps talking (he may do so even if the Success Levels dip into the negatives, depending on his agenda and how crazed he is). If the negotiator gains extra Success Levels equal to the target's Willpower, the target makes a deal short of giving himself up (perhaps he frees a hostage, or moves a bit from the roof edge). Double the target's Willpower in extra Success Levels means he caves—crisis averted. As usual, you can modify these benchmarks for good roleplaying, if the target has no real desire to carry out the threatened act, or other circumstances.





GAMBLING

Dealer: Blackjack. Congratulations.
Fred: I'm feeling really bad about this.
Gunn: Oh, don't feel guilty, babe. If I had your head for numbers, I'd be counting cards too.
 —4.3 The House Always Wins

Whether a poker game in a seedy brothel, bookies offering long odds on barbaric ordeals, or the most elegant of con men hitting Las Vegas, gambling is a big part of life for those who can afford it (and many who can't) on both sides of the law.

Most the time gambling happens off screen, or as a background detail that doesn't need lots of rules. As usual, you should only resort to the dice for actions where the results of a win or a loss are important to the plotline. If the players are curious to see who won their all-night game of hearts while staking out a suspect's house (though staking and hearts might be a bad combination for some of them), they can each make a single Intelligence or Perception and Wild Card (Gaming) roll, just to see. If a character is trying to convince a contact he's worth talking to, beating him at a game of cards might just do the trick (if not, the character could force the contact's hand and up the ante to see if he folds under pressure—if that's his strong suit. Okay, we'll stop now).

Like most of the material in this book, this section provides a very abstract system for adjudicating gambling sessions. It plays fast and loose with probabilities and the House margin. If you want to pull

out a real (or virtual) roulette wheel and have a go, that could add a nice diversion to your play session—but it does make it harder to take Qualities and Drama Points into account. Most games in reality are about the amount of dollars won or lost. That isn't always the case, especially in fiction (in *Buffy* the currency of preference between demons seems to be kittens). While a rough guide to odds is given here, if you want to gamble for non-cash treasures, the stakes could be anything—the ownership of a hotel, or a soul.

GAMES OF CHANCE

Many popular games on the street are just a matter of pure luck, like roulette or craps, or mostly luck, like blackjack. In part their popularity comes from a superstitious belief in the fates (and in the Angelverse, that's probably not just superstition).

When a Cast Member just wants to see how well he does against the house (say he spends one hour in a casino), roll D10 and add two to the result. If a natural 10 (10 shows up on the die roll, modifiers are not counted) is rolled, roll again and add that result to the total (keep rolling as long as natural 10s keep resulting). The player can use points of Good Luck to increase his total, and of course you can use those Bad Luck points as well. Drama Points cannot be spent on this roll. If he receives one Success Level, he wins back his stake and that much again. If he receives two Success Levels he doubles his winnings. If he gets three, he triples them, and so forth (if he fails, he gets zilch and loses his original bet).



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If a character wants to make a bet on a single event, the same roll is made but this time one or more Drama Points can be spent (as long as it's a dramatic moment—it doesn't work if the character just wanders into a casino every evening to pay off the mortgage). Can't spend them like water though—the character makes a Perception and Wild Card (Gaming) roll. The Success Levels in that result limit the number of Drama Points that may be spent.

A certain number of Success Levels are needed in the chance roll (D10 plus two; rolling again on 10s) depending on the odds. If that number is not achieved, the character loses his stake. Otherwise, he hits the jackpot (perhaps literally). The Gambling Table shows how much money can be won based on the original bet (which is also paid out).

House Limits

Most casinos impose minimum and maximum bets, sometimes on a game-by-game basis. If they have a character listed as a potential card counter or other undesirable (could be that he just wins too much), he probably won't even get in the door. The casinos we've seen in *Angel* have both been demon-controlled and so are less concerned with the rules (see p. [?]), but even they have to have the appearance of fairness, or no one will show up.



GAMBLING TABLE

SUCCESS LEVELS NEEDED	WINNINGS	SAMPLE ROULETTE BET	OTHER EXAMPLE
1	x1	Red	Blackjack, toss a coin, cut of the deck
2	x5	Six Number bet	Roll of a six-sided die, a tie in baccarat
3	x11	Row (3 numbers)	Full house in Let it Ride, three in a row in Red Dog.
4	x17	Split (2 numbers)	11 in craps.
5	x25	—	Any Triple in Sic Bo.
6	x35	Single number	Snake eyes in craps.
7	x50	—	5 from 6 Keno bet.
8	x100	—	Royal flush in Caribbean Stud Poker.
9	x200	—	Straight flush in Let it Ride.
10	x400	—	Five aces in Pai Gow Poker.
11	x700	—	Pick ten from ten winners in the NFL.
12	x1000	—	Royal flush in Let it Ride.
13	x1500	—	6 from 6 Keno bet.





CHANCE GAMES

A partial list of games of chance that might come up in play is provided (although blackjack and roulette are easily the most popular). Each has a number that represents the Success Levels needed (and hence how much is won, according to the Gambling Table). If a range is given, the character must decide how much he is aiming for. For example, he can decide to play keno to win any amount from x1 (one Success Level) to x1500 (13 Success Levels). This is not how the games work in reality, but it's a good simulation of their use in dramatic fiction.

GAMES OF SKILL

This one is a bit more obvious—just use the normal rules for Resisted Actions, using the appropriate skill. That means Sport for physical contests, and Wild Card (Gaming) for most others.

If betting on somebody else's skill—the results of a demon gladiator match, for example—it's treated as a Game of Chance. A character can make a more informed decision by studying the form of the contestants first. Roll Perception and Sports or Wild Card (Gaming). Add the resulting Success Levels to the roll for determining the result.

CHEATING

There's always someone out there trying to get an unfair advantage. Please note that we're not condoning this sort of behavior unless something like the fate of the world is at stake . . . or the cheater is one of the good guys and no one really gets hurt (ah, the slippery slope). In most cases, cheating is treated as a Resisted Action: an appropriate Attribute and Sports or Wild Card (Gaming) roll versus the opponent's Perception and Notice roll (or Brains Score). If successful, the number of Success Levels gained (not the difference between the Resisted Actions results) adds to the normal roll result for that particular contest (or subtracts if the house is cheating in the case of an unopposed roll).

CHANCE GAME TABLE

Game	Success Levels Needed	Notes
Baccarat	1-2	Receive cards to get close to nine. Bet on the player, banker, or a tie.
Blackjack	1	Receive cards to reach 21, but no higher.
Craps	1-6	Lots of different bets on the roll of two dice. Sic Bo is another dice rolling game.
Keno	1-13	Guessing numbers drawn from a barrel.
Slot machine	1-13	One armed bandits, with hundreds of variations, including video poker.
Poker games	1-12	Try to make a poker hand from dealt cards. Variations include Let it Ride, Caribbean Stud and Pai Gow Poker.
Red Dog	1-3	Deal two cards, bet that a third will be between them in value.
Roulette	1-6	Spin the wheel, take a chance. . .

Card Counting: In certain games (especially blackjack), a character can increase the odds in his favor by noting which cards have already been played. If you're talking a one-deck poker game in Joe's basement, anyone can try it. If precautions are taken (e.g., casinos shuffle many decks into a single hopper), the counter must have either Eidetic Memory or



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Intelligence 5+. When counting, roll Intelligence and Wild Card (Gaming), or Intelligence and Science - 3 (for those mathematical whizzes). Note that counting cards is not actually illegal, and only gives an extra 1-2% advantage (but most casinos will throw out anyone they catch). Our rules, as usual, are a little more cinematic.

Dealing: If dealing, a character can roll Dexterity and Wild Card (Gaming) to influence the distribution of cards (such as dealing an ace from the bottom of the deck). A non-dealer can do the same, by say pulling a card from up his sleeve or other hidden location, but he gets a -2 on that roll.

Illegal Equipment: Marked cards, loaded dice, a magnet under the roulette wheel . . . there are lots of ways of rigging the game with the right equipment. Illegal equipment must be brought in to play. That requires the gambler (or an accomplice) to make a Resisted Action against the Perception and Notice (or Brains) of the opponent. The proper roll depends on the equipment—marked cards or loaded dice might require Dexterity (doubled) or Dexterity and Crime roll; magnets would call for Dexterity and Mr. Fix-It. You can apply modifiers to these rolls depending on how subtle the cheat is or how suspicious the opponent is. You might deem it impossible to detect certain tricks without special senses such as The Sight (demon casinos probably supplement their electronic security with supernatural measures given the nature of their clientele). If the gambling rolls are spread out over time (say an all night session of poker), you can require that the cheater roll several times to avoid getting caught (and if the device renders the winning too one-sided, you should grant bonuses to the cheatee). If the cheater is successful, a bonus is granted to the gambler's subsequent chance or skill roll depending on the device (usually between +1 to +5).

For equipment that is difficult to use (for example, it is tricky to read properly marked cards with a casual glance), another roll must be made to get the bonus (in this case Perception and Notice to read the cards correctly).

High Stakes Example: Let's look at Angel playing for his and Gunn's soul in 3.18 Double or Nothing. It was all based on the turn of a card, so the usual rule is that Angel's player would roll D10 and add two, and win on a roll of nine or above. He could spend Good Luck or Drama Points (as long as he rolls Perception and Notice -3 with some Success Levels) on the roll. However, shocking as it seems, let's assume that everything wasn't fair. It's pretty hard to cheat such a simple deal, but if the dealer tried and had a Wild Card (Gaming)-oriented Brains 15 (four Success Levels), Angel would suffer a -4 penalty to his chance roll. If Angel got a 15 or above

on a Perception and Notice, he would spot the trick (you might give him a bonus because of the difficulty of cheating in that case, and because of the number of on-lookers looking out for trickery).

Alternatively, the dealer might be using a crooked set of cards. You might decide the cards give the house a bonus of +15 (which would be -15 on Angel's chance roll). There's no question of getting the cards into play (the house supplies them), but Angel might notice something funny about the deck. You decide that Angel needs at least five Success Levels to notice them because they are so subtle (most equipment wouldn't provide bonuses that big, but when the stake is a vampire's soul, Jenoff would bring out his best set).

Angel first rolls his Notice (or you roll it for him) and fails. Not surprising. Then he rolls D10 plus two minus 15 and needs a nine or above. Time for Drama Points, though even two wouldn't guarantee success—and don't forget the bad guys can spend them too (say Jenoff spends one Drama Point, meaning Angel now suffers a total penalty of 25). In the end, Angel didn't actually care about the result of the game—he was just using it to distract Jenoff. He keeps all his Drama Points, draws the card, and goes for the axe.

Psychic Visions: Being able to tell the future is a big help for those with money on the line. Trouble is that it never seems to work that way in practice. Most of the Qualities that help predict the future won't help in games of chance—they either allow reading of auras (which doesn't help read the turn of a card), work too sporadically, or are focused on little things like people in danger. Supernatural Sense (Empathy or Insight) provides a +3 bonus to the roll when playing games that include reading your opponent (like poker). Then again, if a player is of a demon race known for possessing these Qualities, finding an opponent will be difficult.





DISGUISE

Angel: Hi. This is exciting, isn't it? I just love boat trips.

Little Tony (to henchman): Who's the mook?

Angel: Herb Saunders, Baltimore.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

There are two main aspects to disguise—one is looking the part, the other is acting the part. If a character is just trying to blend into a crowd or throw off pursuers, a quick change of costume is a good way to go. That normally doesn't require any rolls, but it does help if the character has a costume to change into. Many P.I.s carry a variety of hats, sweaters, and maybe wigs for just this purpose. Angel makes do with an improbable selection of floral shirts in his car. If it comes down to rolling dice (such as when trying to lose a tail, see p. [?]), a new costume provides a bonus, based on how appropriate the change is.

If a character is trying to disguise himself as a member of a particular occupation or location (such as sneaking into a lawyer's office as someone with a reason to be there), the player rolls Intelligence and Crime (or uses the Brains Score) to pull it off. You can substitute a more relevant skill, such as Knowledge or Science for pretending to be a scientist, if it helps. That is resisted by an observer's Perception and Notice roll (or the Brains Score). Once again, good costuming might

provide a bonus. On the other hand, if the sneaker is known by the people being snuck past, a penalty is applied.

If a character is trying to pass himself off as a specific person, it gets a whole lot trickier. In general, two rolls are needed. The first allows him to look the part, which normally requires better preparation, including specific items of clothing and a make-up kit. Use Perception and Influence or the Brains Score. The second roll is to act the part by convincing people through mannerisms or speech. Naturally, the better the opposition knew the original, the harder it gets—being the wrong gender or species doesn't help either. This time, the disguiser uses Intelligence and Influence, Intelligence and Art (Acting), or the Brains Score.

For any of these rolls, the more Success Levels achieved, the better. One Success Level means the other side is suspicious and may investigate further, perhaps asking for extra ID. With two Success Levels, they have niggling suspicions, but aren't sure why. With three or more, the deception works fine. That doesn't mean the character can automatically go anywhere he wants (it won't stop guards asking for ID if that's what they normally do, for instance—that might require a bit more fast-talking).





FORGERY

Angel: Well, because the Harlan Elster I'm looking for gave me this.
Elster (taking signed check): Really. Well, he gave me this (pointing to bruise). At least mine's real.

—3.12 Provider

Like computer hacking, forgery is an illegal activity that doesn't use the Crime skill to resolve. In this case, Intelligence and Art is rolled, or the Brains Score used. As usual, the harder the thing to be forged, the bigger a penalty there is to the roll. Producing a plain paper document that looks official (say a letter on a certain law firm's letterhead) suffers no penalty. A manuscript with extra protection against forgery (such as a prescription for narcotic drugs), or a driver's license incurs a -3 penalty. A passport brings in a -5, while money has a whopping -10. These rolls assume the forger has the appropriate material and time—mostly likely he is actually turning one document into a similar one, such as modifying the amount or name on a check, or filling in details on a blank passport so it looks used.

The Success Levels on the roll determine how good the forgery is. Anyone looking at it with interest (who knows what it should look like) spots the deception if they get more Success Levels on a Perception and Notice roll (or using the Brains Score) than were garnered on the original forgery roll. If the successes are equal, the viewer is slightly puzzled but isn't sure why. People who are suspicious (that might not be because of the document, but the circumstances in which they find it) take a closer look, and get another roll with a bonus depending upon the situation and their knowledge—up to +7 for careful examination by eye, or +15 if by microscope or similar instrument. They could also run a background check, such as matching the number versus the name on a computer, which is trickier to get around.

The same Intelligence and Art roll is made for mass-producing forged items, such as hundred dollar bills or perfume that can pass for the expensive stuff. The roll is made once by the person overseeing the operation (it has to be rerolled if conditions change, such as new ingredients or an emergency move of location), but a -5 penalty is applied because he can't take the same care with each item.

SAFECRACKING

Gunn: Spine-man, chill. All right? This is nitro. The last thing I want is my body parts mixed up with yours.

Vyasa: We should have been in the vault by now.

Menlo: Shut up! (drops explosive) No—

—2.8 The Shroud of Rahmon

Safecracking is a multi-faceted art—there're a lot of different types of safes, not to mention vaults and related security devices. The most important part of the job is research. To have any success, the cracker has got to know if the model being busted into is susceptible to punching out the dial, or if such tactics instead cause it to deadlock. Maybe the front must be peeled off to expose the mechanism, maybe the back is better—assuming the back can be reached (even a small hole may enable the cracker to see the tumblers fall). Characters can try the old listening-to-the-tumblers trick, but they'd need supernatural senses to use that on modern safes, even with a contact mike and amplifier (still, all that's possible in this RPG!)

Other approaches are burning in with an oxy-torch or a thermal lance (a super-heated drill bit), drilling through to cut the bolt, or just going straight for the nitro. If the character chooses the wrong method, it's going to be a long, frustrating day. Of course, even if he has all the dope on the correct model, some sort of alteration might have been made—an easily breakable vial of poison gas added to some part of the mechanism, for example. Feel free to get inventive and nasty with security for underworld types.



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Among all the possible methods (see Safecracking Methods Table), each safe should have at least one optimum approach, perhaps a few non-optimum one, and probably some that are a complete waste of time. All this is your call, based on the cost of the safe and its installation among other things. Non-optimum methods take twice the listed time, and deduct one Success Level from any rolls made.

If the cracker is able to discover the model of the safe beforehand, he can research the optimum method with an Intelligence and Wild Card (Safecracking) roll. If he only finds out when confronted with the box itself, he

needs at least three Success Levels to remember the best way to proceed.

To find how quickly a method of entry takes, and what Attribute must be rolled with Wild Card (Safecracking), consult Safecracking Methods Table. For most methods, when there's no time pressure, the character can roll multiple times—each attempt takes the time indicated. Once the right number of Success Levels is reached the box is busted. If any roll is a failure, the table shows the result. As always, adjust values as you see fit depending on the circumstances of your plotline.

SAFECRACKING METHODS TABLE

METHOD	ATTRIBUTE	TIME PER ROLL	SUCCESS LEVELS	RESULT OF FAILURE
Drilling	Strength	1 hour	4	Success Level total reduced to 0, after two failures, must try another method.
Explosive	Intelligence - 2	30 minutes	3	Only one roll allowed (see below).
Listening	Perception	5 minutes	6	Success Level total reduced to 0.
Oxy-torch	Constitution	30 minutes	4	May kill the contents.
Peeling	Strength	1 hour	3	Must try another method.
Punching	Strength	2 minutes	3	Deadlock, must cut, drill or peel.
Thermic Lance	Dexterity - 2	3 minutes	5	Contents killed.



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Setting Explosives: To use explosives correctly, a character first drills a hole (that's why it takes so long), then insert the explosive without going bomb. That requires at least three Success Levels on the roll. If he gets only one Success Level, the door doesn't open, but later attempts to cut, drill, or peel take one-half the usual time. Two Success Levels is similar but further attempts take one-tenth the time. If the roll fails, roll again—a second failure means the explosive went off during set up. The good news is the contents of the safe are fine. The bad news is that 40 points of Fire damage are done to everyone within ten feet (that could be more depending on how vindictive you are feeling). If one of the characters has superfast reflexes, you might allow him to save the day with a good roll (or a Drama Point), as Angel does in 2.8 The Shroud of Rahmon. If the second roll succeeds, the explosion goes off at the right time, but the amount of destructive power needed was over-estimated, meaning the cracker just killed the contents along with the door.

Killing the Contents: If things go wrong with explosive, thermic lance or oxy-torch method, the cracker may end up destroying the contents of the safe, reducing the whole exercise to farce. We've already discussed explosives. For an oxy-torch, make a Dexterity and Wild Card (Safecracking) roll. If that roll fails, the contents are scragged; otherwise keep cutting. For thermic lances, there is no second roll—the stuff is toast. If the contents have further protection (such as being inside a steel briefcase within the safe), this result might not be so bad.

Vaults: Vault doors are handled the same as safes, but generally peeling doesn't work, and the time needed is longer. You get to decide, as usual, but a good rule of thumb is to simply double the time. On the plus side, the cracker is less likely to kill the contents on a bad roll, since there's usually a lot more space between the door and what it's guarding.

Ready for a Tumble?: Patrick's character is attempting to get inside a safe (charitably, we'll assume plans to stop the apocalypse are inside). He has done his research, and knows that peeling is the optimum solution, and that neither listening nor punching will do him any good at all. Also, he doesn't want to take any risk of killing the contents (or himself, for that matter). The character drills a hole in one corner and starts peeling the front off with a crowbar. After consulting the table, Patrick rolls Strength and Wild Card (Safecracking), getting two Success Levels. It's taken an hour so far, but is looking good. The next roll comes up a failure though, and that's it for the peeling (you tell him he sees a container of gas attached the door, and he figures it's not nitrous oxide—a less dramatic alternative would be that the front was tougher than

it first appeared). Next he tries drilling, taking it from the back to avoid the trap and get a proper look at the tumblers. He rolls Strength and Wild Card (Safecracking) again, this time spending a Drama Point. He gets six Success Levels, minus one for being the non-optimum method—that's over the required four Success Levels. He's in! It took four hours (one for each of the first two rolls, two for the third), but it was either that or watch the Oscars telecast, so he figures he's ahead.

Of course, if a character can grab the combination with mind reading, a good psychometry roll, coercion, or trickery, all this messy cracking can be avoided.





PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS

Gunn: Five herb shops in Chinatown and we've been to four. How come whatever we're searching for is always in the last place we look?

Wesley: I supposed it is one of the unwritten laws of being a dick. (off Gunn's look) Ah, a sleuth, a gumshoe, Sherlock.

Gunn: All I know is you use the word "dick" again and we're gonna have a problem.

—3.2 That Vision Thing

It all started when she walked into my office . . .

This chapter looks at how real-life Private Investigators operate in Los Angeles. It's not quite as sexy an occupation as it is in the movies, but a lot of important work gets done, and some of it is stranger than fiction (well, fiction without demon karaoke bars, anyway). Again, we focus on L.A. and California, but you Directors can apply much of this stuff in other venues. You may want to adjust things with changes in geography (particularly if you are going offshore) or you can just "make it so" in other area to avoid research headaches.

Now don't get all Merl on us here. While some people may get a kick out of large slabs of legal terminology, ordinance listings, and statistics, that's not really what this chapter is all about. You're running a game—this info is designed to help that work out for you.

The best way to use this chapter depends upon how important P.I.s are to your game. If your Cast is similar to *Angel Investigations*, but you want to stick a little bit closer to procedure, pretty much all of it is likely to come into play. Even if only one or two of your Cast are P.I.s, there's lots of background info and story inspiration to be found in here. If you're blowing through a more combat-heavy, alternative-dimension, or even cosmic-level game (or not even playing the *Angel* roleplaying game at all), we hope you enjoy all the quotes and pretty pictures."

CHAPTER 4

ANGEL™



THE PEOPLE

Wesley: Oh, he's an eccentric, all the great ones are. Sherlock Holmes, Philip Marlowe . . .

Harold Jeakins: Those are fictional characters.

Wesley: Yes, right you are, which gives *Angel* quite the leg up when you come to think of it.

—2.5 Dear Boy

A whole lot of a different people become private investigators, for a whole lot of different reasons. Some are drawn to the mystique of the sole operative, beholden to nobody. Some are in it to help people, some for the voyeuristic rush, some think it will “attract babes.” Wealth is not usually a realistic goal, though it has been known to happen (and no one says P.I.-wannabes have to be realistic). Maybe the sap has just seen too many James Bond movies, and the CIA wouldn't have him. Many have a background in security or law-enforcement work. If a cop or soldier becomes sick of the bureaucracy, the chain of command, and limits on jurisdiction, he may quit for what he sees as a freer existence. Sometime, the decision to leave is not voluntary (if one of your players wants to use Kate in your game post-Season Two, making her a P.I. is a good solution—she may not be too happy about it, but it's probably better than the alternatives). Some discover almost accidentally they have a talent for the work, perhaps when they become involved as a client in a particular case. Others may go looking for a P.I. to solve their problem, discover no

one with the right expertise, so take on the task themselves (like nature, the free market abhors a vacuum). Those familiar with some of the sub-cultures of Los Angeles, with knowledge of new security technology, and a willingness to search for missing pets—or have good contacts among demonic artifact importation services—may find themselves fulfilling a need that isn't otherwise being met. Although most *Angel RPG* games concentrate on the stranger side of things, Cast private eyes may well have started in “the industry” before discovering how strange things can get in the City of Angels. If so, it's a good idea to determine their original motivations and how they may have changed with more recent discoveries.

There are no “minimal entry requirements” to work in the field, though as the next section explains, getting an actual license isn't easy. People come from all walks of life, from high school dropouts to university professors who have got bored with academia, from the genuinely streetwise to those who want to burst out of their sheltered existence. Still, the relative ease in joining the field does nothing to increase success once in the profession.

Persistence in such a difficult career normally requires an obsession for discovering how things work and who did what to whom. Alternatively, a pressing desire to help those who need it can keep a P.I. “in the game.” Both are admirable qualities, but neither guarantees the character is going to be good at his job. Perhaps the most important virtues are patience,





organization, and both an eye and memory for detail. As a practical matter, an ability to remain emotionally centered in the face of traumatic events is vital. That doesn't mean the hardcase has to come across as a robot (quite the opposite, usually)—but if he gets flustered when faced by betrayal, grievous injury, and casual cruelty, P.I. is probably not the best profession. It is better to be galvanized by such things instead. A good investigator is usually a stabilizing influence on his clients, and often must act as a makeshift counselor in the face of stressful and dangerous decisions.

Good people skills are invaluable for other reasons. Without the authority of a policeman's badge, P.I.s usually have to rely on their charm and quick wits to elicit information, or work at the margins of an official investigation. While a familiarity with high-tech gadgetry and data-mining can go a long way these days (it's okay if one or two members of an agency are better at talking to their gadgetry than sentient beings), at least one person has to be able to convince folks to do things his way (or at least not bodily toss him out of the area). A flexible approach to techniques and work practices is usually essential—clock-watchers don't last long. A similarly flexible, or at least pragmatic, approach to morality is often called upon as well.

All this means that lots of options exist when creating P.I. characters. Perception, Willpower, Influence, Crime, Knowledge, Notice, a few Contacts, and perhaps even Situational Awareness or Photographic Memory are all good things for a P.I. Some Getting Medieval or Gun Fu is not likely to go unused either. These traits don't necessarily explain why he's chosen this line of work, or what separates him from the pack though, so you should encourage the player to take another skill or Quality to give him a specialty. Finally, don't neglect other areas to concentrate on those listed—rounded character are more fun to play and more useful if . . . when things go awry.



CASES

Gunn: These all the cases y'all got going? Isn't this the well oiled machine?

Cordelia: We set them up, we knock them down. Or we did, until Angel knocked down the wrong . . . I'm sure he is getting on top of it now.

—2.1 Judgement

Who a person is, is only one half the equation. What he does is the other. For a P.I., that generally depends on who walks into his office and asks for help—a somewhat arbitrary way of fighting the good fight. As mentioned in **Chapter One: Helping the Helpless**, most of the people we actually saw walk through the door of Angel Investigations were there to screw over the team one way or another. Apart from that charming possibility, variety is the spice of life for a profession in steady demand.

Spouses Cheating: High on the list is marital infidelity. This is less popular than it used to be—before the “no-fault” divorce laws of 1960s, legally breaking up required documented evidence of an adulterous affair. This led to lots of investigators crashing through hotel rooms with camera flashing. Still, plenty of suspicious partners want to know why their spouse isn't at home as much anymore. This is all pretty mundane, and not the stuff of great drama. As Angel says to the straying wife in 2.5 Dear Boy: “I don't like doing this. It's crass. Your husband knows. Go home. Tell him the truth. Work it out or leave. I don't care.”

Even so, you need not be so dismissive of such cases (besides, Angel was pretty cranky in that episode). It's surprising what a character can find out about a person he's been hired to follow, from petty deceptions to world-spanning conspiracies. Only one thing is likely—things are not what they seem. Being hired to follow an alleged adulterer, just to find out he is an actual adulterer, is not much fun and not very Angel (other than as a minor side-plot). Finding out he is having to earn extra money to pay off his daughter's gambling debts, before the heavies move in and claim fingers as a down payment, is more like it—especially if the debts arc back to the original client in one of those twisted noir plots. Oh, and the heavies sport twelve-inch tusks.

Snooping: Other cases similarly involve someone wanting information about someone else. Perhaps a member of a company is suspected of embezzlement, drug-use, or just “rabble-rousing” (the profession has a long history of being used by employers against union activity). When a firm is seeking applicants to fill a sensitive position, an investigator might be hired to do





background checks (sometimes the investigator is asked to do the interviewing as well, in the hope he can ask suitably penetrating questions).

Missing Persons: Missing person cases are classic and a little more dramatic from the get-go. The police are usually unwilling to act, since there is likely to be no proof of crime, and their resources are stretched already. There are plenty of variations on this theme. Investigators are often called upon to hunt down relatives that haven't been seen in years (if at all), trace letters or emails back to their original source, or find an unknown person who otherwise fits some criteria. A surprising number of requests are made to track down childhood crushes and first loves (perhaps as a sequel to an investigation into adultery).

Missing Objects: Searching for stolen or otherwise missing goods is also a big business, and requests to find pets quite common (many such cases turn out better than that of Phillip Spivey and his dog in 3.19 The Price). Tracking down information, whether with standard Freedom of Information requests or something a little more esoteric, is popular (of course, most cases involve searching for the facts, but these have no other goal). Certain types of information—say, spells, counter-curses, or the plans for a suitcase-shaped nuclear bomb—may bring their own difficulties.

Kidnapping: A very common and often tragic case is that of parental kidnapping. With divorce a lot easier than it used to be, custody over children has become the major battleground between many disaffected partners. Some just aren't willing to abide by a court's decision. Often a client approaches a P.I. with documents granting him custody, and requests the children be "re-kidnapped," since any court action is likely to take years (many parental kidnappers cross state and even national boundaries, complicating matters enormously). Even if the client does have full legal right to the children, the ethical dimension of these cases is often very difficult to navigate.

Crimes: A case that is likely to provide immediate drama is one that pertains to an actual crime under investigation by police—from petty theft to Murder One. This could develop in a number of ways and few are conducive to good relations with the boys in blue. If a police investigation has been bungled or deliberately sabotaged, the aggrieved party might hire an investigator to get to the truth of the matter (either to solve the original case, or to prove the police were negligent in their duty). If someone has been accused of a crime, they might hire an investigator to collect evidence for their defense, either privately or through a solicitor. Even if the case is only parallel to an official investigation, rather than at cross-purposes to it, the police aren't likely to be happy with "meddlers" getting in their way. The fact that both parties are, in theory, concerned with getting to the truth is pretty much irrelevant.

Sometimes people come to a P.I. about a crime that cannot be taken to the police, on the grounds they themselves might be embarrassed or incriminated. Blackmail is a classic case (as seen in 1.20 War Zone), when the extortioner hires a detective to take care of the matter in as discreet a fashion as possible. And when demons are involved, most crimes cannot be reported to the police (well, they can but not if the character is looking for a response other than guffawing).

Bodyguards: Many people turn to investigators for personal security. They might be the victims of a stalker or otherwise threatened by parties known or unknown. Since it's a waste of money to just use an investigator as a bodyguard, this usually involves finding evidence against the perpetrator, scaring him enough (with threats of legal action or, on occasion, bodily violence) so he backs off, acting as advisor in matters of self-defense and security, or just providing moral support. For people like Rebecca Lowell in 1.17 Eternity however, money isn't a problem and keeping the P.I. around simply as a bodyguard works fine. In the Angelverse, many clients are threatened by monsters that need to be forcibly dissuaded, so investigative protection often leads to dismemberment.

Others: Not everyone who comes to a P.I. is going to be in trouble. Other types of cases might just be routine business activities that the agency is in a good position to handle. Insurance firms, lawyers (including Wolfram & Hart), news services, even other detective agencies have all been known to outsource work. Many court cases use private investigators because of the adversarial process. Jury selection, the taking of witness statements, and process serving are all common examples. Most of these duties are too dry for a game session, though like everything else, they can have their moments of excitement (or lead to said moments).





Finally, many P.I.s are regularly called on to take “cases” with no rational pattern at all. They might be asked to protect a client from aliens, prove the CIA is tapping his phone, or simply listen to a litany of complaints about neighbors. How they handle such cases is up to them. One tactic is to refer the case off to someone who specializes in “that sort of thing”—meaning, your Cast.

POWERS AND RIGHTS

Kate: You're telling me you're an investigator?

Angel: More or less.

Kate: Where's your license?

Angel: That's the less part.

—1.2 Lonely Heart

Let's get technical! Pay attention, or we won't respect you in the morning.

As you might imagine, the rules about what a P.I. can and can't do get pretty complicated. That's mostly because any system of laws attempting to govern the possibilities of human behavior has to be complicated (can you imagine what the legal system would be like if all the demons in L.A. decided to go legit?). Most of the time you don't want to worry about that too much in the game. Keeping the feel of investigative work—along with excitement, pace, character, intrigue, and all the other ingredients of a good story—is more important than discussing legal boundaries. But often it's good to know where those boundaries are, at least roughly. If a character purports to care about the law (perhaps for the reasons discussed in **Chapter One: Helping the Helpless**, perhaps because of something else), you'll need to let his player know how to keep him on the good side of it. If he's an edgy anti-hero who dares to break the rules—well, you'll want to know when he does cross the line.

Another reason to know about P.I. laws is that they help differentiate various factions in the game. The partnership between Kate and Angel in Season One was so successful because each had different resources and was subject to different laws.

THE FINE PRINT

Doyle: You know the service our friend Angel provides might put some people in mind of the “V” word.

Cordelia: Vampire?

Doyle: No, vigilante. You know there are laws against this. You need to chat people up a little more casual like. You know, “Hi, what's your name? How's life treating you? What's that you say? Minions from hell getting you down?”

—1.2 Lonely Heart

Give or take a couple of crucial phrases, a Private Investigator in the state of California is defined as being a private person (not employed by the government) who investigates (that is, “engages in business or accepts employment to furnish, or agrees to make, or makes, any investigation for the purpose of obtaining, information with reference to”) the following matters:

- * Crime performed against the U.S., or any of its states (including private citizens).
- * Detailed information about any person, including their habits, integrity, affiliations, or acts.
- * The recovery of lost or stolen property.
- * The responsibility for fires, libels, losses, accidents, or damage to persons or property.
- * Securing evidence to be used before any court or similar legal body.

As Wesley points out, if a character is involved in this sort of activity (apart from obvious exceptions like searching for his own property), and don't have a license, he is labeled a vigilante. There is no specific law against this, but there are lots of little ones about particular situations, and the police come down heavily on “amateurs” in their line of work. They are treated as both a danger to themselves and others, and seen as being only one step away from a lynch mob (if they make the police look bad, they're in even worse trouble).

To become a licensed Private Investigator, a character must log 6,000 hours (about three years) of on-the-job experience, pass both a written and oral exam, and undergo a criminal history background check through the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation. He also must pay a fee to the government (who will no doubt use it for the betterment of mankind). The good news is that a character does not have to be licensed if he is an employee of an agency whose owner is licensed, which is how most folks get their 6,000 hours from in the first place (working for the police, military police, or as an arson investigator also counts). If licensed as a P.I. in a different state, a character can practice for 60 days in California if pursuing a case that started back home.

There are some exceptions to all this, which is useful to know if you're being devious. A character isn't subject to P.I. laws if he only collects data from public sources, for example. More interestingly, the rules do not apply to duly incorporated philanthropic societies (non-profit organizations for the public good)—a couple of loopholes that the East Hills Teen Shelter or similar organization could take advantage of (Anne will be thrilled).

Note that being a P.I. does not give a person the right to carry a gun, to enter private property, or to make jokes about dicks in a public place. Licensed investigators have a few advantages over a private



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citizen, but usually small things in odd places—for example, if they run a plate through the DMV (see p. [?]), the owner of the car isn't notified of the query. On the flip side, they are subject to a number of restrictions citizens can ignore. They are able to obtain a firearm permit, but need to undertake additional training due to the nature of the profession, including information on the responsibilities and ethics of citizen's arrest, and six hours of shooting at things. They need an additional license to carry tear gas.

Citizen's Arrest

A Private Investigator is not allowed to apprehend people the way the police can, but is allowed to make a citizen's arrest—as are most other adults. This allows a character to physically restrain someone who he witnesses committing a public offense, or if the sleuth knows (but did not see) the perp commit a felony (a crime punishable by at least one year in prison). If the P.I. attempts this action, and those conditions are found to be false, he could be charged with false imprisonment. A citizen's arrest does not give the investigator the right to use excessive force or search the subject, except for a cursory pat down to remove weapons that are a potential danger. In all cases, the P.I. must transfer his captive into police custody as soon as possible.

Clients

Cordelia: See his file? He has VISA, MasterCard, and a problem. He's our target audience.

—2.5 Dear Boy

At its heart, private investigation is a customer-orientated business. Usually, someone asks for help and is willing to pay for it. And thus a client is born. This process means at least one sympathetic party is available to help the P.I. get a handle on things. This is very different from the way the police operate—they are supposed to respond to every identified crime in their jurisdiction, and sometimes find that nobody wants the truth to come out.

One way or another, investigators thrive by keeping their clients happy. Like any good business, one motto is “the customer is always right.” In truth, P.I.s soon discover that “the customer is almost invariably wrong.”

We're not talking about clients trying to lure the detective into a demon gladiator arena or posing as a protectee for a taste of immortality. The everyday sort of person who fronts up to an agency and asks for help is unlikely to know or tell the whole story. Pretty much by definition, clients come to P.I.s when they are in some sort of trouble. Even if they're completely blameless, they are unlikely to have an unbiased view of their situation. They might not know what their real problem is, they might be blaming the wrong person, they might even be trying to cover a guilty conscience (but that doesn't mean they are guilty). They often don't understand the legality of the situation, their own rights or those of the people they think have wronged



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them, probably because they were never really paying attention. Even if the “bad guys” are most likely guilty, they still have the right to a fair trial, and that may involve investigative work.

All that makes for a mess of potential complications. Just the fact that a client is paying for help creates a possible conflict of interest between the customer’s wishes and the “right thing to do”—whether ethically or legally. A private detective is an instrument for allowing the client to take advantage of his rights within the law, but that’s sometimes not as obvious a path as it might be.

Different detectives handle these conflicts in different ways. Some refuse to take cases that are not clear-cut, while others pride themselves on taking every one that walks in the door. Some choose their battles based on a sense of justice that doesn’t always match the law books. Others don’t care about anything but getting their money at the end of the day.

