

HELLHUI TARCH

Mom's Coming to Dinner 1
Hot Merchandise



WILDFIRE
Igniting Imagination

A dark, atmospheric illustration of a forest at night. A full moon is visible in the upper left corner, casting a soft glow. In the foreground on the right, a woman with long, flowing blonde hair is shown in profile, looking towards the left. She has a serene expression. In the background, a deer with large antlers stands in a misty clearing. The trees are tall and thin, their silhouettes against the moonlight.

Full Moon TRASH

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DISCLAIMER

CthulhuTech is a game. It is a work of fiction intended as entertainment. Everything contained within is a product of imagination. None of it is real.

This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters, and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fictional and intended for entertainment purposes only.

FOR MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY

This book is intended for mature readers. It contains dark and disturbing content and images. Reader discretion is advised.

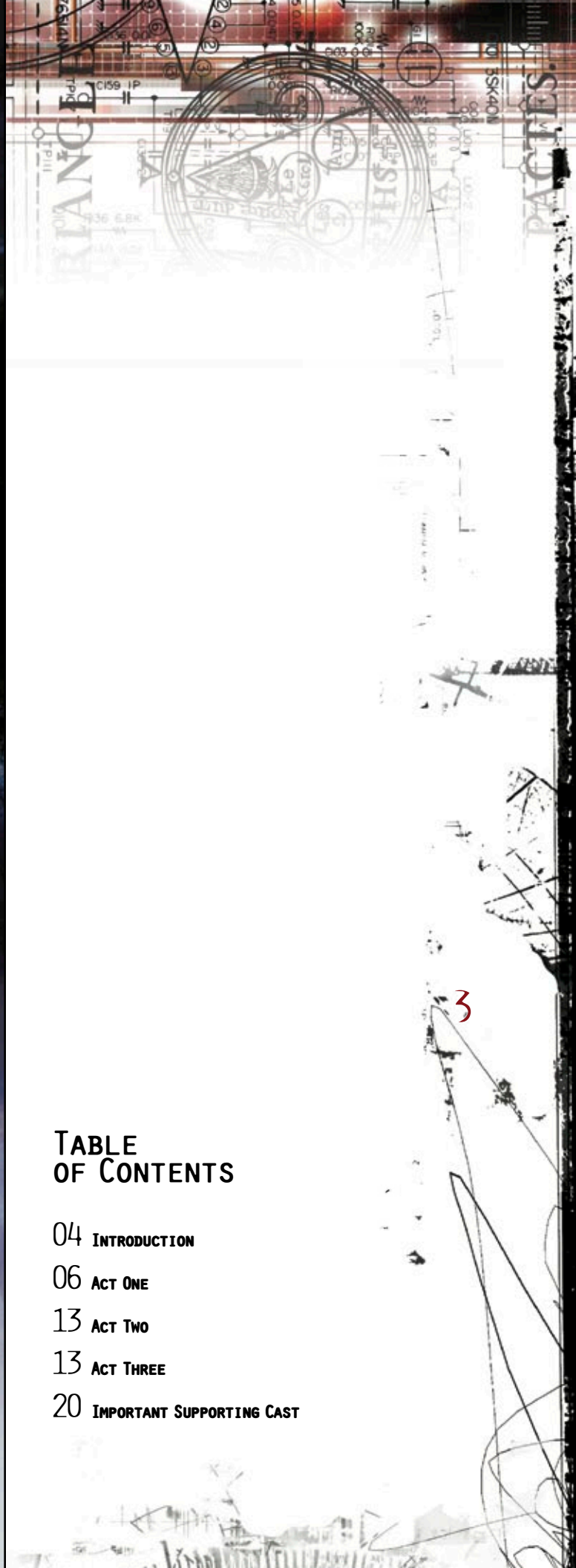


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Introduction

organized play

Welcome to *Hot Merchandise I*, the first adventure in the epic story of *Mom's Coming to Dinner*. This is a ready-to-run adventure that can be part of Organized Play.

This is an introductory story for those interested in starting an Eldritch Society game. It assumes that most, if not all, of the Dramatic Characters are Tagers, and any other mix will require you to tone down parts. The story follows a group of Tagers tailing a group of Chrysalis Corporation operatives into Seattle. Ultimately, they become embroiled in much larger plots going on in the shadows of the arcology.

This adventure is for Level 1 Characters, which are those that have a total of 20-25 Skill Points. If your Characters are more advanced than that, you will need to adjust things to be appropriately challenging.

Naturally, these adventures are intended for Storyguides. However, as a player, you may find the way the setting of *CthulhuTech* is brought to life in these adventures useful for your visualization of your Character and game. You probably don't want to memorize the adventures if you plan to play them – it'll only ruin your enjoyment.

Organized Play Adventures

The *CthulhuTech* Organized Play adventures will take you through the most significant events in the Strange Aeon, as designed.

This doesn't mean that you won't come up with awesome and significant adventures on your own, but these are the ones we designed to hit the high points based on what we've created.

SOUNDTRACK

We've created a soundtrack for *CthulhuTech* on the popular *Spotify* platform. It is composed of dark ambient and experimental music, designed to provide an interesting background for your

game. If you're interested, you can find it at http://open.spotify.com/user/wildfire_studios/playlist/0cRWZa4rbdJbDzBFZ1hWuK, or find the URL on our Facebook page at [facebook.com/cthulhutech](https://www.facebook.com/cthulhutech). We will be updating over time, to expand the repertoire of music and moods.

RULES FOR ORGANIZED PLAY

The great advantage of Organized Play is that players (and Storyguides) have the flexibility to use their Characters in different groups. Perhaps they're playing an event at a local hobby store or at a convention, they're playing in two groups, or their group dissolves or moves on to another game and they want to keep playing.

