

It happens to everyone, or so Lou told himself.

Every day in this city, someone takes a wrong turn on a walk he's taken a hundred times. Sooner or later, everyone is bound to take the wrong short cut between the wrong two Chinese restaurants and end up lost.

Only Lou didn't know of any wrong turn anyone could take off Broad Street that ends up in a burnt out expanse the size of a pair of football fields. When he looked behind him, he could see one of the Chinese restaurants and the street he'd been walking down. When he looked ahead, he was looking at the crater of some tragic explosion. Past it, he could see the hazy outline of South Street, but only barely. To his left, where the subway entrance should have been was a hut, a building not much taller than twenty feet.

He walked closer, against his better judgment. The hut appeared to be pulsing or breathing. One step closer and he could see it was pulsing because it was made entirely out of skin—the skins of people all grown together, but still alive.

He screamed, and the skinless things that belonged there came to the sound, like bees to honey.

COLLECTION

OF

HORRORS

THE MOTHER OF ALL WRONG TURNS

**A Storytelling Adventure System
anthology for Hunter: The Vigil**

WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.
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Special thanks to our voice actors for giving up a Saturday to help us out:
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Check out White Wolf online at <http://www.white-wolf.com>

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The Mother of All Wrong Turns

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL •••

SOCIAL ••

Overview

Fortean researchers call them “alternative geographies,” and every major city has them. Somewhere in the wretched tangle of streets, buildings and people, pockets of unreality build up until they fill up with some other place like pus into a blister. Whether these other places are interconnected or singular pockets of hell has only been studied by the Cheiron Group, and they aren’t sharing that information with others. Many have things in them, living or nearly living, sentient or nearly sentient. More than a few are alien enough in atmosphere that they are deadly to humans just by virtue of prolonged exposure. Some have their own gods.

To set up this scene, the cell should be in transit, whether on the run chasing a target, stumbling home drunk from a bar or just walking down to the corner store for munchies. (This scene can also come after the events detailed in **No Escape**, another scene in the **Collection of Horrors**). While walking, the hunter cell happens into one of these alternate geographies, exposed to the possibility of others wide open.

This space is inhabited like many others, though in this case it is not monsters from somewhere else but a member of the Cheiron Group studying this particular phenomenon. JJ, or Josephine Joy, has run into these alternate spaces before, and is capable of protecting herself there. When she comes across the cell, her initial goal is to get them the hell out of the space, no matter what it takes.

Once the cell has found one of these places, the likelihood of stumbling across more dramatically increases. If you wish, this can be only the beginning of the strangeness.

Description

It takes less than a second for one of you to recognize that wherever you are, it isn't where you meant to be. A tight turn, approaching the street from just the right angle, and you are now running across an open wide field instead of the hard dirty concrete on the street.

The grass at your feet is sharp, dry and cuts like razors - not enough to destroy shoes, but enough to ruin them. The sky over this field is a lambent green and casts a sickly hue over everything below it. In the distance, you can see the outline of the city you were just recently in, but it seems a thousand yards away or more. However wide this field is, it can't possibly fit in the space it seems to be placed in. Just past a rolling hill, you hear the piping of hollow reed flutes that whistle madly. The tune is highly atonal but rhythmic, like a band too far away for a melody to be pinned down. Still, it seems to be rapidly growing closer.

You hear the sound of movement on the razor grass to your right. There stands a tall and slender female body with long legs and arms. It's thin, perhaps alarmingly so, with a black leather face connected loosely to a weirdly short torso and eyes that bug out and shimmer in the sickly green light. Whatever it is, it moves toward you quickly, but before you can react, the gaunt creature says in perfect English, "What the hell are you doing here? What the hell are you doing here without a suit on? Jesus, are you insane?"

Storyteller Goals

With this scene, you have the opportunity to expose the cell these alternate geographies and unlimited potential for new hunts as the cell attempts to chart them, or just understand them.