These sorts of dilemmas can happen in any type of investigation, but let’s take missing persons as a good example. Detectives with experience in the poorer areas of Los Angeles are hired to track down runaway kids for concerned parents. There are laws about who has custody of whom, but most such cases are never decided by a court, and the investigator has little chance of discovering the real situation in the first interview. The child may have been lured away, disappeared on a whim, or escaped for good reason (and it’s always a good idea to make sure the parent is who he says he is). In that situation, most detectives promise to do a missing persons search, but specifically say that they

No Client? No Problem

P.I.s can get business through means other than a direct call for help. They might actively seek out a situation that needs solving, although such “ambulance-chasing” is held in contempt by many. They might have a handy hotline to a mysterious higher power (not necessarily named Charlie) that steers them in the right direction. Occasionally their contacts or friends can let them know if anything of interest is going on (Virginia and Kate did this once or twice for Angel Investigations). Some agencies develop relations with particular lawyers or other interested parties—for example, someone like Anne Steele could refer people in legal trouble to the Cast, or an investigator might get to know someone who specializes in the defense of cases brought against the poor and disadvantaged (one of the Cast might be such a person).

There’s enough going on in L.A. that a sleuth is unlikely to remain idle, even if none of the Cast has the Psychic Visions Quality. A search for redemption is just as valid whether or not the clues arrive in Technicolor pain. As we saw in Chapter One: Helping the Helpless, A.I. was never very successful at attracting a good class of client. No reason your Cast can’t do better.





will not necessarily tell the parent where the child is, if he is found. Instead, the detective will see what the child has to say first, and might convey messages between the two parties if necessary. If the client doesn't like those conditions, he can take his business to a P.I. with a more client-centered attitude.

To complicate matters, the detective might not be as altruistic as he seems. Anyone who gets a reputation on the street for forcibly returning someone to abusive parents (even if that's not what really happened) is going to find his contacts drying up. Some cases might not be worth the risk.

Remember, conflict and drama increase when things get messy. Besides suiting the mood of the *Angel* TV show, that makes things somewhat truer to life.

THE BILL

As amply demonstrated on *Angel*, the hardest part of a case can be getting paid at the end of it. A client can tearfully promise that no expense should be spared searching for her sister/Pekinese/demon-summoning-doodad, but get extremely argumentative when presented with an itemized bill. Each P.I. brings a different approach to that problem (remembering Bill Murray in *Ghostbusters* might be a good start.)

There is no standard contract, but very few detectives promise to undertake work that only pays on success. That's usually a special arrangement because they have a personal stake in the matter, or when they agree to take a percentage of the "winnings" (and that's always a much greater fee than standard because it's so speculative). A few do indeed help the helpless for no charge, but at some point they too have to pay the rent (or support the occasional unemployed actress).

More usually, payment is made for effort, not results. We're not going to go into detail about dollar amounts for all the different services—we'll just assume someone in the office is keeping good accounts. The times we have seen a bill on the TV show, we haven't seen the bottom line. To give a rough idea of rates (and

they can vary a lot), we suggest about \$55 an hour for surveillance, \$140 for lifting and running fingerprints, and \$400 to find an undisclosed safe deposit box. It all adds up.

NETWORKING

Angel: All right, I hired a private detective. He's got a friend on the force.

Wesley: WE'RE supposed to be the private detectives.

Gunn: WE are supposed to have a friend on the force.

Angel: We did, but she got fired. Get over it.

—2.18 *Dead End*

Like members of any profession, P.I.s like getting together to talk shop, show off, and have some fun. There are various conferences and seminars held around the country each year, and less formal meeting spots like particular bars on a Friday night (good luck trying to lose a tail in that crowd). On a more business level, certain organizations represent the profession, stand up for the rights of their members, and disseminate useful information such as recently changed statutes. These are most often organized at a state level, and the most relevant one for an L.A.-based game is the California Association of Licensed Investigators (it has 2,000 members, and claims to be the largest of its type in the world). The World Association of Detectives (who used to be called the World Secret Service Association) has a larger scope but not as many active members.

A number of databases and mailing lists have been set up specifically for private investigators to compare notes. Membership usually requires providing proof of identity and license details to the owner of the list, although there may be ways around that. This is especially useful for interstate inquiries or finding specialists in a particular field, although simply keeping track of the topics under discussion may provide unexpected benefits, particularly if they reveal a larger pattern that matches a current case.

How much contact the characters in your game want to have with others of their profession is mostly up to them. It also depends on how much the average detective knows about the world of demons and magic. Your Cast might be regarded as brave souls willing to face the darkness at the heart of Los Angeles, or cranks dragging down the reputation of their colleagues by pandering to the paranoid and deluded. Most likely, their rep covers a bit of both.





CAREER OPTIONS

Wesley: You want me to say I'll act as her bodyguard.

Bryce: No. You don't really get to say anything. I'm going to pay you a lot of money to protect her. You'll do it, and get paid, and we'll both be very happy.

—2.6 Guise Will Be Guise

The security business is far larger than just private investigators. A couple of other options are listed here. These may provide some inspiration for different character backgrounds, or may just represent some of the people your players are likely to meet during the campaign.

BOUNTY HUNTERS

This profession is often taken up by those who wish to have the “excitement” of the P.I. life, but with clearer goals and less restrictions. There are no entry requirements—you don't even need to wear a hat. Sometimes they're called Bail Enforcement Agents, but that's far too boring for a cinematically noir L.A.

Bounty Hunters track down skippers—people who have not shown up to their court hearing and thus forfeit (skip) their bail. If the bounty hunter makes a citizen's arrest and so returns his quarry back to the jurisdiction from which he fled, he generally gets paid ten percent of the bail amount. In theory, a hunter has to be given authority to pursue a particular individual, but sometimes that process breaks down a little. There are no formal arrangements for hunting down criminals who haven't even gotten as far as a bail hearing yet, although rewards are often offered for information leading to arrest.

Bounty hunting is quite a popular profession among demons who have discovered the power of the greenback. They do sometimes get a bit confused about how much of the criminal to return though. Also, a few sorcerers who use their mind powers to collect the money by turning in innocent bystanders just spoil it for everyone.

PRIVATE SECURITY

These jobs range from your basic bouncer to private security guards and celebrity bodyguards. Again, there's little in way of formal training other than the ability to look intimidating, although some companies pride themselves on the standards of their employees. This might also be the occupation of crims trying to go legit, or ex-cops who found they didn't have the patience or temperament for their original career.

INSURANCE ADJUSTERS

Just to be completist (and because they have appeared in famous noir stories), Insurance Adjusters sometimes perform similar functions to P.I.s. They are beholden to different regulations though. They are hired to represent the policyholder in a dispute over whether an insurance policy should be paid out or not. They won't come into the game very often, but they hire P.I.s on occasion—as do their opponents, the insurance companies who undertake their own investigation. In any case involving significant damage to property, compensation claims, or anything that has been insured (which these days is just about anything except maybe earthquake damage in L.A. and the destructive acts of a higher being), one or other of these might be poking around.

MEDIUMS

While not something the police normally want to talk about, even in the “real world” the authorities have been known to seek aid from the supernatural, or at least those who claim to channel it. In a way, they have no choice. If some mystic type trundles up to a police station with knowledge of an open case, they have to take some action, at least in theory. This may involve no more than kicking the so-called medium out on his backside, or moving him up to the position of number-one suspect. A few individuals have avoided both fates though, and been able to render assistance on a number of different cases. In Los Angeles, that could be a career-making move, maybe with a book deal on top (or at least a movie of the week).

In an odd way, this is harder to explain in or import to the Angelverse. Because a well-defined supernatural underground exists, folks with genuine psychic abilities are likely to become a part of that culture. Certainly, they will be accepted there far better than among the stalwarts of the LAPD. Anyone making such powers public is likely to get a visit from some interested party (perhaps the government itself, if it manages to move fast enough) with an alternate offer. Wolfram & Hart is one possibility—in general, they don't try dissection as their first line of inquiry. If the psychic is interested in helping law enforcement (and doesn't want to start his own agency), his best bet is to develop some relationship with a police officer, much as that which existed between Angel and Kate. That may be an effective and productive deal, but it isn't likely to be a financially lucrative one.

At least there aren't strict regulations controlling such a career path—not until the unionized sorcerers hear of it, anyway.



ANGEL™



SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCES

Gunn: Lorne's dimensional magic expert was picking up some seriously bad vibes.

Angel: So nobody actually saw anything else come out?

Fred: Well, not exactly.

—3.21 Benediction

While no real surprise, keep in mind that not everything on the *Angel*/TV show matches up with what detectives face in their regular jobs. The next chapter goes into some detail about how the supernatural might change the nature of police work, while **Chapter Six: War Zone** covers the demonic forces that shape a lot of crime in the city. A canny Angelverse detective builds ties to both worlds. He takes advantage of the system when he needs to, but is in a good position to move through the underground when his cases take him there.

Obviously *Angel Investigations* leans towards the supernatural side, what with the various vampires, half-demons, and weirder things that are part of the crew. Still, they very rarely use supernatural means to solve a case. When demons are involved, they most often research the particular species (sometimes using a few new-fangled methods like looking on the Internet), and then hack it to pieces with large cutlery. Only rarely must they perform a ritual of exorcism or use a specific type of arcane widget. If they're after information, they use the old-fashioned methods of hitting the street,

asking questions, promising favors, and threatening snitches. Sure, the people they talk to are a little bumpier than most, but there's a real minimum of mumbo-jumbo.

If your Cast wants to take a more mystical investigatory approach—for example, using a crystal ball or casting a spell to reveal who has entered the crime scene—the choices and results are endless. You are going to have to address those situations as they arise and make some judgment calls on what is learned. Certainly, little support exists in the *Angel* show to justify covering this avenue. On the other hand, the *Magic Box* supplement for our sister game, the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer RPG* discusses sorcery, magic items, and weird science in detail. Any or all of this stuff could kit out a P.I. very well. Always remember that magic is a two-edged sword in the Angelverse. Feel free to “balance the karmic scales” every so often and make it hurt... bad.

For a different type of *Angel* game, another approach is possible. Just because the setting is supernatural doesn't mean the characters have to be (we'll call this the *Cast a Deadly Spell* option, in order to meet our quota of obscure references). This is especially relevant in a P.I.-type campaign, where observation and wits are more important than combat power. The underworld most likely always views such a “straight” character as an outsider—he'll probably hear “but you can't possibly understand” a lot. Still, being somewhat removed from the spooky stuff may provide a unique perspective or a more balanced viewpoint (that helps get to the truth





better but, again, that may not be what the client is really looking for).

Regardless of the means used, it wouldn't be an *Angel* game without some supernatural elements and sooner or later the demon underworld is going to notice the heroes. Some demons, despite their bluster and contempt of humanity, should be surprised and even impressed by anyone who can discern information from seemingly meaningless clues, and so catch someone breaking the rules of their society (don't be fooled into thinking there are no rules—something keeps that strange network of demon bars, massage parlors, and casinos that flourishes in L.A. from descending into anarchy). Of course, the Angelverse underworld is still a dangerous place, and even if some sort of balance of power stops overt public brutality and lawlessness, the danger of private brutality and lawlessness is ever-present. There will always be someone in need of a resourceful and clever P.I. If the Cast solves a few cases, have certain factions approach them—perhaps offering some sort of sponsorship, secret or not.

The players should think carefully about these things—if the Cast gets a rep as agents of one particular group, the balance that has kept them from harm so far might disintegrate (in which case, let's hope the sponsors live up to their promises). Whether or not the Cast is aligned with a supernatural faction, another group could come to view them as potential saviors—the humans who live their confused and often desperate lives in demon-haunted areas. This will certainly be the case if the characters risk the dangers of those mean streets to help out an unfortunate (human, demon, or a mixture of the two) once or twice. Responding to that charity with a flood of aid requests could cause the Cast to ignore their sponsor's task—no doubt that leads to difficulties with said supernatural sponsor.

SUPPORTING CAST

Here are quick statistics allowing you to bring a few detectives into the game without much fuss. We've got your basic Quick Sheets for the guy discreetly staking out the Cast HQ, and his key assistant, who is rifling Internet databases for background information. The stats for the agency they likely belong to are also provided.

L.A. DETECTIVE

Judy: I guess if we left now it would look, I don't know, bad, huh?

Angel: That all depends. This have anything to do with that P.I. I tossed out of here?

—2.1 Are You Now or Have You Ever Been

Most private eyes in Angel's Los Angeles have seen a lot of strange stuff, and have discounted most of it. The human population keeps them busy enough without having to chase after demons and mystic prophecies. Still, the experienced ones are pretty hardened and most probably adapt quickly if forced to.

Joe Gumshoe is an average guy who tracks down missing kids and straying husbands. More experienced detectives are likely to have honed their skills, with increased Attributes and a beefier Brains Score. Their Combat Score may have picked up a bit too, depending upon the cases they've been involved with. Most P.I.s have some access to firearms, but don't carry them in the normal course of business.

Jane Friday is an assistant who keeps things in order back at the office. Normally such characters don't get quite as caught up in the action as Cordelia, but this is a cinematic game 'n all. Even with all the paperwork

Name: Joe Gumshoe
Motivation: Find the truth, have a drink
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 3, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 10, Brains 12
Life Points: 34
Drama Points: 2
Special Ability: Contacts (Criminal) 2, Contacts (Governmental) 2

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	10	—	Defense action
Mace	10	Poison	Strength 4 vs Dexterity
Punch	10	7	Bash



ANGEL™

Name: Jane Friday
Motivation: Keep everything shipshape
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 9, Brains 13
Life Points: 26
Drama Points: 2
Special Ability: Lie Detector, Poker Face

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	9	—	Defense action
Punch	9	5	Bash



swept into the background, such a character can be a great presence as a pragmatic and sensible organizer, a kindly face for client interviews (perhaps catching some otherwise hidden information), and a ruthless pursuer of ordnance supply companies. At the most benign, we're talking about Miss Money Penny; an edgier example would be Joan Cusack's Marcella in *Grosse Pointe Blank*.

SAMPLE AGENCY

Cordelia: Okay, Elvis. When you are a big star you can get away with not carrying any cash. And while we're on the subject, I think one of us should apply for a Small Business loan, just to get us through the rough spots. I mean, what's a thirty year loan to you?

—1.18 Five by Five

Detective agencies come in all shapes and sizes, from a lone operative with an answering service as a secretary, to wealthy private crime institutes and nationwide security firms. The one presented here is a bit bigger than Angel Investigations, with more staff and a better financial position (but less occult resources and a smaller HQ, hence the cheaper cost). It includes a Law Library facility (see p. [?]).

Your game could start out with the characters being employed by a company like this, either as flunkies or in control. In the former case, the Cast could aspire to taking the reins in time. In the latter, they could be content with the status quo and the help they provide, or they could have loftier ambitions. Of course, most agencies don't usually go from limited resources to a huge multi-million dollar headquarters with a staff of hundreds overnight—but anything's possible.

Total Value: 8 points.

Clout: Criminal (Street cred) (1), Financial (Holding its own) (2), Governmental (Connected) (1). **Total Cost:** 4 points.

Quarters: Medium (1), Physical Security (Good) (2). **Total Cost:** 0 points (reduced by three from Financial and Governmental Clout).

Gear: Computers (Basic) (1), Laboratory (Basic) (1), Law Library (1), Medical Facilities (Basic) (1), Workshop (Basic) (1), Vehicles (Vehicle Fleet) (2), Weapons (Gun Bunnies) (1). **Total Cost:** 4 points (reduced by four from Criminal, Financial, and Governmental Clout).





THE SYSTEM

**Wesley: Something is going down tonight.
Something with the Man.**

—1.16 The Ring

The government—what would we do
without it?

In truth, a whole lot of ink has been spilled on the pros and cons of the system (giving us an excuse to bring out the line about progress and Congress), but we're going to ignore all that. Whether you like or not, the government is one of the major forces in any big city, and unless the Cast spends their life enmeshed in extra-dimensional battles or crawling through the most inaccessible sewers, they are undoubtedly going to meet government agents sooner or later. And we're not talking secret Bond-types here. Anyone who speaks for the system is a government agent—mostly it's local cops, but it also includes Feds (FBI), municipal paramedics, social workers, court system employees (including judges), and even dogcatchers.

Your players might even want to be government agents. Playing a cop is a great way of experiencing a street-level game with a bit of backup when the going gets nasty.

This chapter looks at government both as a resource to be used by the Cast (remember that Governmental Contacts Quality), and as a background for characters both within and outside the main Cast. Like the previous chapter, we'll go into quite a bit of detail to give you Directors a solid understanding of how things work, but emphasize the bits that are going to come up in the game, and point out the things you might want to cut short to keep things moving. As usual, the discussion focuses on the system in and about L.A. and California, but most of this material can be transported directly to another large municipality or state with minor tweaking and name changes. If your game takes place in a smaller population center, you will have to bring the scale down considerably (L.A. and SoCal being one of the more crowded areas of the U.S.).

CHAPTER 5

ANGEL



TO PROTECT AND SERVE

Kate: I just couldn't . . . My whole life has been about being a cop. If I'm not part of the force it's like nothing I do means anything.

—2.16 Epiphany

The Los Angeles Police Department is the thin blue line between the City of Angels and total anarchy. Of course, some people think anarchy is already a good description of life in the Big Smoke. Others say that without the comfortable sheen of normalcy that the boys (and girls) in blue provide, the populace would quickly realize the horrors that lurk beneath the surface and rise up against the demons. As long as the law is around and the sounds of sirens periodically pass, most people can ignore pretty much anything as Someone Else's Problem.

Whatever the case, police duty is a hard, hard job. The policemen and women on the street are not privy to any vast conspiracy. They struggle against danger, stress, and often a severe lack of gratitude. They each have their own reasons justifying their willingness to put up with this daily aggravation, but the bottom line is someone has to do the job.

We'll start by describing how the police force relates to all the other parts of the city, then take a detailed look at how it is organized. We'll also give you pointers for using police terminology and procedure in your game, and detail some of the locations and people we've seen on screen.

THE PARTS AND THE WHOLE

In general, people interact with the police in two ways. The first is with individual officers, who all have their own motives and agendas, prejudices, and breaking points. They might be paragons of virtue, cheerfully corrupt, or beholden to demons, but they are just as much individuals as anyone else in the game.

The second manner is with police as the face and voice of the law. In that case, the officers are a much more tight-knit group, and it's a lot easier to make them an enemy than a friend. They are tough, no-nonsense, and certainly have no time for supernatural crap or yet another civilian with an attitude. The LAPD protects its own, and while a character might have a relationship with an individual officer, he treads dangerous ground if he tries to get between the cop and his cohort.

COPS AND SLEUTHS

Kate: Find him, you call me. Nothing above nor beyond. You cannot be involved in this.

Angel: You don't want to get a reputation for going outside the department?

Kate: I don't want to get a reputation for getting you killed.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity





Police officers and private eyes can make pretty good partners (see p. [?]), but they usually distrust each other instinctively. That's actually easier to overcome in L.A. than other places, in part because of the sheer amount of crime and desperate living means there's plenty to go around. Of course, if either side starts thinking that the other is out to get them—perhaps the P.I. gets interested in matters best handled by internal processes (or perhaps the P.I. is in fact a psychopathic monster who has already carved a swathe through Europe and may be starting on L.A.)—the relationship can break down fast.

While it does last, cop-sleuth relations have to be handled low key, or the bureaucracy of the LAPD will try to put a stop to it. Too cozy a relationship might even lead other cops to wonder about their compadre and his loyalties. In the end, most lieutenants have no problem with a bit of fraternization for mutual benefit, as long as no one gets killed and the paperwork looks good.

COPS AND CRIMS

If the Cast Members are on the other side of the law (see **Chapter Six: War Zone**), introducing a police contact can be very useful. There are a couple of ways to do this. One or more of the Cast might be informers—presumably not on each other, but on the bad elements that give law-breaking a bad name. Maybe they want to go straight, and this is best way they can think of.

Then there is the opposite side of the coin—crooked cops play both ways. Perhaps they take money in exchange for “protection.” Or maybe they're handing out money to get jobs done—it's a lot easier to run a mob when you happen to also be in charge of hunting them down.

Most of the time cops and crims don't have relations—other than hunter and hunted (though it can be difficult sometimes telling one from the other). Even if a character is on the rocky road to redemption, if he makes a habit of breaking the law—even if he only has a reputation for it—make sure the police take an interest (can you imagine what Kate would make of jail-break Faith or Gwen, for example). In that case, the police might be the antagonists of the game, or just an occasional pain in the butt as they show up when least wanted.

You can even combine the antagonistic and close relationship. It's pure melodrama—and thus perfect! Placing one of the Cast and his lover on opposite sides of the law (best if they start out unaware of the fact) creates inherent drama over the course of the game. That might be represented through the Tragic Love Drawback, but sometimes things work out better than expected.

COPS AND CHAOS

Kendrick: And you wanna believe?

Kate: Oh, I already believe. That's the problem.
—1.19 Sanctuary

Individual police officers take to the supernatural in lots of different ways. The Captain who raised all those zombie cops in 2.14 The Thin Dead Line took to it a bit too well. On the other hand, whittling away at her cherished laws of reality drove Kate a little insane.

Keeping with the general cluelessness of officials in the Angelverse, the LAPD should expend great efforts to completely ignore or redefine the problem. However they justify it—drugs, mass hysteria, genetic engineering, a lunar eclipse (a *long* lunar eclipse), the ever-popular PCP gang, or just a case of real ugliness—they are not about to admit anything transcendental.





Partly that's because the LAPD has almost no meaning in that sort of world. Human law goes out the window when the humans are on the bottom of the food chain. The fact that the Angelverse *is* that sort of world makes their denial a hard thing to do, but they are managing it—in fact, a lot of the time, they are winning. It's the demons that are trying to blend in with human society—perhaps they are attracted to a society with strong rules, makes things more predictable and stable. The LAPD doesn't just enforce the rules, it makes them believable for both the humans and non-humans in their city.

All that could change, of course, if you want. If your game is set during and after Season Four, for example, the wide-ranging events become harder to explain—the system could break down completely after everyone wakes from Jasmine's influence. How you explore the consequences of that is up to you, but they're certainly a lot of fun to be had.

In the short term, what happens if the local cops do find something they're having trouble explaining? When it comes to “cult activity” or similar weird stuff, they usually call in the FBI. Even if they don't, some government agency somewhere is likely to take an interest, and probably take the proof as well. Then it's a matter of government bureaucracy, which can tie anything up for decades . . .

COPS AND COPS

It's not just outsiders who can find themselves on the wrong side of the LAPD. Cops can get away with quite a lot inside the system, but if they start going against the grain, bring on a world of trouble. Kate experienced that when she started believing in the monsters. As we said in the previous section, the LAPD could not tolerate such behavior. It's not only that she believed, it's that her belief affected her police work. The institution no doubt would have frowned on the

behavior of the zombie-master Captain, but he was obviously still crossing the Ts on the paperwork he sent in, so he could be ignored.

Corruption is like that as well. There is every indication the LAPD is making great efforts to cut down on the cronyism, brutality, and blatant law breaking that have surfaced over the years. Still, it's a tough town and tough people are needed to do the policing. More importantly, the cops have to present a unified front or the bad-guys will walk all over them. At the very least they try to handle everything quietly and internally—this sometimes only buries the problem rather than rooting it out.

Internal Affairs

Internal investigation of the LAPD is handled by the Professional Standards Bureau, one of the few parts of the Department that is not subservient to any Assistant Chief (see p. [?]). They report directly to the Chief of Police. If you introduce police corruption in your game, these gents are likely to become interested sooner or later—whether they make the situation better or worse is up to you and the actions of the Cast.

THE HIERARCHY

This section goes through the various types of cops that turn up in police-oriented games, from the world-weary detectives to the enthusiastic SWAT members.

DETECTIVES

Kate: I'm a detective, Kendrick. See? (holds up an evidence bag) I'm detecting.

—1.19 Sanctuary

Police detectives are at the forefront of investigative crime fighting. Their job is to tackle the cases in which an arrest is not made at the scene of the crime, and even then they might be called in to follow up leads so a conviction can be made. They also get a lot more freedom of movement than regular patrol officers. In all, they are great Cast Members, especially because the players don't have to fill in all the paperwork.

Detectives can fit well in two types of games. The first is set in an Area covered by one of the four geographically oriented LAPD Bureaus (see sidebar). There, a detective usually works on a specific type of crime, such as robbery, homicide, or vice. The second brings in the Detective Bureau itself, which investigates





LAPD Areas

Like Gaul, Los Angeles is divided into four (hats off to the *Asterisk* fans who get that reference). Each quarter is the responsibility of a particular Bureau, which are in turn divided into a number of Areas. Much of what was seen on *Angel* is within the West Bureau, which includes the Wilshire Area (where both the original *Angel* HQ and Hyperion are located), plus Hollywood and Venice. The Central Bureau covers downtown and further towards the North and East, while The South Bureau is the lucky winner of jurisdiction over the “war zone” where Gunn used to hang out. The Valley Bureau (which includes North Hollywood) completes the set.

All this is from real life, and importing it to your *Angel* RPG game requires some storyline adjustments. According to the *Angel* TV show, Kate Lockley is assigned to the Metro Precinct. There is no LAPD subdivision called Metro, in fact, the LAPD does not have any precincts at all—these are the Areas referred to above (since “the police” are in truth thousands of separate organizations across the U.S., standard terminology is not something you can count on).

Later, we’ll talk about the Metro Police Station (see p. [?]), which is where Kate spent most of her time. We know it’s on 12th Street, so we’re going to use it to replace the Central Area station on our L.A. map (see p. [?]; the real Central Area station is on 6th St). The other change we’ve made is to move the Southwest Community Police Station (and the Natural History Museum), since they’re both in the middle of what we are defining as Gunn’s “War Zone” (see p. [?]).

serious crimes, or ones requiring particular expertise, anywhere in the city. Members of the Detective Bureau also offer support, resources, and training for detectives in the various bureaus.

The Detective Bureau is broken up into various divisions. These include famous ones like the Robbery-Homicide Division (RHD), the Narcotics Division, and the Organized Crime and Vice Division (OCVD). The others are the Juvenile Division (which investigates crimes by and against minors), Commercial Crimes Division, and Detective Headquarters Division.

The upshot of all of that is that there are lots of different types of work and places in which to do it. If you are running a police-based game, you need to decide where the characters fit into this scheme of things. It’s usually a good idea to keep them fairly close together—for example, have them all assigned to the one area, or the one Division—but some flexibility is possible. A game with a couple of cops working Homicide out of the Central Area could easily have a detective from the RHD as a part of the group. They receive their orders from different people, and most likely have different contacts and resources (the RHD detective knows people from across the city, while the others have better local knowledge), but that’s a good thing. Also, just because the Cast includes several homicide detectives doesn’t mean they can’t investigate anything else. The LAPD tries to be flexible (while maintaining good order) and encourages its personnel to share information, resources, and workload as much as practical. A good example is in 2.8 The Shroud of Rahmon when Kate became involved in a case being handled by robbery detectives because she happened to know one of the participants—Angel.

Remind your players that nobody gets to become a detective straight away, even if it’s an ambition of many that join the force. It usually takes about three years on the beat before a promotion to detective is possible, although it could be a little quicker, or a lot slower, depending upon individual circumstances.

PATROL OFFICERS

Kate: I’ll put a uniform on her building. But I can probably not spare one for more than a day or two.

—1.4 I Fall to Pieces

Most of the cops on the streets of L.A. are uniformed patrol officers. They are the ones who patrol neighborhoods, respond to reports of a crime or accident, do traffic duty, and interface with the locals. In most areas of the city, they are cordial with passersby, friendly with shop owners, professionals, and other locals, part of neighborhood watch meetings and police-sponsored events, speakers at drug



awareness lectures in schools, and generally visible participants in local life. In the areas of L.A. where some *Angel* games are set, successful community liaison means not getting shot. Officers are also expected to support the activities of detectives as required. For example, they might be called upon to protect witnesses, help in stakeouts, or set up roadblocks.

Most officers work out of the Area police stations, and are usually assigned to a foot or car patrol (there's also motorcycle and even bicycle patrol officers in the city). Although patrol work has traditionally been done in pairs, budget constraints have undermined this as an automatic default. In general, cutbacks are limited to the safer areas of the city.

Patrol is where all new police characters are assigned when they join the force, starting as probationary officers. Some people are quite happy to stay with this sort of work; others push for more "exciting" careers as detectives or in special units.

Taking the Heat

What's it take to be a cop? Some are in the force to play tough guy, others want to help people out, many are in it for the stability and a good retirement package. Actually surviving in the profession without going crazy or getting shot is a different matter (but there are lots of internal supports for just these sorts of problems).

One of the most useful characteristics of a police officer is the ability to act defensively (don't rush into anything without backup, be it an ambush or a crazy conclusion about the ugly-looking guy with spikes in his head) and professionally (follow the book, stick by fellow officers, look like you have the right to do what you're doing). Officers are also subject to abuse, trauma, and danger on a daily basis—they have to be able to handle that. They can't let the bloody accidents, hysterical victims, and psychotic junkies get to them.

Of course, these ideal traits aren't shared by everyone. Feel free to introduce cop characters who must overcome their weaknesses, or those with serious Drawbacks. Again, it's all about the drama. The perfect cop might be the Terminator with a good curbside manner, but that's not what a game like *Angel* is about.



OTHER Units

Cop: Seal the house. I want SWAT, NOW!

—2.5 Dear Boy

Bureaucratically speaking, each geographical Bureau is equivalent to the Detective Bureau. A couple of other groups also share this level. The most important ones are the Professional Standards Bureau (i.e., Internal Affairs) and the Special Operations Bureau, which runs things like the Air Support Division, Underwater Unit, K-9 Unit, Mounted Unit, the Gang Support Section (GSS), and the ever-popular Special Weapons And Tactics Team (SWAT). Another one is the Counter-Terrorism Bureau, which works closely with the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security (see p. [?]).

All these units create a pool of personnel that allow you to introduce characters with almost any skill you might be interested in. A lot of these choices aren't necessarily good options for Cast Members, but make great contacts for people on or off the force, and are also good backgrounds for police characters. It's quite usual for officers to be transferred around Bureau to Bureau, so a homicide cop might have been a police diver or internal affairs investigator in previous years.

Two good storyline units are the Gang Support Section and of course SWAT. Your players may have a particular interest in either of those.

The GSS is active in trying to curtail gang activity in various forms, including biker gangs and Hispanic or African-American gangs. They also have a special Asian Crime Unit to cope with the linguistic and cultural barriers in that community.

The SWAT is a different matter. They are brought in when there's a need for heavy weaponry—usually because the bad guys are also packing. They are also specially trained for things like hostage negotiation and the security at sensitive events such as political rallies (which is where the "special tactics" moniker comes in). They also work with the Air Support Division when needed. If something turns up that the SWAT team can't handle, the next step is the National Guard (see p. [?]), but they'll go a long way before admitting that possibility.



ANGEL

Name: SWAT
Motivation: Put the bad guy down
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 4, Con 3, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 14, Brains 12
Life Points: 40
Drama Points: 0-2
Special Abilities: Combat Armor (AV 12), Hard to Kill 2, Situational Awareness



Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	14	—	Defense action
Knife	14	9	Slash/stab
Pistol	14	15	Bullet
Punch	14	9	Bash
Submachine Gun	14	15	Bullet; can burst and autofire

RAKS

Angel: I'm out of vice three weeks, I've seen enough amateur night crap to fill a mini-series. You wanna pretend that's not a cub scout's uniform and tell me about dead people?
 —2.4 Untouched

Want to know who's in charge of the squad room, or who a character has to backstab to get promoted, you're in the right place. Of course, the higher up the hierarchy a character is, the more paperwork he has to do, and the less he sees of the field. That means players may find the brass is a bit less exciting to roleplay, but it can be an interesting change of pace, especially if you shortcut some of the boring stuff and let the Cast lead their men out into the streets every now and again.

An important concept inside the force is that each member of the hierarchy is only ever accountable to one superior at a time. This sometimes makes cooperation between divisions trickier, and encourages working together on an informal basis. This tension is not helped by the occasional power plays and feuds across the organization. Still, the purpose here is to ensure that no one is faced with contradictory orders.

Officer: Your basic uniformed patrol officer (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 179). Although most of them work for the four geographic bureaus, they are found all through the organization, including the Special Operations Bureau.

Detective: Covered this one too. Hey, it's almost like there's some sort of internal consistency going on here!

Sergeant: Sergeants do a lot of the day-to-day administration for the department. They prepare shift

assignments, inspect personnel and equipment, dispatch officers to crime scenes, review reports, and the like. While not present in the LAPD, some police forces have a separate rank called Detective Sergeant (and Detective Lieutenant).

Lieutenant: The people usually designated Officer-in-Charge of major functions within a police station. They pay particular attention to the big picture of crime within their area, and closely follow the progress of large or significant cases. Patrol officers and detectives get to visit with the lieutenant when they screw up.

Captain: These folks run each Area and Division and are usually the highest ranked officer Cast Members are likely to see on a regular basis. He might even remember their names (especially if they screw up often).

Commander (1 Star): Assistant commanding officers under the Deputy Chiefs.

Deputy Chief (2 Stars): These officers are in charge of each Bureau.

Assistant Chief (3 Stars): And then there were three. The Assistant Chiefs are titled Chief of Operations, Chief of Support Services, and Chief of Administrative Services. The Chief of Operations oversees almost everything that police officers are going to be involved in. The other two shouldn't come up much.

Chief of Police (4 Stars): The big enchilada—what he says, goes.

Board of Police Commissioners (5 Stars): This is a group of five civilians appointed by the Mayor of Los Angeles to run the police department at the highest level, setting policy for the Chief of Police to implement.

There are also plenty of descriptive titles for functions within each police station, usually for a shift at a time.





Here are some of the ones you should trot out for police characters (often complete with assistants and other hanger-ons):

Desk Officer: Supervises the on-going activity of the station, including communication with officers in the field, compiling information regarding arrests and other significant events, and taking responsibility for evidence. Usually a sergeant, characters want to be in good with this gent—he could make their lives ugly if not.

Patrol Supervisor: Supervises the work of patrol officers. He inspects them at the start of the shift, and sometimes during it. He is usually a lot more mobile than the desk officer, although of similar rank.

Watch Commander: Determines the priority and allocation of officers to cases on his watch and oversees operations within the station. Be warned, he might also get out into the field to see what is happening, and might take control of emergency situations. The Watch Commander is usually a lieutenant.

Composite Artist: an officer who creates sketches based on eye-witnesses reports, and uses those funky computer programs to stitch different bits of a face together, remove and add beards, and age individuals in case the characters are working with an old photo. He usually stays in the station, but might be assigned to large or important crime scenes to help take accurate measurements and sketch the layout.

When Cops call 911

If your Cast Members are part of the police force, sooner or later they might want to call in a SWAT team to handle some of their more problematic cases—Jenoff's Casino, for example. That'll sort out those pesky demon mobsters!

Your first impression is probably "holy crud, how am I going to get around this one," but there are a couple of issues at play here. Don't automatically disallow that sort of thing just because it messes with your plot. There are a couple reasons why it probably won't happen, and even if it does that can be grist for even more stories.

The major response to a SWAT team demon call is that the LAPD simply do not want to know. If they were to officially acknowledge the non-human denizens of the city and, more problematical, all the pain that usually goes along with that subculture, they would be overwhelmed by trying to cope with a new jurisdiction. Keeping the SWAT team home allows for more "feasible deniability."

Because they can't officially acknowledge it, it follows that they cannot officially repudiate it either. Cops who try to rock the boat might be quietly told to lay off, or might just be thrown to the wolves—there is every reason to believe that at least some of the panel that judged Kate in 2.15 Reprise were less clueless about the problem than one would imagine. You could call this a big case of unhealthy denial, but as we noted already, the strategy is actually working—by pretending the monsters don't exist, they are forcing them to blend in with human culture rather than the other way around.

Now, remember that the LAPD is not monolithic in this or any other viewpoint, and all the other law enforcement departments and agencies have their own take on things. A "no look, no see" strategy such as this one, as much as it exists at all, is going to find support as well as objection among those in the know. The Cast Members may want to join forces (or create) a faction that promotes a more proactive stance.

Even so, there are problems. With Wolfram & Hart on the scene, plus less pervasive but still important people like Magnus Bryce (see p. [?]), a lot of the demon haunts have connections in high places, and money is being changed hands to see that certain targets aren't targeted. Not everyone will have such an agreement though. Also, you might want to consider the side effects for places whose "hands-off" policy lapses (for example, what if a demon bar can't afford to pay its protection money one month and someone like Bryce lets it be known that they are no longer part of the family?)

Finally, as well trained as they are, even SWAT teams aren't ready to take on a Casino load of demons. Most of their "special weapons and tactics" won't work, and they have no real way of telling friend from foe. Calling them in on such a place puts them in considerable danger, and may create a whole lot of collateral damage. (This situation is what groups like the Initiative are for—see *Military Monster Squad* for more—and they have more problems to deal with than a bunch of demons who want to cheat at cards.)

Some players might still want to press forward and give it a go. Our advice is to let them, and see how it plays out. It will probably turn into a bit of a bloodbath, but let's assume the good guys win. There's still likely to be cover-ups and official sanctions, but the effect on the people confronting the supernatural on the front line could be fascinating to explore, as would the effect on the demon subculture itself. The more blatant operations will pull their heads in. Paranoia and distrust will become even more evident. The instigators of the first raid might try a second to show it was more than an aberration, and find a strange lack of targets. All interesting things for a game of politics and street life



ANGEL



A number of civilian staff are usually present on each shift—stenographers to take statements and transcribe recordings, payroll supervisors (very important), typists, mechanics, and general laborers to keep things spic and span. To make things a bit more like the cop movies, add in numerous prostitutes at the station house, working their way through the booking process.