Using the guidelines here, players can keep their treasured Characters going through *Mom's Coming to Dinner* without restriction.

LEVEL 1 CHARACTERS

This adventure is designed for Level 1 Characters, which means they have earned up to 10 Advances.

If players have been playing *CthulhuTech* outside of *Mom's Coming to Dinner*, they may have enough Skill Points to be considered a higher Level. If this is the case, you'll need to bump up the difficulty and foes in this adventure in order to make it appropriately challenging.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

Characters completing this adventure should receive 15 Experience. You can give these out over sessions, or you can give them all out at the end.

VERIFICATION

Since players can travel between groups within Organized Play, any kind of Character advancement needs to be tracked and verified by the Storyguide. This is to make sure that everyone stays honest from group to group.

The simplest method of verification is to note on the back of their Character Sheet the number of Experience awarded, any special gear the Character acquired, as well as the name of the adventure and date or dates played. Please include your name and write in your own handwriting – don't let the players do this themselves. If you're comfortable with it, you may also include your e-mail address.

Since mobile devices are commonplace, an even more formal way to verify advancement is to post the above details to the player's Facebook Wall. This creates a digital record that is less easily disputed, if it ever comes to that.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a Character dies, the player shouldn't be handicapped in terms of playing in *Mom's Coming to Dinner*. Have the player create a new Character with the same number of Experience as the Character who has passed on.

However, have that player keep the deceased Character with the new one, so that all Experience has been tracked and verified for purposed of Organized Play.

SUSPECTED CHEATING

Cheating is poor sportsmanship, most especially in roleplaying games. Most people simply don't, since roleplaying games are about the story.

If you encounter a player who you suspect has cheated, ask them to be more detailed about how they received their Experience or gear. If they can recount the events of their adventure and they make sense, you may choose to let them participate.

However, if a Character has extremely unusual advancements – most especially in terms of gear – or cannot satisfactorily recount where they received them, then you have several choices. You

can let them play as is, and adapt the challenges for that Character to make them more difficult. You can also ask them if they will play without the suspect advancement for the duration of your game. Finally, you can simply not allow them into your game.

Unverified advancement can be suspect, but groups can often be too excited at the end of a session to properly record things.

In any event, make the judgment call that works best for your group.

PLAYING OUTSIDE THE OP

Enthusiastic players may wish to play adventures that are not part of *Mom's Coming to Dinner* in between Organized Play adventures. That's awesome and no one should be penalized for that.

However, if anyone wants to bring in such a Character, they should have all outside advancement verified by their Storyguide, just as if they were playing within *Mom's Coming to Dinner*.

organized play I:

hot merchandise, pt I

There's a lot going on in this story, so this description is going to move pretty fast. You will, of course, want to slow things down in the appropriate places and take your time with it. You may have to create additional details as you go, but that personal touch will make this story your own.

ACT I: WELCOME TO SEATTLE

Act Goals: To introduce the story and hook the Characters. There's a car chase, an ambush with ensuing rescue, and discussion with local Eldritch Society wigs that should keep the Characters in Seattle.

Scene 1 – The Chase

Goals: Chasing an escaping team of Dhohanoids from the Cascades into downtown Seattle, hopefully dodging the other Seattle drivers in the process.

Setting: I-90 into Seattle

Cast of Characters

Chrysalis Corporation Operatives – a group of eight (or more) Experienced Dhohanoids on a mission that ends in the Seattle arcology. They carry a metal briefcase that may hold something very important.

Starting Out

This story begins *in media res*, with the Characters chasing a team of Dhohanoids through Seattle traffic.

Before beginning the adventure, determine how many vehicles the Characters are in, and which of the Characters is driving. A minivan is available if a large-ish group wants to go in a single vehicle. Determining who is driving is best done through Character interaction, and if any of them have the Pilot skill for cars.

Once that's worked out, read the following to your players:

This morning started with a raid against a Dhohanoid breeding pit in the Cascade mountains and, for the last hour, has turned into a high-speed pursuit through Stevens Pass, down towards the Seattle arcology. Just as the Chrysalis Corporation clean-up team arrived earlier, two cars burst out of a side building and took off. Your team jumped into nearby cars and began the chase.

The Dhohanoids in the lead cars are maniacally driving at over 100 miles per hour in the outlying regions, and then drop to only about five miles over the speed limit in sections. They seem to know exactly when a cop is going to be around the next corner.

There are eight Dhohanoid operatives in the cars ahead of the pack. (Any Tager Characters will be able to sense them, and have verified this information.) There are four Dua-Sanari, two Vrykols, an Elib, and a Gelgore. If there are more than six players at the table, have another car full of Dhohanoids – two Dua-Sanari, a Vyrkol, and an Elib – fall into formation with the two lead cars during the chase. The Dhohanoids have a metal case in the lead car, with an important artifact inside it. Para-Psychics with sensory powers may be able to pick up hints of the case, or any Character succeeding at a Hard Observation Test will catch sight of it while they are driving. The team should hit Seattle just after rush hour.

During the chase, the Dhohanoids are all driving identical cars and begin a shell game of passing each other and dropping behind one another. They are trying to confuse the Characters. The Characters must succeed at a Challenging Observation Test to keep track of the cars, or find

a way to mark them. (Bullet holes, paint, dents from being hit, etc.) Additional cars will fall into formation and cars will peel off to try and lure the characters off the main caravan. These are driven by Human and Nazzadi security professionals for the Chrysalis corporation, and are not Dhohanoids (unless the Storyguide really wants to scare the players early on).