A less official but nonetheless important status symbol within the department is the amount of time served. LAPD officers with at least twenty-five years service get their pensions guaranteed. Some retire, others just keep going because they wouldn't want to be doing anything else. Despite the longevity, sticking around can be a bit dangerous. Long-timers are sometimes scapegoated for things that go wrong—they might be censured or even fired—since their finances are secure, the brass feels less bad about laying blame. Anyone who tries to lay a bad rep on someone approaching their 25th year is going to be badly thought of by most cops in the department.

POLICE WORK: A PRIMER

Kate: You have the right to remain silent, but I wouldn't recommend it.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

This section summarizes many of the legal issues and technical details that go into a police officer's day. We don't go into the full minutiae of the job (that'd take volumes and would be pretty darn boring), but this format should give you a fair amount of information to make your games more realistic.

Affidavit: A written declaration, such as one prepared to support a request for a search warrant.

Arrest: To arrest someone, an officer must have reasonable cause to believe a crime has been committed. The officer must state his identity, the crime for which the arrest is being made, and read the suspect his Miranda Rights (qv).

Assault: This is a crime that covers both inflicting injury, and threatening to inflict injury. It becomes Aggravated Assault when it entails serious bodily harm, negligent use of a deadly weapon, or threatening to cause serious bodily harm.

Working Hours

The LAPD works pretty flexible hours. In general, the day is split into three shifts—the day shift from 8 AM to 4 PM, the PM shift to midnight, and the AM shift until the day workers come on again. The actual time of changeover varies (in part so the criminals don't all strike at the moment when police officers are swapping jobs). If one of the characters wants to work the nightshift because they have an "allergy to sunlight," it shouldn't be too difficult to swing a 9 PM till 5 AM shift, although some aspects of the job, like presenting evidence in court, might be harder to work around. Most police officers work twenty shifts every twenty-eight days.



ANGEL

Burglary: The crime of unlawfully entering a building with the intention of committing a crime. There are various permutations, including “Breaking and Entering” which implies some sort of physical force or trickery involved.

Chain of Evidence: All evidence found should be kept in the personal possession of the person finding it, until it is handed over to another official representative, who signs for it. This minimizes the chance of things getting lost, and defense lawyers claiming the evidence is unreliable and thus not admissible in court. It is also particularly important when the evidence includes illegal things such as heroin or cocaine. Such things have been known to go missing from time to time, and the public relations hit is not something the brass wants on their watch.

The Crime Scene: In general, cops realize that protection of the crime scene is a vital part of finding and preserving evidence. Of course, lots of cops (especially in movies) wander in and out of that funky yellow taped area at will, so this is probably the best way to play it in your game.

Diplomatic Immunity: Diplomatic officers, their families, official staff, and servants are immune from arrest in the United States. Consular officials have some immunity as well. Until inter-dimensional relations are formally recognized (possibly when hell freezes over), this probably won't have much impact on the game.

Embezzlement: Retaining goods or money received after they should be lawfully returned.

Entrapment: It is illegal for a police officer to create the idea of a criminal act in someone's mind, and then charge them for committing it. It is not illegal to create the opportunity to commit a crime, just to plant the idea of doing the deed. This defense comes up quite a lot in undercover cases, to various levels of success.

Felony: More serious (and dramatic) crimes than misdemeanors (qv). Murder, grand larceny, extortion, and assault are the big ones.

Homicide: Homicide doesn't imply a crime has been committed, it just means one person has killed another. It might be justifiable homicide (for example, a legal execution, or a killing by a police officer in the process of stopping a felony, which could not otherwise be avoided), excusable homicide (killing someone by accident, or in self-defense), manslaughter (killing someone accidentally while acting illegally, or under extreme emotional duress), or murder (killing someone with malicious forethought).

Informants: People who supply information about on-going illegal activity. The higher-ups understand that this is a sensitive area so individual detectives are given a fair amount of freedom in contacting, paying, and ensuring the security of informants (see p. [?]).

Interrogation: Questioning a suspect (see p. [?]). This differs from an interview, which is questioning someone believed to have information of interest, such

as a bystander (an interview could turn into an interrogation half way through, depending on what's said ... or not said).

Larceny: The crime of theft, also covering embezzlement (qv) and fraud.

Miranda Rights: The familiar language used when arresting a suspect: “You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to speak to an attorney, and to have an attorney present during any questioning. If you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be provided for you at government expense.” Variations, such as Kate's in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity, are not recommended. The point is that a suspect need not answer any questions if he requests the presence of a lawyer (but is free to answer them if he wants).

Misdemeanor: A crime with a maximum jail sentence of a year in a county prison—i.e., one that's probably not exciting enough for an *Angel* game.

Search Warrant: The U.S. Constitution guarantees citizens the right to be free from unnecessary searches. Anytime a police officer wants to do something more than peek in a window or pat a newly arrested suspect down for weapons, he must get a search warrant signed by a judge. These are usually very specific, indicating what is being searched for and where it is likely to be, and the officer has to show probable cause before getting one signed. Getting one that is valid after dark, or requires breaking in by force, is harder still.

Weapon: Any use of a weapon by a police officer has to be justifiable, and each shot must be accounted for in a written report after the fact. Of course, many movies and games don't worry if the police fire twenty times without reloading, let alone justifying each one after the fact, so you are more than welcome to ignore whatever bits of this bureaucracy you like.



ANGEL



GETTING (AND KEEPING) CASES

Skale (giving her a photo of Angel and Menlo):
He's out of the scope of our investigation, but,
uh, Carlson said you might be interested.
Kate: I'm interested.

—2.8 The Shroud of Rahmon

Private eyes can pretty much choose the cases they want to do—although if they don't have a lot to choose from, they may well be stuck with a great deal of unpleasantness. Nonetheless, they don't have to take the money of any shmoe who walks in the door. Likewise, they can declare a case unsolvable, and walk away.

Police don't have that option. Detectives get cases assigned to them on a semi-random basis, and have to get results or their lieutenants want to know why (those lower than detective get even less choice). Lieutenants also have a habit of taking a case away from investigators who aren't doing so well. It might be reassigned, or it might be put on the backburner, but either way it looks bad.

You can assign cases to Cast Members depending on their reputation in the department, and their relationship with the Lieutenant (or, most usefully, on what adventure you're running this week). If both are good, they'll get more say in what cases to take. That makes for a more proactive campaign—the players can decide the direction they want to go. If either rep or relationship is bad, feel free to saddle them with the strange cases. Sometimes that's good (strange is interesting), but sometimes the Lieutenant just gives them the really tedious things to get them out of his hair. We don't suggest you play through the tedium, but that's a good way to stretch out the time it takes them to accomplish anything meaningful in the storyline. The rest of the game time is spent in busy work.

On the flip side, if they get too good at the really strange cases, other people are going to start paying attention. If the Cast Members are masters at sweet-talking, or you're running a supernatural-lite game, that might not be a problem. More likely, they're going get

start getting labeled S&M (that would be Scully and Mulder) pretty quickly. We know what happened to Kate in that situation—her impeccable rep started going sour, and she ended up being booted off the force as an embarrassment. Don't sweat going down that route though, just flip over to the chapter on P.I.s (or possibly the section on drugs).

Even if you do move the Cast down that road, don't feel constrained by that storyline. Variety is the spice of life, and all. Perhaps with suitable Governmental contacts, the Cast becomes a lot harder to dismiss out of hand. That opens up the possibility for some intra-force intrigue as their enemies maneuver against them. Perhaps they are on the verge of being booted when they stumble across a big case, and it gives them a chance to shine. Perhaps one or two Lieutenants in the force (if you're in LA, there's a lot of them) know a bit more about what is going on, and they can work for a transfer to his area. In that case, they might become dependant on the Lieutenant's ability to dodge the crap. In exchange, they should work to make him look good.

A group of policemen getting similar reps (i.e., a roleplaying group . . .) might be looked at suspiciously by the hierarchy. They might decide to split up the troublemakers. Present that as a challenge for the players to overcome. And even if the Cast doesn't manage to avoid the transfers, it doesn't mean the end of the game. You could declare that Season at an end, and resume the story six months later when circumstances have changed a little. It's traditional.

CORRUPTION

Lockley: We agreed that I'd use my department connections to facilitate movement of your untariffed auto-parts. We didn't agree that I'd be removing evidence from crime scenes—or pumping my own daughter for information.

Suit: We understand the extra lengths to which you've gone. (produces a thick brown envelope) Don't think that we are not appreciative.

—1.15 The Prodigal

Policing is a difficult, dangerous, and frustrating job, with little financial reward. Often, it's also a thankless job. In a big city like L.A., all those factors are magnified. It's a wonder that anyone is willing to do it at all. Some "adjust" things to make it more "worth their while." Others crumble under the pressure and start to do things the wrong way.

When those who have taken on the obligation of upholding the law turn their back on those responsibilities, a whole lot of badness can happen. We've seen some of the consequences on *Angel*. Further exploration of the subject is entirely appropriate for a police-based game.



ANGEL

Corruption happens in a couple different ways. One of the most significant, particular in L.A. (think Rodney King) is racism, but various other -isms also raise their head. It could result in derogatory language and violence, or more subtle (perhaps even unconscious) assumptions about civilians based on their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or whatever. As Gunn mentions in 2.14 The Thin Dead Line, sometimes it just requires walking while black. Tension between police officers of different backgrounds also occurs, and damaging cliques could form (a subdued example was seen in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity, when an officer in Kate's station revealed his hidden frustration at working with a woman). Lots of work has been done to try and change such attitudes. One method is hiring more minorities, both to interact with their own communities, and just go about the usual business of policing. This has not been trouble-free—tensions in the wider community almost inevitably filter through to the police force (sensitivity training or not).

Sometimes violence by police officers isn't motivated by prejudice at all, but simply frustration at being unable to solve particular cases. In 2.8 The Shroud of Rahmon, we see Wesley threatened with skull denting; in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity, it's Kate that does the threatening. Captain Atkinson implemented an extreme case of this in 2.14 The Thin Dead Line—he turned that frustration on an entire community.

Another common problem arises due to readily available and easily sold contraband that surrounds officers. Drugs and weaponry are usual targets—they might be picked up from crime scenes, or simply removed from evidence storage. Controls are in place

to stop such things happening (the same controls used to preserve the chain of evidence, see p. [?]), but a big premium is still put on officer reliability. If the amount of a drug found at a scene is under-reported, or more guns are checked out of evidence storage than are signed for, it's very difficult to follow the trail.

In 1.15 The Prodigal, we see Trevor Lockley using his connections to obtain drugs used by certain demonic races. This is a little different from the usual, because he was returning it to the people who had supplied it in the first place. That highlights a more insidious area of corruption, specifically protecting certain individuals by interfering with a police investigation, rather than for the cash value of the evidence itself. It also raises the possibility that one reason the presence of demons isn't more widely known is that key figures in the law enforcement and related fields are actively involved in suppressing the evidence. It's not so much a conspiracy, as an efficient use of a pre-existing network of corruption.

Other potential types of corruption include passing on information, taking bribes, or demanding favors. It's not unheard of for police to actually control criminal activity, making them as dangerous as a mob family. With a couple of "informants," or maybe even a whole gang, at his beck and call, the officer can direct them to the best locations, and thwart any investigation of their activity from the inside. Such things are frowned upon in polite company.

So, there's a whole lot of corrupt activity possible, but how do you use it in the game? The easiest way is to use corrupt cops as the bad guys, either as a one-off or even a big bad (for someone entrenched enough). This sort





of villain is suitable for almost any campaign, whether the Cast Members are private eyes, police, or themselves of dubious legality (whether or not they're trying to do the right thing).

If one or more of the characters are police officers, corruption can be a more subtle force in the game. Most "corruption" is small stuff—shortcuts that different people around the station house take to smooth over the day-to-day frustrations of police life. Most cops don't suddenly decide to be bad; they fall into it in stages. Stress, money problems, having to look tough in front of the squad, cutting through red tape, and just ordinary joking around can lead to minor infractions—these might become major in a moment of crisis. Even small breaches of the law can be the start of a downward spiral, as people try to cover up their previous actions, or fall into bad company.

These sorts of temptations work very well for police Cast Members, and other characters around them. Drawbacks like Addiction, Covetous, Emotional or Mental Problems, an Obligation to someone else, or some Secret that needs keeping, are other levers for you to manipulate. We saw the tail end of that spiral in Trevor Lockley, ashamed by what he is doing, but unable to refuse, until it led to his death. We see a different type of spiral for Kate. Her relationship with Angel—accepting his help, using official resources to help him in return, and even releasing him from lawful custody in 2.10 Reunion, just before a massacre—puts her in a bad position with her department, at the same time as it shows her a world that is totally incompatible with her belief in the solidity and worth of the police force. It ended up getting her fired, and brought her to

the brink of death. Those contradictions are similar to those experienced by cops who get too close to the street life, and start taking a little action for themselves. Of course, Kate had the best of intentions—but so many people do.

POLICE PLACES AND PEOPLE

For your gaming pleasure, we have included a couple of the places that cops gather. These can be regular sets in a police-oriented game. We've also statted out Kate's father, Trevor. He can represent any lifer on or just off the force.

METRO DISTRICT POLICE STATION

Police Scanner: Dragnet in progress. Suspect is believed to be in the vicinity of the 12th street station. Secure area. Use caution.

—1.11 Somnambulist

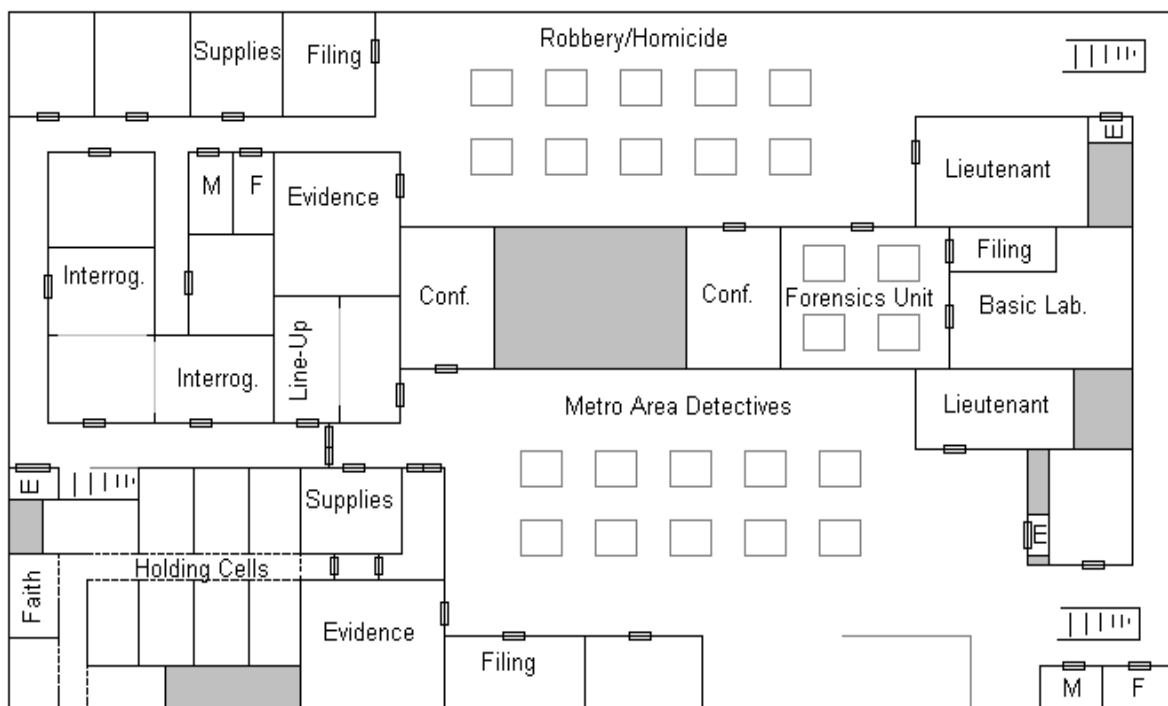
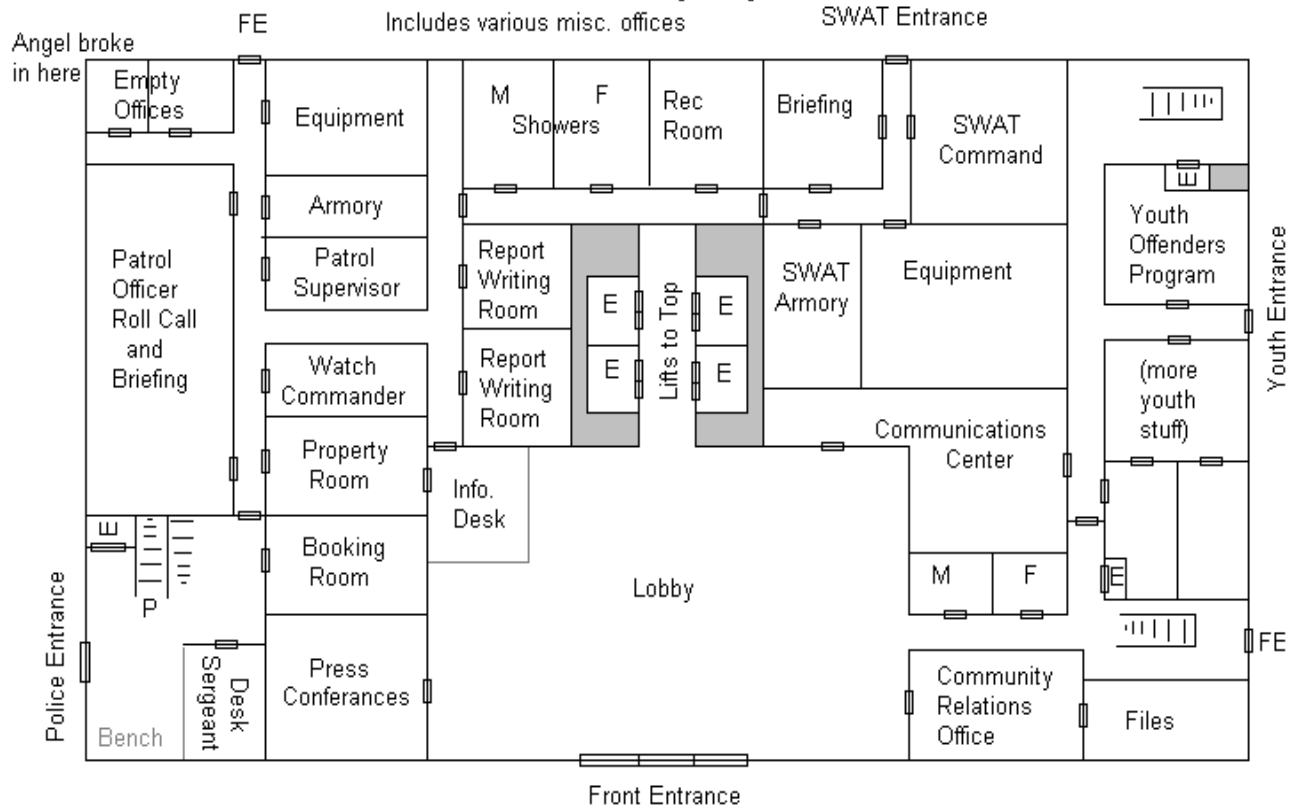
The Metro District police station is the huge edifice we've seen on screen during Seasons One and Two. It looks half police station, half medieval fortress, which is probably a good idea in this town. Admittedly the three- or four-story glass fronting probably won't help against invading demon hordes, but it does provide a bright work area for the detectives. Above the main block is a thinner tower with another eight stories in it, which contain Records and probably some of the upper hierarchy (perhaps even the heads of a couple of Bureaus, like the Special Operations Bureau and Detective Bureau). You could also station some SWAT teams in there without much trouble. Below street





Metro District Police Station

E Elevator
FE Fire Escape
P Stairs to Parking Garage



ANGEL

level is the parking garage, with ever-handly sewer access. As well as the impressive front entrance, we've seen a much smaller side door (in 1.19 Sanctuary), and Angel snuck into a back room with a bit of vandalism (in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity).

The *Angel* TV show never showed us what happens on the first floor, but we can reasonably locate a public information and complaint desk right inside the doors. A property room for handling lost and stolen goods, a press office to create those embarrassing TV spots, a desk sergeant, and an area for marshalling police officers in a more private area out back are all good additions.

We've seen a lot more happen on the second floor. This is where the detectives do their thing, including Kate (at least until she was transferred to "Siberia"—probably one of the community substations associated with the Area—between Seasons One and Two). It also has holding cells and various other offices. Best of all, it's only been shot up once on screen, in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity.

Another area on the second floor was seen when Kate conducted her search for "The Pope"—who turned out to be Penn in 1.11 Somnambulist (the fact that Angel described himself as a Pope several episodes earlier may have confused matters!). She worked with the Robbery-Homicide Division—probably even the Homicide Special Section that investigates serial killers and other high-profile cases. She was back there near the end of Season Two, after her career settled down (temporarily). Another open-plan office, it had the Forensics Unit, evidence storage, and some private rooms for putting up victim mosaics.

The Professional Standards Bureau also has offices someplace in the Metro station, as we see in 2.15 Reprise.

Naturally, most police stations are nowhere near as grandiose as this one. The one we see in 2.14 The Thin Dead Line is a good example—a lot smaller (though still two stories) and somewhat messier, it was an oasis of law in a bad neighborhood. At least until the Captain started sending zombie cops out on patrol.

]

THE BLUE BAR

Kate: My father is having this retirement party thing, with a bunch of his old cop buddies. I'm supposed to say a few words. It would be nice if there was at least one person there who wasn't, you know, armed.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

After a long day on the beat—or a long career on the force—the police of the Metro like to go down to the Blue Bar to relax. It might seem a bit strange that they'd choose a bar full of other cops to do that in, but for some of them, it's the only place they're likely to feel at ease. The last we heard, the bar was being investigated to see if anyone had spiked the drinks.

TREVOR LOCKLEY

Angel: Hello, Mr. Lockley. Congratulations.

Lockley: For what? All I did was live this long and not get shot.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

Kate's father has obviously had a hard life, but he seems intent on soldiering through, even if it means doing damage to the people closest to him. His wife died early and he was left raising a girl he didn't know what to do with. Kate loved him, but couldn't tell him of the pain she was in until his retirement party (thanks to a little magical prodding), and even then he turned it

Name: Trevor Lockley

Motivation: Do whatever works, and keep everyone at a distance

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 3, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 2

Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 13, Brains 11

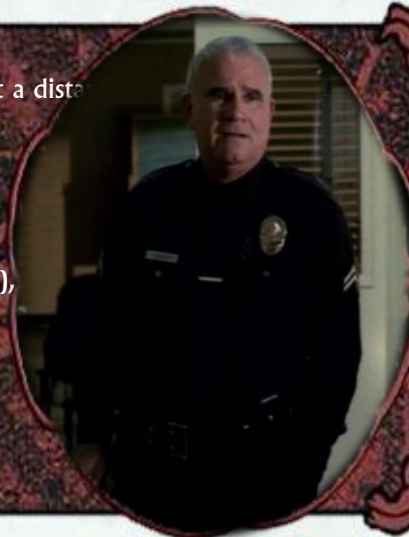
Life Points: 34

Drama Points: 3

Special Abilities: Nerves of Steel, Secret (Crooked cop), Emotional Problems (Fear of Commitment),

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Pistol	13	15	Bullet
Punch	13	9	Bash





back in her face. Worse, he supplemented his salary with dirty money. It got him killed in the end, and completely devastated Kate, leaving her no one to trust in at all.

If you're running a game with the better-looking Lockley, or cops in general, you might want to keep Trevor round for a bit longer. Maybe he didn't retire in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity, or Angel saved him in 1.15 The Prodigal. Either way, the core of his character—his bluntness, emotional indifference, and extra-curricular activities—should stay the same. Of course, if he's a member of the Supporting Cast, you probably want to change the nature of those activities to keep the players guessing.

OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT

Angel: Don't drive too fast. Lot of cops out there.

—2.18 Dead End

The LAPD isn't the only law enforcement game in town—this section looks at some of the others you might drop on the Cast. The main one is the FBI, because they are likely to get interested in the sort of activity that happens when street level action meets mystical forces. They also can make great protagonists (you might have seen a TV show along those lines). And the Feds ain't the only ones horning in either. From the National Guard to the anti-terrorist taskforces, we'll cover some of that ground. We'll also shake down the Coroners Office, whose jurisdiction is a little more post-mortem.

Once you get outside L.A., other organizations do the basic enforcement of the law. The Los Angeles County Sheriff handles similar types of jobs in the towns and countryside around L.A., and the Californian Highway Patrol rides the roads up and down the coast. While that won't have much effect on most games, you could introduce some confusion, and perhaps ethical dilemmas, if representatives of different jurisdictions are all trying to get their hands on the prize.

THE FBI

Wesley: When did she die?

Cordelia: Um, it doesn't say. Just that she was being tracked by federal authorities for bank robbery. She checked into the Hyperion in '52 and was never heard from again.

—2.2 Are You Now or Have You Ever Been?

They haven't shown up on screen in *Angel* yet, but FBI agents are definitely present in the L.A. area. You might bring them into a game to take over or advise on current police matters, or to instigate their own investigations—all in that inimitable Mr. Johnson cooler-than-thou style. They combine the clout of

traditional law enforcement agencies with the flexibility of P.I.s—not a coincidence, since the Bureau's first chief (William Burns, the predecessor of J. Edgar Hoover) had previously run one of the big private agencies, rivaling Pinkertons. Whether it's a few lone agents in search of the truth, or the attention of a full division, it's a force not to be underestimated. It's also likely to be even more politically torn and distracted than the LAPD.

The FBI Field Office in L.A. is located at 11000 Wilshire Boulevard and is HQ for almost 600 special agents. It has jurisdiction over much of Southern California, stretching roughly between Santa Maria and Palm Springs (yes, that does include Sunnydale). Of course, the whole point of the Bureau is that it's a Federal institution, and so investigates federal crimes. Could be as simple as a felon crossing state borders (the fact that Faith probably has a criminal record in Boston—at least—may account for her manhunt being assisted by Federal authorities, and Jay-Don, the vamp who came in from Nevada, was another possible FBI target). The FBI also polices computer crime, public corruption, and civil rights abuses such as the Rodney King incident. Particularly significant for Los Angeles, they investigate gang activity and drug trafficking, keeping a wary eye on the Mexican border. Another big one is bank robberies—it's a Federal offence and L.A. is, among other things, the bank robbery capital of the world (must be all those hard-up demons). The Bureau may also become involved in a nominally state matter, if it is a serious enough offence, or requires special training—for example, assault on children or serial homicide.

As we've seen in the *Buffy* TV show (or *X-Files* for that matter), the government knows a little about the supernatural—mostly that monsters exist and the populace has to be “protected” from the truth. Still, it's best to assume the great majority of FBI agents are as much in the dark as everyone else. Keeping a limit on the number of people in the L.A. office who know the nature and perhaps even the scope of the city's demon problem is realistic and allows you to bring in some “special” help every so often. The special agents (“G-Men,” while cool, is so *passé*) are more specialized and better trained than most police officers—that doesn't mean they necessarily have more sense or experience. They can pursue their investigations throughout the country without much trouble (give or take the paperwork of travel requisition forms), which makes them good Cast Members in campaigns that cover a lot of geography. There's not enough space here to go into detail if you want to take that option, but we can give you some hints, including the organization stats and the Special Agent Quality (see p. [?]). For high-level government conspiracy fun, we recommend you look into the *Buffy* RPG supplement **Military Monster Squad**.





L.A. Federal Bureau of Investigation

Total Value: 32 points.

Clout: Financial (In the money) (3), Governmental (Agency) (4).

Quarters: Huge (5), Multiple Locations (5), Physical Security (Excellent) (3).

Gear: Computers (Top-notch) (3), Laboratories/Research Facilities (Top-notch) (3), Medical Facilities (Top-notch) (3), Workshop/Repair Facilities (Advanced) (2), Law Library (4), Occult Archives (Minimal) (1), Special Training (2), Training Facilities (3), Vehicles (Fleet) (2), Weapons (Paramilitary) (3).

Alamitos, home of the 40th Infantry Division, 223rd Infantry Regiment and the 9th Weapons of Mass Destruction, Civil Support Team. There's also the 3rd Battalion, 160th Infantry in Inglewood—they have tanks!

The Guard is an unwieldy force, especially when the nature of the threat is obscure. If its chain of command is compromised (say, they are all taken over by a deceitful demigod), they could prove a well-equipped and resolute enemy. Another possible use for them in the game is as a background for one of the characters. Membership gives training, discipline, and a little money. It may be a chance to escape the despair of life in the slums without “abandoning” family and friends to full-time service, or just an occasional weekend adventure.

THE NATIONAL GUARD

Fred: Angel, it's Connor. He's here.

Angel: I know.

Lorne: And the National Guard, I think.

—4.20 Sacrifice

The National Guard is a branch of the armed forces composed mostly of civilians who serve on a part-time basis. They are organized by state, and may be called upon by the Governor (in cases of natural disasters or other localized emergencies) or en masse by the President. They have some 18,000 members in California alone, although they are somewhat remote from L.A., being more concentrated near San Francisco. The main base in Tinseltown is in the suburb of Los

L.A. Region National Guard

Total Value: 30 points.

Clout: Financial (Holding its own) (2), Governmental (Major contributor) (3).

Quarters: Medium (2), Multiple Locations (2), Physical Security (Military-level) (4).

Gear: Computers (Advanced) (2), Laboratories/Research Facilities (Basic) (1), Medical Facilities (Full-scale) (5), Workshop/Repair Facilities (Cutting edge) (4), Special Training (2), Training Facilities (3), Vehicles (Military/Exotic Vehicles) (5), Weapons (Full Metal Jacket) (5).







A good relationship with the Coroner's Office is always helpful for police officers, and invaluable for private detectives (that counts as a Governmental Contact in character creation). If you're playing a law enforcement game, a coroner may be a good character to add to the mix, diversifying the skill set in the Cast. If she has unresolved sexual tension with a vampire cop who agonizes over his loss of humanity—works for us!

OTHER INVESTIGATORY AGENCIES

Shopkeeper: Wow. People used to think that I was paranoid. I mean, don't get me wrong. I've still got the implants in my head. The CIA is still listening in. It just doesn't bother me anymore.

—4.19 Magic Bullet

A whole swathe of government agencies is just waiting to stick their noses into dangerous and complex situations. Some of them might be able to hold their own against demons and evil lawyers, most cannot. If you are running a law enforcement game, or one with close links to law enforcement, it's a good idea to keep these guys in mind. They could be called on to provide a lot of extra resources and backup, but might drag the investigators into petty disputes over jurisdiction and who has the biggest penal statute.

Don't bring in all of these people all at once, at least not without inciting some major crisis in L.A. Then again, that's just what happens (twice) during Season Four. Even when things were calm and everyone was under the influence of Jasmine, the national (and even international) organizations should be taking notice. For smaller events, it lends an air of reality to the game if a FEMA team shows up to coordinate disaster relief (such as from an earthquake or rioting), or Interpol becomes interested in demon tribes being smuggled across the Pacific.

Department of Justice: This is the overriding law enforcement agency of the United States government, controlled by the Attorney General. Most of the time, it appears in the guise of members of the sixty or so bodies that make up the department, rather than specific DoJ personnel. These bodies including the FBI, the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives), the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration), the U.S. Marshals Service and smaller bureaus like the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Executive Office for Weed and Seed (no, they don't send SWAT teams after badly managed farmland, but attempt to reduce gang activity and drug abuse in high-crime neighborhoods). According to 2.17 Disharmony, the DoJ also runs a "Division of Fraud and Bunco," with yet another handy web-searchable database.

Department of Homeland Security: Created in January 2003, the DHS is made up of previously existing bodies including FEMA (The Federal Emergency Management Agency), the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service), the Coast Guard, and Secret Service. This department is most concerned with border protection, emergency

Autopsy of the Living Dead

We know that vampires rise from the dead, usually after they've been "planted," but sometimes in the morgue itself. But what if they've been autopsied—can they survive that procedure? There is no conclusive evidence on the show, but based on what we've seen in both *Angel* and *Buffy*, it looks like they can.

It can't be easy. Having your chest sliced open (probably not in the Y-incision, since damage at the neck is better examined with a cut straight down the center) . . . having all your organs plucked out, the heart sliced open, the brain removed . . . it's enough to give anyone a bad day. At the end of it, all those organs, including the brain, are placed back in the chest cavity in no particular order. It'd take a lot of regeneration to recover from that. Still, given what we saw the bug-like creature doing to the vamp in 4.20 Sacrifice, it's not an unjustified assumption.

Best to assume that most of those that rise in the morgue do so pre-examination. When the department is busy (in Los Angeles, that's 24/7) incoming bodies will be put aside for a day or two, except in cases of an urgent murder investigation. That gives them a chance to slip out the back door. If they don't, feel free to assume that the moment of rising is significantly delayed, as the body tries to cope with the major trauma.

Another theory might explain what is going on. Perhaps a lot of the autopsy staff are in on the secret, or as we suggested above, demons themselves. Less conspiratorially, maybe traditions have developed differently in the Angelverse—and these happen to help a vamp's rebirth. For example, the brain could be put back in the skull (even if it tends to leak). That might be an interesting option to explore for those with contacts (or actual Cast Members) in the Coroner's Office. A few simple adjustments could cut back the rate of undead recidivism.





response, and terrorist matters. Given that leads in these areas are difficult to judge, they could justifiably stick their noses in any odd events. Basically, when things get beyond normal homegrown criminal behavior, feel free to bring these guys in (the events of Season Four would have been a good test for the new-born agency). It's doubtful that the borders they protect are trans-dimensional ones, but you never know . . .

Port of Los Angeles: The Coast Guard is responsible for maritime security concerns, but the Port of Los Angeles is a city-based authority that oversees the day-to-day handling of traffic through the port, located in San Pedro Bay, twenty miles south of downtown. The harbormaster that Angel threatens in 1.9 Hero would be a member of that authority.

The Central Intelligence Agency: The big time. CIA agents aren't likely to turn up in L.A. because they don't have jurisdiction Stateside. At least, that's what they *want* you to think.

Interpol: These gents aren't a U.S. agency, but may become involved in a street-level Series by acting through the DoJ. Based in Paris, with a National Central Bureau in all 180 or so countries that are members, Interpol exists to coordinate information and resources for the prevention of crime worldwide. It concentrates on the big problems such as international money laundering, drug cartels, slavery rings, and terrorist organizations (it also provides assistance, advice, and training to local police, but that is something the U.S. doesn't see the need for). Interpol may be called on for information if the characters are up against bad guys who are frequent travelers (for demons and vamps, more than a few decades in one spot usefully gets stifling). By the way, Romania is a member state of Interpol.

THE COURTS

Angel: This isn't about the law, this is about a little thing called life.

—1.22 To Shanshu in L.A.

Back in **Chapter One: Helping the Helpless** we gave a short spiel on the meaning and importance of the law. The courts system is tasked with turning all that theory into reality—providing the only formal mechanism we have for sorting out the good guys from the bad guys. The fact that they don't get it right all the time is a matter of public record, but it's a lot better than no system at all.

We're not going to cover every possibility for legal action for and against the citizens of Los Angeles, you'll be glad to know. Instead we'll go through the stages of the system, see how they match up what happened in *Angel*, and what you can do with them in your game.

POST-ARREST

Turlock: We can help you. Tell us what you know and we send you back down to holding. Stay quiet and my partner here will dent your skull.

—2.8 The Shroud of Rahmon

We've already covered arrest back in the police section (p. [?]). Once the suspect is in custody, he is taken back to the station, fingerprinted, and photographed. If deemed necessary, he may have to give a DNA sample or stand in a lineup for an eyewitness. He gets his phone call, usually to his lawyer, or to a service that will get him one.



ANGEL

According to the Supreme Court, a detainee (the arrested person) must be arraigned within 48 hours. That means he has to be brought before a court and the police must show enough evidence to justify the arrest. If they don't, the suspect goes free.

This is a critical time for both the investigators and the accused, and there are lots of dramatic opportunities as the two sides clash with the heat of a first encounter and a ticking deadline. Of course it is all supposed to be conducted in a civil fashion, but tempers can fray. Threats and intimidation can be made, usually by the police, sometimes by both sides. Such outbursts might be an effective method of cowering the opposition, but equally might prejudice the case and bring the whole thing tumbling down.

What the police want, of course, is a confession. As the saying goes, "anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law." In a dramatic game, that is often enough—proof is found, the bad guy's clever schemes fail, and he has no option but to admit his culpability. Realistically, a confession can actually prove more trouble than it's worth (see *The Poisoned Tree*, p. [?]). For that reason, many detectives try to gather as much independent testimony and evidence as possible first.

Establishing probable cause for arrest isn't the only thing that happens during arraignment. The judge formally reads the charges, asks for a plea, makes sure the suspect has a lawyer, and decides on bail conditions, if any. If no bail is granted, the suspect is taken to a county prison.

At this point, plea-bargaining commences. There are far too many crimes and criminal cases in a big city to allow each defendant a day in court (and trials usually take much, much longer). The suspect may be offered a smaller sentence or other compensation in return for a guilty plea. A common occurrence is that a crook is charged for a lesser offence if he reveals information about other criminals he has worked with. In this way,

police hope to subvert gangs from the inside, and get evidence on the leaders.

A good example of the process after arrest is shown in 1.6 *Sense and Sensitivity*, when Little Tony Papazian is brought in and charged. Admittedly, the events in the episode do deviate from reality in one or two places, but those are pretty obvious.

BRINGING IN THE LAWYERS

Kate (to Lindsey): I despise you, you and everything you represent. And when I say "represent" and "thing," I DO mean your clients.
—1.19 *Sanctuary*

Not all lawyers are soulless parasites trying to undermine the fabric of society and the very reality in which it resides. No, really. Some are just trying to do their job, see the truth come out, and make the system work.