While all of this is happening, have the drivers from each car make Average Pilot Tests. Failure means that there is a minor accident – paint scratched from either the guard rail or another car. Critical Failure means a serious accident—for every 30 miles per hour they were driving at the time, roll a die of damage. This damage is Integrity scale and done to the car. Passengers suffer the same amount of Vitality damage, but armor protects as normal. Any car that suffers a serious accident is almost guaranteed to be out of the chase. The Characters can hijack a car from a passerby (a bad idea, as this will get the authorities involved) or head into Seattle and hope the rest of the team either catches up, or the Eldritch Society gets a lead.

There are two main outcomes for this scene – either the Characters follow the caravan into Seattle or they play demolition derby on the Seattle freeways.

Following the Caravan

The Dhohanoids continue trying to get them lost or into an accident in Downtown traffic. Call for a Pilot Contest, between the Dhohanoid driver and the Characters. Success means that they keep up, failure means that they begin to fall behind. Two consecutive failures mean that the Characters have lost the caravan. Call for three Contests, as they break across the Eastside, weave across the I-90 bridge through Mercer Island, and then into the downtown corridor.

Successfully following the caravan, each car will peel away off different exits, until it is just the initial cars from the breeding pit. The cars drive through an abandoned construction zone and make a hairpin turn under the freeway ramp into a service bay. The service bay is attached to a Chrysalis warehouse, with warehouse employees working hard to unload several large shipping containers. Other employees are driving forklifts, and pulling cases from shelves to stack on pallets. It's very busy, and the Dhohanoids jump out of their car and flash ID badges to the security guard at the door as they run into the facility.

The Characters can get to the front of the building in time to see the Dhohanoids exiting into the heavy foot traffic of the mid-morning.

Demolition Derby Time

Intentionally crashing into someone, without destroying your car in the process, takes skill. Call for an Opposed Pilot Contest and resolve as normal combat, but with the Pilot test taking the place of the Combat skill and Dodge. The cars do a base of +0 damage. For every die of damage a driver is willing to do to their own vehicle, increase the damage dealt by +1 die. The damage dealt to the attacking car is rolled after the impact is completed, and could result in wrecking the attacking car as well. (Storyguides can think of this like Burning.)

The chase is happening far enough outside the arcology that attacking in Tager form is risky, but reasonable. There are few other cars on the road, and if the characters act quickly, the authorities won't have time to respond even if someone makes a call.

Causing a multiple car accident, however, is going to attract the attention of local law enforce-

ment. The Mercer Island tunnels on the I-90 will be the best place to swap cars, if the Characters need to drop the immediate attention of the law enforcement. This may cause complications later, if they drive the stolen car back to the safe house. Throughout the demolition derby, the other Chrysalis cars will protect the leader carrying the case. If they get all the way to downtown, still following the lead car, the Dhohanoids will go to the warehouse as described above.

Should the Characters find a way to successfully retrieve the case, there will be a small piece of paper with an address on it inside the case. This leads into the ambush scene at the Beacon Hill warehouse, with the Characters encountering the Dhohanoid team on the train as described in the next scene.

Cleaning up the Mess

If a Tager ends up transforming in the streets of downtown, they soon find a squad of Mk-V Crusader pilots jumping in to the fray. Dhohanoids will shift to keep the Taggers occupied so that the lead car can escape, and then try to escape the Crusaders by jumping into the lake, or breaking line of sight and shifting back to a human form.

Scene 2 – The Ambush

Goals: After the Characters follow the Dhohanoids into Seattle, they are led to a warehouse in Beacon Hill and attacked by Chrysalis agents. Other Taggers are in the area, and have been dispatched by the Eldritch Society to help if needed.

Setting: The Seattle Arcology – Beacon Hill warehouse, Beacon Hill mag-lev station

Cast of Characters

Chrysalis Corporation Operatives – a group of eight (or more) Experienced Dhohanoids on a mission that ends in the Seattle arcology. They carry a briefcase that holds something very important.

Kory – Experienced, Nazzadi female, early-thirties, Phantom Tager (callsign Flatline), she is a pack leader and an expert in Nazzadi martial arts (Hun-Zuti). She is aware of the Character's arrival in Seattle and was dispatched by the Eldritch Society to help if needed.

Dave – Experienced, Human male, late-twenties, Shadow Tager (callsign Null), member of Kory's pack. He is nonchalant, patient, and difficult to excite. He's Kory's best friend and right hand.

Seattle Eldritch Society – Select Taggers who come to rescue the Characters from an ambush, led by Kory.

If the Characters Recovered the Case

The first thing the Characters are likely to do once they get their hands on the case is try to open it. This is fairly simple, an Easy Criminal Test or Average Strength Feat Test will do the trick. There is, however, a small transmitter in the briefcase (Challenging Security or Surveillance Test to detect) which sends a signal to a team of Dhohanoids that someone without the key has opened the case (Hard Security Test to disable). A Character with X-Ray Vision can detect the device with an Easy Observation Test; of course, with X-Ray Vision, that Character can also just read the piece of paper.

The address leads to a warehouse in Mid-Beacon Hill, which is most easily accessed by mag-lev train. Upon boarding the train, read the following:

The mag-lev car isn't terribly full, there are perhaps a dozen or so other riders in the train. One group catches your interest: four well-dressed people, clearly a group, chit-chatting about the game in a perfunctory manner. After a minutes' observation, you notice the odd ticks and gestures that let you

know, without a doubt, that at least one is a Dhohanoid. Worse, as you approach your stop at Beacon Hill, it's clear that they're getting out here too.

If They Followed the Car

If they followed the car, read the following:

Your team picks up the Chrysalis agents walking down the street towards a mag-lev station, ostensibly talking about the recent game. The leader has a metal attache case, chromed and shiny – impossible to miss. All of the others are wearing long jackets to keep off the rain, but perfect for hiding a gun or small object underneath. If you hadn't chased them from a secret facility, you'd almost believe that they are nothing more than a group of businessmen.

Descending the stairs, they board the mag-lev train and choose a car that, while not full, has enough riders that confrontation isn't an option.

Back to the Main Story

If, for some reason, the Characters lose the Chrysalis agents, or something else prevents them from reaching the warehouse, have several hours go by and then they will receive a call from Kory to setup a meeting and advance to the next scene.

The streets are crowded outside the mag-lev station, with residents out walking, couriers racing in and out of buildings, and street vendors selling small snacks. After walking for about ten blocks, the crowd begins to thin out. The Chrysalis Corporation operatives are slowly make their way to a warehouse in Mid-Beacon Hill. They use the civilians and cops in the area to their advantage, forcing the Dramatic Characters to keep a low profile and just follow them. They see the agents cut across the street mid-block, to a large warehouse. One swipes a keycard at the door, and they all head inside.

Ambush

As soon as they enter the warehouse, the four Dhohanoids (one Elib and three Vrykol) join their pals for an ambush. They have business to conduct as well; a small metal case containing a circlet is hidden amongst the warehouse detritus (Hard Observation Test to notice it, with a -2 Test Penalty if the Characters are in combat). Inside the warehouse, the original team of Dhohanoids is reinforced by a Zabuth, a Gelgore, and twice as many Dua-Sanari as there are Tagers in the group. If the Characters managed to get the address without tripping the briefcase transmitter, reduce the Dua-Sanari by half.

The fight should be fast and brutal. In the second round of combat, have Characters not engaged in melee combat make a Hard Observation Test. Success will show several Nazzadi and Humans in black jumpsuits up in the shadows near the rafters. This is Kory and her pack. If the Dramatic Characters start to lose the fight, they will shift to Tager form and proceed to even the playing field. As soon as Kory has a chance, she will order the Characters to back off, and her pack will finish mopping up the remaining Dhohanoids. She leads them out of the area, shifting back to mortal form as soon as it is safe.

If the Characters can handle the fight by themselves, Kory will drop down afterwards and introduce herself and her pack. It's not her place to steal their thunder if they can handle the mayhem.

Kory will explain they were given a head's up that the Characters were coming and have been watching for them, but they didn't want to move in on their action unless they had to. Then they discovered the trap. This rescue team consists of a bunch of Tagers: a Shadow, a Nightmare, and four Phantoms. The Phantoms most likely will

leap in and use their Tentacle Sheathe Limit Attacks right off the bat, resulting in an immediate reduction in Dhohanoids and a lot of screaming.

The Characters are escorted onto a mag-lev train on its way to a Seattle neighborhood called Queen Anne. If they succeeded at dealing with the Dhohanoids themselves, they should have the case. If not, it will show up later.

Dua-Sanaras

Size: Medium (6 to 7 ft. tall)

Attributes:

Agility 9, Intellect 6, Perception 7
Presence 6, Strength 9, Tenacity 9

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 2, Orgone 12, Reflex 7

General Skills:

Athletics 3, Criminal 3, Intimidate 2,
Misdirect 2, Observation 3, Stealth 3

Combat Skills:

Dodge 3, Fighting 3, Marksman 2

Weapons:

- Beak +1
- Tentacles 0 + Entangle

Damage Bonus: +1

Vitality: 14

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Unfeeling & Malicious

Senses:

- Nightvision
- Sonar

Movement & Speed:

- Land 17 mph (42/10 ypt)
- Swim 34 mph (84/20 ypt)

Elib

Size: Medium (7 to 8 ft. tall)

Attributes:

Agility 10, Intellect 5, Perception 7,
Presence 7, Strength 11, Tenacity 10

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 2, Orgone 12, Reflex 7

General Skills:

Athletics 4, Intimidate 3, Misdirect 2, Observation 4, Savoir-Faire 2, Stealth 3

Combat Skills:

Dodge 3, Fighting 4, Marksman 2

Weapons:

- Talons +1
- Mouth +2 (requires 2 Actions)
- Leaping Strike +2 (requires 2 Actions)
- Swallow
- Tail Swipe +1

Damage Bonus: +2

Vitality: 15

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 2 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Brutal & Murderous

Senses:

- Acute Smell & Taste
- Nightvision

Movement & Speed:

- Land 19 mph (47/11 ypt)
- Leaping Double

Gelgore

Size: Medium (5 to 6 ft. tall)

Attributes:

Agility 10, Intellect 7, Perception 12,
Presence 6, Strength 5, Tenacity 8

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 3, Orgone 12, Reflex 9

General Skills:

Athletics 4, Intimidate 2, Misdirect 2,
Observation 3, Stealth 3

Combat Skills:

Dodge 4, Fighting 3, Marksman 4

Weapons:

- Claws 0
 - Bite 0 + Poison
 - Needle Pods +2 + Poison
- Range 25/60/170
Shots 3 or 4/1-5

Damage Bonus: 0

Vitality: 11

Armor: 0/0

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Efficient & Collected

Senses:

- Acute Smell & Taste
- Nightvision
- Thermal

Movement & Speed:

- Climbing 26 mph (64/16 ypt)
- Land 45 mph (111/27 ypt)

Vrykol

Size: Medium (5 to 6 ft. tall)

Attributes:

Agility 12, Intellect 7, Perception 12,
Presence 6, Strength 5, Tenacity 8

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 3, Orgone 12, Reflex 10

General Skills:

Athletics 4, Observation 5, Stealth 3

Combat Skills:

Dodge 4, Fighting 3, Marksman 2

Weapons:

- Forearm Blades +1
- Mandibles +1

Damage Bonus: 0

Vitality: 11

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Frenetic & Perceptive

Senses:

- Acute Hearing
- Acute Smell & Taste
- Acute Touch
- Broadband Audio
- Nightvision
- Thermal

Movement & Speed:

- Climbing 15 mph (37/9 ypt)
(can cling to sheer surfaces)
- Land 15 mph (37/9 ypt)
- Flying 60 mph (148/36 ypt)

Zabuth

Size: Large (9 to 12 ft. tall)

Attributes:

Agility 9, Intellect 5, Perception 8,
Presence 7, Strength 14, Tenacity 11

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 2, Orgone 13, Reflex 7

General Skills:

Athletics: Adept (3), Intimidate: Expert (4), Ob-
servation: Adept (3), Stealth: Adept (3)

Combat Skills:

Dodge: Adept (3), Fighting: Master (5), Marks-
man: Expert (4)

Weapons:

- Maw +3 (requires 2 Actions)
 - Barbed Claws +2
 - Spiked Tail +2
 - Ocular Blast +4
- Range 25/60/170
Shots 1

Damage Bonus: +4

Vitality: 17

Armor: 2/2

Regeneration: 3 Points

Fear Factor: 16

Temperament: Cunning & Cruel

Senses:

- Acute Hearing
- Nightvision

- Sonar
- Thermal

Movement & Speed:

Land 23 mph (57/13 ypt)

ACT II: THE TROUBLE WITH THE UNDERGROUND

Act Goals: To find out where the artifact came from, what it is, and why the Chrysalis Corporation wants it, to follow a straggler from the original Dhohanoid party, and to ultimately regain possession of the artifact when they discover they've been passed a fake.

Scene 3 – The Safehouse

Scene Goals: After getting some rest at the safehouse, the team meets with a Lorekeeper from the Society. He explains about the Children of Chaos and the importance of the briefcase.

Setting: Queen Anne safehouse

Cast of Characters

Kory

Riley Sommers – Experienced, Human male, late-twenties, Eldritch Society Operator. He is tapped into the safehouse's security feed and will chat with anyone if it breaks the tedium of staring at monitors. He has a strange sense of humor.

Anton Graves – Veteran, Human male, early-forties, an Eldritch Society Lorekeeper who's keen mind and sharp intellect leave him somewhat inaccessible to most. Recent events have led him to believe that the Children of Chaos are up to something significant in the Pacific Northwest.

Read the following to your players.

The mag-lev pulls into the Queen Anne station and your crew gets off. The directions Kory gave you lead

to the second level of the Queen's arcology, into a residential neighborhood with long rows of cookie cutter brownstone houses. The address is a nondescript house with a small yard. Inside, it is fully furnished with a modern, easily-replaceable décor. You've seen several safe houses just like this in the past.

An operator's voice with a slight country twang comes over the speaker system installed in the house. 'Oh man, you boys certainly know how to kick some serious tail if what Flatline tells me is half-true. Get some rest, I'll keep a digital eye on things and sound obnoxious overtures if you need to get up.'

Home Safe

The safehouse is provided by the Eldritch Society and is used by packs moving through the area. There is a basic security system installed with an operator monitoring it. The operator, Riley Sommers, is on babysitting detail because he got caught hacking some personal files on his free time. Now he has spent the last four days staring at security feeds of empty houses for ten hours a day and is starved for conversation, or anything to break the tedium. He has been ordered to let them get some rest, but if anyone wants to sit up and talk, he will do so gladly.

A few hours later, after the team has had a chance to nap, eat and use the bathroom, Kory arrives. She will knock twice hard and let herself in. As soon as the door opens, a discordant jangle of the *1812 Overture* and *Flight of the Valkyries* will begin blaring through the house, instantly waking anyone who was still trying to sleep. After about ten seconds, Riley will get the noise turned off.

Kory looks for whoever seemed to be in charge during the earlier fight or a pack leader if there

is one. She asks to be brought up to speed on what brought them back to Seattle so fast after the raid this morning. If they have the case, she will ask what's inside, otherwise she will produce the case, saying that her people found it in the warehouse after finishing the fight.

Kory informs them that all signs point to something big going down here in the Pacific Northwest. There's been a lot of Dhohanoid movement and it seems like there's more now than there have ever been. Essentially, she plants the seed that they've stumbled into something. She makes a few calls and tells them that there's a local Lorekeeper who wants to speak with them in the morning.

At this point, it's time to lay low and rest until tomorrow. This is an excellent spot for Character interaction and drama.

Anton Graves

The next morning Anton Graves arrives at 8 am on the dot. When he comes in, Riley keeps the music from repeating what happened with Kory. The Lorekeeper asks them for the case. Opening it, he looks intently at the circlet and asks the Characters if they know what it is. Characters can attempt an Incredibly Hard Occult Test to see if they do. Success means they know it's called the Circlet of Ghabbaz and that it's quite obscure. Also, they know it was split into three pieces – the headpiece, the circlet, and the clasp – and lost many centuries ago. If they fail the Test, Graves tells them all this. He then reaches into his coat, pulls out the headpiece, and attaches it to the Circlet. As he attaches the headpiece, the Lorekeeper explains that he found it here in Seattle on a sorcerer who he suspects used to be a member of the Children of Chaos. Sadly, she died before he could confirm those details.

Anton goes on to say that there is argument among occultists that an obscure conjunction is on the horizon. This conjunction combined with the serious increase in Dhohanoid activity and the appearance of the Circlet are all reasons for the Eldritch Society to believe that something very significant is about to happen in the Pacific Northwest.

Anton asks if the team would feel up to running point on this investigation. Their recent performance has suggested that they should be up for the task. Once they decide to take the job, it's off to their first lead – a contact in the arcane underground.