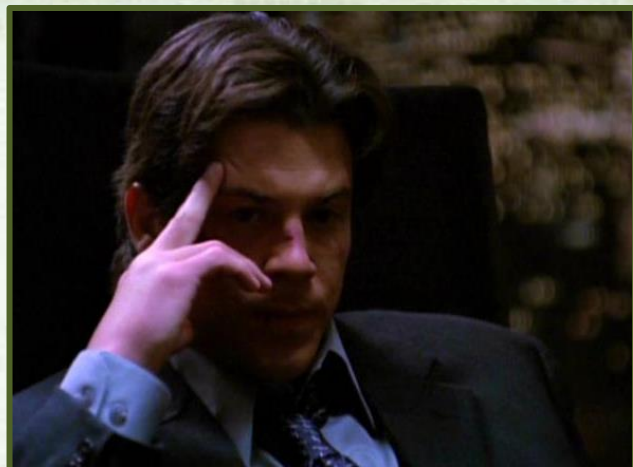
If an accused does not have a lawyer, he rectifies that pretty quickly once he realizes how much trouble he's in. If he can't afford a defense attorney (as determined by the judge at the arraignment), he gets access to free legal aid, with either a lawyer from the County Public Defender, or one from a registered law firm working *pro bono* (for the public good). This is purportedly the relationship that Vanessa has with Wolfram & Hart—obviously a way of hiding her exact ties with them. It is possible to eschew legal aid altogether and represent yourself but, as the saying goes, a person who goes that route has a fool for a lawyer.

On the other side of the table, felony cases are prosecuted by a member of the District Attorney's Office. In Los Angeles, this organization has almost 1000 deputy district attorneys who do the hard work in court. The office also employs its own investigators to track down the facts (could be an interesting choice for a character or campaign background).

Name: Prosecutor/Defense Attorney
Motivation: Nail the crook/Earn the fee and look good doing it
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 3, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 9, Brains 13
Life Points: 26
Drama Points: 0-2
Special Abilities: Wild Card (Law)
Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	9	—	Defense action
Punch	9	5	Bash





The Eternal Question

You might have a player who wants to take the role of a lawyer. That's an interesting challenge, and quite valid for a street game. Usually such characters are members of the County Public Defenders or otherwise represent those down on their luck, which usually entails working with P.I.s to uncover the truth and keep innocents from being railroaded into jail. These kinds of cases are a nice change from the high-level stuff that Wolfram & Hart usually gets involved in. If the "slumming" lawyer turns out to be particularly adept or particularly underhanded, have the W&H recruiters come a'calling with the old can't-refuse offer.

Whether using lawyers as Cast or Support Cast Members, there's one question that often seems to come up: Should a lawyer defend someone they believe is guilty? The obvious answer is "yes." Not only does the Constitution guarantee everyone the right of defense, but the purpose of the trial system is to get to the truth of the matter. Still, difficulties should arise, especially in an *Angel* game. What happens if the lawyer discovers his client is hiding the truth or subverting the system (by say jury tampering)? That forces difficult ethical choices and creates drama.

PRELIMINARY HEARING

Lindsey: Your honor, we request the court's compassion in this obviously mishandled affair. The District Attorney's attempt to link my client, Miss Brewer, with this brutal crime would be laughable if it weren't so sad.

—1.22 Blind Date

The preliminary hearing happens after arraignment, and puts the onus on the District Attorney to prove before a judge that the evidence justifies a full court trial. Usually this is a fairly staid affair, where the prosecution presents the minimum amount of evidence to prove it has a case. The defense generally makes no submission at all. Neither side wants to expose their full argument, since the main battle is still to come. Nonetheless, it is possible that the defense could undermine the evidence presented and get the accused released immediately.

This is exactly what happens in 1.22 Blind Date, when Lindsey convinces the judge that Vanessa Brewer need not stand trial for murder. He first appeals to the judge's compassion, but when Angel stymies that (with the shades gambit), resorts to "devious legal maneuvering," as Lee Mercer describes it.

This hearing is a good place to introduce drama to your game. It happens quickly after the arrest, doesn't take long to resolve, doesn't have the complications of a jury or witnesses, and may include underhanded maneuvering if you want it to. The big disadvantage, dramatically speaking, is that crucial turning points here favor the accused (though that could be a good thing if a Cast Member is up before the judge). If the defense wins, it's all over. If the prosecution prevails, it's just another step in the process. Even so, a loss for the defense here puts the suspect behind bars for months. That's a long time in an RPG, and certainly for anyone trying to get on board the fight for the Apocalypse.

Alternatives to a Preliminary Hearing

Misdemeanor cases do not require a preliminary hearing. For felony crimes under Federal jurisdiction, or for rare cases at the state level (as decided by the DA's office), the hearing might be held before a Grand Jury. This is essentially the same procedure, but a panel of citizens replaces the judge. Grand Jurors serve one-year terms, but are generally considered tools for the prosecution.

Grand Jurors are brought in particularly for cases investigating the conduct of local government officials.





THE TRIAL

Judge: What are your grounds for requesting a mistrial?

Gunn: You are, Your Honor. I'm asking that you recuse yourself from this trial.

Judge: The thin ice you are on is over very deep water.

—5.1 Conviction

This is the fun part of the game when the characters wander round in a expressionistic fugue, beset by forces beyond their comprehension, and then turn into giant cockroaches! Oh wait, that's that other Kafka novel.

The actual procedure of a court case is reasonably straightforward, if lengthy, especially for a felony trial, which is pretty much what we're interested in here. Things hopefully get under way within 60 days of the preliminary hearing, although complicated cases might require more preparation time. Once everyone is convened, the first step is to select a jury of twelve members. As each side can reject a certain number of potential jurors without giving a reason, they both try to stack the deck with those they think would be favorable to their argument (having telepaths in the courtroom would be handy for this). After several days of jury selection, each side summarizes their case, and presents evidence—the heart of the trial.

The prosecutor goes first, since it is his responsibility to prove his case (the defender does not have to prove anything, just show that the prosecutor's case isn't "beyond a reasonable doubt"). He presents the evidence he has through a series of witnesses. Those witnesses might have actually seen the crime (as victim, participant, or bystander), been privy to some knowledge regarding it, be members of the police or another investigative body who collected physical evidence after the fact, or expert witnesses who are not directly involved, but can provide an explanation for claims being made. For example, an expert witness on ballistics might explain to the jury what a certain exit wound means about the bullet that was fired.

Each witness answers the questions of the prosecutor, and then faces the defender who cross-examines him, hunting out weaknesses in his story. The prosecutor gets a final round of questions to emphasize his point, or attempt to repair damage done by the cross-examination, and then the next witness is called.

This generally goes on for days but occasionally takes weeks. Sometimes the flow is broken when the lawyers and judge discuss some point of law, such as whether a particular bit of evidence is admissible (this is even less fun for the jury, since they have to leave the chamber).

Once the prosecutor has finished with his last witness, the defense gets to do the same thing, bringing on evidence of his own. The prosecutor then has another crack at it—usually this is the last round, although if more evidence appears, the judge may allow the process to continue another time or two. When all's been said and done, the jury retires to decide their verdict. The accused is announced as guilty or non-guilty. If guilty, the losing party usually appeals and the whole thing gets bumped to a higher court.

The best way to depict a trial in game is with a series of small scenes that encapsulate the process and put all the exciting bits in one place. These usually revolve around the questioning of a vital witness—often the victim of the crime, but not always (difficult in a murder

Supernatural Process

Although out of this book's jurisdiction, Season Five reveals that the L.A. District Attorney's Office has its own shamans to foil jury rigging and other underhanded tricks by Wolfram & Hart. This shows that someone in officialdom knows a little more than they usually let on. It also opens up a myriad of plot possibilities.

One way of looking at this is to posit a small group of supernatural beings (demons or human mages) who like to see more due process in the system, but haven't revealed themselves broadly. They cast their mystic shields, or otherwise thwart people like W&H when they get the opportunity, but keep a low profile. That makes supernatural guardians available without changing mundane law enforcement policies or occult knowledge. The option probably makes more sense if you're playing a street game, where occult forces are more subtle.

Alternately, you could say that at least one branch of the city government is aware of the supernatural denizens of the city, and has put some on the payroll. If you're playing a game where magic is more of an everyday phenomena, or the brewing apocalyptic battle has hit CNN, this option may be the way to go. In fact, maybe the shamans only show up in Season Five because the government actually learned its lesson from the disasters of Season Four, and is scrambling to catch up. That would be an interesting change of culture to explore.





investigation, even in the Angelverse). Of course, if the characters are only peripherally involved (such as police officers called to the stand), one or two small scenes are all you can justify anyway. During this “on screen” time, the attorneys should turn on the fireworks.

If you want to portray a more protracted courtroom drama—not all of it, but to give a better feeling of the scope of the trial—the best way is to depict the personalities within the court room. There’s the judge (who hopefully tries to keep everything fair), the prosecuting and defending attorney, the accused, the jury, and those called up as witnesses. There may be others, depending upon the way things play out (if the court room is hijacked by demons or terrorists trying to prove the degeneracy of the American Way, that adds a whole new dimension to the mix).

In an ideal world, the personalities of those people don’t really matter—they each go through the motions to present the accumulated evidence in as efficient as way as possible. That rarely happens, if ever. Each has their strengths and weaknesses, things they will let slide and things they will relentlessly pursue past the point of good sense. It’s when those traits come out that things get interesting. There is clever legal argument, of course, and unexpected facts brought to light, but even they are mostly academic if you don’t get the reactions of the people most affected by them.

The Right of Appeal

Although there are often a number of options for appeal available after a court case is concluded, particularly if the accused has been found guilty, we recommend you do not go down that route. It just stretches things intolerably, both in and out of the game world. In *Angel*, the guilty party should take it like a man . . . and arrange a prison break instead.

Other decisions can stretch matters out as well. The exact punishment is often decided at a second hearing after the fact, and in special cases, such as the possibility of a death sentence, an extra trial might be held just to determine whether the sentence is appropriate. Again, quick is better.



Penal Institutions

Narwek: For the crime of assault against those judged to be your betters you are to be detained until our royal highness passes sentence upon you.

Gunn: I’m guessing community service is out. (hit hard in the stomach by the demon) Too bad. I really like those orange vests.

—2.20 Over the Rainbow

If all of that has gone badly, one or more characters in the game might end up in jail (at least if they were the ones being accused, although there are exceptions to this). At least they won’t feel lonely, considering almost one percent of the population of the United States is also behind bars.

As with everything else, a strict hierarchy applies in these matters. The LAPD runs the city jails for detaining people temporarily. If they remain in custody after a court hearing, they are given over the L.A. Sheriff’s Department to await a proper trial. The LASD manages five facilities, including the Mira Loma Detention Center for illegal immigrants, and the high security Men’s Central Jail—the largest prison in the free world. If found guilty of a misdemeanor, the prisoner could remain a ward of the County for up to a year (or perhaps get off with a fine). If guilty of a felony, he is transferred to a State Prison. There are thirty-three state Correctional Facilities in California, none of them all that close to L.A. (the closest California State Prison is in Lancaster, about fifty miles north). Faith was held in the Northern California Women’s Facility in Stockton, which has recently been deactivated, and most of the inmates moved to the Valley State Prison For Women in Chowchilla.

Detailing the vicissitudes of prison life would take a lot of pages. This section gives a brief run-down of prison conditions in the Angelverse, and the kind of stories that can be told inside the walls.





BEHIND BARS

Life inside is a little like life outside. It's nastier (pretty scary when you consider the alternative), but also more predictable. It's hard, but survivable for those who play within the rules. Those who fight it, or try to ignore it, find themselves brutalized by both the guards and other prisoners, often winding up broken in spirit if not in body. Even those with all the right connections often have to play to survive on a day-by-day basis.

In general, factions run the show. Prisoners of similar race (and sometimes religion) tend to congregate and look out for each other. Members of gangs in L.A. also stick together—the success of the police in recent years means that some heavy hitters could be among the prison population. Prisoners who don't rely on those groups better have Slayer-reflexes, or some other survival mechanism. Even within the factions, the powerplays can be deadly. The guards are yet another faction—and not always the most significant one. Because they are outnumbered, they generally keep the tension amongst everyone else simmering at a containable level, just to deflect aggression in other directions. Sometimes it's more serious than that—California prisons have seen cases of guards putting mixed-race groups in an exercise yard, and betting on the result.

INTERVIEWS

Faith: Well, uh, I hate to wet the paper for you, Wes, but I'm kinda unavailable right now. Maybe you want to check back in a few decades when my parole comes up.

—4.13 *Salvage*

In many criminal cases, a lot of potential witnesses and participants are criminals themselves. This is a good reason for one of those scenes with glass-separated booths and private phones. You might arrange things so one of the characters needs to interview someone in prison who was involved in the case, has knowledge heard on the prison grapevine, or is a regular contact who's had a run of bad luck (the only human in California who knows how to get into a particular demon bar could be behind bars for tax fraud).

Having a reason to go to the joint doesn't grant automatic access. The character must keep two people happy. One is the prison authority who allows him access. This is normally just a short bureaucratic procedure involving arranging a time and showing some ID. If the reason for the visit is somewhat dodgy (read: supernatural), some kind of Influence roll is probably going to be necessary.

The next obstacle is the prisoner himself. This is basically the same as handling any seedy contact—unless he's got a good reason to talk (like, the characters are the ones who have been hired to prove





his innocence), the entire trip will be a waste of time. Use the interrogation rules in this case (see p. [?]) or just require a good cover story.

An investigator need not meet the criminal face to face. He could write a letter, or convey information through the do-badder's legal representative. Face-to-face is still popular because it's the fastest and easiest way to arrange something without the conversation being intercepted (it's illegal for prison authorities to listen in on those meetings, but that doesn't mean it can't happen, of course). It's also more dramatic for a game. Not all prisons separate visitors from prisoners with glass. Some allow them to meet at a table under the (usually bored) gaze of Correction Officers. A visitor isn't supposed to pass items to the prisoner directly (they have to be given to the authorities first), but there are ways and means.

AN INSIDE STRAIGHT

If a character needs some information or resource inside a prison, but can't persuade anyone to come out and tell him, he might decide to get a bit closer to the source. Going undercover in a prison is dangerous and difficult—but then, it's also kind of exciting.

The easiest way to do it is with the permission of the authorities. Most wardens are extremely reluctant to allow any such thing to happen within their walls, fearing it will undermine the stability of their turf. Nonetheless, with sufficient Clout or some good Influence rolls, a gate pass could be gained. Even if the warden does approve, it's best if as few guards as possible are in on the plan—not everyone is that good an actor, and the swapping of information between guards and prisoners is not unknown.

If the character isn't in good with the prison administration, he could either try to get himself arrested—not a recommended course of action—or break in. That's easier than breaking out, but not by much. Remember that the character need not break in as a prisoner, either—he could impersonate a guard, or turn up as the new priest assigned to counsel the inmates.

Once inside, the daring young man is basically alone in a hostile environment, and subject to all the forces of prison life (with the possible exception of boredom). If he does manage to find what he is looking for, he has to get out again. The best bet is to have something set up already from the outside, but just revealing himself to the proper authorities is another route. They're not likely to be happy, but if the undercover dude has important enough information he might escape legal action (they're not going to just keep him there—unless they're the bad guys, hint, hint).



ESCAPE

Skip: And you're here to try to rescue this guy? But we're on the same side. Shouldn't you be helping to keep him in here?

Angel: I know, I know. Long story. Involves a girl. I don't like it any better than you do.

—3.2 That Vision Thing

Here's a classic. Maybe someone is imprisoned who shouldn't be (or even if they should), and the Cast wants to get him out. Maybe you've arranged things (or it just worked out that way) so that a Cast Member is in jail. A series of escape scenes is a great way to use the prison system in a short but memorable way. Once again though—not exactly easy.

It all depends on the level of security, the capabilities of the crew, and the opportunities that present themselves. The trick for the characters is to look for weak spots in the usual routine of the prison, or create an unusual incident and hope a weak spot reveals itself. Encourage them to do the unexpected. The easiest place to tunnel out of is through the warden's office at midday. Hijacking a helicopter and flying it into the compound is not subtle but has been known to work. Of course, for some characters a weak spot *is* the hardened glass and the three-story fall onto a police car.

HARD TIME

If one of the characters does end up in prison and escape seems unlikely—maybe he doesn't even want to escape, *a la* Faith—it's usually difficult to work into the plot (if you're thinking of setting up some *Hogan's Heroes* deal where the Cast ducks in and out whenever they want . . . well, it's your game). One method is to continue with a different character outside, bringing back the old character when the time is right. Yet again, Faith provides the perfect example.

Still, it's possible to set a game in the Big House. If everyone is on the same side of the bars, they can at least adventure together (you might even work up a mix of prisoners and guards in the Cast). What with all the different factions, hidden secrets, and daily brutality, there is plenty of scope for roleplaying. Even geography might not be a problem—if the prison has some dimensional weak spots, for example.





Add Demons and Stir

Almost every facet of life gets the supernatural treatment in *Angel*, but what we see of the prison system looks pretty true-to-life. Agents of the First Evil (from *Buffy*) did pay an inmate to attack Faith with a funky dagger in 4.13 *Release*, but that just confirms the lack of more mystic options open to it. If you are using the prison system as an on-going setting in your game, you have to make a few choices. The first option is to go all-human, with perhaps a few well-hidden demons as suggested in the Death Row section. If there is a significant supernatural element among the inmates, decide why knowledge of that hasn't spread beyond the prison walls. Perhaps instead it is the guards that are demons, or acting as a front for demons that want to prey off all that aggression kept in such concentrated form.

The supernatural presence doesn't have to be an ongoing thing—it could be a one-off that happens to coincide with the presence of the Cast (funny how these sorts of things happen, isn't it?) Take the example of the regular contact the Cast has to question, who just happens to be in jail. It's a waste setting up that scene and having no pay-off. Perhaps the contact gets word to the Cast that he's scared for his life, or you set up some other hint that something bad is about to happen. Perhaps the Cast turns up, and finds it all eerily deserted...

DEATH ROW

Kate (finding the grave of Officer Peter Harkes):

That one. Never saw the guy who shot him.

Angel: Catch the killer?

Kate: Oh, yeah. Not exactly a criminal genius.

He's up for the death penalty.

—2.14 *The Thin Dead Line*

The threat of death changes a prisoner's experience quite a lot. The condemned are kept away from others, and more closely guarded. More attention is paid to spiritual needs, if they are open to that sort of thing, and outsiders take a closer interest in the cases. Whether any of that helps in the long, slow wait until execution depends on your plotline. Since over 500 condemned inmates reside in San Quentin alone, no single one is necessarily going to stand out. Males are held in San Quentin, and females in the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla (it's obviously a town with a lot of prisons).

Death row is also the part of the prison system that is likely to attract the most supernatural attention, due to the nature of the criminals housed there, and the shadow of death that falls over them. An inmate might take any recourse to escape his fate, even if it means trading his soul for a fate even worse. In fact, he might be there as a result of a demon nestling in his guts, just waiting for the chair to set it free.

JUVENILE DETENTION

The incarceration of juveniles is a different matter than that of adults, although the lines are becoming blurred—some minors are tried as adults because of the severity of their alleged crime, and sometimes adult jails are used to hold under-age prisoners because of a lack of other options. In L.A., the incarceration of minors comes under the jurisdiction of the Detention Services Bureau, under the Los Angeles County Probation Department. This applies to people from age 12 to 25, but many are transferred to an adult prison when they reach 18. The DSB runs three "juvenile halls" for the secure accommodation of minors found guilty of criminal offences, the closest to the *Angel* crew being on Eastlake Avenue. There are also a number of ranches and camps spread about California for those under lesser security.

OTHER PUNISHMENT

Prison is by no means the only option when it comes to punishing the guilty. There's also community service (usually doing work cleaning the State's highways, or something equally bracing). Home imprisonment is





also an option for those considered a low flight risk or ill of health, for example. In these days of budget shortfalls, judges are particularly open to cheaper options, and simply fining the criminal large sums of money may be acceptable—although not if the criminal doesn't have large sums to start with. This is one way to keep your group together if one of them gets into a little legal bother.

HOSPITALS

Doctor: Well, she is having a psychotic episode. We've done a CAT scan. There is no organic damage that we can see, but we can't seem to sedate her.

Angel: Cordelia, can you hear me? Cordelia! Cordelia!

Doctor: We're trying a number of different drug therapies. Do you know if she has any allergies?

Angel: I don't think so. Drugs won't help her.

Doctor: Well, something better.

—1.22 To Shanshu in L.A.

There're a whole lot of different hospitals in L.A., from public facilities run by the Department of Health Services, to expensive private clinics and tantric retreats (mostly that's just doctors and nurses). If a character gets shot, knifed, caught in an explosion, or inundated by agony-inducing visions, feel free to whip out at least one of those options. It's best if the character has health

insurance—finding a place that will accept non-emergency patients without insurance is going to be harder than getting Lorne to vacation in Pylea.

In the game, hospital admittance could be a temporary arrangement for those low on Drama Points. The *Angel Corebook* covers the rate of healing under medical care (see p. [?]). Obviously, there's no need to limit hospital visits to that. Hospitals are centers of birth, research, and restoration, but they are also collections of pain, disease, and desperation, all of which are much more useful for an *Angel* game. As with other such places, demons are likely to gather to feed. Also, injured criminals might require police guard, or potential witnesses might need to be protected from attack in a place not designed with a defensive perimeter. Often it's the doctors who cause the most trouble, particularly if they dabble in the demonic arts (see Dr. Meltzer from 1.4 I Fall to Pieces, Dr. Melman from 2.18 Dead End, and Dr. Gregson from 3.1 Heartthrob).

PARAMEDICS

These are the true heroes of the streets of L.A., driving into dangerous territory at all hours, with no protection, to save whatever lives they can. Some find themselves ambushed when responding to an emergency call by those trying to get drugs and other medical equipment. Others find themselves protecting their patients from continued attack (see 2.14 The Thin Dead Line).



ANGEL

Name: Paramedic
Motivation: Save lives, get some sleep
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 2, Int 2, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 11, Brains 12
Life Points: 26
Drama Points: 2
Special Ability: +3 Brains when treating injuries

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Punch	11	6	Bash



Paramedics can be either employed by the DHS, or by a private company licensed by the L.A. County. They are usually young (either that or they have some supernatural advantage to cope with the stress and lengthy shifts), and hope this will lead to a more stable position in a hospital or clinic. Each requires EMT-I certification, which verifies competency in treating a range of injuries from soft tissue to musculoskeletal and neurological. They also get to deliver emergency babies and solve embarrassing problems that maybe didn't require a 911 call in the first place.

FIRE STATIONS

We haven't actually seen many examples of the Fire Department on screen (1.22 To Shanshu in L.A. is your best bet), but fire, explosions, or wayward kittens may call them into your game. The L.A. County Fire Department is divided into various Battalions that encompass several Fire Stations each. Totaling almost

200, each Fire Station usually has two or three fire trucks on standby. The Fire Department also has helicopters available for those hard to reach areas, including brushfires (whose idea was it to import all those highly flammable gum trees?). The helipad is about 12 miles north of Hollywood.

Industrial fires or the presence of hazardous material generally require further specialized equipment, such as particular chemical retardants and protective gear. All that might take a bit longer to arrive on the scene.

FIREFIGHTERS

Like police officers, firefighters are among those who actually go *toward* the disaster area. Although no particular qualifications are needed, stringent tests are conducted to evaluate a candidate's knowledge, background, as well as his physical and emotional fitness. Once part of the force, constant training, on-going readiness, and frequent danger are the norm.

Name: Firefighter
Motivation: Protect people and property
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 11, Brains 11
Life Points: 40
Drama Points: 2
Special Ability: Fast Reaction Time, Hard to Kill 2

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Axe	11	22	Slash/stab, used two hands
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Punch	11	8	Bash





OTHER SERVICES

Gavin: There are other levels to this, Lilah. Avenues of interest I have . . . one of them being—does Angel even exist?

Lilah: Are you getting metaphysical on me?

Gavin: No. The guy has no social security number, no taxpayer ID, no last name as far as I know. How can he go down to the building department, or anywhere else in officialdom for that matter? He's the rat and we're the maze. Don't you want to see what he'll do next?

—3.4 *Carpe Noctem*

We've only covered a few of the levels of officialdom here—there's a whole lot of government out there. We'll mention a few more just to round out the chapter but checking your local phone book will reveal many more than you could work into a month of *Angel* RPG sessions. While the city Personnel Office, the county Planning Board, the state Freshwater Wetlands Appeals Board, or the U.S. National Labor Relations Board may not seem like the source of any exciting stories, we can't say where your fevered plotline imaginings will take you. An innocuous-sounding title could never hide a threatening conspiracy or a demon infestation, right?

The following agencies don't necessarily save lives, but they keep everything running in a (relatively) smooth fashion. The best use for most of these is as contacts for the characters, so we'll cover what the agencies might be able to tell them—even if they don't want to hear it.

Social Security Administration: These Federal government people are responsible for paying benefits for retirement, disability, medical care, and a variety of other reasons. They also administer the whole Social Security Number (SSN) business. Although a reasonable level of security is built into the system, the SSN was never meant to be a sure-proof means of identification. As a result, various scams using fake or stolen SSNs are a lot easier to pull off than they might be. The Administration is a great source of all sorts of information, especially if a character can get a contact to pass him things unofficially.

Department of Public Social Services: Not to be confused with the above, Social Services is a state agency. It provides benefits for needy Los Angelinos, such as food stamps, cash aid, foster family arrangements, and a range of medical services. They are both a great source of information about people who have gone through various welfare programs, and also likely to appear at the end of adventures, if not sooner, to take care of anyone caught in the crossfire. Of course, sometimes they get more than they bargained for. It was Social Services who took in Ryan,

the boy from 1.14 *I've Got You Under My Skin*, and you can bet they're going to have a hard time keeping him under control. And if that ain't an ideal adventure hook, well . . . what we have here is a failure to communicate.

Department of Motor Vehicles: A local agency and an excellent source of info, the DMV is good place for contacts. If an investigator can't track someone down through social services or the DMV, particularly in car-packed L.A., somebody's definitely hiding something. As Cordelia says in 1.11 *Somnambulist*, the DMV is a little stalker-phobic, but the right contacts should get around that.

Department of Water and Power: Another local agency with a good set of records on the strangest people (even Caritas is connected to the main utility lines). This group is particularly useful in L.A. for a number of reasons. Water is scarce, and therefore valuable (the movie *Chinatown* was all about the amount of water reaching L.A., for example). The electricity supply has been pretty jumpy of late as well. The other end of the water system is also of interest—there's a lot of strange things down in those sewers. If any public department knows something about the extent of supernatural penetration in the city, it's likely to be the crew responsible for the sewers.

Internal Revenue Service: It's debatable whether Lorne has ever submitted a tax return, and that's probably the case for vast amounts of the underworld (demonic or otherwise) in L.A. (Russell Winters a notable exception). But just about everywhere else, the IRS wields power that is hard to ignore. Just ask Cordelia.



WAR ZONE

Angel: I want to find those kids. I don't think any of them have homes. They're probably living together somewhere.

Wesley: How many are there?

Angel: I'm not sure. Six, seven, maybe more? A couple of them couldn't have been more than sixteen.

Cordelia: God. Twenty minutes ride from billionaires and crab puffs—kids going to war.

—1.20 War Zone

Los Angeles is a city of extremes.

It's no good being rich or poor—you have to be very rich or very poor. That's certainly obvious in the Angelverse, where power and privilege are matched by struggle and mere survival among the most destitute.

This chapter is about degradation and despair in the poverty-stricken areas of L.A. It's a bit of a strange amalgam, since the infamous crime-stricken L.A. areas of Compton, South Central, Watts, and the like are conspicuous by their absence on the *Angel* show. Instead of those densely populated areas of gang activity and people trying to get on with their lives, we see empty stretches of urban wilderness, with a few small groups of vigilantes shielding their community (what there is of it) from vampires and other nasties.

We're going to treat things a little more realistically than that, but still give you Directors all the tools needed to replicate the world of Gunn and Justine. Oh, and we cover crime syndicates, drug abuse, and homeless shelters along the way for those looking to move in different directions.

CHAPTER 6



GANGSTA PARADISE

Gunn: Your thing hurts everybody! Why do you think nobody cares they're clamping down on this neighborhood?

Jackson: 'Cause they're a bunch of racist pigs.

Gunn: There is that. And there's people like you.

A thug with a gun, keeping the cycle going.

Jackson: Not my problem.

—2.14 The Thin Dead Line

"Gang" is a bit of a loaded word in Los Angeles—it usually refers to the large and loosely connected affiliations of youth spread throughout the city (mostly in the poorer parts). These groups generally share ethnicity and a common feeling of oppression and boredom. There are untold numbers, with a complex web of alliances and feuds between them. The big players are the Crips, marked by the color blue, and the Bloods, marked with red. The Crips were the first, but then a rebellious offshoot joined up with a whole lot of other gangs to create the Bloods. The rivalry runs deep and casualties number hundreds, though things are quieter now than they were in the '80s and early '90s.

The majority of the African-American gangs agreed to a truce after the '92 riots, using a document based on an Arab-Israeli peace treaty. While perhaps not the best of role models, this peace has been intermittently kept. The Hispanic, Asian, and Caucasian gangs were not part of the process, and kept on much as they were. Indeed, Hispanic groups contain over half the gang population

of the city, and originated many of the practices now common across all gangs. Even so, they haven't caught the public imagination in the same way the Crips and Bloods have. Large-scale foreign organizations such as the Yakusa and the Mexican Mafia (concentrated in the prison system) also have interests in L.A.

Most gangs aren't criminal organizations in a strict sense—many members join just because it's often the only social option available. It's a way of tagging territory and belonging to something bigger than the individuals concerned. In a very real sense, the gangs empower minorities in a way impossible to achieve by solo action. On the other hand, a great deal of the crime on the streets is perpetrated and protected by the gang hierarchy. Smuggling is the big earner, including drugs, guns, and people. Violent crime and prostitution are also up there on the hit parade. The big irony of all this (and it's the same with most ethnic crime syndicates from the tongs and La Cosa Nostra on down) is that vast amounts of the violence are directed inwards. The drugs and guns that come into L.A. entrench the slum conditions and do more harm to the occupants than anyone else. Although the '92 riots were sparked by the acquittal of white police officers in the Rodney King beating, much of the damage was directed at Korean businesses and an opportunistic settling of scores between gangs. Were the heavily armed gangs of L.A. to erupt in an organized uprising against authority, it would take a lot more than a few days for that to settle down.



ANGEL



All this social theorizing and background is fine and dandy, but much pretty much none of it has shown up on *Angel*. Gunn's gang cares more about keeping themselves and their community safe from vampires than what colors they're wearing (and a quick check shows they do have a healthy mix of blue and red, amidst a lot of black and various other hues). As we've said, the nature of the slums shown on the TV show is quite different from that of the majority of L.A. If you are going for a more realistic setting, you might want to bring some of the gang activity into it as well. You could do that pretty much as is, or go for a more metaphorical approach. *Angel*'s L.A. is made up of a wide variety of demon species intermingling in uneasy truce, but with frequent murderous conflict along ethnic lines. As such, the metaphor isn't buried too deeply. You just need to widen the scope a little and draw some more parallels. (It'd be interesting to speculate on what the vamp population makes of the Bloods in the *Angel*verse, for example. Or maybe, as the gang name suggests, they're one and the same.) As always when you use real organizations in a game (especially ones involved in group identity—not to mention frequent gun battles), you might need to make sure you're not offending anyone by trivializing or caricaturing current events. Poll your group and handle it as they suggest.

GUNN'S GANG

Rondell: Word's out, brother. Vamps know better than to even cross Venice Boulevard these days. Crew's as tight as it's ever been, even back in your day.

—3.3 That Old Gang of Mine

The description and stats for Gunn's gang were given in the *Angel Corebook* (see p. 170) and there's not much more to add (the overwhelming focus of the show has obviously been on Gunn himself, not his crew). Episodes like 1.20 War Zone and 3.3 That Old Gang of Mine show their usual haunts—abandoned industrial areas that they can keep a tight perimeter around. There's usually about ten or so in the core group, but more are spread out keeping an eye on different areas of town. When any sort of demonic presence makes itself known (usually by feeding on the natives), these scouts call for back-up, which arrives complete with pick-up truck and stake cannon.

A couple of folks stood out in Gunn's gang. The first, of course, was his beloved sister Alonna, who saw the trap Gunn was falling into by fighting the monsters, but ended up being a casualty herself. She was turned and Gunn was forced to stake her. Other named members were Chain (who wielded a chain with a spiked ball), Bobby (who manned the stake cannon), Beck and James (gang scroungers), and George (Rondell's back-up). Most of these folks can be represented using the Gang Member Quick Sheet (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 180).





Two gang members were more important. Gio was the newcomer that caused so much trouble for the group in 3.3 That Old Gang of Mine. He had come from Miami, claiming he'd heard of Gunn and wanted to check things out in L.A. The actual story of why he left was never revealed, but thanks to Lorne we know it involves the betrayal of a girl. Once Gio did get to town, he started hanging with the gang and subverting their mission into one of killing any demon for kicks. That, combined with Gunn's guilt over leaving his old buddies behind, led to a nasty siege in Caritas, and eventually Gio's head been chewed off by a big morphing demon. There's got to be a moral in there somewhere.

Rondell was the other "main" gang member. He took over the crew after Gunn abandoned them. He seemed to have his head on straight and kept on trying to do the right thing (when he wasn't being manipulated by Gio). With a few modifications, Gio's Quick Sheet can be used for Rondell, or any other "play-a" gang member.



Gunn's Territory

Based on dialogue from the show, we can work out a rough approximation of the territory Gunn and his gang patrolled. It's quite large, reflecting an ambition that we've seen time and again from Gunn. The main area of concentration was south of Venice Boulevard, stretching the miles between the Harbor Freeway and Crenshaw Avenue, with watches extended up through the Garment District towards the center of town. This isn't too far away from the original A.I. headquarters, though we suspect the area doesn't get too post-apocalyptic until south of the Santa Monica Freeway. If you're interested in setting scenes in this stretch of urban wilderness, you may want to devise a reason for its apparent desolation in the Angelverse, near such highly populated suburbs. It could be some great accident has left psychic scars on the area, or perhaps there is some sort of more mundane contamination. Maybe it's an industrial area that simply withered away to better competition elsewhere, and no one has bothered to rezone it. Or maybe the populace simply stays indoors of an evening!

South of Gunn's area the industrial wasteland continues, but with a greater demonic presence—this is where Jenoff's Casino can be found, for example. Beyond that, the haunted landscape probably fades into the more crowded life of the ghettos, though you can extend it as much as necessary for your game.

Name: Gio

Motivation: Kill demons, show everyone he's #1

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 3, Dex 4, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 15, Brains 11

Life Points: 43

Drama Points: 2

Special Ability: Contacts (Criminal) 2, Hard to Kill 3, Natural Toughness, Secret (Miami events Mental Problems (Severe Delusions—all supernaturals are evil), Mental Problems (Severe Recklessness)

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	15	—	Defense action
Crossbow	15	20	Slash/stab
Punch	15	10	Bash
Stake	15	10	Slash/stab
(Through the heart)	12	8	x5 vs vamps
Submachine Gun	15	16	Bullet, autofire and burst





ORGANIZED CRIME

Kate: Supervisor Caffrey shot himself?

Spivey: It happens.

Kate: In the back of his head? He wrapped himself in plastic and he locked himself into the back of his car?

Spivey: He'd been depressed.

—1.6 *Sense and Sensitivity*

As far as traditional organized crime characterized by Italian and Jewish gangsters goes, L.A. has gotten off lightly. The glory days for this crowd were the first half of last century, with figures like Johnny Rosselli, Jack Dragna, and Mickey Cohen coming across from Chicago and New York to capitalize on the expanding population and film industry (and to soak up some rays). Since Cohen's downfall, the gangs and drug runners have stepped into the spotlight. Las Vegas is a better refuge for the wiseguys, though even that is a lot cleaner—and more varied in the type of criminal it does attract—than it used to be. That doesn't mean this breed of organized crime has disappeared completely, it's just on a smaller scale and struggling against increased competition and more effective federal authorities (legal tools provided by RICO, the Racketeer Influence Corrupt Organizations Act, are aimed at getting mob bosses rather than the flunkies).

Once again breaking with reality, the main human crime lord we've seen on *Angel*, Little Tony Papazian, is in this mold (complete with a sidekick from *The Sopranos*). Kate had been hunting him for some time,

and in 1.6 *Sense and Sensitivity*, she got him. Whether someone else from the same organization stepped up when Tony was dropped in jail is a matter for your campaign. Tony could also continue to run things from behind bars (though after being abandoned by Wolfram & Hart for his indiscretions, he seems to be short on potent friends).

In a similar vein, Magnus Bryce from 2.6 *Guise Will be Guise* was a syndicate boss (see p. [?]). The gangsters that Doyle was involved with, particularly in 1.5 *Rm w/a Vu*, could well have a similar hierarchy (perhaps even reporting to Jenoff, see p. [?], if you want to tie things up nice and neat). All this shows that you don't need Italian accents and the rule of *omertà* to have some level of organized criminal activity—criminals flock together to arrange jobs, move the merchandise, or simply hang out, often without much consideration of the underlying tensions that encourage a lot of gang membership. What style they have probably comes from watching *The Godfather* and *Pulp Fiction* a couple of times each, rather than any handed-down traditions. Underneath the trappings, regular mob guys can be represented by the Hardened Criminal Quick Sheet (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 180).

Mob activity covers some of the same rackets as gangs (particularly prostitution and drugs), but also branches out to extortion, forgery, illegal gambling, and blackmail. Because they are better entrenched in the American system—or perhaps they just act like they are—they have more luck building relationships with those higher up the political hierarchy (Governmental and Financial Clout, in game-speak).