Scene 4 – Finding a Buyer

Goals: The team begins investigating the headpiece and how it came to be found in Seattle.

Setting: The Seattle Arcology. A rent-by-the-hour office space in SoDo.

Cast of Characters

Karen V. – Experienced, Human female, early-thirties, a broker in the arcane underground whose cautious nature keeps her healthy and out of jail. She knows a lot of people and a lot of deals, so it's often worth jumping through her hoops. Karen looks and acts hard, like someone who grew up on the streets.

Karen's Muscle – Experienced, Human and 'Nazadi males and females, former military bodyguards.

To start the scene, read the following to your players.

Anton calls the team to provide the meeting location with his contact. 'Very well, gentleman (and

ladies), Karen will meet you at a temporary office just south of downtown. It's easier if you don't have her last name – she's a bit skittish about meeting new people. Be on your best behavior, and by all means don't go creepy on her. She doesn't know and doesn't need to. Any last minute questions? She's expecting you in the hour.'

The headpiece represents the first step in the investigation. It was found here in Seattle and something like that had to have made ripples in the arcane underground. There are two key questions that need to be answered – which will be given to the team by Anton if they seem slow on the uptake.

1. Did the headpiece come through Seattle's port or did it come another way?
2. Who was involved in the transaction or was it handled strictly inside the Chrysalis Corporation?

If there's news to be had, it'll be found in the arcane underground. That's where Anton's contact comes in. Karen V. is a broker in the arcane underground – she matches up buyers and sellers without actually dealing personally with the merchandise. She's very knowledgeable and knows where to get all kinds of things. However, Karen's more than a little cautious and has rules. She won't deal with newcomers unless they have a reference from someone she trusts. Anton is providing that reference, but Karen still never shows up without a handful of armed muscle.

The address provided is an expensive rent-by-the-hour office space in SoDo – south of downtown, a mostly industrial neighborhood. Security in the building is already tight, but she brings her muscle nonetheless. An Average Observation Test will show that two of the bodyguards have military tattoos for the NEG Forces, the Fighting

33rd. A Challenging History or Trivia (Military) Test, will let the Characters know that the Fighting 33rd was a corp that took heavy casualties in the first Juneau invasion, but refused to retreat until the order was given.

After taking a look at the piece and taking a few photos, Karen tells them that this is out of her normal realm of expertise. She traffics in all kinds of stuff, but ancient artifacts are kind of a niche market with not a lot of buyers. However, Karen knows someone who might be able to point them in the right direction, with the right persuasion. She doesn't like giving up contacts, but she also doesn't want to get personally involved. In return for a small bribe of 5,000Tn and a small favor, she'll hook them up.

This price is negotiable, if the characters would like to. A Persuade Test of 15 will lower the price by 10%. For every 5 points over that, she'll go down another 10%, to the lowest bribe of 2,500Tn. The Characters can submit a reimbursement to the Eldritch Society for this expense. After paying, Karen tells them to meet with Farouk Hassan in Belltown. She will call ahead for them to make an appointment. If the Characters are anxious about this, they can listen as she makes the call. It's very brief, with Karen telling Farouk that she's sending a group up to his shop to discuss a few antiquities.

Scene 5 – Meeting Hassan

Goals: The team meets with another antiquity dealer, who is more than they suspect. Their meeting is interrupted when a very distraught Lorekeeper calls them, suspecting foul play.

Setting: The Seattle Arcology. An upscale magic shop in Belltown.

Cast of Characters

Domany – Experienced, Nazzadi female, mid-twenties, almost magazine perfect, Domany is smart enough to know how to use her looks without looking like she is. She's polite, professional, and knowledgeable. It's also obvious that she likes nice things.

Farouk Hassan – Veteran, Human male, early sixties, above-board upscale magic shop proprietor and noted occultist, underground sorcerer, black marketeer and secret supplier to the Chrysalis Corporation. His above-board persona is that of a keen and tasteful businessman who opens up to anyone with a true passion for the occult. His other face isn't nearly so pleasant.

To start the scene, read the following to your players.

The shop is in Belltown, a hip young professional neighborhood just north of downtown. Taking the mag-lev train up seventy blocks, you enter a ritzy shopping district on the uppermost level of the arcology. Everywhere you look, people are walking around in designer clothing. Real sunlight pours down through ceiling panels. The sign on the door reads in small tasteful print – “magic shoppe.” Tinted windows make it impossible to see inside.

Most Characters will never have been to the fifth level of an arcology, where the richest and most influential citizens of the NEG live. For visitors it can almost feel like visiting a theme park. There is a surreal feeling, like the area is just a little too perfect. Even the trash cans are clean and organized.

The shop is expensively decorated, with an actual fireplace, individually lit glass cabinets, and

dark woods. There are several genuine bookshelves with actual printed books, a liquor cabinet, humidifier, and dessert tray. The area is protected by a Ward of Seclusion, so none of the supernatural senses of the Characters will work from outside the shop.

Domany comes out of a back room, walking with the grace of a runway model, and introduces herself. She asks how she may serve them today. It seems a little thick, but Domany pulls it off without any reprehension or sarcasm. Farouk isn't visible, and it's up to the Characters to figure out how to get to him.

Telling Domany that Karen called ahead to arrange a meeting won't get them far. She tells the Characters that Mr. Hassan is quite busy today, and did not tell her of any appointments with a group of individuals such as themselves. A Challenging Persuade Test, showing their Tager forms, or pulling out the headpiece, will all work to get Farouk's attention. If the Characters come up with another way, go with it, presuming they do not become violent.

Once they convince Domany that they should in fact be here, and have a meeting with Mr Hassan, she leads them to a back room. It has a small wooden table, placed directly beneath a lamp. Several leather wrapped bundles lay on the table – they look to be sets of small tools. There are audio pickups in the room so that Domany and Farouk can hear what the Characters are talking about. After a few moments, Farouk comes into the room. He introduces himself and, if the Characters displayed the headpiece or their Tager forms to Domany, he will ask to see them. He is a grandfatherly man, with a strong passion for the occult. An Average Observation Test will see several henna tattoos on the old man, along his hands and neck, probably extending

under his clothing. A Hard Occult Test will identify the marks as a Ward of Corporal Protection, a Ward Against Sorcery, and a Ward of Solitude.

Eventually, he will get around to discussing Karen and their meeting. If it has not come out yet, Farouk asks to see the headpiece and circlet. He begins examining it, and says that he does not immediately recognize it. He tells the Characters that he must consult his library and some colleagues about the piece. If they tell Farouk that it is the Circlet of Ghabbaz, he will nod and say that such things are possible, but ask what tests the Characters have done to confirm that information.

In order to properly identify the piece, Hassan asks them to leave the circlet and headpiece with him. There are several details which cannot be captured through pictures, such as the aura surrounding a piece and any mystical residue left upon it. He believes that with proper compensation, he can have everything identified within the next two days. He wishes that it could be done faster than that, but certain rituals take time. The price is 10,000Tn, which he does not need immediately. Payment can certainly be made when they return for the information and their property. (This expense can be paid by the El-dritch Society.)

Thrilled by this new prospect, Hassan invites them to peruse his store before they leave. He will meet them here again at noon tomorrow and asks that they don't try to communicate electronically. On their way out, the characters are catered to by Domany and a few assistants – they can drink expensive champagne, cognac, or scotch, smoke expensive cigars, and eat delicious tortes, pastries, and other assorted desserts.

ACT III: SAVE THE GIRL

Act Goals: It's time to kick ass, take numbers, and save the girl.

Scene 6 – Betrayal Around Every Corner

Goals: as Act III Goals

Setting: Seattle Arcology – A warehouse in SoDo.

Cast of Characters

Kory - from Act I

Anton Graves - from Act I

To start the scene, read the following to your players.

It's been a few hours since leaving Farouk's shop, and Domany's company. Your earbuds all begin to sound off as Riley calls in. 'Sai, I don't wanna know where you been, but Graves is looking for you. You need to get back here stat.'

As soon as you arrive back at the safehouse, Anton is pacing back and forth around the living room. You can see dark stains on his sleeves, and the caked look of blood around his fingertips. 'We need to talk...'

Anton is in a panic when the characters arrive. He has several images to show them, from the office that they met Karen in. The pictures show a grisly scene. Karen's muscle has all been neatly executed – cut throats and stabs through the heart. Karen herself lies in a crumpled heap in the corner. Her body looks like it has been tortured and mutilated. An Average Law Enforcement Test while looking at the photos discovers that the cuts were clearly made by claws (not clean enough for a knife). On the Dhohano front, it could have been an Elib but not a Zabuth, but

there's no Chrysalis Corporation clean-up team. It does not appear to be a robbery, since Karen's computer and jewelry are still present.

The Lorekeeper received a panicked call from Karen, and sent Kory to go investigate. The pack leader sent back the photos to him, but their call was cut short. He heard a crunching sound, like bones breaking and then the line went dead. Riley tracked her to a warehouse near the office. If they ask how, the operator sounds a little sheepish, but he chipped her, like you would do with a dog or cat. The chip sends a signal whenever she is in mortal form.

The Characters can either go themselves, or have Riley contact the rest of Kory's pack for backup. If they go alone, there are a Bakhi, four Gaunts, and a dozen dwarf fetches waiting in the warehouse for them. Kory is in her mortal form, with several hideous beetle-like creatures crawling on her and biting her flesh. The flesh-eating beetles eat at roughly the same rate as she heals, so it is an agonizing torture which could go on for weeks, if no one stops it. The beetles can be killed by simply brushing them off Kory and stepping on them. Storyguides should increase the number of creatures in the warehouse to deal with the reinforcements of Kory's pack.

Once the team has dealt things and saved Kory, she will come to and tell them that the creatures spoke about the Circlet. They plan on killing Farouk and stealing it. They have to warn him.

This is where this part of the story ends. The second chapter of the Circlet of Ghabbaz, and saving Farouk will come in the next installment of this adventure.

Bakhi

Size: Medium (4 to 6 ft. tall)

Attributes:

Agility 8, Intellect 11, Perception 9,
Presence 7, Strength 6, Tenacity 9

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 2, Orgone 11, Reflex 9

General Skills:

Athletics 3, Observation 2, Misdirect 3

Combat Skills:

Armed Fighting 3, Dodge 3, Fighting 3,
Marksman 2

Weapons:

- Talons 0
- Can use mortal weapons

Damage Bonus: 0

Vitality: 11

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 12

Temperament: Devious & Dedicated

Senses:

- Acute Vision
- Nightvision
- Scan

Movement & Speed:

- Land 13 mph (32/8 ypt)
- Flight 27 mph (67/15 ypt)

Gaunt

Size: Medium (6 to 8 ft. tall)

Attributes:

Agility 11, Intellect 3, Perception 7,
Presence 5, Strength 8, Tenacity 10

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 2, Orgone 11, Reflex 7

General Skills:

Athletics 4, Observation 3, Stealth 4,
Survival 4

Combat Skills:

Dodge 3, Fighting 3

Weapons:

- Horns +1
- Barbed Tail +2

Damage Bonus: +1

Vitality: 14

Armor: 1/1

Regeneration: 1 Point

Fear Factor: 12

Temperament: Mysterious & Unpredictable

Senses:

- Acute Touch
- Nightvision
- Sonar

Movement & Speed:

- Land 15 mph (37/9 ypt)
- Flying 60 mph (148/36 ypt)

Fanged Dwarf Fetch

Attributes:

Agility 7, Intellect 6, Perception 5,
Presence 5, Strength 5, Tenacity 6

Secondary Attributes:

Actions 1, Orgone 11, Reflex 6

General Skills:

Athletics 3, Observation 2, Survival 2

Combat Skills:

Dodge 2, Fighting 2

Weapons:

- Claws -1
- Bite 0

Damage Bonus: 0

Vitality: 7

Fear Factor: 12

Senses:

- Nightvision
- Thermal

Movement & Speed:

- Land 11 mph (27/6 ypt)

RIANGE

PACTS

IMPORTANT SUPPORTING CAST

The named Supporting Characters are provided with stats below, including all of the Skills that will commonly be used during the events. If a Skill is called for that is not included below, feel free to add it in. Presume a level of 3 or higher for all critical Skills, and level of 2 if it does not come up regularly.

DOMANY

Personal Assistant

Domany is Hassan's right-hand at his upscale magic shop. She's a pretty, spoiled professional girl. Of course, pretty is an understatement – gorgeous would be the more appropriate term. Domany is the kind of girl who has always known how to use her super-model looks to get what she wants, without looking like she's doing it. One might easily mistakenly assume that she's just another girl who has bought into the capitalistic dream. One would never realize that her ambitions run so much deeper.

Physically, Domany is the kind of girl that makes men's jaws drop. She dresses expensively in revealing Nazzadi fashion and rarely downplays her looks. However, she has a secret facial tattoo that she only reveals when she is her true self, the face of her evil. It is protected normally by a Glamour Lock.

Virtue/Flaw: Loyal/Vain

Experience: Experienced

Noteworthy Attributes: Intellect 7, Presence 8

Noteworthy Skills: Occult 4, Misdirect 3, Persuade 3, Seduction 4, Dodge 3, Fighting 3, Marksman 3

Noteworthy Qualities: Alluring/3, Big Ego/1, Sexy Voice/2, Wealth/3

ANTON GRAVES

Society Lorekeeper

At first glance, Anton is the perfect example of a librarian. In his early forties, he has a slight European accent, despite his African descent, and a keen mind and sharp intellect which leave him somewhat inaccessible to most. Anton forgets that not every answer comes from a book and, while he respects the Taggers for what they have given up, he feels that they too often leap into conflict without understanding why.

Virtue/Flaw: Intellectual/Snob

Experience: Veteran

Noteworthy Attributes: Agility 5, Intellect 7, Presence 6, Tenacity 7

Noteworthy Skills: Dodge 2, Fighting 1, Marksman 2, Occult 4, Persuade 3, Pilot 3

Noteworthy Qualities: Internal Clock, Latent Para-Psychic

FAROUK HASSAN

Antiquities Dealer

If one were to meet Farouk Hassan on the street, one might be reminded of their grandfather. He's a kindly-looking, genteel man in his sixties who is helpful and generous. He manages a magic shop in Seattle that caters to the wealthy. However, it's really just a front, though a profitable one.

On the inside, Hassan is what many might call evil incarnate. There are many traits that can be attributed to him, including morally bankrupt, ruthless, heartless, scheming, domineering, and manipulative. Hassan might find this list a compliment. This sorcerer is the worst kind of snake – your friend on the outside, your killer on the inside. His devotion to the goals of the Blind Lady are absolute.

Virtue/Flaw: Patient/Cruel

Experience: Veteran

Noteworthy Attributes: Intellect 10, Presence 8, Tenacity 10

Noteworthy Skills: Education 5, Larceny 4, Misdirect 4, Observation 5, Occult 5, Savoir-Faire 4, Streetwise 4, Armed Fighting 4 (NEG Kendo +1), Dodge 5, Fighting 4

Noteworthy Qualities: Fearless, Shrewd, Wealth/4

KORY

Tager Pack Leader

A well-muscled, attractive Nazzadi female, Kory is also a Phantom Tager (callsign Flatline). She is a local pack leader in Seattle and an expert in Nazzadi martial arts (Hun-Zuti). Kory exudes confidence in everything that she does, but often dives into a fray without calling her backup.

Kory is currently single, her last relationship ending in flames. She felt that her boyfriend was unwilling to make decisions fast enough, especially when they were complicated. Whether that was truly the case, or just her recklessness is unclear.

Virtue/Flaw: Confident/Reckless

Experience: Experienced

Noteworthy Attributes: Agility 8, Perception 6, Presence 7, Tenacity 9

Noteworthy Skills: Athletics 3, Fighting 4 (Hun-Zuti +1), Stealth 3, Intimidate 3, Pilot 2

Noteworthy Qualities: Driven, Fearless

RILEY SOMMERS

Society Operator

Riley Sommers joined the Eldritch Society a year ago, when he came around a corner and saw a pack of Tagers ripping apart a Dhohanoid team. He soiled himself and passed out – later he was approached by one of the Lorekeepers to work with the Society to protect humanity. Now, he is

glad to be a part of the team, and loves listening to the stories and watching the packs to which he is assigned.

Unfortunately, he can get a little carried away at times and sometimes takes a bad prank a step too far. He was recently caught hacking the personal files of a Lorekeeper. Riley wasn't going after critical information, but was changing all of the OS preferences. The fact that he was caught is what actually got him in trouble. Now, he's on safehouse detail and bored out of his skull, until the higher ups forgive him.

Virtue/Flaw: Loyal/Precocious

Experience: Experienced

Noteworthy Attributes: Intellect 7, Presence 6

Noteworthy Skills: Communications 3, Computer 4, Security 2

Noteworthy Qualities: Egghead, Manic



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