As far as Mafia families go, the traditional structure places a Don at the top (think Marlon Brando with a throat infection) with a couple crews doing the dirty work, each run by a capo with a number of soldiers directly under him. The Don may have a consigliere to advise him, and an underboss to help run things. The crews are made up of various thugs, including those who have reached the coveted status of made man (aka wiseguys), after being ritualistically welcomed into the family. A variety of other positions exist throughout the organization, often with tenuous links back to the family, from the pushers and prostitutes to a variety of enablers. People who are part of the network but not made men are known as associates. Above this all, a network of families sometimes coordinate national activities—at least when they're not killing each other.

LITTLE TONY

Tony: I want my phone call.

Kate: You've got to cancel your suite in Yerevan? You think you can still get your deposit back?

Tony: You've been running after me for a long time, haven't you sweetheart? If I'd known how bad you wanted me, I might have let you catch me a little sooner.

Kate: If I'd known how badly you needed the exercise, I might have let you run a little longer.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

We don't find out a lot of specific detail about Tony and his merry mob of made men. As Kate says, he's a bad guy, and has been involved in a long string of crimes, most prominently the murder of County

Supervisor Caffrey. It may be there's not a lot of depth to the organization, based on information from Angel and Doyle's interrogation of Johnny Red (yet another colorful character). If Tony was out of the picture for any period of time, it seems his thugs would just move on somewhere else. That probably means he only has a single crew under him, without much promotional prospects in the ranks. As always, you can pad things out more than is seen on screen—there's only so much information about someone that can be conveyed in a single episode. If you make Tony (or someone like him) a regular villain, you definitely want to fill in more of the blanks. The stats in the sidebar place him as a capo in a large but thinly spread family. Or he could be a renegade, setting up his own shop far from those nosy Don-types. That would put him in a tenuous position with the families, unless he showed some serious backbone and significant victories quick.

Papazian Crew

Total Value: 8 points.

Clout: Criminal (Major Connections) (3), Financial (Holding its Own) (2), Governmental (Influential) (2), Supernatural (Arcane) (1).

Quarters: Medium (1), Physical Security (Good) (2), Supernatural Security (Believers) (1).

Gear: Computers (Basic) (1), Medical Facilities (Basic) (1), Workshop/Repair Facilities (Advanced) (2), Vehicles (Fleet) (2), Weapons (Gun Bunnies) (1).

Name: Little Tony Papazian
Motivation: To do what he damn well wants
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 11, Brains 12
Life Points: 45
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 5, Mental Problems (Severe Cruelty), Mental Problems (Severe Recklessness), Natural Toughness, Resources (Wealthy).

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Pistol	11	14	Bullet
Punch	11	8	Bash
Shotgun	11	22	Bullet





PROS AND CONS

Angel: Breaking and entering is such a negative term.

—3.7 Offspring

The preceding sections aside, an awful lot of disorganized crime happens in Los Angeles. These folks range from those who use guns to make withdrawals from the local 7-11, to pimps, pushers, hackers, and others who think no night on the town is complete without a bit of assault and battery. These people don't have to be incompetent—master cat burglars and serial killers count—but the vast majority of them are, driven by little more than their own pain and aggression, and given some measure of protection by the fact that the LAPD is always stretched very thinly.

We haven't seen too many of this sort of characters on *Angel*, at least ones that are human. The gangsters who came together to rob the Shroud of Rahmon are likely lone operatives who work for whatever crew is offering the best incentive that week. That's a good way for people to specialize in a particular line of work (safecracking, for example), and get enough different jobs to make it worthwhile. Gwen Raiden is another great example of the lone operative, but we'll leave her for next chapter.

On a smaller scale, one thing we have seen is the pain caused by crimes within couples and families, including stalkers (1.4 I Just Fall to Pieces), abusive partners (1.3 In the Dark), and parents (2.4 Untouched). As Cordelia says, there's not enough yuck in the world.

ROCK BOTTOM

Angel: You're not afraid of me?

Anne: Well, I've seen worse things since. A fourteen year old girl sitting in her own blood after a rough trick and dozens of people just walking right by . . . so no, vampires, demons, even lawyers pretty much don't impress me.

—2.12 Blood Money

A lot of people come to Los Angeles with stars in their eyes, looking for fame and fortune, or just sunshine and good shopping. A lot of people born in the city grow up wanting a break, a chance to experience the wealth they see around them and on their television screens. For most of them, it ain't going to happen.

All that crime and desperate living doesn't just happen without consequences. Pain, destitution, addiction, alienation, crippling injuries, and insanity spread through the city. Some people just fall away into nothingness, with no one left to care that they died or that they ever lived.



STREET LIVING

Sunny: Lots of folks squat here. Most are cool, but if a fat guy wearing furry slippers asks you to play "teddy bear in the hole," just tell him to get lost.

—3.20 A New World

In the real world, a quarter of a million people, give or take, live on the streets of L.A., scavenging for food and accommodation where they can. From runaways to laid-off workers, victims of crime and slaves to addiction, individuals and whole families, they permeate the city, mostly unseen.

In the Angelverse, things are likely to be as bad, if not worse—though considering the vampire and demon population, the number of surviving homeless could also be a lot less (hardly a good thing). The largest concentration of homelessness we've seen is at the East Hills Teen Shelter, which is covered later (see p. [?]). It's probably more instructive to look at Connor's actions after he returned fully-grown from Quor-toth. *Angel* is all about the metaphor, and the image of a disaffected youth, bedding down in dingy rooms with little understanding of how the world works, running from a family he does not trust, is as powerful a metaphor as you could want. Within hours of arriving he had his first taste of the most desperate side of the city, going up against the dealer and all-round bastard Tyke, and befriending Sunny, who showed him kindness before dying messily in a bathroom with a needle in her arm (this is all from 3.20 A New World, if it's not ringing a bell). Over Season Four, he finds out about street life in more depth—the degradation of his surroundings plus the manipulations of his family lead him to strap explosives to his chest and try to take a lot of people with him.

Sunny herself is obviously another good example. She came from an abusive home, but was bearing up reasonably well, as long as she got her fix. Without it, she was reduced to thievery and humiliating acts, and when she got the chance to grab Tyke's stash, she took enough of it to kill her. She could stick around longer



ANGEL

Name: Sunny Motivation: Find a friend, and get more "medicine" Critter Type: Human Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 1, Int 2, Per 2, Will 2 Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 10, Brains 10 Life Points: 22 Drama Points: 2 Special Abilities: Addiction (Heroin, heavy), Contacts (Criminal) 1.				
Maneuvers				
Name	Score	Damage	Notes	
Dodge	10	—	Defense action	
Pigsticker	10	3	Slash/stab	
Punch	10	5	Bash	

in your game, if you want a guide to the underbelly as seen by one of its inhabitants. If Connor is also involved, it might change his circumstances somewhat to have a stable friend (and lover).

DRUGS

Vampire: Dude, whatever you're on . . . I'll give you the girl for a gram.

—4.14 Release

Drugs aren't exclusive to the downtrodden. In fact, a discussion of drugs could be slotted into any number of different areas of this book. The drug trade in Los Angeles extends through almost every section of town, from the destitute to the ultra-rich, from suburbia to Hollywood, within the ranks of the police and among traditional demon tribes. Still, considering the effects and prevalence of heavy usage among the hopeless, Rock Bottom seems as good a place as any.

Drugs have already been introduced through the Addiction Drawback (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 29), where we discussed the Addiction Point Value (APV). We'll go through a few more possibilities here, but still keep it cinematic. The basic rules remain unchanged, but some substances do different things altogether.

Morphine: This opiate is like heroin. It's a lifesaver in medicine, and can be used to wean an addict off the hard stuff. Still, morphine can be addictive if taken for too long. (APV 3)

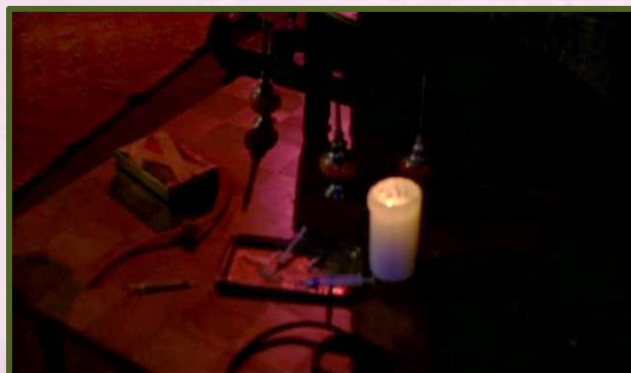
PCP/Angel Dust: This is bad, bad stuff, and relatively rare these days (even so, it can make a good cover story for supernatural activity if needed). PCP induces a temporary Strength increase (□2) along with delusions of power. It also brings on psychosis, often leading to random attacks on others, and self-mutilation. (APV 6)

Doximall: This fictional drug is what Rebecca Lowell gave Angel in 1.17 Eternity. It was a tranquilizer that

produced feelings of bliss, and brought forth Angelus. We're guessing that the gypsy curse wasn't invoked (it wasn't a permanent condition), but the drug simply suppressed Angel's consciousness enough for Angelus to seize control. If that's the case, it's a very interesting means to bring Angelus into a plot for a short time and without sweating the whole bliss thing. (APV 4)

Ecstasy: A favorite at dance parties, this drug produces a feeling of energy and euphoria. It also creates restlessness, dehydration, decreased sexual performance, and the perception of increased tactile sensitivity. The more (and more frequently) it's used, the more is required to feel the effects. If taken frequently enough, it also stops the brain producing serotonin on its own, leading to acute depression, and more Ecstasy use. Strictly speaking, not physically addictive, but its psychological components mimic the effects of physical addiction pretty convincingly. (APV 4)

Rohypnol: This is basically valium x10—it's often used to spike someone else's drink to make them lose their ability to resist assault, but it is also considered a party drug and used voluntarily. It has the nice (if you're a bad guy or are desperate to forget) property of blocking the memory. Treat a dose as a poison Strength 3 that affects Willpower rather than physical stats (only





roll once). Imbibers who push past the sedative effects find it acts as a stimulant, keeping them awake while still blocking memory. That essentially turns users into walking ids. Not pretty. (APV 2)

Blood: Not much of a drug for humans, but it could be considered one for vamps, particularly those trying to walk the straight and narrow. You can introduce some nice dramatic tension in the most unlikely places by treating blood as physically addictive substance for bloodsuckers. Likewise, being bit by a vampire could also be addictive to humans (see Season Four *Buffy*). (APV 4)

Orpheus: An entire Episode could revolve around this one (in fact—4.15 Orpheus). We're not going to try and duplicate the effects of Angelus and Faith's pilgrimage down Flashback Lane in game terms—that was a half-mystical journey that depended upon the identity and needs of the people involved. Any use in your game will depend in a similar way on your Cast. In short, Orpheus is an enchanted drug that humans take (or, more often, get given) before vampires feed off them. It creates a powerful psychic trip (in more than one sense) for the bloodsucker, and it seems the human is also dragged along for the ride. We suspect that Faith had a little help in directing Angelus' journey, perhaps from some fragment of Angel's essence, perhaps from the Powers That Be (or both), but after a number of scenes from the vampire's past life, it eventually led to

Good Vamp vs Evil Vamp in a metaphysical smackdown. Good, dramatic stuff! Also very, very dangerous. Treat Orpheus as a poison of Strength 4 for humans, and a drug of APV 4 for vampires.

Aside from the effects of the drugs themselves, the network built around their distribution and sale is extensive and dangerous. Most of the drugs we've seen on the show have been pre-pushed, but Tyke (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 179) from 3.20 A New World is a particularly nasty sort. Connor interrupted him trying to rape Sunny, and took his ear as a trophy in the ensuing fight. The last we see of Tyke, he's in a furious gun battle with police, which looked like it was going very badly for him—but which he may well have got out of alive. Bringing someone like him (and his boys) to your street game is a good way to introduce some very human evil to the mix. He probably won't be much of a threat for the heroic types, but he could tie up an investigator or two and he should be hell on dependents or Supporting Cast.

SEX TRADE

Woman: Whoa. Whoa. Hey. Baby, you saved my life. Don't you want your reward? I can give you a nice reward.

Connor: Uh . . . yeah, OK.

Woman: You got fifty bucks?

Connor: What for?

Woman: You got nothing.

—4.6 Spin the Bottle

Prostitution may be the oldest occupation, but it hasn't got any easier. Like drugs, sex work is found at all levels of society, from high-class mistresses to terrorized refugees that are bought and sold. Los Angeles, film capital of the world, is also home to a porno industry that is just as lucrative as the Hollywood system. What we've seen of that has been a couple of demon brothels (see p. [?]), some streetwalkers, and a "first class escort service" on La Brea and 6th, as mentioned in 3.4 Carpe Noctem.

Prostitution itself is illegal in California, but as in most places, people ignore or find ways to get around such rules (which doesn't help the occasional John or Hugh dragged into a police station on solicitation charges). A variety of clubs and other dens of iniquity, some catering for very specialized tastes, exist. Certain women, in theory, escort gentlemen to fancy parties. Street girls tend to congregate in certain areas, plying for drive-by trade. Plenty of male prostitutes can be found as well, though not generally in West Hollywood, which might surprise some.

More Dangers

If someone gets access to a larger or purer dose of a drug than he is used to, an overdose may result. A graphic example is Sunny in 3.20 A New World. Another danger is poison, as many street drugs are cut with all sorts of junk to increase their resale value.

If an addict faces a situation where the risk of taking too much exists, call for an Intelligence or Willpower (doubled) roll to see if he can resist the urge (use sparingly unless you are making a plot statement here). If an overdose does occur, treat it as a poison roll, with Strength equal to half the drug's Addiction Point Value (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 134). Most drugs cause a poison re-roll every twenty minutes (so get medical attention fast).

More dangerous is the quality issue—if characters take substances from an unfamiliar or dodgy source, all sorts of bad things might happen. We'll leave that to your tender mercies. Taking drugs is bad news—don't let anyone forget that.





Girls are usually “under the protection of” a pimp (a more appropriate statement would be “enslaved to”), or working for a madam who is likely an ex-working girl herself. Despite assurances of a successful career path, many individuals in the trade become lost to drugs or violence. Once again, the number of predators in the Angelverse suggest the streets are emptier and the graveyards fuller.

There are plenty of archetypes to use for prostitutes in your game. In horror movies, they tend to be there to either increase the T&A quotient (strip clubs are good for this sort of thing—at least on screen, doesn’t work so well in an RPG), or be the victims of psychopaths, Jack-the-Ripper style. The hooker with a heart of gold, the struggling student caught up in a violent trade, and the calculating seducer, wise to the ways of the world are all staples of the genre. Despite the salacious trappings, we recommend that you treat prostitutes as characters much the same as everyone else. They might be struggling against their fate, resigned to it, or enjoying it, but their trade shouldn’t affect their reaction to the supernatural weirdness that tends to follow the Cast around.

CRIME IN THE GAME

So now that we’ve gone through some of the different ways people break the law, how do you use any of that info in an *Angel* game? As always, that depends on the themes of the game and the identity of the Cast Members, but here are some suggestions.

With the LAW

Cordelia: So, how nice is it to finally have a simple “find the Crime Lord” case? Over and done with.

Angel: Yeah.

Cordelia: Wait, you’ve got pensive face.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

We’ve got two whole chapters of the book dedicated to private eyes and the justice system, so you should have plenty of support material for the Cast if they are involved in such noble pursuits. The information in this chapter provides ideas for antagonists. They could be humans, demons, or a mix, depending on how much of the Angelverse feel you want (the next chapter details more about demonic crooks).

This sort of campaign can take two main approaches. The first is a variation of the “crime scene of the week,” where the characters investigate a different crime each Episode or two, and pit their skills against a new adversary each time. This is obviously, well, episodic, though the interaction between the Cast and the various Supporting Cast is a good way to keep a consistent thread running (as well as the occasional reoccurring villain). The other approach involves the Cast vying with a crime syndicate or other nasty group, which provides an on-going threat, usually via a series of lackeys that escalate in threat level as the players become more of a hindrance. Someone like Tony Papazian is good for this sort of thing, especially if your Cast is dedicated to upholding the law, since the mob

Name: Streetwalker Motivation: Get through the night Critter Type: Human Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 2, Per 3, Will 2 Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 11, Brains 11 Life Points: 26 Drama Points: 3 Special Abilities: Contacts (Criminal) 2				
Maneuvers				
Name	Score	Damage	Notes	
Dodge	11	—	Defensive Move	
Punch	11	6	Bash	





hierarchy makes pinning an actual crime on the local Don difficult to do. The approaches can also be mixed, with one-offs breaking up your seasonal arc. Likewise, your antagonist can also move up from a crime lord interested in little things like money and fast cars, into a player in the next apocalypse (usually with some prodding from a certain law firm in the background).

ON THE EDGE

Cordelia: Are you friends with, like, every criminal in town?

Gunn: See, there you go assuming those brothers are criminals.

Cordelia: Aren't they?

—2.3 First Impressions

Doyle wasn't a criminal, he just happened to be involved in the seedier side of life. This involved borrowing money at unwise rates, hearing all the gossip of who is screwing whom over, and picking the wrong drinking companion on occasion. A character like that is a perfectly good way to introduce some of the highs and lows of life on the street, without all that messy breaking of the law (that's the next option). Gunn is also familiar with that end of the spectrum, although—from the point of view of the police—is less innocent a participant.

The downside of such a Cast Member was apparent on the show, particular with Doyle. He had creditors chasing after him who didn't sweat breaking some bones in the process (and though killing Doyle wouldn't have got them any money, it might have helped them collect from a lot of other people). Characters who keep such company are likely to be drawn into unpleasant situations against their will (though, this being *Angel*, that pretty much happens to everyone). Thieves steal from thieves, and anyone else nearby if they can away with it.



The advantages include being close to a rich source of information, and having contacts to provide services not available elsewhere. Being on the edge of the underground allows the character to live in a cash economy, which is great when dodging official notice (as those of the undead persuasion probably should). For those being persecuted, or just feeling persecuted, it can provide a sense of companionship. For those who have seen too much horror in the world, it feels more real than any suburban cocoon. Some characters keep dangerous company to give them a charge, or as part of their vocation—undercover cop, charity worker, or a construction worker in a mob-influenced union, for example.

AGAINST THE LAW

Anne: Kenny . . . why'd you come in?

Kenny: Cops.

Anne: What?

Kenny: Cops. They've been hassling everybody lately. Which, hey, what else is new, right?

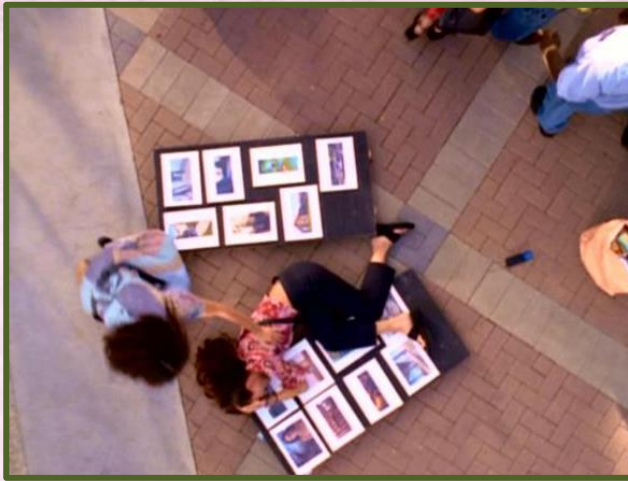
—2.14 The Thin Dead Line

The Cast could be the ones who are dodging cops. There could be all sorts of reasons for this—they could be stealing from the rich to give to the poor, or on the run for a crime they didn't commit (sounds kinda catchy). They could be involved in illegal activities that just happen to save the world (think of the various times our heroes have snuck into places after one mystic component or another). It doesn't really matter if you're going after diamonds or a mystic shroud, from a planning point of view (the follow-through could be significantly different though).

A darker Series involves Cast Members willingly, perhaps cheerfully, flout the laws of California for personal profit. There might be all sorts of reasons—traumatic childhoods, peer-group pressure, a hatred of 9-to-5 work, greed, watching too much violent TV (the evening news would turn anyone to a life of crime), or needing some extra Drawback points (just kidding—that's what Dependents are for). Whatever the case, the character is well and truly in the life. He might be part of the mob hierarchy, a gang, an independent operator, or whatever. Game-wise, that usually involves a point or two of Adversary (Police), and other notes on the sheet that indicate his skills (the Crime skill is a good place to start), contacts and perhaps motives (Addiction, Covetous, Mental Problems or Resources (Destitute) are possibilities). The Criminal/Wise Guy Quality has some more notes along those lines.

Whether a character is deemed a criminal fairly or not, actually performing criminal acts in the game is a different matter. There are, as usual, a couple of ways this can happen (hey, if there was only one way, you





probably wouldn't need us to write these supplements). As already mentioned, the character might be going through the motions of a robbery or assault for the greater good. He might be participating in an actual heist as part of undercover work, or just going about his everyday life as a felon. Either way, it involves danger, drama and snappy dialogue, so it's a good thing for the game.

In the end, *Angel* isn't about people going around breaking the law for the hell of it. *Angel* is about redemption and fighting the good fight regardless of reward or result. As such, criminal Cast Members work best if they are seeking escape from their life of crime. They'll find that to be most effective, they'll have to use the skills and contacts they have developed, which means temptation is always close. Lots of people who knew the character previously likely want to see him fail—if only so that they can pretend that they themselves are beyond redemption, and hence they don't have to try. As a Corleone once said: "I try to get out, and they keep pulling me back in."

It's not an easy path, as Faith, Doyle, Gunn (in his own way), and of course Angel have found. But the alternative is a life of broken promises and short-lived friendships, running in place just to keep from drowning in the depravity of street life in L.A.

STREET SUPPORT

A number of people are trying to make a difference on the streets already. And not all of them do it by fighting demons. We've already looked at various examples in previous chapters, like the police, paramedics, and private eyes. Now we look at more unofficial types.

AVERAGE JOES

Angel: Are you saying that we're becoming psychic?

Jasmine: No, what I'm saying is . . .

Gunn: Hot water just went out down on the third floor.

Wesley: And there's a plumber in the lobby who can (astonished) help us.

Jasmine: That's what I'm saying.

—4.19 Magic Bullet

A great many people do a lot just by going about their ordinary life in the poorer sections of town. A teacher who inspires a bit of passion in his students for broader horizons, and who does not tolerate gang symbols in his classroom, can be a positive influence with a broad reach (and potentially a fearsome reputation). Likewise, people working grueling jobs to make ends meet, while still taking time to be involved in their kids lives, are far too few and far between on the mean streets. Priests who bring some compassion and tolerance to the poor and desperate are also part of the solution.

We haven't seen a lot of these types in *Angel*, for the same reasons we haven't seen any of the rest of ghetto life. That's not where the stories have been set. Still, it could be—the problems are just as desperate and the solutions just as tricky. If you venture into such territory, a sprinkling of characters with lofty ambitions and mundane capacities is a good idea. They are a bit lost against the scale of the problems they face, and in solid need of some high-powered help (though combat should not solve all problems).

SHELTERS

Angel: You work with runaways?

Anne: Some of them. Some are from around here, just don't have anywhere to go. We give 'em food, clothes, somewhere to stay if they need it.

Angel: That's good. It's good that someone's . . .
. It's—it's good to do.

—2.12 Blood Money

One street care institution we've seen is a homeless shelter, the East Hills Teen Shelter run by Anne Steele in 2.12 Blood Money and 2.14 The Thin Dead Line. A couple hundred such shelters are spread out through the city, but the number of beds can cope with less than five percent of the homeless. Along with accommodations, they provide soup kitchens, needle-exchange programs (to stop the spread of AIDS and similar diseases), some medical services, and counseling.





The East Hills shelter is on Crenshaw Boulevard, not too far from Gunn's former stomping ground (the two did know each other previously). Anne has quite a history in the interleaved Angel- and Buffyverse—a younger, more insecure version of the character can be found in the *Buffy RPG* supplement *Welcome to Sunnydale*. While the logistical details are sketchy, the shelter might hold about fifty kids overnight, more if they are stretched (such as in 2.14 Thin Dead Line). They probably organize a soup kitchen for considerably more people during the day, and of course more volunteers than just Anne help keep things running. Doyle used to work in a soup kitchen, before discovering his demon bloodline and dropping into a bit of a tailspin. It probably wasn't East Hills—the timing is wrong for a start, and there are plenty of other possibilities—but that could make for an interesting connection.

To make things manageable, fairly strict rules are imposed at shelters, including a ten o'clock curfew, no weapons, no drink or drugs, and no gang posturing. Other places might have more or less restrictions. For example, in establishments for battered women, such as the one visited by Rachel in 1.3 In the Dark, contacting the husband/boyfriend is usually against the rules, but that seems a hard one for some people to abide by, whatever they have suffered. There are also orphanages, halfway houses for getting criminals back into society, nursing homes, mental health clinics, and more. There's an awful lot of pain out there to be kept in check.

We've provided stats for East Hills. It has its own (meager) resources, including the contacts created by its ever-changing population. We haven't given much weight to the money Anne received in 2.12 Blood Money, since that was a one-off that might or might not happen in your game.

Remember that shelters, like any good location, can be used for good or evil. As *Buffy* 3.1 Anne showed, shelters like the Family Home can prey on the homeless and desperate just as easily as help them (see *Monster Smackdown*, p. 106).

East Hills Teen Shelter

Total Value: 4 points

Clout: Criminal (Street cred) (1), Financial (Struggling) (1), Governmental (Connected) (1), Supernatural (Arcane) (1)

Quarters: Medium (1), Physical Security (Standard) (1)

Gear: Medical Facilities (Basic) (1), Workshop/Repair Facilities (Basic) (1)





ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
13-14	3	GOOD
15-16	4	VERY GOOD
17-20	5	EXCELLENT
21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	

ANGEL



VIGILANTES

Holtz: Your life has been ruined. You can't sleep. Instead you wander the streets, making others pay for what happened to your sister. That's where I can help. I see your talent. And I see your hate. And I know that I can shape and hone you into an instrument of vengeance.

Justine: Sounds like fun.

Holtz: It won't be.

—3.10 Dad

We've already mentioned that the police don't like vigilantes horning in on the law enforcement business. For a city like Los Angeles, with its over-burdened (and not entirely trusted) police department, that's almost beside the point. Add in a whole lot of vampires and demons preying on the populace—a problem the police are doing nothing to curtail—and the existence of people trying to put a stop to it on their own initiative is almost inevitable. Whether just trying to survive, doing maximum damage to the enemy, or actually creating a better environment for those around them, some folks are sick and tired and not going to take it anymore.

Gunn's gang (see p. [?]) fits into the most charitable of those categories (at least when he was actually running it); others aren't so sympathetic. A prime example of this type is Justine from Season Three. We don't know a lot about Justine's previous life. We actually know more about her twin sister (if you read the fine print on her obit). Julia Cooper was a famed interior designer, known mostly for her work on hospitals and churches. She did active service for the local elementary school and church, and liked

gardening. That all stopped when she was "mugged"—the sort of mugging with major blood loss—leaving her sister to grieve. As for Justine herself—well, we have her address (1722 Spaulding), but that's about it. We don't even know her surname (either twin might have been married), or whether she was in any way as socially minded as her sister. When we first met her (in 3.10 Dad) it's six months after Julia's death, and she's most at home in old leather jackets and an alcohol haze—and killing vampires, of course.

In the show, Justine is pretty much inseparable from Holtz, but it doesn't have to be like that. Using Holtz brings in a whole lot of baggage about Angel's past that might not fit your game; Justine or someone like her works well all on her lonesome. She's a little unsteady without the flame of Holtz's mission—half drunk on alcohol and bitterness—but has already survived six months of stalking vampires in graveyards, which is probably longer than some Slayers.

Another character on the show fits the vigilante mold, and can be used separately from the group he eventually finds himself a part of. We are, of course, talking about Wesley Wyndam-Pryce, Rogue Demon Hunter! If nothing else, he had the leather down pat (with slightly less comfort).

Both of these examples concentrate their venom on creatures of the night, which isn't too surprising on a show like *Angel*. Individuals taking on more real-world problems, from gang violence to date rape, are likely to be found as well. Groups inspired by the Guardian Angels, who patrol the subway deterring muggings might be found (these folks use the stats for a standard gang member, see *Angel Corebook*, p. 180).



MANEUVER	BONUS	BASE DAMAGE	NOTES
Dodge	9	-	Defence Action
Punch	8	6	Bash
Kick	7	8	Bash
Stake	9	6	Slash/Stab
(Trough the Heart)	6	6	x5 vs vamps
Hand Taser	9	5	chance of KO
Grapple	11	-	Defence Action
Big Ass Knife	9	9	Slash/Stab



BIG BAD WORLD

Holland: Welcome to the home office.

Angel: This isn't . . .

Holland: Well, you know it is. You know that better than anyone. Things you've seen. Things you've, well, done. You see, if there wasn't evil in every single one of them out there, why, they wouldn't be people. They'd all be angels.

—2.15 Reprise

Most of this book has been talking about Los Angeles—it's where the show is set after all (give or take the occasional alien realm, some of which aren't even in Nevada). Still, there's plenty of room out there for champions to get down and dirty with the forces of darkness. That's a lot of streets, and some of them make South Central L.A. look like CityWalk at Universal Studios.

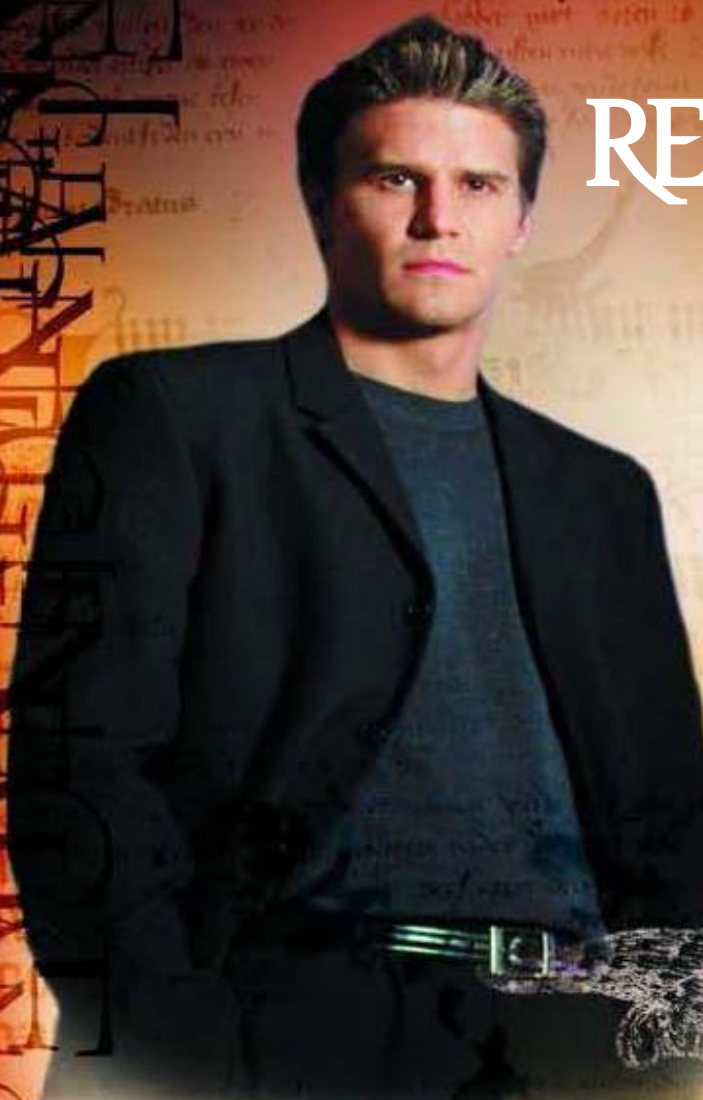
As far as States-side goes, Las Vegas isn't as bad as they come, but it's got lots of glamour, money and missing people (even if half of them are roomed up with an "associate" for, say, three days at a time). It's a city where private detectives are always in demand, and multiple factions—demonic and otherwise—have their eye on the prize. Miami is another great location for smuggling and skullduggery (as Gio asks in 3.3 That Old Gang of Mine, what is it with vampires and sun-drenched cities?). New Orleans is a classic for tales of the supernatural. In Chicago and New York, traditional

mob action is still to be found, despite the wins the Feds are having with RICO, and the slow disintegration of mob culture under the pace of modern life. You could also zip through the Lincoln Tunnel into Jersey, and give Tony Soprano a run for his money.

If you want real mob culture, try Moscow (the vampires at least don't mind the cold), or Sicily itself. Prague is an interesting example. Although still skating on its history and grandeur, it's become a nexus of drug routes and organized crime bosses struggling for control (it's also handy for golems and quick access to the "horseshoe of the Carpathians," Dracula country).

If you're just looking for slums, Mexico City has some of the largest and most densely populated on the planet. Then there's the streets of Hong Kong, where the anything goes atmosphere clashes with Chinese bureaucracy and maybe even a dragon or two. Take on the Yakusa in Osaka, or hunt serial killers in Adelaide. The end of the world is a big event, and characters will be able to see it from wherever they're standing. The trick is not so much where they are, but if they can remain standing long enough to do something about it.





REZERVÖIR DEMONS

Gunn: Okay, what I want to know is how'd I live in L.A. all my life and not notice weird-ass stuff was going on?

Cordelia: Oh, the ass is even weirder than you think.

—2.6 Guise Will Be Guise Los Angeles

Underground economy gets a whole new meaning.

The supernatural permeates Los Angeles like drugs and desperation. It is found at all levels of society—as a dirty little suburban secret; as a decadent exploration of forbidden fruit by people with too much time and money; as a refuge for the soulless, the heartbroken and the addicted. It's not just occult-oriented humans of course. Demons and other races are found under the surface and in most parts of town, blending into the freak show of everyday life.

This chapter is all about the supernatural, how it fits into the City of Angels, and how the inhabitants get along with each other and everyone else. You Directors should find plenty of good stuff here for devising backgrounds for demonic characters, and for setting up various adventures in a wide range of locations.

What this chapter does not do, however, is give you rules and stats for running all the different types of demons and dark magic that you might find along the way. We could fill whole books with that sort of stuff—and we have. **Encyclopedia Demonica** has more monsters, races, and supernatural character types than a goth book store, while **Lawyers, Gods, and Money** looks at dark powers, interdimensional jaunts, and everyone's favorite evil law firm. You don't need those books to use the material in this chapter—the monster rules from the *Angel* core book will do very nicely. But if you're looking for deeper coverage and lots more options, those books are the cat's meow.

CHAPTER 7



FILTHY LUCRE

Cordelia: Uh, it's always the same. A smelly, old, abandoned building. Are there no demon hideouts in Beverly Hills?

—2.11 Redefinition

Cordelia should know better. There are demon hideouts in Beverly Hills, though ravening monsters are frowned on by the better people there. If killing is absolutely necessary, it should be done with more discretion and less ravening.

Of all the places that the supernatural has infiltrated, the world of the rich and the famous is the most concerned with looks and “purity” of blood. It’s not the color of the skin, it’s whether it has bumpy bits or feels like sandpaper that is the problem (though now that we mention it, racism is not exactly an unknown problem either). The rich dabble in magic and visit demon haunts, but only if they feel safe doing so. So they’ll pay good money to watch demons fight each other to the death (see 1.16 The Ring), or scratch their itch for *really* exotic sexual encounters (see 1.20 War Zone or 3.14 Couplet), or partake in a werewolf feast (see 5.3 Unleashed), but they’re not going to invite “those people” to the right places, other than as paid entertainment. If their presence isn’t strictly necessary,

such as making a purchase from the kind of auctions run by people like Barney in 1.10 Parting Gifts, they are more likely to use middle-men rather than get involved personally. That’s where facilitators like Wolfram & Hart are so useful. They look as respectable as they need to be, and arrange all their nasty little schemes in a civilized fashion.

If demons want in on the world of the rich and famous, they have to learn to co-mingle. Most vampires don’t have the smarts for this sort of thing, but those that do can do very well. Nothing like living forever to increase your net worth. Russell Winters (1.1 City of) was one such social climber, until he went after the wrong victim. Half-demons and other species that can pass for human also have a chance, but it doesn’t matter how human you look if you don’t have the resources to throw a dinner party for all the right people. Those with particular powers could overcome some visual or social impediments. Hypnotizing the guests into enjoying themselves is not only a cheaper option, it involves less need for wit and name-dropping.

Demons who have the cash, but can’t do the passing thing, either have to hang out with the gangster demons, come up with a plausible reason for seclusion (perhaps they have a human slave as the front man for all their operations), or hunt down some radical plastic surgery (and they’re not alone on that path).



ANGEL

On the flip side of those using powers to get rich are those rich who come into powers. This can provide a few advantages, but they most likely have to hide their talents, even from their own family. Billy Blim (from 3.6 Billy) is a good example—he had to arrange an escape from his own family mansion.

Some of the other options in this chapter, like demon-worshippers, could just as easily apply to rich people as those in a lower socio-economic bracket. That generally means they have surrendered control of their lives by getting too close to the darkness—or perhaps that was how they got to be up-town to begin with.

HOLLYWOOD GOTHIC

Angel: You looked into that mirror and all you saw was yourself. That's all you ever see, Rebecca, and that's what really frightens you. This isn't about the way the studio, the network, or the fans see you. It's about how you see yourself. Your own reflection has been corrupted into something unrecognizable. You think you want to stay the same? What you really want is to make it disappear.

—1.17 Eternity

As far as we've seen on *Angel*, this is almost a supernatural-free zone. Despite the glitz and glamour of Hollywood, it doesn't seem to have much impact on the demon community, and vice versa. No need to stick by that view though. Action stars who can do all their own stunts (or even their own morphing), starlets who stay young, directors with supernatural charisma to win over reluctant producers and distributors . . . all might be "naturals" in show biz. Anything could happen when the casting couch actually turns out to be an altar.

What we have seen on *Angel* is how the allure of Hollywood drives people towards desperate actions, making them easy prey for dark forces. Russell Winters used it as a trap for courting and finally killing newly arrived girls. Skip used it as a (somewhat complex) lure in his plans to get Cordelia to accept half-demonism in 3.11 Birthday. Rebecca Lowell from 1.17 Eternity had been successful in the system, but was staring at the other end of what seemed a very short tunnel. In trying to seduce Angel to extend her grip on fame and fortune, she almost got herself killed. Then there's Oliver Simon, the renowned talent manager who represented Rebecca, and was interested in Angel back in 1.1 City of. He came up with a perfectly nutty idea to scare his star into some publicity, without any demon influence whatsoever.

TRIBES

Richard: I was just trying to bless our marriage, like in the ancient teachings.

Harry: And since when does your family follow the ancient teachings?

Uncle John: We don't flaunt our beliefs, but they're very dear to us.

Harry: Oh, please Uncle John. When is the last time you pried yourself away from ESPN long enough to spill the blood of a she-goat?

—1.7 Bachelor Party

L.A. is a melting pot of cultures, races, and demonic species, all mixed up in a big and mostly-unhappy mélange. But that doesn't mean that everybody abandons their own culture for the bright lights and easy pickings. Many demons are tribal beings, and those ways die hard. Whether it's out of a sense of tradition, self-preservation, xenophobia, or just force of habit, remnants of those tribes can be found.

Name: Rebecca "Raven" Lowell
Motivation: Keep getting work
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 2, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 11, Brains 11
Life Points: 30
Drama Points: 4
Special Ability: Attractiveness +3, Contacts (Financial) 2
 Mental Problems (Severe Obsession—stay a star), +3
 Brains for Art (Acting) and Influence

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Mace	11	Poison	Strength 4 vs Dex.
Punch	11	6	Bash



ANGEL

Name: Harry (Harriet?) Doyle
Motivation: Study demons, find a nice man
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 4, Int 3, Per 4, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 12, Brains 15
Life Points: 43
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 3, Occult Library(Good), Resistance (Poison/Disease), +3 to Brains for Language, Occultism, and Science (Anthropology).



Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Punch	12	6	Bash

All in all, L.A. really isn't a good place for tribal customs to flourish. We've seen no real large-scale concentrations of a particular species on the show (other than humans—and even they sometimes seem a bit thin on the ground). The tribes we've encountered have all been small and mostly mobile. Looking at what happened to the Ano-movic demons in 1.7 Bachelor Party gives us a good understanding of why that is. It looked like they'd been in L.A. too long, and fallen into the temptations of fancy technology and comfortable suburban living. Sure they tried to eat Doyle's brain, but that was more a comfortable suburban malevolence rather than a strict observance of lore.

Other groups we've seen have all been focused on a particular goal, and most appear to be new in town. The Lubber demons in 2.13 Happy Anniversary, and the Nahdrahs in 3.12 Provider are good examples (L.A. might offer lots of distractions, but it's still a good place to find smart people if you need them). The Lilliad demons from 3.10 Dad were stalking Connor. These types definitely carried trappings of a religious cult (which is probably a good definition for most demon tribes). A more secular example, as far as we saw, was the Lister demons from 1.9 Hero. With some human blood in their veins, they were being hunted by the self-appointed Scourge (another cult-type), and stayed around just long enough for Angel to arrange them a boat trip to anywhere else.

Tribal demons are great for dragging supernatural Cast Members back into their traditions, usually with a mixture of sentiment, familial duty, and ultra-violence. Lorne's relations (or lack thereof) with the Deathwok Clan are a case in point, although in your game the decision doesn't have to be so clear-cut.

ETHNO-DEMONOLOGISTS

Angel: You study demons? That's your profession?

Harry: Do you have a problem with that?

Angel: No. It's just . . . Doyle said . . .

Harry: That when he first went through his change I freaked. Which is true. But after I adjusted, I realized here is this whole rich, interesting world just waiting to be explored.

—1.7 Bachelor Party

Most likely because L.A. isn't the best place to find demons living the ways of their ancestors, it's not the best place to find people who study that sort of thing. Still these folks do exist, and occasionally come a'calling. Serving divorce papers is not the best of occasions, but that's how we met Harry, Doyle's ex. Judging from her travel itinerary, she'd been pretty much all round the globe, and likely off it as well. This continues another fine tradition—all those ancient books on demon lore didn't just write themselves, you know (well, not all of them, anyway). These days Harry probably writes it all on-line in a blog.

Although Harry didn't come around again after her break-up with Richard (the Ano-movic) over that unfortunate bachelor party, she could easily stay a bit longer or reappear in a game. Perhaps after Doyle's demise, she is inspired to take up his fight, aligned with the Powers That Be. Or maybe she just wants to study the occult ramifications of a vampire with a soul (or whatever metaphysical quirks mark your group).



ANGEL

DEMON WORSHIPERS

Angel: Which demon do you worship, huh?

Which one gives you your power?

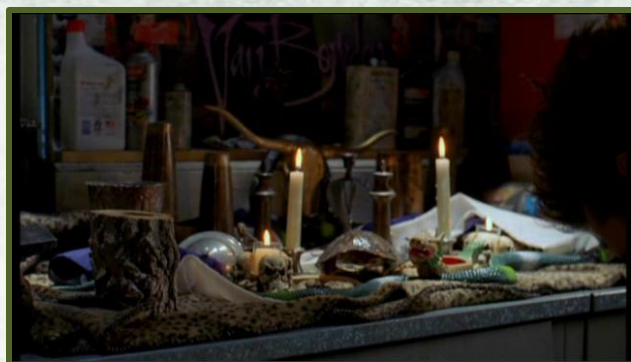
Allen Lloyd: A whole bunch, actually. I'm a polytheist.

—1.6 Sense and Sensitivity

Some demon tribes that remain together do so out of shared belief in some higher power. That goes for a lot of humans too. They might come together in worship, or do it in paranoid isolation, but given the amount of raw power walking around in demonic form, it's not surprising that some humans try to glom onto as much of it as they can.

Demons worthy of worship are usually not the sort that get into brawls at the local bar on a Friday night. These types are closer to the primal powers that battle over the fate of worlds. (Then again, there are some awfully gullible humans out there—just give them a magic gizmo and some flowery incantations and they'll think you're the second coming of Joss.) From non-corporeal parasites like the Thesulac in 2.2 Are You Now or Have You Ever Been? to the Senior Partners of Wolfram & Hart, potential worships are a dime a dozen in L.A. The whole point of the exercise is that the demon gives out a little of its power in return, although it doesn't always work out that way.

On the show, demon worshippers have mostly been human and mostly cause problems for our heroes. Allen Lloyd is a good example. He was contracted out by Wolfram and Hart in 1.6 Sense and Sensitivity to cause havoc in the Metro Area police station, which he did quite successfully. We never did see what happened to him. Considering Angel got a zap of the Sensitivity Stick, Lloyd could still be out there somewhere, planning something devious. Captain Atkinson of the



LAPD had a much more ambitious plan. With power granted by Granath, the zombie god, he was raising cops who fell in the line of duty and sending them back out on the streets, to dispense a rougher brand of justice (in 2.14 The Thin Dead Line). He too is still around, and it was his formal complaint that got Kate suspended from the force. Once again, great on-going villain material, especially for a police-based game.

Patterning adversaries on these demon worshiper types is certain in keeping with the *Angel* TV show. Another approach could be interesting as well. What if the worshipers show up as clients or victims? What if someone really nasty stole a religious trinket that the worshipers were protecting? Alternatively, the worshipers could be "regular joes" just trying to survive in a peaceful way. Their "god" could be remote or long dead or otherwise unlikely to cause harm. They might even be prosecuted for their "faith," and need some help against their tormentors. Finally, part of the worshipers' faith could be efforts to keep their demon god carefully limited or circumscribed. Taking out enough of them might actually bring the deity to Earth. Blanket demon bashing could cause more problems than it solves.

Name: Captain Atkinson

Motivation: Take back the streets, by any means necessary

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 3, Per 3, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 13, Brains 13

Life Points: 49

Drama Points: 3

Special Abilities: Hard to Kill 5, Rank 4

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Big Pistol	13	18	Bullet
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Punch	13	9	Bash



ANGEL

Name: Denver
Motivation: Help people, collect occult widgets
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 3, Per 4, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 12, Brains 14
Life Points: 30
Drama Points: 3
Special Abilities: Occult Library (Amazing), Resistance (Paranormal), +5 to Brians for Occultism



Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Axe	12	12	Slash/stab
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Punch	12	6	Bash

BUSINESSES

Cordelia: What's that?

Rick: Good eye. That's a Shorshack box.

Cordelia: What's the diff?

Rick: About twenty dollars, and it's not available in a mahogany finish.

Cordelia: Looks the same. Handcrafted by blind Tibetan monks?

Rick: Pieced together by mute Chinese nuns. Now that's craftsmanship.

—1.14 I've Got You Under My Skin

What with all the demons, occultists, and mystic wannabes floating around Los Angeles, it's hardly surprising a great web of supernatural support services has developed. Aside from various occult bookshops and apothecaries, bars, clubs, and even spas are thriving. Essentially, you can devise whatever supernaturally oriented service you like. These places not only supply mystic knowledge and ritual components, but undoubtedly serve demon fast food or introduce lonely demons to compatible mates (which may actually be the same thing). Considering the dangers posed by the clientele served and the items trafficked, most of these establishments are likely to have good security and a policy of not asking too many questions. Few sweat the fine line between being customer-focused and being a fence or otherwise illegal.

Supplies: One of the best supply stores is Rick's Majick 'N Stuff (Potions • Spells • Sorcerer Equipment), found on Melrose and Robertson, between the yogurt shop and the Doggy Dunk (from 1.14 I've Got You Under My Skin). Rick is a smooth salesman and a knowledgeable contact, although as usual with such places, the best incantation to remember is caveat emptor—he doesn't give refunds.

Doyle also had a contact with a good apothecary in Koreatown (mentioned in 1.5 Rm w/a Vu). We never find much about him, but that's a good opening for locating a business in your game (it might even be Soon from the Lotus Spa). A considerably more up-market place frequented by the likes of Virginia Bryce is seen in 2.6 Guise Will be Guise, but it too is not named. An old couple run Van Hoa Dong, one of the five herb shops in Chinatown, as revealed in 3.2 That Vision Thing (it must be a really cutthroat market if there are only five in the L.A. Chinatown). Although aligned with the forces of good, they had a mean set of claws to go with the inscrutable air.

Bookstores: The best and most stable was probably Book City, a large shop covering a multitude of topics, but with a "special" section up the back. It was run by a guy named Denver for fifty years or so, and anyone who lasts that long in this business has got to know a few things. Inspired by a planned, if not consummated, act of courage by Angel back in the 50s (in 2.2 Are You Now or Have You Ever Been?), Denver has tried to use his business and extensive contacts to further the cause of tolerance and Light. Alas, in 2.15 Reprise he got caught, quite literally, between Angel and Darla, and died messily. If you overlook (or alter) that slight setback, he'd make a great continuing character in a game.





Another important bookshop is Barlowe's (though it's not actually named on screen), run by a fellow called Lionel and seen in 3.14 Couplet. Note the presence of the Wolf edition of the Wolf, Ram and Hart volumes, which is probably not a good sign. Also, don't forget there are a *lot* of "alternate" bookshops nearby. They don't necessarily know which truth is out there, but are willing to sell a book with multiple-choice paths to enlightenment—this is California, after all. The best conspiracy-oriented one might be Magic Bullet Books ("everything THEY don't want you to know"), as seen in the episode 4.19 Magic Bullet.

For a change of pace there's the Thwack Comics store visited by Gunn and Angel in 5.4 Supersymmetry. It seems a good place to hunt down urban myths and find out what the word is about Angel on the Internet (of course, an investigator could log on himself, but he'd probably have to spend most of his time sorting through websites about Jessica Alba). Researching Angel can also be done at the Ancient Eye bookstore, as Kate did in 1.11 Somnambulist.

Refreshments: Don't overlook the plain old demon bar. It's not a glamorous profession, but someone has to keep that crowd from getting thirsty. You can probably assume that most are run by old warriors who want to settle down and watch other people fight for a change. Apart from Caritas (we're getting to that one), a few have been mentioned on screen. There is the very minimalist Bar and Bite Club on La Cienega and Washington, which is where Darla and Drusilla went recruiting for their mercenary army in 2.11 Redefinition (Darla was particularly unimpressed with the fact they had bloodless wrestling matches). We don't see the Lone Bar, which is mentioned in 1.8 I Will Remember You, but it's in Santa Monica, on 2nd near Beach, and apparently a good place for demons to get patched up if they've come out second best in an altercation. Others we've seen include the various establishments Angelus visited in Season Four, one of which was used by vampires and Orpheus junkies (see p. [?]).

Maybe one of the best signs of a stable demonic subculture in Los Angeles is the presence of a massage parlor and spa for demons and invited guests, the Lotus Spa in Koreatown (seen in 1.10 Parting Gifts). It was run by a gentleman called Soon, who seems human enough. Although he was offering sanctuary in some sense (tending to a wounded Kungai demon), he was happy to give Angel access to the "patient" for a bit of remuneration. Again, the supernatural businesses are very much part of the underground, and few things are done strictly above-board. That of course would vary depending on how up-scale and exclusive the supernatural business in your game—or how intimidating the investigator.

CARITAS

The Host: Hey, how 'bout that? A performer.

Why don't we just call him Angel, the vampire with soul. I'm gonna have a chat with Mr. Tall, Dark and Rockin' and, meanwhile, Durthock the child-eater is gonna open up to y'all. He's searching for the Gorrishyn mage that stole his power and he's feeling just a little bit country.

—2.1 Judgment

Rich or poor, tribal or solitary, master or slave, a lot of demons, supernaturals, or those otherwise aware of the underworld end up at Caritas sooner or later. It's a nightclub found in a quieter section of Chinatown, where folks of all ilks come to put their conflicts aside and indulge in a bit of karaoke.

Caritas is the brainchild of Lorne, aka Krevlorneswath of the Deathwok Clan, aka the Host, who fled his home dimension of Pylea at an opportune moment. He fell in love with the color and movement of Earth (particularly L.A.) and, most of all, with the music. Having found what he believed was his true path in life, he started showing others how to find theirs. It doesn't much matter if those people are murderous demons, lawyers, or college kids who think they're in the middle of a on-going costume party (see 2.13 Happy Anniversary). Lorne listens to them sing, lies about their ability to do so (if necessary), and dispenses advice based on what he reads of their aura. It's not always perfect advice, to be sure (sending Angel off to undergo the Trial to save Darla's life in 2.9 The Trial didn't go too well, as Lorne himself predicted), but he does his best.

The club is reached down a flight of stairs from a nondescript door set back from the street. There is usually a bouncer on both ends of the stairway, one to watch the street and one to operate the metal detector and confiscate weapons at the bottom. (We're never told exactly what the machine is that screens weapons. It may be more mystic in nature, beeping at harmful magical devices as well as weaponry. That's up to you, or possibly Lorne's player, if he's one of the Cast.)

A sign at the entrance says "No weapons or violence allowed," and that's not just a request. Thanks to some string pulling with the Transuding Furies, Lorne has arranged it so that no demon can perform violence when inside the perimeter. The obvious loophole to this was made apparent in 3.3 That Old Gang of Mine when a bunch of humans shot up the place with semi-automatics. Once it was rebuilt, a multi-species EnforceGuard system was installed (using dodgy contract labor), which managed to disallow human violence as well. This was completely ineffectual in stopping Holtz from torching the place in 3.9 Lullaby, just before the grand reopening.



ANGEL



Once inside, Caritas has a pretty simple layout—no dark corners exist to lurk in, just a big room with a bar and a stage. The stage has a karaoke machine (naturally), with a wide selection of songs, though it isn't always used. Off to one side and usually behind locked doors is Lorne's bedroom, a very tastefully decorated chamber. Apparently the whole club was constructed out of a shipping bay, so the back wall of the bedroom is a thin partition to an alley, which became its own mystical party zone thanks to Connor's birth.

Despite the singing and the colors, don't underestimate Caritas as a source of politics, intrigue, and nastiness. Snitches and fences hang out, and mortal enemies can arrange the terms of their final battle. We've been told that dealers of the drug Orpheus (see p. [?]) are the only people that have been banned from entering, which leaves some pretty unsavory types left over. But Lorne takes his responsibility seriously and gives shelter and equal advice to all parties, at least until closing time (sometime pre-dawn, presumably). That might well include people conspiring against the Cast Members.

Lorne is also serious about putting people on their path, which might not be what they're expecting. Going back to 2.9 The Trial, we later discover that Lorne's advice was the start of the chain that led to Jasmine's birth. There's no evidence he knew any of that, but advising a Champion who's destined to be a major player in the Apocalypse can't be easy.

If the party does stay on Lorne's good side, he may well cut them a break once or twice—but they will no doubt have earned it. (As an example, Lorne gives Angel a tip-off about what the W&H lawyers are up to in 2.15 Reprise—he doesn't reveal what he read in their auras, just what he overheard in the restroom.) And though Caritas is meant to be a sanctuary, by no means does everyone respect the rules. Ramone, one of the barkeeps who does a magical sea breeze, betrayed Angel to Paul Lanier in 2.6 Guise Will be Guise, for example. Afterwards, Lorne mentioned Ramone was "off the menu." This doesn't necessarily mean he's feeding the fishes, but it's something to contemplate. Even if Lorne wouldn't arrange such a thing, a lot of demons have a stake in Caritas staying neutral and might take an active role in seeing it remain that way.

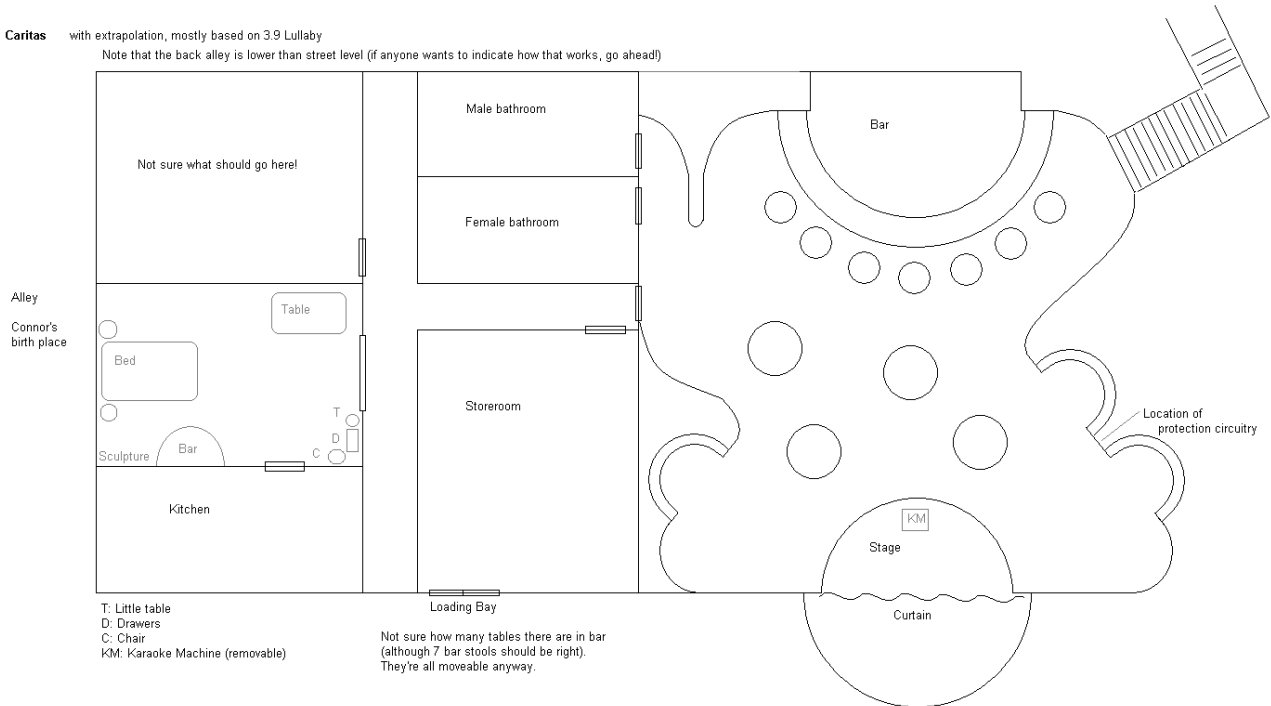


ANGEL



Caritas with extrapolation, mostly based on 3.9 Lullaby

Note that the back alley is lower than street level (if anyone wants to indicate how that works, go ahead!)



ANGEL

Singing Karaoke

It's not unknown in RPG circles that when a character has to sing something in game, everybody at the table throws Doritos at the character's player until he starts crooning. A worthy tradition for any gaming group! Hey, nobody is going to sound much worse than the Original Cast—Mandy just will never sound the same.

Fortunately, the amount of information Lorne gains is not based on ability or duration, just a heartfelt couple of bars. Also fortunately, no need to worry about musical episodes on this show (at least as far as we know).



OCCULTISTS AND WIZARDS

Angel: He's a necromancer.

Wesley: Power over the dead. That explains the bodies Wolfram & Hart's been providing him.
—5.2 Just Rewards

The portrayal of magic in *Angel* is far different from that in *Buffy*, where spell-slinging is relatively common. We've seen a number of occult specialists on *Angel*, including Wesley himself, and some self-described wizards, in particular Magnus Bryce and associates. Despite that, none of them are seen casting magic, and magic spells appear limited to evocations or banishments of spiritual beings. Weird powers do exist, but they are generally granted by demonic forces, possessed by those who are already demons, or embedded within "magic items" (the Ring of Amarra, for example).

A select few humans do wield their own power. The best examples are Marcus Roscoe from 3.4 Carpe Noctem (who swapped bodies with people to escape his nursing home), and Professor Seidel from 4.5 Supersymmetry (who sent a number of students, including Fred, off to Pylea to get them out of the way). Since these involve transferal of souls and dimensional travel, neither of which is very far from demon summoning, metaphysically speaking, the pattern seems to hold.

If you want to buck the trend and introduce overt magic types into your *Angel* game, far be it from us to say you nay. It's a complex and extensive subject however. We suggest consulting the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* roleplaying game and importing the Sorcery Quality for real magicians. The *Magic Box* supplement for that game has more magical goodness than you can shake a Sensitivity Stick at.

THE WIZARD MOB

Magnus Bryce: You see someone in this town with looks and talent, chances are, we provided one of them. It's like they say—the goddess Yeska does not give with both hands. It's not a nice business. I have a lot of enemies . . . industry rivals.

Wesley: Like the man in the hall?

Bryce: Paul Lanier? His firm's in wish-granting. Scary little Euro-creep. And there are others.
—2.6 Guise Will Be Guise

For a bunch of supposed high and mighty wizards, when the going got tough at Magnus' birthday party, nobody did anything more mystic than throw a punch or run away. Virginia did describe spells cast by her family (her great-grandfather's first spell was a tallness illusion), but it's possible that story itself is just, well, an illusion. Virginia undoubtedly believed it, but she was hardly privy to the internal machinations of the company.

But let's start at the beginning.

Magnus Bryce is a successful L.A. businessman, with a cable network and a major software company in his portfolio, but unknown to most his real business is "wizardry"—providing people with what they need, for a price. He is, in other words, your basic mob boss, and not much different from Little Tony, except he makes more money and pays his percentage up the ladder in souls rather than cash. His daughter Virginia was kept at arm's length from the seedier side of the business, mostly because she was being carefully groomed as a sacrifice to the Goddess Yeska upon Magnus' 50th birthday (but not carefully enough, since her "purity" was about eight years past its use-by-date). Anyway, to make a short story shorter, Wesley saved the day and the girl, and Magnus now has a very annoyed patron goddess.





In your game, things don't have to be over and done with so quickly. The company (never named, so we'll go with Bryce Amalgamated) and its rivalries with similar businesses can make a great background to a Season, especially if you increase the number of thugs that are around Bryce at any one time, and play up the contrast between the different areas of his business—the high-tech communications company mixed with dark magic, corruption, and bitter feuds. You can use a lot of the information about the mob from **Chapter Six: War Zone** (and Little Tony would fit right in to such a game as well), tweaking it for the upper class set in which the Bryces move. For those looking ahead a bit, you'll want to bring in the obviously wealthy necromancer from Season Five.

In the show, Virginia goes on to become Wesley's girlfriend for a few episodes, helped along recovering from her father's betrayal with therapy and a gigantic trust fund. She breaks up with Wes in 2.15 Reprise, mostly because of the stark dangers of a life fighting on the L.A. streets—not the monsters, but the guns. If Magnus' business is fleshed out for your game, she'd presumably also be around a lot longer. She can start as she is at the beginning of 2.6 Guise Will be Guise, aching to break free of her father's control, but not aware of the danger (maybe she does become a "24 year old runaway," leading her to the Cast). Alternately, you could start once she has realized the true stakes, and is now fighting for a life of her own. However you handle it, she'd make a great Cast Member.

The Magnus Quick Sheet nearby has a Magic combat maneuver included and bonuses to his Brains Score for Occultism. All that is pure conjecture on our part—we never saw him actually use magic. If you want to play Magnus as more propaganda than prestidigitation, drop the maneuver and halve the Occultism bonus.

Bryce Amalgamated (unofficial branch)

The organizational stats given here can be used if the characters go up against the resources of Magnus' mob, or they want to become a part of it—presumably lower down the ladder. Although Magnus is wealthy and connected, his public face means that not all his resources can quickly be placed into shady dealings.

Total Value: 16 points.

Clout: Criminal (Major connections) (3), Financial (In the money) (3), Governmental (Influential) (2), Supernatural (Exotics) (3).

Quarters: Medium (1), Multiple Locations (1), Physical Security (Good) (2), Supernatural Security (Protected) (2).

Gear: Computers (Basic) (1), Medical Facilities (Basic) (1), Workshop/Repair Facilities (Advanced) (2), Law Library (1), Occult Archives (Impressive) (3), Vehicles (Vehicle Fleet) (2), Weapons (Getting Medieval, Gun Bunnies) (2).

Name: Magnus Bryce

Motivation: Money, power, and keeping the goddess happy

Critter Type: Human

Attributes: Str 2, Dex 2, Con 3, Int 3, Per 2, Will 4

Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 12, Brains 12

Life Points: 36

Drama Points: 2

Special Abilities: Contacts (Various), Hard to Kill 2, Nerves of Steel, Occult Library (Impressive), Poker Face, Resources (Multimillionaire), +4 to Brains for Occultism

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Punch	12	6	Bash
Magic	16	Varies	By spell





LIFE POINTS
DRAMA POINTS
EXPERIENCE POINTS



CHARACTER NAME Virginia Bryce
CHARACTER TYPE Human
DESCRIPTION _____

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	<u>2</u>	INTELLIGENCE	<u>3</u>
DEXTERITY	<u>3</u>	PERCEPTION	<u>3</u>
CONSTITUTION	<u>2</u>	WILLPOWER	<u>3</u>

QUALITIES

Attractiveness <u>4</u>	Resources (Wealthy)
Contacts (Financial) <u>3</u>	Contact (Supernatural) <u>3</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

SKILLS

ACROBATICS	<u>3</u>	KNOWLEDGE	<u>3</u>
ART	<u>0</u>	KUNG FU	<u>2</u>
COMPUTERS	<u>3</u>	LANGUAGES	<u>2</u>
CRIME	<u>2</u>	MR. FIX-IT	<u>1</u>
DOCTOR	<u>0</u>	NOTICE	<u>3</u>
DRIVING	<u>1</u>	OCCULTISM	<u>3</u>
GETTING MEDIEVAL	<u>1</u>	SCIENCE	<u>3</u>
GUN FU	<u>0</u>	SPORTS	<u>0</u>
INFLUENCE	<u>4</u>	WILD CARD	<u>0</u>

DRAWBACKS

Emotional Problems	Mental Problems
(Fear of Commitment)	(Phobia of Guns) <u>1</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

USEFUL INFORMATION

INITIATIVE (DIO + DEX) _____
PERCEPTION (DIO + PER + NOTICE) _____

COMBAT MANEUVERS

MANEUVER	BONUS	DAMAGE	NOTES
Dodge	6	-	Defence Action
Punch	5	4	Bash
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

NOTES

SUCCESS LEVELS TABLE

ROLL TOTAL	SUCCESS LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
9-10	1	ADEQUATE
11-12	2	DECENT
13-14	3	GOOD
15-16	4	VERY GOOD
17-20	5	EXCELLENT
21-23	6	EXTRAORDINARY
24-26	7	MIND-BOGGLING
27-29	8	OUTRAGEOUS
30-32	9	SUPERHEROIC
33-35	10	GOD-LIKE
+3	+1	



MERCENARIES

Elliot: You know, Gwen, you came to me very highly recommended for your, uh . . . for your talents. But I have to admit, I was expecting someone a bit more . . . professional.

Gwen: I am a professional, and we professionals don't like taking the bone.

—4.2 Ground State

Plenty of people in Los Angeles are willing to sell their services for a buck, but few are good enough to earn a name for themselves in the supernatural underground. We're using the term "mercenaries" as a catchall category for individuals who have some special talent and offer it on the open market. They aren't all necessarily in it for the money, but usually want *something* in return (Boone from 2.12 Blood Money just wanted a good fight, for example).

Mercenaries are a varied bunch. From your stock standard assassin-for-hire (such as the *thing* from 1.19 Sanctuary) and professional thief (Gwen Raiden) to those with more esoteric specialties such as dimensional magic (Mistress Meerna, in 3.20 A New World) and soul engineering (Wo Pang of the Kun Sun Dai, in 4.10 Awakening), the only common link is someone willing to pay. Wolfram & Hart hires a lot of freelancers—they have a lot of money. People like Wesley and Lorne have to rely more on their arcane knowledge, professional contacts, and reputation to convince folks to do things for them.

For any mercenaries in your game, especially ones that last longer than a single Episode, a natural, inherent conflict exists between carrying out their vocation, and fighting against (or for) the apocalypse. This becomes much more poignant the closer an apocalypse looms. Gwen is a great example of this—she got caught up in the attempt to stop old Rocky from putting the sun out in Season Four. Before that, she was strictly "me first . . . and only."

Even if your game involves smaller stakes, such as cops trying to clean up the city, many potential allies need more motivation than just fancy sentiments before getting involved. When it comes to choosing between money and a soul, most people go for the money, just because they can hold it in their hands (give or take a visit from Wo Pang). Sometimes appealing to those people requires getting a little dirty, but in the Angelverse, that's par of the course.

THE BAD LIFE

Jameel: Hey, man, the only reason why I showed is 'cause I know you got a rep, and I ain't looking to make no new enemies. But on this Deevak situation I just can't help you. He'll know it was me. Demon's got eyes and ears all over the place, not to mention teeth! There's a good chance that he had some vamps tail me over.

Gunn: I don't see none.

Jameel: Good. I'm just here to pay my respects and be off the streets before sundown like my momma taught me.

—2.3 First Impressions

Some demons want to sample the highs and lows of L.A. culture, but don't want to worry about all that pretending to be civil junk. Those types can go the mobster route instead. Done well, that life brings money (one of the most useful things ever, even for demons), good clothes, bad clothes, companions (willing, unwilling, trustworthy, mostly not), and lots of violence. It's enough to make any strong-willed preternatural entity weak with envy.

We've seen various levels of this on the TV show. Deevak from 2.3 First Impressions started organizing his own turf. It was all a bit seedy, but worked until Gunn and the rest of A.I. put a stop to it. More pragmatic but even less glamorous are the practiced crims who just happen to be demons, like the various members who made up the raid in 2.8 Shroud of Rahmon. They didn't seem to have any particular edge over their human counterparts, but probably have better contacts for disposing of major evil artifacts. They even have police records, which suggests that the cops aren't above pretending some crims are just real ugly humans.





DEMON CASINOS

Jenoff: Name your game. Omaha, Texas Hold 'Em, Seven Card Stud . . .

Angel: How 'bout a simple cut of the deck? High card wins.

Jenoff: Vampire's not only got a soul, he's got guts. Feeling lucky?

Angel: After you.

—3.18 Double or Nothing

Casinos are illegal in California, so the two-story building with flashing neon and a huge sign proclaiming CASINO is probably in one of the lesser-populated areas of town, at least as far as law-abiding citizens are concerned. Inside, demons and humans co-mingle, most of them interested in the games and refreshments to be had. Others have more sinister or desperate goals. The game with the biggest stake at Jenoff's (3.18 Double or Nothing) is played by those with some seemingly desperate short-term need. The stake, of course, is the soul.

The winning or losing of souls is obviously a big thing with casinos (hey, must be a metaphor!), since the Tropicana in Las Vegas (4.3 The House Always Wins) had the same idea. Run by former "second-rate lounge magician" Lee deMarco, it blended into the human world a lot better, but had a special roulette wheel out back where people's destinies were collected. As a sideline, deMarco also kidnapped Lorne and got him to read the aura of audience members at his popular nightly concerts. This allowed him to discover who had the choicest merchandise.

We're never told exactly how much influence Jenoff and deMarco had—they might have been stand-alone operations, or part of a wider network. We're going to go with the stand-alone option, since we've never seen allies of either planning retribution against the characters for disrupting business (you could always play it so that the kidnapping of Lorne was a way to lure Angel into a trap—it doesn't quite make sense, but could be fun). It stands to reason, however, that these guys had some major league contacts somewhere. They had good operations that were netting a lot of souls *and* a lot of money. It could be interesting to assume the winnings were going somewhere other than a pension plan, and let the Cast follow the trail.

For more pragmatic Cast Members, Jenoff doesn't have to be viewed as an evil villain-type. Hey, it could be argued he wasn't taking anything that wasn't freely offered. His casino could act as neutral ground if Caritas wasn't available for whatever reason (most likely firebombing). Considering his incredible regeneration, it's not out of the question that Jenoff survived, and even if he didn't it's likely one of the smarter demons nearby took the place over (with or without the soul sucking). Maybe even a member of the Cast.

To help flesh out a demon casino, we've provided a demon bouncer. He's less offense-minded than the demon thug (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 197), but tougher and sharper.



ANGEL



Name: Jenoff (the Soul Sucker)

Motivation: Respect and souls

Critter Type: Demon

Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 4, Int 4, Per 6, Will 5

Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 13, Brains 16

Life Points: 58

Drama Points: 3

Special Abilities: Increased Life Points, Regeneration (24 Life Points per Turn), Resources (Rich), Soul Sucker, Supernatural Senses (The Sight—or rather The Smell)

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	13	—	Defense action
Punch	13	9	Bash
Soul Sucking	10	Will drain	See sidebar



Name: Demon Bouncer

Motivation: Look scary, be scary

Critter Type: Demon

Attributes: Str 6, Dex 4, Con 6, Int 2, Per 3, Will 3

Ability Scores: Muscle 18, Combat 14, Brains 12

Life Points: 88

Drama Points: 1-2

Special Ability: Increased Life Points

Maneuvers

Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Break Neck	18	29	Must Grapple first
Dodge	14	—	Defense action





Soul Sucking

From what we saw in 3.18 Double or Nothing, two good possibilities exist for the soul extraction power. It could have been something innate possessed by Jenoff (and perhaps other demons of his ilk) or it could have been a feature of the ring he wore (the ring that extracts blood from Gunn to mark the contract).

The actual sucking part of the deal is a simple and brutal procedure. Jenoff thrusts his fingers through the eyes of the victim, and the soul is drawn out as an ethereal glow. It looks very painful, and at its conclusion, the body falls dead—to be given to Jenoff's principal bodyguard for purposes best not imagined.

Jenoff can perform the procedure automatically if the target is immobilized. In combat, he must first Grapple, then make an attack at -3 to target the eyes properly. Once he hits, the procedure has started, and the victim can take no actions until it is finished, one way or the other (though we recommend spending a Drama Point on a Plot Twist). Jenoff automatically drains one Willpower a Turn, until death occurs at Willpower 0, or he is interrupted. For each two Willpower points drained, one is turned into a Drama Point for Jenoff, and the other is siphoned off to . . . somewhere else (we're going to leave that mysterious—it sounds better and hides the fact we don't actually know).

Fortunately, Jenoff can't do this to just anyone. The victim must have freely signed a contract in his own blood beforehand. Jenoff is able to access information about the people he has made a pact with. He knew, for example, that Gunn had pledged his soul to another (which could lead to some interesting sessions exploring the nature of the soul and true love, if you want to go that route).

If the victim is partially drained, he becomes immune to further attempts (without another contract, anyway and, really, what are the chances of that?) Lost Willpower returns at one level per day. If you want to be icky, you could point out the fingers-through-the-eyes biz is not going to do the character's sight much good.

Jenoff's soul sucking specifics are just one example; the power is no doubt much broader. Feel free to rejigger it to suit your purposes. For the sucker, it may be a need, a hunger, or a pastime. The results could be a continuation of existence, a boost in power, or just a warm pleasantly drowsy feeling. Whatever you decide, it should seem pretty potent. Most folks consider soul sucking serious stuff (which may be the perfect reason to make it something mundane—heightens the shock factor).

For the suckee, the effects of soul sucking should . . . well . . . suck. If done carefully it turns him into a zombie more or less (as in 4.3 The House Always Wins), but if just ripped out like Jenoff does, it kills. Mindless slaves, willing cohorts, demonic transformation—the possibilities are legion.



ANGEL

DEMON BROTHELS

Wesley: You went to Madam Dorion's.
 David Nabbit: J-j-just once.
 Wesley: It's a demon brothel.
 Nabbit: Or twice.
 Wesley: In Bel Air, I believe. The Watchers
 Council is rife with stories about it.
 Angel: Ah. And how many . . .
 Nabbit: Twelve times.
 Angel: . . . people knew about you going?
 —1.20 War Zone



We've seen two demon brothels on screen in *Angel*. The first is Madam Dorion's in 1.20 War Zone, where David Nabbit was caught on film doing things that quality investors frown on. This seems the most famous of the establishments in Los Angeles, judging by Wesley's comments.

The second was seen in 3.14 Couplet and never named. Since it's run by a woman called Anita, we're going to stretch the limits of plausibility by calling it Anita's Place. Anita's Place seems to cater to more exotic tastes, and has a freer policy about magic use on the premises. One of the rooms magnified all pleasurable sensations and emotions so that a simple pillow fight could produce waves of ecstasy (imagine what it would be like to . . . ahem, never mind). Anita herself specializes in producing elixirs such as love potions and the mystical prophylactic that protected Cordy's "visionity" when she wanted some quality time with Groo.

Both madams look reliably human, which must reassure the clientele. As well as the "ladies of the night," both establishments undoubtedly have good

security, including hidden thugs and other unexpected surprises for people causing trouble. Security cameras are unlikely, at least in the public areas (which includes the bedrooms, of course), as such things do not reassure the customers. Still, a madam might want to have something tucked away for a rainy (or hassle-heavy) day. Your call really.

"Customer service representatives" in these establishments usually have a much better deal than the ones on the street, although they still have to cope with unreasonable demands and the cruelty of clients on occasion. If the place has any pretensions to high-class, even one transgression of that sort ends with ejection and (most likely) some lesson-teaching. Then again, in the bad life, money talks. How much a "client liaison" is willing or able to stand for most likely depends on the specifics of their demon heritage. Similarly, how much they can retaliate against those who go too far varies. Feel free to pull out some nasty surprises (ten-inch claws, acid breath) or protective features (exoskeleton, dimensional shift) as the story calls for it.

Name: Anita
Motivation: Provide a necessary service for maximum return
Critter Type: Human (?)
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 3, Int 4, Per 3, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 12, Brains 14
Life Points: 30
Drama Points: 3
Special Ability: Brew potions (see sidebar).

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	12	—	Defense action
Pistol	12	14	Bullet
Punch	12	6	Bash
Switchblade	12	6	Slash/stab



ANGEL

Name: Demon prostitute
Motivation: Earn a living
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 2, Dex 3, Con 4, Int 2, Per 3, Will 2
Ability Scores: Muscle 10, Combat 11, Brains 11
Life Points: 34
Drama Points: 1
Special Ability: Use your imagination!

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Punch	11	6	Bash



Potions

The duration and exact effects of the potions provided by Anita aren't clear. The costs should be determined based on your game, but a few hundred dollars for the first one, and a few thousand for the second one sounds good to us.

Love Potion: Anyone drinking this must make a Willpower (doubled) roll. If he fails, he falls in "love" with the next person of the appropriate gender (and species) that he sees. The effect lasts twenty-four hours. At the end of the time, the lover makes another Willpower roll. If he fails again, he doesn't realize he was under a spell, and tries to rationalize his behavior.

Paranormal Prophylactic: This is what Cordelia was after in 3.14 Couplet. After drinking the entirety of the elixir, the imbiber is protected from any mystical consequences of intercourse for the space of two months. If only Darla had been using this, things might have turned out very different.

REGULAR DEMON FOLKS

Wesley: We set the captives free.

Cordelia: Well, actually, didn't we set a bunch of . . . demons free?

Wesley: Oh. Well. Technically . . . yes.

—1.16 The Ring

A huge number of characters in the supernatural underground hang around just trying to blend in, have some fun, and not cause too much trouble. While each is unique, in *Angel*, the usual name for such folks is victims. Still, it's good to take a look at the faces in the crowd once in a while, just to get a better sense of scale. The various demons targeted by Gio and the others in 3.3 That Old Gang of Mine are a good example of the mass of the supernatural underground (the big thing in the sewers, whose greatest concern before getting slaughtered was getting the most out of his soda, was called a Yabnie demon, if you need to know). Occasionally these bystanders get caught in the crossfire. The Kwaini demon from 1.15 The Prodigal was a member of a peaceful race, until drug addiction drove him insane. And don't forget the reluctant combatants in the gladiator arena (1.16 The Ring), although more than one of those would never be confused with an innocent bystander.

In truth, it's best not to underestimate the faceless members of the crowd. Many are demons with special abilities, the least of which is probably superhuman strength. When those folks get riled up, all hell can break loose. The crowd certainly made things tough for Jenoff at the end of 3.18 Double or Nothing.





THE THIRD DEMON

Wesley: In any event, I diagnosed the girl's condition as infection by a Skilosh.

Angel: With your books.

Wesley: Yes.

Angel: Yeah, you were always so good with your books. Made it look so easy. When it isn't.

—2.16 Epiphany

The game is afoot . . .

After all that investigation talk, it's time to give your gang some investigation do. The Third Demon presents the characters with a couple of interrelated mysteries, some nasty opponents, and a world where the issues of right and wrong are not always clear-cut. Designed for folks playing private detectives, the adventure can be run with some modification for members of the police force, or anyone else with an interest in helping people. Whoever they are, they do need access to the demon subculture of their city. That could be Los Angeles, making this entire book more applicable, but the scenario works just fine in other places—other places with a demon subculture, anyway.

In the meantime, we are contractually obliged to give this warning, though you've undoubtedly heard it before. The adventure is for Directors only. Any players reading it out of turn are just spoiling their own fun. They could read it afterwards, just to see how much you screwed it . . . ah, cleverly added to the mix.

CHAPTER 8





PLOT SYNOPSIS

The characters are approached by Yvonne, whose daughter Eloise is missing. This isn't your everyday runaway—she disappeared from the middle of a car accident along with the driver of the other car. Her stepfather died in the same crash. Now Yvonne has been contacted by someone with proof Eloise is alive, and that demons are involved. She heard about the Cast Members somehow (maybe from a prior adventure) and has turned to the experts for help.

Using some deductive reasoning from the proof Yvonne presents, the girl can be tracked down to a dangerous demon brothel called Candlelit. Eloise is not a willing participant, and can be rescued from dire circumstances with some guile . . . or just brute force.

So far, so good, but questions remain unanswered. Who provided the original information, and what happened to the driver of the other car? These become a lot more important when a dead body turns up—looking exactly like Eloise's stepfather, who was buried months ago, shortly after the crash that killed him. The Cast receives an urgent email suggesting an autopsy should not be performed. Can the Cast discover who is doing what to whom?

The truth is convoluted. The other driver in the accident, William Hargensen, was assimilated by a demon that had previously resided in the body of Eloise's stepfather. William's roommate Adrian Mulvaney is the mysterious stranger who is trying to kill the demon—trapping its essence so no one else is

killed. He realizes that an autopsy will release the demon, so he calls on the Cast to try and stop it.

But we're not done yet. In another noirish twist, Adrian decides that Eloise is to blame for the crash that killed his friend, so he tries to frame her for murder.

Ah, the tangled webs we weave . . .

CHANGE-UP

This Episode is presented a bit differently from others in the *Angel* RPG line. As with many mysteries, it requires lots of information in the form of clues and red herrings, and is set in some diverse locations. Keeping all this straight is going to require a bit of study. We've tried to make things easier by summarizing the major characters and events so you can find facts in a hurry (and so it doesn't take up so much room).

That doesn't mean you should present the material like that to the players—smooth things out, dribble the information out as they discover it, and fill in blanks as they arise. We've set up a report from another private eye sketching out the background to get the Cast up and running fast (see p. [?]). That can save a lot of legwork, as the characters are able to look up the answers to some of their questions, rather than interviewing people and looking up records all over again. It also gives you an idea of the sorts of questions detectives might ask when you go off to design your own adventures. Feel free to scale back the information in the report if you want your players to carry more of the investigatory load.





Dramatis Personae

Here are the important characters in the adventure, dead or alive.

Eloise Holt: The missing girl, now mired in demon prostitution. She was a college student, studying chemistry. Her father was Brian Holt (an army medic killed years ago in a training accident). She kept his surname despite her mother's subsequent marriage. See page [?] for Eloise's exegesis.

Yvonne Bryson: The natural mother of Eloise, who asks the Cast for help. She married Kevin Bryson about three years ago (some eight years after her first husband Brian Holt's death).

Kevin Bryson: Eloise's stepfather, killed in the crash. He designed and sold swimming pools. In fact, Kevin's identity is an elaborate cover created for a Trinette demon—a body-jumping species—who had been enjoying his quiet life in the suburbs. He has now swapped bodies again, thanks to the crash, but brought along his physical characteristics when he jumped (as usual). Even though Kevin is buried, a look-alike is still walking around, causing trouble. See page [?] for the demonic details.

William Hargensen: The driver of second car, an artist. His body was taken over by the Trinette demon, and so now looks like Kevin Bryson. William's soul has moved on.

Adrian Mulvaney: William's roommate, and the passenger in the second car (although he has hidden this fact from the police). He has tracked Eloise down and is the one sending mysterious emails. See page [?] for add ons about Adrian.

Quilla: The madam at Candlelit and a Nanjin Adept. She has been "given" Eloise by the Trinette demon, and will not relinquish her without a fight (or good financial incentive). Quilla's quirks are on page [?].

Sandra Klein: The receptionist at Candlelit, beholden by the threat against her brother.

Sandy Klein: Favored slave/prostitute at the Candlelit, and twin brother of Sandra.

Rick Hernandez: Private eye originally assigned the case. He has done a lot of the tedious footwork already, but is out of his depth when it comes to demons.

John McCrost: The new identity of the Trinette demon, found dead in a bizarre ritual murder in Act Three. Like all the demon's hosts, he's a dead ringer for Kevin Bryson. Due to certain evidence at the scene of the crime, Eloise may be blamed for his murder. If he is autopsied, the demon will escape again.

Paul Lawson: A baker who helped the newly embodied demon escape from the crash scene with Eloise.

Lee Nguyen: The manager of a Holiday Inn near the accident, and eyewitness to Quilla's involvement

Leonard Shultz: An eyewitness to the McCrost murder.

Edward Ryerson: Detective in charge of the investigation into John McCrost's murder.

Jill Stanthorpe: Medical examiner for the county coroner.

Timeline

All dates are given relative to the start of the adventure. Some details become relevant only in Act Three.

Four years ago: The Trinette demon arrives in town, on the run from a murder rap in Chicago. He meets Quilla (in the normal course of her business), and she helps him by arranging a meeting with Wolfram & Hart. The evil lawyers set up the Kevin Bryson cover for a tidy sum. The demon pledges Quilla a debt of gratitude.

Three years ago: Kevin meets and marries Yvonne Holt. Although he settles into suburban life, his demonic nature surfaces in a continuing series of subtle slights and humiliations, most directed against his new stepdaughter.

Two months ago: Distracted by her stepfather's torments, Eloise crashes the car, causing the death of Kevin's body. The demon assimilates William Hargensen, remolds it into a Kevin look-alike, and leads Eloise away. He plans both to punish her for the accident that cost him a "sweet life" while at the same time repaying his debt to Quilla. Adrian sees the transformation and manages to follow some of the way (but not to Candlelit itself, where Eloise is forced into servitude). The police investigate the crash. Yvonne hires Rick Hernandez to look for her daughter. The body of Eloise's stepfather is buried (it does not revert to its original pre-demon shape upon death so it still looks like Kevin Bryson). John McCrost (a carefully prepared alias the demon assumes) takes up residence in a house on Temple Street.

One week ago: After searching through the demon underground, Adrian discovers Eloise's location and manages to get a photo by infiltrating Candlelit as a customer. He emails the photo to Yvonne.

Two days ago: Yvonne decides Hernandez is not treating the photo seriously, because of the presence of the demon in it. She looks for an alternate option.

Today: Yvonne meets the Cast and asks for their help.





Eloise couldn't stop shivering. If she was dead, why did she have to shiver so much?

The bed under her was scratchy and hard, and though she couldn't see very well through her tears and the dim light, she thought there were bloodstains soaked into it. Some old, some hardly dry. She wondered how much of it was hers.

There was a low moaning somewhere and a sound like a heavyset dog barking softly. Behind it, a scraping sound came and went and set her teeth on edge.

She turned her head and looked at the door. She wanted to go to it, wanted to believe that outside it somewhere was her home, wanted to believe she was not dead. But whatever else was out there, the woman was closer—the woman with the dead voice and fingers hard as steel, hard as the grip of the ghost that had pulled her from the terrible silence after the car crash.

Hard as the bed on which she lay.

Eloise got up and moved silently towards the door.

It opened before she got half way and she shrank back in fear. But it was not the woman, not the ghost either.

"Help me," Eloise said. "Please."

The man lifted his hand up to her hair and started twirling a strand around his finger.

"Please."

The man said something, but all Eloise noticed was that his whole jaw swung open instead of just his mouth. She screamed. It was only much later, when she was alone again and her mind was trying to grab hold of something to distract itself, that she thought the man who wasn't a man had been trying to say "Pretty . . ."

ACT ONE: INTRODUCTION

Angel (voice over): Los Angeles. You see it at night and it shines. Like a beacon. People are drawn to it. People and other things. They come for all sorts of reasons. My reason? No surprise there. It started with a girl.

—1.1 City of

Action

The Dame: It's just another day in the life of the Cast, when the door opens and a woman appears. She seems nervous, introduces herself as Yvonne Bryson, and gets down to business as soon as possible. She says her family was in a car crash two months earlier. Her husband Kevin was killed and her daughter Eloise went missing. Neither the police nor a private eye she hired has been able to find out what happened, or where her daughter is. She had almost given up hope when a mysterious email appeared with a recent photo of Eloise. She has come to the Cast because the photo also contains some sort of monster, and she is having trouble finding anyone to take it seriously.

She has a copy of the email and shows it to the Cast. She can also give them a copy of the report compiled for her by the previous detective, Rick Hernandez. She is desperate with grief for her daughter and husband,

RUN DOWN

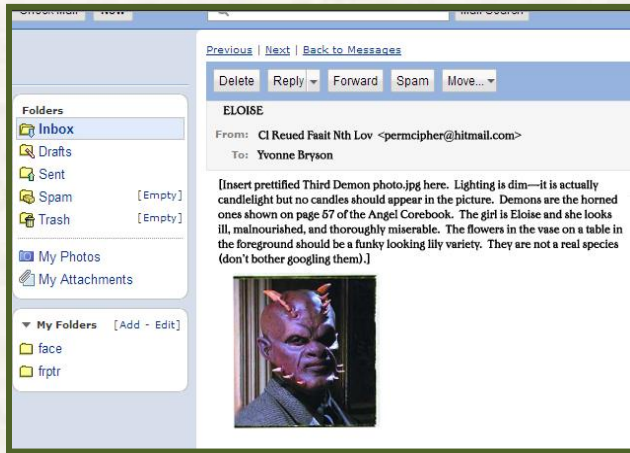
It starts (as always) with a dame.

In this Act, the players are asked to search for a missing girl. Based on the clues they are given, and some footwork to fill in the blanks, they can track down lots of interesting information about the case. The Act ends when they have determined the location of the girl—the Candlelit brothel. However, you may return to this section to find review the information later on, when it becomes more relevant or when the Cast finds out more.





and agrees to almost any terms to get Eloise back. She answers what she can and otherwise leaves the Cast to the task, telling them they can contact her whenever necessary, via email or mobile phone.



The Report: Once Yvonne is gone, the characters are left with the pieces of the puzzle. The most informative piece is Rick Hernandez's report, which gives them a great deal of background, but not much about Eloise's current circumstances. Here are the highlights (Yvonne could provide some of this information as well):

- * The report is about ninety pages of notes, receipts, and speculations. It appears to be thorough and professionally assembled. Among other things it includes photos of the Bryson family (this becomes important later, since the Cast need to see at least one photo of Eloise's stepfather).

- * There was nothing particularly unusual about Eloise's family, other than the death of the Yvonne's first husband (Brian Holt) eleven years ago, in a training accident. They lived in comfortable suburbia, with no bad debts or apparent enemies.

- * Kevin Bryson grew up in Philadelphia and has no surviving relatives. He arrived in the characters' city four years ago. Hernandez did a standard background check, including his birth certificate, attendance at University of Michigan, and driving record, and found nothing stranger than a speeding ticket. (All of this is a fabrication by W&H, who are very good at creating this sort of detail. See page [?] if the character's try to penetrate the deception.)

- * In an interview transcript, Yvonne indicated that Kevin was a real joker, always kidding around—but just harmless stuff, since he was at heart a generous man. He sometimes made fun of Eloise's hobbies, but they liked each other, even if Eloise was a normal "stressed out" teen—particularly with all the war and terrorism in the world. (The report does not say so, but Eloise was

actually stressed out by her stepfather. Her mother did not know that.)

- * Eloise attended the local university (UCLA if in Los Angeles), majoring in chemistry. Her former boyfriends have been interviewed (one was staked out for two nights), but nothing came of that. According to her friends, she'd never taken anything stronger than an ecstasy tab that made her nauseous.

- * Buried deep in the papers is a statement by one of the Bryson's neighbors describing Kevin as "creepy." He would sometimes just stand out in the backyard and grin at her. (This nugget can only be found if a player specifically states his character is spending a couple hours reviewing the papers.)

- * The crash occurred approximately 4:10 PM on a sunny Saturday afternoon (while the Brysons were going to a friend's house for dinner). There were no witnesses. Kevin was killed instantly from multiple injuries when the second car struck his passenger-side door. Eloise was driving, and apart from a bit of blood, there has been no sign of her since. Yvonne was sitting behind her daughter and was knocked unconscious on impact.

- * The other car was owned by William Hargensen, who was coming home from a session at his usual gym. He also disappeared from the crash. From evidence at the site, it appears the Bryson's car drove out unexpectedly into the intersection, and William was unable to avoid it in time. William was a small time artist who freelanced for the film industry. William's roommate Adrian Mulvaney (a computer programmer), and his family in San Diego were interviewed, but none of them have seen him since the crash. They described him as a happy and friendly man.

- * Brian Holt's blood relatives (two brothers) were also contacted, but they report no sign of Eloise trying to rejoin that side of her family.

- * Neither Eloise's or William Hargensen's credit cards have been used since the crash, nor is any money missing from their bank accounts.

- * Of the blocks surrounding the crash site, two are residential, one has the grounds of the Stockton Junior High, and the other some basic shops (all closed at the time). Hernandez conducted a house-to-house of the residential area, but no one remembers seeing Eloise or William walking away from the site. He suggests they moved through the school grounds to avoid detection, and must have done so quickly because the time before the first witnesses arrived was quite short. Janitors were working in the school, and thus the gate may have been open, although they deny it.



ANGEL

The Email and Picture: Perhaps more immediately interesting is the email sent to Yvonne. It shows Eloise looking malnourished, mistreated, and thoroughly miserable. There is a demon besides her and a vase on a table in the foreground. This information reveals two or three different paths to Eloise's location. Which path the Cast takes depends upon what they notice, and their areas of expertise.

- * Sophisticated tracing of the email's route from its point of origin leads to a large and busy cybercafe in town. This is pretty much a dead end.

- * Any sort of telemetry or psychometry using the photo as a focus fails, because such impressions have been destroyed by the image's circuitous route through modern technology.

- * The demon in the photo is a kailiff demon, a common species used as thugs and bodyguards in the demon subculture (a successful Intelligence and Occultism roll or any Supernatural contacts reveals this). It is impossible to determine its identity beyond its species, due to the quality of the photo and the sunglasses. Trolling through their contacts, the Cast Members can find several folks who will name subculture businesses that employ kailiff as bouncers. The number of businesses that must be visited, the reception at those businesses, and whether and when that route actually leads the team to the Candelit are the stuff that subplots are made of.

Canon Alert

Apart from some linguistic hints, there is nothing on the show to suggest the Nanjin come from the Philippines. We made that up. Also, the lilies are not a real species—don't try to Google them.

- * The vase looks expensive and the flowers are quite unusual. With some persistent research (probably by calling florists in the city), the gang discovers they are Cascannia lilies, a species that only grows on the northern-most tip of the Philippines. By researching the area, cross-referenced with occult knowledge or contacts, they discover that area contains Pajaur—the home of the Nanjin Adepts (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 53).

- * Only one business in the city specializes in Philippine lilies. It's called the Pasuquin Lady. The staff tries to deny any connection with the lilies, but it is fairly easy to get a customer and address out of them. That leads to an address on Fourth Avenue and the name Quilla. The staff knows nothing of demons but is very frightened of Quilla—they may need reassurance

that they won't get into trouble for squealing (if the Cast cares).

- * If the investigators don't think to check flower importers, but go for the Nanjin Adept connection instead, some supernatural contact reveals that only a few are in town at the moment. Again, tracking down all the leads can be as time consuming and eventful as you wish, but ultimately they do lead to a Nanjin that runs a brothel over on Fourth Avenue.

- * The email address is not a random string. The first portion of the email address, permcipher, is a clue to the presence of a permutation cipher, one of the oldest types of codes, and relatively easy to break—it just requires rearranging the nonsensical sender letters in the right pattern. Decoded, it reads Candlelit Fourth Ave (see sidebar).

Red Herrings

If your characters take a more roundabout route through the demon subculture, or if you just want to string things along a bit, here are a few distraction suggestions.

- * The Cast learns of a demon called Fayagat who might have some important information (it's reported that he's a semi-regular patron of Candlelit, or otherwise knows Quilla somehow). If asked, he says he answers no questions unless he's been beaten in a game of poker, with some valuable item as the Cast's own stake. Needless to say, he's extremely good and an extremely bad loser. If the Cast wins, he answers questions—but feels no compunction to answer them truthfully. He does all his business in Caritas, or some other neutral spot, so violence is more trouble than it's worth.

- * Another informant called Lame Johnny—who happens to be human—wants to meet the Cast to discuss their problem, but not in a demon bar (he doesn't want a rep for hanging around with the good guys). Trouble is, almost as soon as they start talking, the police swoop in. They suspect him of being involved in a drug-related murder. They're just rounding up the usual suspects, but have had trouble with Johnny before, so have no trouble with bashing some heads at the slightest provocation. (This could turn out to be quite involved, if you want. Johnny could be taken into custody before the Cast gets a chance to question him, for example. That should lead to using all the juicy correctional facilities stuff in Chapter Five: The System.)



* No legitimate businesses with the name Candlelit exist, but with an Occultism roll or contacts, the Cast can discover the Candlelit brothel, a very secretive establishment frequented by demons, found on Fourth Avenue.

* Reviewing the photo closely, the Cast can see that the light in the room is bad and that from the open door not much better. Some sort of analysis or expert (your call) might determine it is actually candlelight (quite a few candles, mounted on the wall above the view of the camera). With some trawling of demon bars, someone eventually recognizes the location as being in Candlelit. This is provided as a last ditch solution if other methods fail and should definitely provoke a fight or two.

Hopefully, through one chain of reasoning or another, the Cast comes across the name and location of Candlelit. In that case, they can go onto the next Act to try to rescue the girl from her dire fate.

Other Enquiries: A thorough group might try some (or all!) of the avenues below at the beginning of the adventure, and if they're particularly clever, they can find Eloise via one of them. Even if they don't get that far, they gather information that puts them in a much better position later on. They may try some of these options during later Acts, as the mystery deepens, but we'll list them all here, for ease of reference.

* The official reports of the accident don't say more than Hernandez's do. By getting a look at the cars involved, the Cast can discover something. Both vehicles remain in police lockup due to the ongoing nature of the investigation (though the police have more or less forgotten about it), and the characters might get access with Governmental Clout, contacts, a good cover story, or just sneaking in. Any sort of supernatural senses pick up the presence of some sort of mystical event involving death (the transference of the demon's spirit from Kevin to William). If the investigators think to test the bloodstains specifically, they discover that those from both Kevin and William show anomalies that suggest a non-human source (see sidebar). They could also discover a small smear of human blood on the passenger side window, away from all the other stains and previously overlooked. This came from Adrian.

* Other signs of Adrian exist in the car. According to evidence records, two sweaty towels were discovered on the back seat (they are now in separate storage), although nothing was made of that at the time. Hernandez checked the gym, but didn't look at the attendance record—both William and Adrian were there that day.

* If they do interrogate Adrian at his house, you should mention he owns a cat (see Act Three for why).

* If they check back at the scene of the crash, they might rediscover the trail, although it is quite cold. Firstly, Hernandez's speculation that the school gate might have been left open by a janitor is denied hotly by those who were working there, and a good round of questioning, or psychic ability, can tell they are serious about this. There is no sign of any psychic residue or other trail through the school (though with the usual amount of movement and emotion on the grounds, that doesn't mean much).

* If they question people who turned up at the crash site (mostly from nearby homes and shops), they find someone who recognizes Adrian's photo. Nobody thought he was in the crash, he just seemed to be part of the crowd, and didn't hang around long.

* If they have a look at the few shops along from the intersection, they find that all are closed on Saturday afternoons. One of the closest to the crash is the Lawson Bakery, which just happens to have a newly painted façade. This is relevant because the owner Paul Lawson was painting it at the time of the crash. Lawson saw it happen, and witnessed "Kevin Bryson" and Eloise stagger out of different cars. When Kevin asked to hide inside the shop, Lawson was happy to comply (mostly because of the hundred bucks Kevin offered him). Hernandez questioned Lawson as a matter of routine, but didn't penetrate the deception. If the characters do better, they can find out a few things, although Lawson will always be a reluctant witness, best swayed with cash, the threat of legal trouble, or some demonic persuasion. Lawson identifies Kevin from a photo, although he was wearing a "sort of badly fitting" outfit (in truth, William's clothes on a physically changed body). He says Eloise seemed in shock, and if asked why he let a man from a different car drag her away from the scene, he says that she called him daddy, so he thought it was alright (though really, he cared more for the \$100). The two rested in his shop for five minutes, then disappeared out the back door. Both of them looked shaken, and were moving slowly—the man in particular had a noticeable limp. Lawson didn't see anything he regarded as supernatural, and will be even more reluctant to tell what he knows if the Cast talks about or displays any "weird stuff."

* The story of Lawson and his quick hundred can be discovered any number of ways, but none are easy (this is the sort of detail reserved for rewarding characters who are being very thorough, and should garner extra experience points). Basically, they involve questioning people in the shops just in case, and noticing Lawson is lying, or making some very good rolls with Psychometry on his doorway. Your players are likely to be suspicious if you single out the Lawson Bakery as the only named location, so you should also mention the Metro News Shop and NoFuss Dry-cleaning on either side.





Solving the Cipher

Most permutation ciphers put their original message into a grid, rearrange the columns according to some predetermined order, and then transmit the resulting grid column by column. To reverse the process, the encrypted message must be put back into columns, and the columns returned to the right order.

Since the email message is 18 letters, three rows of six columns is suggested (there are other possibilities, but that is the most common arrangement). The encrypted message is this: Cl Reued Faait Nth Lov. Ignore the spaces and capitals, and put it into columns like this:

CEDANL
LUFITO
REATHV

Now the question becomes, how to arrange the columns? Some sort of number or code word is usually provided that hints the proper arrangement. That code word is properly transmitted separately for security, but in this case the word is more obvious—it's the subject of the email, Eloise. To use the code word, put the letters in Eloise in alphabetical order (E is first, followed by the second E, then the I, etc) as column headings.

E E I L O S
1 2 3 4 5 6
CEDANL
LUFITO
REATHV

Move the columns around so the code word is correct:

E L O I S E
1 4 5 3 6 2
CANDLE
LITFOU
RTHAVE

Reading right to left: CANDLELIT FOURTH AVE.

Okay, so it's all very clever to use a real cipher, but how does it play out in a game? There are a few approaches. First, you could give it to your players as a puzzle to solve themselves. If any of them are particularly interested in cryptography, it should catch their interest. Having said that, it probably requires a fair amount of fiddling about with pad and pencil (and maybe looking up a reference book or two) before the trick becomes apparent. That might be better to do between game sessions. If someone does solve it like that, he should get an extra experience point or Drama Point (or two) for his trouble (and a robust round of back-slapping).

The second is to approach the cipher as a puzzle for the characters to solve. The players make a series of Intelligence and Knowledge rolls (with six cumulative Success Levels required) to get it out, at which point you tell them the answer. They can also approach a professional cryptographer, if they have appropriate contacts (or just look one up in the phonebook), who should solve it quickly.

Finally, a mid road exists. If they attempt to solve the puzzle, they can make a series of Intelligence and Knowledge rolls, each of which gives them more clues. For example, the first might tell them what "permcipher" implies, the second gives the basic principles of permutation ciphers (as explained above), and the third tells them more about code words and how they might be used. If they take the info, work out the code word is Eloise, and solve the puzzle, that should give them a good sense of achievement, as a real message appears out of the apparently random letters. If they solve the puzzle with less rolls, they should feel better still (and maybe get a Drama Point).

If the Cast wants to know why a cipher was used at all, they'll have to ask Adrian (assuming they find out he sent it, and they can get him to talk at all). He'll tell them he was paranoid about the pervasive demon culture monitoring the Internet or other lines of communication, and so didn't want to use any plaintext messages. That's true—but he also loves fooling about with that sort of thing. If the players become suspicious of Adrian because his occupation (programmer) suggests a possible interest in cryptography, more power to them.



ANGEL

* Although they may not know it, if the characters get as far as the back alley behind Lawson's Bakery, they can follow the same trail Adrian did in tracking down Eloise (see page [?]) for more about his version of events). The first step is a check of all hotels in a fairly wide area around the end of the alley. Hernandez did a perfunctory check of two nearby hotels, but was looking for a William Hargensen and didn't travel far enough in the right direction. Even if they're not sure who they are looking for, the Cast can discover that a man with a bad limp checked into a room in the early evening of the night in question by talking to the manager at the Holiday Inn (a little over a mile away through back streets). The manager, Lee Nguyen, did not see Eloise, but he particularly remembers this man because a "really scary looking" blind woman, dressed all in white with long white hair, visited that room an hour or so later. He doesn't know how long she stayed or where the man went in the morning. He also isn't much good at providing a description, although he is "fairly sure" the man was older than William Hargensen (even faced with a photo of Kevin, he cannot say for sure—he wants to help but really only remembers the limp and the blind woman). He also might mention that someone has asked him about this before, and is fairly sure he recognizes Adrian from a photo.

* The physical trail grows cold here, although the characters can find psychic residue of both the demon and Quilla in the appropriate room. The good news is that with that description of Quilla, the investigators have a much easier time tracking her down through occult contacts—she is quite a distinctive figure.

* Repeating the standard background check on Kevin gains the same information as Hernandez's report. If the Cast is very thorough, however, they can do a little better. Firstly, they may be suspicious that his past has been too neatly removed—his boyhood home was torn down to build a sewage treatment plant, his mother died of cancer, and his father drowned in Perkioman Creek in an "alcohol-induced accident." Both of these people were real, but they didn't have a son (or any other living relatives). The latter can be discovered by tracking down neighbors who moved when their houses were demolished (five Success Levels on an Intelligence and Computers roll teases that out of the appropriate databases, less if the players say they are specifically looking for that sort of detail). This is admittedly a pretty thin lead, but it should indicate that further investigation of Kevin Bryson is warranted.

* If they think to check police records such as VICAP (see p. [?]), the Cast may find the original warrant for Kevin's arrest in Chicago, dated four years ago. At the time he was going by the unlikely name of Oscar Tallon. This route is very difficult since matching up people by their description remains an inexact science, but four Success Levels in a research roll does it. If the Cast

wants to bring in extra law enforcement to investigate this, the details are up to you, but that can lead to some interesting contacts.

* If they try a thorough bar crawl of occult contacts (thinking Kevin might have had some contact with the demon subculture for whatever reason), the Cast mostly comes up empty. The Trinette demon was solitary by nature, and Quilla remained his one solid acquaintance (if you could stretch their relationship that far). If the Cast is able to hack into W&H records (which requires eight Success Levels and physical access to a W&H computer on their internal network—that might be gotten by, say, taking over the firm), they learn a great deal, including his species and previous covers. They do not find the name John McCrost, however.

* If they do find out enough about Kevin (especially if they get Adrian's story), they may be able to research his particular species before the next murder (see p. [?]).

* If for whatever reason they try to exhume Kevin's body, Yvonne objects strenuously, but eventually agrees. The corpse is still there, and signs that it previously held a demonic entity persist (see sidebar).

Ex-demon Resident?

The bloodstains in the car are a good illustration of the limitations of a pre-planned adventure. If your Cast decides to check the bloodstains, they should be rewarded with a result—in this case, that there is something suspicious about the blood from both Kevin and Will. However, we don't know what senses or detection tools your Cast will be using, and if we try to list all possibilities, we could confuse the issue with contradictory explanations (and blow past our word count lickety split). So, whatever your Cast tries, it works!

This leads to a related problem. If there are anomalies in the blood that can be detected by forensic science, why aren't they mentioned in the police report? The answer, of course, is a cover-up in the forensic laboratory—just one link in the process that stops news of all those demons spreading. If the characters realize that, they might gain another contact (or perhaps even someone they can blackmail into providing doctored results, should that ever become necessary). If you don't like that explanation, you could have the police report note some odd chemicals in the blood but draw no conclusions from it.





TROUBLESHOOTING

If you want to run this adventure but your Cast doesn't normally take cases from clients, Yvonne could find them a couple different ways. She doesn't know anything about the demon subculture, but she is determined to find help. Perhaps she goes back to the police talking about demons, and someone like Kate transfers her to people who know more about the subject. Perhaps she rings up a random "psychic hotline" and the voice on the end refers her to the Cast. (Could be Lorne's hot line psychic Aggie from 2.20 Over the Rainbow, could be someone else you cook up.)

If you want your Cast to build better contacts with the private eyes in their city, Rick Hernandez is a great place to start. He's hardheaded but not stupid, and might help out if shown that the demon problem is not just "delusional crap." In that case, instead of Yvonne

handing the Cast his report, arrange it so they must collect it from Hernandez in person—at which point he expresses his deep doubts about the whole thing, and his suspicion the Cast are exploiting a woman's grief. Hernandez can be represented with standard P.I. stats (see p. [?]), modified as you see fit.

If you change the name of the girl, or the location of the brothel, to fit in better with your game, you'll have to change the cipher as well. Alternately, you could just remove that funkiness from the game, and use the lilies or the trail via the Holiday Inn as the means of getting to Act Two.

If the Cast discovers that Adrian sent the photos, the adventure is still on track. He tells them the minimum he can get away with, which does not involve revealing his further investigations into Kevin Bryson's location (even if he has to spend a Drama point to fend off suspicions). See p. [?] for more about what he knows.

ACT TWO: COMPLICATION

Cordelia: He doesn't know this world. I can't send him into a demon brothel all by himself! I mean, I trust him, but I'm not crazy.

Angel: Brothel.

Cordelia: YOU'D be safe there. No woman's gonna tempt you, right?

Angel: . . . right.

—3.14 Couplet

RUN DOWN

In this Act, the players dig further into the Candlelit brothel and try to rescue Eloise from the clutches of its Madame. They may try to shut it down for good, considering the suffering and death it causes on a regular basis. Or they could preserve it as a source of information. Once they find out the details, that's pretty unlikely though.

ACTION

Reconnaissance: Time spent looking before you leap is seldom wasted. The Cast may have come across the address of the Candlelit in a number of ways. If their sources are demonic contacts, they can continue to seek information about the premises, the security, and other relevant details that are "public" knowledge. If they discover the address through Pasuquin Lady (the lily importer), no further information can be had there so they may stake out the place instead. Of course, they might just walk in the front door!

Asking around (you decide who needs to be asked . . . and how forcefully), the Cast can find out the following:

- * The Candlelit occupies the second story of a group of retail premises along Fourth Avenue. The entrance is through a back alley, marked by a single red candle. It is run by Quilla, a Nanjin Adept, and has been in business for almost a decade.

- * It is an expensive establishment, but not flashy or highbrow like Madam Dorion's. The Candlelit caters to a more disturbed and disturbing crowd. With sufficient payment, they can arrange anything, including murder.

- * The place is relatively low tech. It does not have a telephone. All lighting is provided by candles or open fire. It is rumored that the prostitutes are slaves who never leave. Once they have been damaged beyond the interest of their masters, they are used as raw materials to create more candles.

- * Security is excellent, including numerous demon thugs and Quilla herself, who is a dangerous martial artist.

If the Cast's investigation takes a more doing than asking route, they can discover other information. You might ask for Dexterity and Crime or Intelligence and Computers rolls to get some of this information. Don't make it too difficult though. Quilla has become complacent in her security and isn't taking active efforts to deter potential spies.

- * The doorway to the premises is in a small alcove in the back alley, and easily found. It is only open during





the night, when a nearby candle burns and a demon bouncer occupies the alcove. During the day the solid metal door is locked and a strong metal grate protects the alcove.

* Although the area is reasonable busy, the shop fronts below the brothel (on the avenue side) have obviously not been used in years. It appears that a café, shoe store, and video rental place were the former tenants; all of them quite large. Metal grates cover the doors and windows, and a sign proclaims a bright new retail adventure is opening soon (the sign is years old). If examined closely, the grates have obviously been welded shut.

* Checking the wiring or utility records shows that the electricity and phone wires have been long disconnected.

* Building plans on record show the original layout of the second story as a large space supported by columns rather than walls. No doubt the layout has changed in the meantime. The last plans filed are over 10 years old.

* Tracing ownership of the buildings eventually comes up with a dummy corporation managed by Wolfram & Hart.

* The establishment is most popular between 11:00 PM and 3:00 AM. It gets about 25 to 30 "customers" a night, including a variety of races, including human (apparently).

* Three demon thugs usually arrive around 9:00 PM, and three leave again around 6:00 AM—not the same ones, since they are on rotating shifts. Every morning, usually between 10:30 and 11:30, a young woman (Sandra) leaves via the back door to do shopping from a mini-mall and other businesses in the area. Quilla doesn't leave very often (and won't during the time the Cast is watching, unless they arrange some convincing reason for her to. In that case, she uses a car driven by one of the demon thugs).

The Girl: Sandra is the receptionist/gal Friday at Candlelit, doing the day-to-day tasks of gathering supplies and coordinating clients. She is a potential weak spot in the defenses and can be persuaded to help the Cast, if they approach her carefully. In fact, she is anxious to undermine the operation, as long as there is no great risk to her or her brother's well being. She hates the entire thing, despite her apparent cheerfulness in organizing it on a day-to-day basis.

Sandra's twin brother Sandy is being kept hostage. He is one of the few privileged slaves, meaning violence against him is not allowed. Sandra has been told his status will be revoked if she does not cooperate as well. She is good at appearing professional, but the stress of doing so in horrific circumstances is taking its toll.

If the Cast does want to talk to her undetected, they need to do it while she is shopping. Once past her initially professional demeanor, they quickly discover she has a bitter and sarcastic streak a mile wide. She can tell them a lot of things about what's going on inside, including details about where Eloise is being held, and that they should hurry because the girl may not last much longer. If they try to persuade her to do something active like deliberately leaving a door unlocked, she starts to get agitated and tries to return to Candlelit as quickly as possible. She sees this as crossing the line between what is safe and unsafe for her and her brother (that doesn't really make sense, but after a year in this place, she's not exactly the poster-child for sanity). The Cast has to make some impressive arguments (and Influence rolls) to convince her to help. Even worse, as soon as she is away from them, doubts assert themselves almost immediately. If left alone for half an hour or more, it is unlikely she does anything to help (a successful Perception and Influence roll can deduce that).

If the Cast tries to kidnap her, they can do so easily. In that case, she fights them every step of the way (and Quilla won't give anything up to get her back). If they just want to take her keys, that should pose no difficulties, though it won't get them all the way inside.

Inside Candlelit: What if the characters just walk in during operating hours? They can probably get past the bouncer if they are halfway polite, at which point they climb a flight of stairs, then walk through another metal doorway into the large lobby. It is a stylish room, though hot and smoky, as are the rest of the public areas. The place smells of incense with unpleasant undertones. A table with the Cascannia lilies sits in one corner (the ones from the photograph are in another room). Double doors head right and left to corridors flanked by various guest rooms. At the end of each of these corridors is a locked door to the private areas.

Two or more scantily dressed males and females (mostly human but perhaps of another species if desired) welcome lobby visitors by draping themselves over them (these are favored slaves). Sandra is at the desk, smiling pleasantly. If anyone asks for the manager, Quilla arrives quickly and silently from one of the private area doors. If trouble develops, four demon thugs appear, just as quick but with more growling. Another two thugs are kept in reserve, and the bouncer downstairs can be called in, if things get really tough (see Demon Thug, *Angel Corebook*, p. 197). The slaves number 14—four male and ten female, plus Sandra. Most have retreated to private little worlds of fear and pain, and respond to others with little more than resigned obedience.



ANGEL

Like most of her kind, Quilla is an eerie presence—perceptive, aloof, and with an edge of stark cruelty to her. If a Cast Member tries to convince her he is a potential client, or otherwise lie, he must make a Willpower and Influence roll with at least five Success Levels to get past her finely tuned perceptions. She defends herself if attacked, but leaves violence or heavy lifting to her thugs unless the situation becomes desperate. When serious, she attacks with a long-bladed kris knife that is usually hidden in her clothing.

If the characters get far enough inside, or question Sandra closely, they can learn about the private areas beyond the lobby and guest rooms. These are normally locked during “opening hours.” To the far left are the kitchens and rooms for the favored slaves. To the far right is Quilla’s suite (which includes the safe), and the rooms—more accurately, cells—of the remaining slave/prostitutes (including Eloise). During the day only four thugs are present, usually playing poker in the kitchen, although one occasionally does a circuit of the place to make sure everything is quiet.

A stairway down from the kitchen leads to the old café. This area houses the laundry, waste disposal, and—alas, the rumors are true—the fat rendering area.

All in all, it’s utilitarian and murky rather than colorful or bawdy. Terrible things happen here, and away from the lobby only a thin veneer of civility covers the atrocity.

The Rescue: As with other areas of this adventure, there’s no straight path to the character’s goal! The Cast has to work out exactly what they want to achieve and how to go about doing it. This section covers some of their options.

The first approach is to remove Eloise as fast as possible and get the hell out. Here are some things they can try:

* **Buying her.** Quilla knows Eloise doesn’t have much worth left in her. She asks \$3,000 but will go as low as \$1,200 (use Willpower and Influence to roll for haggling). This is a morally dubious option, but Yvonne reimburses the gang if they bring her daughter back safely. They should get less Drama or experience points for this part of the adventure if they take this option.

* **Ram raid.** If they have suitable equipment and know where Eloise’s cell is (from Sandra, perhaps), they might be able to bust through the roof or an outer wall and abscond quickly—treat them as interior walls (see *Angel Corebook*, p. 135) due to somewhat shoddy workmanship. If they can get into the old video place, they can even bust through the floor. This is especially attractive if they know the demon thugs are a good distance away (in the kitchen over the café).

* **More subtle raid.** The Cast can get the keys to the front entrance from Sandra when she goes shopping. That won’t get them through the door at the top of the stairs, nor into the private areas (Quilla isn’t stupid enough to let all her keys out of the building at one time), but those locks could be picked or busted open. While Sandra is out, a thug usually waits at the top to let her back into the lobby.

* **Distraction.** The trouble with any of these schemes is that Quilla sleeps near Eloise’s cell, and her non-visual senses are sharp. She is likely to hear people on the roof, for example, unless some solid Dexterity and Crime rolls are tossed. If the players create a big enough distraction, both Quilla and the demon thugs might be elsewhere when they make their move.

Name: Madam Quilla
Motivation: Money for pain
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 4, Dex 6, Con 4, Int 3, Per 4, Will 4
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 18, Brains 13
Life Points: 57
Drama Points: 3
Special Ability: Hard to Kill 5, Nanjin Adept, +2
 Combat Score against living or moving foes, +4 Brains
 Score for perception-based tasks

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	18/20	—	Defense action
Kick	17/19	15	Bash
Kris Knife	18/20	17	Slash/stab
Punch	18/20	13	Bash



* An inside job. Most of these plans are best carried out during the day. But if someone can get inside with Eloise (posing as a client, no doubt), and then break out to a getaway car, all the extra people on the premises may just add to the confusion.

Be aware that plenty of other options exist, or that the players may devise something that combines two or more of these suggestions. Players are eternally creative people—give them free reign and give any reasonable plan a good chance for success.

If they have grander plans, the best way to take down the operation is to kill Quilla. Without her, the rest of the resistance crumbles quickly. At least a few of the demon thugs run off when their source of income is scragged (the others fight out of sheer bloodthirstiness). Some of the slaves (see *Streetwalker*, p. [?]) might be persuaded to fight as well, but need some impressive Willpower and Influence rolls to shake them out of their despair (at least three Success Levels). That goes for both the good guys and the bad guys. Those of favored status like Sandy and Sandra require five Success Levels to convince them to take up arms against their captors; otherwise they help Quilla and her demons in minor, less dangerous ways.

Repercussions: While the approach can take many forms, the most common outcome is that they come away with Eloise alive and relatively unhurt. They might also have up to 13 other traumatized people on their hands. The victims should be returned home (many have been listed as missing people), put into the hands of a social services government agency, or left at a shelter such as East Hills. Not all of them are going to come out of this sane, but they've got a much better chance after they are rescued.

Eloise turns out to be one of the tough ones (also, she wasn't there very long). It's going to take some time to recover, but she shows signs of doing so. One important detail to the on-going plot is the phone call she insists on making. See the next section for all the details.

As for Yvonne, she gives the Cast what money she owes them, thanks them profusely, and tries to get on with her life.

What about Candlelit?: If Quilla is still around, she marks the Cast as enemies (assuming she knows who they are and the transaction wasn't mutually beneficial), and attempts to send some pain their way when she can. She doesn't make it a full time vocation though. She's got a business to run. If Quilla is taken out, few mourn, even from the demon community. Wolfram & Hart takes notice, but we'll assume they add this disruption to an already long list of incidents involving the Cast. Their response and their plans for the investigators . . . we'll leave that to you.

Eloise: When the characters first find Eloise, they are not likely to be paying too much attention to the details—they should be getting out and fast (and may in fact be in the middle of a fight). Eloise too is not overly interested in conversation. She urges them to save her and to do it now! The good news is that if Cast does invade Candlelit, Quilla will be more interested in trying to kill them than Eloise (though she may threaten to harm the girl if she thinks there's an advantage in it). If Eloise does get involved in the fracas, she is likely to use her Drama Points to defend or heal herself. A bit of Righteous Fury would be cathartic and very appropriate, but even with a +5 bonus she doesn't have the combat expertise to hit the thugs or Quilla. That may not be the case with regard to any Candlelit patrons.

Once home safe, Eloise is willing to talk a little about the accident and the periphery of her experiences in Candlelit as long as Yvonne is present. Eloise does not want to talk about demons or the supernatural. If some of her rescuers are demonic, she remains incredibly nervous and withdrawn in their presence, certainly in the short term (if the entire Cast is non-human, they might have to do with a second hand report).

As for the accident, Eloise relates how she got terribly angry at her father for yet another half-heard slight while driving. She had suffered a constant barrage of veiled insults and active obstructions for years (it takes Yvonne a while to believe this, but she ultimately accepts her daughter's story). Eloise doesn't quite remember what happened after that, except for the scream of metal. She hazily recalls being led away by the ghost of her father (although his body remained quite dead in the passenger seat of the car)—she assumed she was a ghost too. As such, she was not all that surprised that she ended up in hell. (She also remembers little bits of incoherent detail about Lawson's Bakery and the Holiday Inn, if asked.) When told of the other car, she insists on calling William's family and roommate and apologizing for the accident, as this will help her feel better about it. A fine gesture, but one not without consequences—when Adrian hears her apology, he takes it for an admission of guilt in William's death.

Previously, Eloise was a bright but withdrawn young woman, ground down by her stepfather's casual persecution, but with a self-reliant core. After such a grueling ordeal, she still has friends and a mother who will help her on the way to recovery and emotional balance. It will not be easy, but she is going to try. Events in later Acts may threaten her recovery, driving her into self-loathing, addiction, or outright psychosis, if things go badly. Even when not directly involved in the action, Eloise is the heart of this adventure, and you should make her a very sympathetic character and



ANGEL

Name: Eloise Holt
Motivation: Survive, and forget the pain
Critter Type: Human
Attributes: Str 1, Dex 2, Con 2, Int 3, Per 2, Will 3
Ability Scores: Muscle 8, Combat 10, Brains 13
Life Points: 22
Drama Points: 4
Special Abilities: Emotional problems (Depression), Mental problems (Severe Phobia—demons), Recurring Nightmares

Maneuvers			
Name	Score	Damage	Notes
Dodge	10	—	Defense action
Punch	10	3	Bash

make sure that her well being is foremost in the Cast's mind.

TROUBLESHOOTING

It is possible that the Cast wants to discover more out about Candlelit, but doesn't have the appropriate

Contacts. In that case, asking around a demon pub or two uncovers a snitch (perhaps even Merl himself, if he's still around in your game), who will be able to help. It'll cost them a couple of hundred dollars for the info. That should get them on track for the rest of the events in this Act.

ACT THREE: CLIMAX

Angel: Hey, you wanna get behind the tape? You wanna gawk, go home and watch a high speed chase on Fox. (To officer) You want to think about keeping the tourists off my crime scene?
 —2.4 Untouched

RUN DOWN

And has everyone lived happily ever after? Not quite yet. We've still got a murder mystery to solve, and a strange one it is too.

The Cast is called in to investigate a crime scene surrounding a ritual murder, and discover the body appears to be that of Kevin Bryson, Eloise's stepfather. They have to work out who precisely has been killed and why. Also, Eloise has been implicated in the crime and her innocence or guilt must be determined. Finally, a demon is actually trapped in the corpse—if they are not careful, he will escape and kill again.

ACTION

The Pause that Refreshes: The last two Acts of this adventure can happen anytime after the Eloise's rescue. If your Cast is happy with the outcome (Eloise is safe), they can go on to a different mission in the meantime. You could heat up some subplot you previously laid to

distract them from digging deeper. In that case, best that they not realize they are returning to this Episode—that way the identity of the corpse is even more of a surprise. If they are still puzzled about the loose threads from the previous Act (such as who sent Yvonne the photo) and have continued investigating, this Act could happen quite soon after the previous one.

A New Job?: The Cast is summoned to the scene of the crime. The call comes around 10:00 PM one evening—how it happens depends on how your game is set up. For example, if someone in the Cast has Psychic Visions, that's a perfect way to get them involved. If they are a group of private detectives (or academics or whatever) who have a least some reputation for esoteric studies, they are called in to consult by Detective Ryerson (more on him later). If one or more of them are police, they simply get assigned the case. If they monitor police bandwidths, they hear this from the first officer at the scene: "This one's really weird guys. They've been carving symbols in his chest or something." That should get their attention (the police discourage such details on the airwaves, but the officer is a rookie).

If none of those make sense for your group, Adrian himself calls them. He is in a panic, although he is still security conscious enough to use a public phone. He tries to disguise his voice and covers the handset with a





handkerchief to further muffle it. He shouts something along the lines of "1681 Temple St. You've got to stop it. Stop the autopsy. Someone's gonna die," and then hangs up. In that case, don't worry about the email (see p. [?])—he will send a bit later.

However it happens, the Cast should get the hint that interesting and supernatural things are happening. When they arrive, be sure to make it clear what their standing is at the crime scene. They might be running the show (if detectives are among them), acting as consultants or supporting personnel, or even trying to horn in as spectators. If they're quick, they can try bluffing themselves into the investigation (as Angel did in 2.4 Untouched). If they are consultants, Ryerson lets them poke around other things as well, as long as they're careful.

Scene of the Imperfect Crime: All the action happens at 1681 Temple Street, a medium-sized town house in a mid-to-upper class part of town. By the time the Cast arrives, two officers are setting up the tape and keeping back onlookers, while another conducts a preliminary interview of the sole witness. Two paramedics are having a quiet smoke, observing. The drone of news choppers gets louder. The center of all this attention is the dead body laying half in and half out of the front door.

Other than various lackeys and vultures, two more significant people are on the way. The first is Detective Edward Ryerson, the officer in charge of the investigation. The second is Dr. Jill Stanthorpe, who is in charge of examining the body at the scene and is slated to perform the autopsy. Either one can be replaced by a Cast Member as required or you can use Guest Stars that already exist in your game.

At this point, it would be the height of unprofessional behavior to disturb the body or anything around it (you can remind the Cast of that if they are too gung-ho in their inspection). Nonetheless, two things should become clear quickly. One is that the man does indeed have a symbol carved into his chest, along with seven iron nails pounded through it. The other notable thing is that the body looks identical to Kevin Bryson.

Other information requires some investigation:

* Anyone with official connections can quickly find out 1681 Temple Street belongs to a John McCrost and was leased out as rental property. A little more checking shows the most recent tenants moved out less than a week after the original car accident. No databases show any other address for McCrost through he does own a P.O. Box where he received the rent checks. McCrost has no criminal record, known next-of-kin, or anything but the bare minimum of details to prove he exists at all.

* The body is clad in boxer shorts and the remains of a T-shirt, which has been slashed down the front to reveal its chest. The paramedics have conducted an initial inspection to determine the body is indeed dead. A more thorough examination reveals that it is only starting to enter rigor mortis, which tentatively puts death at one to two hours previous (body temperature is also consistent with that). Markings around the face, hands, and feet indicate the body had been tied and gagged, quite tightly. There is some bruising, most prominently on the back of the head, but also on one arm and leg. Some good dice rolling, cross-referenced with the scene in the bedroom, indicates that the body was likely grabbed by the arm, dragged off the bed, and then tied. Presumably the blow to the head preceded this, although that is harder to determine.

The most interesting aspect of the body is the symbol carved into the chest. It's almost a foot square in area and quite intricate. At seven places along the pattern, the head of an iron nail protrudes slightly. There is quite a lot of blood soaked into the T-shirt and smeared across the flesh. It seems the pattern was carved about a quarter-inch deep, with some sort of sharp but not obviously serrated knife (if anyone thinks to check, the same knife may have been used to slash the T-shirt). It looks like the cuts were made while the man was still alive, and wiped off with some sort of rag, so that the pattern remained obvious, as if accuracy was needed. A tap or two on the iron nails reveals they appear to be in quite deep. It could be theorized that the central nail—over the heart—is the cause of death, although that cannot be proven without a full autopsy.

* A check is done for prints, fibers, and other contaminants on the body. The most interesting thing is the presence of five small cat hairs, which are found nowhere else in the house, other than in the mess of the bedroom. There is no evidence John McCrost had any pets, and the hairs in fact match the type of cat belonging to Adrian Mulvaney (though you shouldn't reveal that unless specifically asked, or if someone makes a great roll/spends a Drama Point. He also has to have seen the cat, of course).

* Blood and sweat samples are taken from the body, for later analysis. Note that if the Cast discovered forensic anomalies in the blood from the car, they should find the same anomalies here (if not, you might not want to mention it, since by the time the analysis is complete all the action will be over, one way or the other). Regardless, there is other strangeness to find. John McCrost's fingerprints match those of Kevin Bryson, but his DNA does not—instead, it matches that of William Hargensen, who disappeared in the car crash! This also takes a while to discover, but a blood type test can come to the same conclusion a lot sooner (it's not conclusive in identifying anyone, but rules out





McCrost being Bryson). Of course, someone would have to think to check those matches—the authorities don't make any of those connections unless the Cast prods them in the right direction.

* Once all initial tests have been completed, the body is zipped into a body bag. It is likely that plastic bags will be placed around the hands and tied at the wrist to preserve potential evidence under the fingernails. It is then dispatched to the coroners, unless a Cast member manages to stop it.

Examining the Nails

Note that the iron nails would normally be removed and examined during a proper autopsy, which in this case would be disastrous (as will be revealed). If one of your characters decides to try removing a nail at the scene of the crime, remind them of normal procedure. If he persists in the plan, it's time to interrupt them with news from Adrian (see p. [?]). If he still persists, go to the Trinette demon discussion (see p. [?]) to see what happens. Hint: it's messy.

* Leonard Shultz is a next-door neighbor, and the man who interrupted the assailant trying to remove McCrost's body via the front door. He saw the door open and a man trying to drag the body outside, at which point he shouted, panicking the assailant who ran to the road. Shultz then heard a car drive off quickly (he can't see the road properly from his window). He describes the man as medium height, wearing a balaclava (head covering that exposes only the eyes), a dark baggy sweater, and dark trousers. If questioned, he says he assumed it was a man, but he's not sure.

Shultz also confirms that McCrost only recently started living in the house. He won't say so unless pressed, but he didn't like the man. He had a way of looking at you like you were beneath him.

* If the neighborhood is canvassed, a woman across the street says she saw an unfamiliar car parked in front of number 1681 in the evening. She knows it was silver and can recognize it (if the Cast spends some time with her and car catalogues), but doesn't know its make or model (in truth, it's a Kia). She also didn't get the number, see the driver, or know when it came or went. If someone makes an intuitive leap to check car rental places, they can discover that Adrian hired a similar car from a small agency quite a distance away (and returns it about two hours after the murder). That's circumstantial evidence, but he'll have great trouble explaining what he was up to.

* The bedroom is where the main action happened, as easily seen by the amount of blood and the sheets torn from the beds. In fact, it looks like the sheets were used to wipe off the chest while the assailant drew the symbol. The knife, hammer, and thin rope used in the crime are also present—all easily purchased at the average home supply store.

A strong smell of cleaning fluid emanates from one corner and a slight undertone of vomit—it appears the attacker's stomach wasn't up to the task. Nonetheless, he did a quick but good job of cleaning up the mess and flushing it, so there isn't enough left for a DNA match. About a foot above the spot, the wall is damp with perspiration. While ill, he leaned against the wallpaper with his sweaty forehead (he didn't wear the balaclava inside). If he is a "secretor"—one of the 60% of the population who leaves his DNA in sweat and other bodily fluids—that'd probably be enough to match him. Alas, Adrian isn't, so that's a dead end.

A small number of cat hairs are found in the blood, as mentioned previously.

A wallet next to the bed contains a driver's license for John McCrost. The picture matches the dead man. It is dated several years ago (the cover was well prepared).

* The rest of the house is neat, with sparse but expensive furnishings, and it looks like the resident didn't spend a lot of time at home.

The Frame

What's going on with the credit card? Despite appearances, it does not mean Eloise killed John McCrost—although that is what the intruder wants the police to think. When the demon was leading Eloise away, he threw away her purse and the wallet of William Hargensen, to muddy the trail (he kept what was left of the money after paying Lawson). Adrian managed to find and rescue the discarded items from the trash bin where they'd been tossed. He didn't reveal this to police (he didn't reveal much to the police) and remembered the card when designing this frame.

It's not a very good frame, though. Eloise has a fairly good alibi in her mother and her card has already been reported missing. Still, if presented with the card and asked if she killed the man who looks like her father, Eloise will break down and cry, confessing to the murder. She's still fragile about her experiences and is struggling with shock and feelings of guilt. Her confession leads to much confusion on the part of the police and untold damage to Eloise's own recovery.





* The means of entry becomes apparent after a few minutes—a window at the side of the house is open and the grass on that side is disturbed. Not enough of an imprint was made to conclusively identify the size and type of shoe.

* The final, and most obvious piece of evidence (too obvious, perhaps) is below the open window on a small bookshelf. It would appear the intruder climbed over the bookcase when entering. Against the wall, partially hidden by the bookshelf but still readily apparent is Eloise Holt's credit card! Looking closely at the window latch, it seems that a flat, stiff object could have been used to jimmy it open. Perhaps the intruder used the credit card and dropped it when entering.

* What if a psychic visits the crime scene? As with the car, death permeates the entire house. Death and something else . . . a feeling of twisting pain and hatred that is buried under the surface. If linked to particular objects or areas (perhaps though the use of psychometry), these feelings are strongest near McCrost's bed. Examining items such as the knife, hammer, credit card, or even the windowsill reveals interesting facts. With at least three Success Levels, it is clear that the murderer is Adrian—assuming that the Cast Member has met him (less than that only reveals glimpses of a figure dressed in black, plus feelings of anger, fear, and determination). With at least five Success Levels, the psychic can get an impression of a photo of William Hargensen in a photo frame. This is the object with which Adrian swore vengeance in William's name, and can lead to Adrian if they haven't met him.

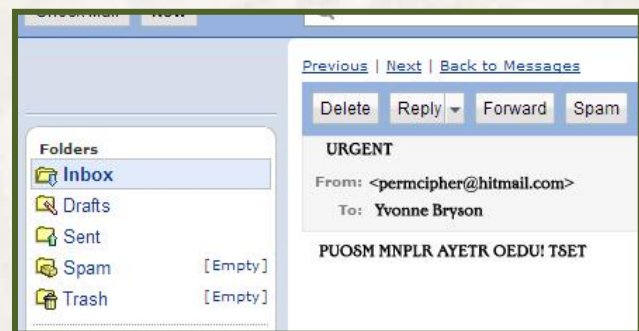
* The symbol is a complicated design that looks like it has been carefully inscribed into living flesh. A successful Intelligence and Occultism roll reveals it is some sort of confining sigil. With three Success Levels, the studier remembers something about imprisoning demon spirits using that symbol. With five Success Levels, the wizkid recalls the name Trinette demon being somehow associated with the symbol.

If they don't get all that, more research is required. Fortunately, references for these sorts of symbols aren't too hard to come by (Adrian found one and presumably he has less access to occult research materials than the Cast), and half an hour in a decent occult library provides the information.

* If the Cast doesn't think to look up the symbol in their own books, they could still find Adrian's materials. If they bust into his house soon after the murder, he isn't there (he's holed up in a cheap motel waiting to see if the police are looking for him). He has encrypted most of his notes on his desktop computer, and uses a much better algorithm than his email messages—

requiring a couple of months of serious computing power to crack (or, more cinematically, fifteen accumulated Success Levels on an Intelligence and Computers roll). These include rough notes on various demon bars and bookshops he's visited, and how he found John McCrost (see p. [?]). He also has a big occult tome under his bed, which falls open to the details on the Trinette—he photocopied the symbol to use on McCrost, since he didn't want to cart around the whole book.

You've Got Mail: Researching the symbol is not the only route to determining that an autopsy is a bad idea. Adrian tries to tell the party, as soon as he realizes that his whole plan could crumble. He does this by encrypting another email and sending it via Yvonne. Yvonne phones the Cast as soon as she gets the email.



Using the same method as before (see p. [?], a 4x6 grid with the code word URGENT), the message becomes TEMPLE ST MURDER NO AUTOPSY!

Of course, your Cast isn't likely to automatically follow the orders of a mysterious correspondent, although his first message may reassure them that his motives are good (which is half right). The idea is to get them do their research before it is too late.

Intervention: This is an atypical murder mystery—it's not so much about who killed the body, but why. In fact, the Cast may discover they agree with the reason for the murder. Or perhaps they disagree with the methods, but find themselves constrained to carry through to stop more death. Then there's the frame, which they are far less likely to be in favor of.

Once the Cast learns about the body and the sigil and understands the situation (including Adrian's message that an autopsy should not be performed), they must act quickly. What they do to prevent the autopsy is another chance for your players to show off their guile.

The Cast could steal the body (en route from Temple Street to the morgue is easiest); delay it 24 hours with bogus paperwork and legal claims, such as a fake next-of-kin who must come from out-of-state to properly identify the body before it is autopsied (one group of



ANGEL

Name: Kevin Bryson/John McCrost
Motivation: Blend in, cause torment (in a lazy fashion)
Critter Type: Demon
Attributes: Str 3, Dex 3, Con 4, Int 4, Per 4, Will 6
Ability Scores: Muscle 12, Combat 12, Brains 15
Life Points: 38
Drama Points: 2
Special Ability: Spirit transferal

Name	Score	Maneuvers		Notes
		Damage		
Dodge	12	—		Defense action
Punch	12	8		Bash

Trinette Demons

It's time to reveal just what is going on, though you've probably worked out most of it by now anyway. The mystery at the heart of this adventure is a rare species of demon called Trinette, one of those annoying jump-from-body-to-body types. The twist for this species is that instead of looking like the person they've just jumped into, they remold the raw material of that body into the same shape they had before. So DNA, blood type, and similar indicators remain the same as before, but bone structure and even fingerprints change.

When the current host dies, it retains its new body shape and the demon spirit dives towards a new victim. The spirit makes a Willpower (not doubled) roll resisted by a Willpower (doubled) roll from the potential host. If the demon wins, it takes over—remolding the body in a matter of seconds, and sending the human soul off to heaven, hell, or whatever else lies out there. If the victim wins (or ties) the roll, the demon moves to another host and tries again. If it does not find any host within five minutes, it dies (it takes 30 seconds to force a Willpower roll, and the disembodied spirit can move 50 yards a Turn).

A particular sigil has been devised which traps the demon spirit inside a body. It must be carefully inscribed, and then seven iron nails driven into the flesh. The last nail must pierce the heart and cause death, at which point the spirit is trapped. If the Cast gains three Success Levels in an Intelligence and Occultism research roll, they learn that the nails must stay in for 24 hours, at which point the demon withers and dies.

Another way exists to kill this demon, although it requires six Success Levels to find. If the demon tries to enter a vampire by mistake, and loses the battle of wills, the vampire soul eats the demon (something similar happened to Angel in *Buffy 2.8 The Dark Age*). Even if the Trinette wins and expels the vampire's soul, it can't successfully inhabit a dead body and must move on again. What happens to the ejected vamp soul is no doubt fascinating and surely provides the basis for one or more future Episodes.

playtesters introduced a fake medical scare—Ross River Fever—which was helped by the fact McCrost apparently only arrived in town recently). They could try to convince the doctor concerned, Jill Stanthorpe, of the danger (good luck!), or something completely different. If they are trying some skullduggery around the morgue, use the plans on page [?].

Intercepting Detective Ryerson before he talks to the girl is easier. If they manage to talk to him about it and explain that the card was previously reported missing, he checks that out first. He still wants to talk to Eloise, but if he is told of her previous troubles, he will do it in a far more sensitive fashion, not causing major heartache.

If the Cast Members are officially part of the investigation, their job is easier. They still might have to explain what happens if, say, the Kevin Bryson/John McCrost body goes mysteriously missing on the way to the morgue. Then again, in the Angelverse, these sort of things happen quite regularly. . .

The Act is officially over once those two actions are resolved. That still leaves some mysteries, which may be cleared up—or not.

Adrian: Adrian is one of the important motivators for events in this story, but he tries to keep as low a profile as possible. If he can accomplish his goals without revealing his identity at all, he will be a happy camper





(as happy as you can be while involved in murder and entrapment for the sake of revenge, anyway).

From his point of view, things are relatively simple. He saw his best friend assimilated by a demon. That set him on a path of vengeance into the murky depths of the demon subculture.

Instinctively not trusting the gathering crowd to understand what he saw, he picked up the trail of Kevin and Eloise himself in the back alley, then lost it again, although he managed to find the discarded purse and wallet. By the time the police called to tell him of the accident, he was already planning his next moves.

That involved both lots of research, in places like Ancient Eye and Barlowe's (see p. [?]; or the equivalent in your own city), and his own foot work that lead to the Holiday Inn and a description of Quilla. Neither of those prepared him for his first demon bar. And yet by stepping lightly and acting confidently, he . . . well, didn't die immediately.

The rest of the story is fairly straightforward, and explained through the plot of the adventure thus far. How much of his side of events the Cast gets to hear depends on how friendly they get (and since Adrian is in serious "trustno!" mode, friendship isn't likely to prosper), or how much they beat out of him. They may not hear any of it. The main mystery left to reveal is how he found McCrost, when not even W&H have that on file.

It was half accident and half McCrost's fault. After being suddenly uprooted from his suburban life, the demon couldn't resist a final look at his old abode. Adrian himself doesn't live far away and he spotted "Kevin Bryson" driving by while shopping. Stunned, he managed to get the license plate, and that was enough.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If none of the Cast has mobile phones, it might be difficult for Yvonne to get a message to them. First, tell them to join the 21st century (even if they were last living in the 18th). Second, try to arrange a message through the other officers at the scene, or whatever is required. If that doesn't make sense, you might have to resort to desperate measures, such as Yvonne contacting Rick Hernandez instead, at which point he solves the puzzle then drives out to Temple Street to see what's going on. Because the Cast has made it so hard to be contacted (a bad idea for any private eye), they might be left with little time to stop the autopsy.

If the Cast is not able to investigate the murder scene fully, they should be close enough to observe the vital facts: the corpse looks like Kevin Bryson, the sigil on its chest, and Eloise's apparent link to the case. The first two are fairly easy because the body is kept out the front of the house while forensics tests are performed (and a chopper gets some good shots of the sigil to show on the news—although they don't show the face, to be "sensitive"). The third might be a bit more contrived—perhaps they overhear Ryerson interviewing neighbors, asking if they know someone called Eloise Holt. However it's done, the plot hinges on these facts so they must be imparted to the Cast.





ACT FOUR: RESOLUTION

Melissa: I know it sounds stupid, but I can feel him watching me—all the time. Today at work, he knew I took my Xanitab when I was alone in the bathroom. I mean, how did he see that? He is just everywhere. I don't think I can take much more of this.

Angel: Well, we're going to help you.

—1.4 I Fall to Pieces

RUN DOWN

It starts with a dame (again).

Yvonne returns to ask the Cast to find the name of the person who has been sending her the emails. She also wants to discover why her daughter's credit card ended up at the scene of a murder. Telling her the same person was responsible for both causes some confusion.

The events of this Act can happen in a number of ways. For example, the Cast might have discovered Adrian back in Act One and told Yvonne about him them. She'll still want to know about the card, though. The point of the Act is to force a resolution. If your Cast doesn't resolve things on their own, they must face a somewhat messy aftermath.

ACTION

All the clues to discovering Adrian have already been discussed in previous Acts and all still exist. You can introduce a few more obvious pointers if your Cast feels a little lost. Here are two possibilities:

* Ryerson finds a witness who spotted car rental plates on Kia outside McCrost's house, and compiles a list of names of people who rented similar models. Adrian's name is on that list. He does not notice any link between Eloise and Adrian, but if the Cast consulted with him before, he asks the Cast if any names are familiar to them.

* If Quilla (or another interested party) is still around, she has decided it's time to remind people not to mess with her. She's discovered who infiltrated her initially and sends some boys around to discourage both parties. Assuming the Cast proves up to the task, they defeat the demon thugs and find two addresses on one of the bodies—their own address and Adrian's, who was the next target.

Confronting Adrian: If Adrian is confronted, he acts defiant and surly, yet does not deny what he has done. He did it for his own reasons and does not expect anyone else to understand or approve. There is a confused mixture of grief, anger, and guilt in the young man, which might come out as angry rants against Eloise, the authorities for letting such atrocities happen, and the Cast for interfering (whether or not they actually saved the day in Act Three). How the Cast reacts is up to them. Getting him to apologize for his treatment of Eloise is difficult.

Over all of that anger is a growing obsession within the man. His introduction to the world of demons was sudden and brutal, and although he has been remarkably successful in negotiating his way through it thus far, he is not sure that luck will hold. At the same time, the abyss has its hooks in him and he can't just go back to playing around with his computers.

Another factor overlays this case—Adrian did, after all, kill John McCrost, and the law still wants him for it (though they might not know who he is). If the Cast is dedicated to the concept of Law, they are faced with one of those pesky ethical decisions. It's probably not too hard to reconcile (demons die in the Angelverse fairly regularly), but Adrian's lack of remorse about Eloise means they might be tempted to give him up to Ryerson.

If the Cast looks past Adrian's bravado, they might see someone in need of help. He's been through a lot recently and, while his reaction hasn't been too admirable, he has survived and even did the right thing (no matter how horrific) about the Trinette demon. He could even become a force for good if steered the right way. You might even want to add a supernatural power to Adrian, like Psychometry, that could have been useful in his prior activities and may prove a boon to the Cast in the future (whether he's one of those rare psychic humans or part demon himself is up to you). Adrian could be an interesting recurring Guest Star (with his own path to redemption) or he might even become a Cast Member.

Convincing Yvonne: If Yvonne finds out what is going on with the credit card, she wants Adrian turned over to the police—at least initially. Once her own anger has died down, it might be possible to arrange something else if the Cast really works on it. She is torn, and absent some convincing (which can be roleplayed) is likely to do something she (or more likely Adrian) will regret.





One way out of this difficulty would be to not enter it. If the Cast manages to hide the existence of the card from Yvonne, they'll have an easier time. That means they probably have to keep the card from the police as well, since Ryerson will want to inform Yvonne that it was found, even if he doesn't want to question Eloise.

Saving Eloise: Perhaps the trick to resolving all this tension involves Eloise. She wants peace, and though she may need a bit of helping, she will act to keep it, trying to do the right thing by both Adrian and her own family.

Maybe Eloise finds the inner strength to stand up to her memories, and help out in the battle against the forces of darkness, becoming a member of the Supporting Cast. If there are still things that the players do not know, or are deliberately kept hidden, those secrets can continue bubbling under the surface, to come out when least expected.

Unresolved Tension: Or maybe you don't want things resolved just yet, especially if you're early in a Season of your own. If the Cast doesn't know who Adrian is, maybe he continues sending them emails that sometimes help, sometimes hinder. He is a newcomer to the demon world, but has adapted fast and will develop his own agenda. That agenda could veer off into the realm of insanity and he could become a major ongoing player in the Season.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Fortunately, by the time you get to Act Four, there's not much that can go wrong with the plot—it's all come and gone. The resolution might be messy, but that's the point. Let things play out and see how your Cast deals with it all.



There are a lot of people out there that need your help, but are you up to the challenge? Crime, corruption, poverty, drugs, Hollywood starlets and, oh yeah-a whole lot of demons. This is the book that shows how it all fits together in the City of Angels. Whether you're a noir-ish private eye (ring any bells?), in the LAPD with Kate Lockley, or even a rogue demon hunter trying to find your way arounda demon brothel, we've got you covered.

Then again, maybe you're on a darker path. If you're taking money on the side, have a gambling problem, or have gotten an offer you can't refuse, this might be your last chance at redemption-or a way to minimize the pain.

Fred: Okay, so he survived an unspeakable hell dimension-I mean, who hasn't? But you can't just leave him all alone on the streets of Los Angeles.
-3.21 Benediction

IT'S TIME TO INVESTIGATE!

The Investigator's Casebook is a supplement for the Angel roleplaying game. In it, you will find:

- An intro to running adventures on the mean streets.
- Details about Angel Investigations-the cases they solve and the locations they haunt.
- New character options, plus new weapons and equipment.
- Rules and guidelines for solving cases, collecting evidence, conducting forensics, profiling, interrogating, gambling, and more.
- A detailed look at the world of private eyes-what they do, and how they do it.
- Police work made easy, including a run down of the LAPD, a primer for catching bad guys, and notes on how the federal authorities fit into it all.
- A quick guide to the court system, whether you're prosecuting or defending, and details on prisons in case it all goes wrong.
- A look at life in the urban wasteland, from ladies of the night to gangsters, and the people trying to make things better.

Written By David Carroll

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