The first exposure to one of these peculiarities is a bit of random chance. When it happens, a person finding himself in such a place rarely makes it out, since the inhabitants there are just so alien. After the cell has found one, however, their rough chance of finding more grows exponentially. When using an alternate geography, describe a very surreal and dangerous environment drawn from nightmares. Emphasizing this twisted fantasy scenario should leave the characters questioning their sanity and in mortal fear of any wrong turn.



Furthermore, this run-in with JJ can be your opportunity to paint a dark picture of some of the operations Cheiron Group hides from all but its highest offices. Be careful to avoid portraying the medical conglomerate and its employees as mustache-twirling evil-doers. They simply operate on a very different plane of morality, like a monsoon or the decay of a star.

The cell might come across the audio prop (p. 5) while trying to dig up dirt on JJ, their mysterious traveling companion on their first venture into the other world. Or, if you prefer, the recording might have been leaked to the cell through a contact in the Cheiron Group or through Network Zero.

Character Goals

Most obviously, the characters are going to want to figure out where they are, and very soon thereafter figure out how to get the hell back home. Clearly, this woman in the leather getup knows a lot more than they do about what's going on, so they may try to talk her into helping them out. They may try to assault her and force her to explain. They may simply run the way they came.

Of course, there is some chance that they might attempt to investigate further and deeper into the alternate geography, which is something JJ simply cannot have. She will stop at nothing to get them to the city they came from as quickly as possible. Once outside the phenomenon, she might be willing to explain in very nebulous terms what it was they were dealing with, but it might take some fancy footwork on the cell's part to get her to stick around long enough to explain even that.

Finding the Path Back Home

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Survival

Action: Extended; each roll takes 30 seconds. This roll can use teamwork rules.

If the characters decide escaping the coming danger is more important than exploration (either out the fear of what they haven't yet see, or because of JJ's gun), they may choose to try to escape the phenomenon first and deal with it once better prepared. In this case, the main action of the scene is finding the path back to reality as they know it. To accomplish this action, the cell must accumulate

a number of successes equal to the minutes they have spent in the alternate geography. For every two rolls, the cell must achieve an additional success to escape.

Hindrances: The cell is chased by JJ (-3), none in the cell are familiar with the part of the city they were in when they found their way into the alternate geography (-4)

Help: JJ is assisting them find the way out (+3), the cell has encountered alien landscapes before, such as the Hedge or Twilight (+2)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The cell loses sight of the real world entirely. They lose all accumulated successes and must start over.

Failure: The cell covers no new ground in their attempts to escape; add no successes to the total.

Success: The cell is on the right path; each success adds to the total needed to return home.

Exceptional Success: Extra successes simply add to the total required to find the exit.

Consequences

There is no good reason to put all the cards on the table with this scene, so feel free to get the cell out of the phenomenon after giving them just a taste of its potential. Whet their appetite and then send them away.

Whether JJ has to threaten, injure or just talk the characters out of the immediate danger of the alternate geography, she won't just forget the incident and go off into the night. Once she leaves the scene and reports to her bosses at Cheiron, they will assign her to observe the characters to determine the effects of exposure to the phenomena.

Once exposed to an alternate geography, the characters will have a much easier time finding others. If the hunters try to seek out more alternate geographies, the players must make an extended Intelligence + Survival roll with each roll representing a day of searching or research. You should impose a requirement of at least twenty successes to find a location the hunters haven't been too.

Josephine "JJ" Joy, Extradimensional Researcher

Quotes: *"There is no reason to be concerned, sir. The location of HQ3 is secure and relatively safe for active use."*

"All three of the expendable biologicals have expired; location C34 is toxic after all. Advise against unprotected investigation."

"The xenobiologicals have been contained, but took four bystanders back with them. I consider the incident closed. Advise?"



Virtue: Faith. JJ has a fanatical devotion to the Group and what they do. Her orders are sacrosanct because they help her save the world.

Vice: Envy. JJ didn't have many chances for a normal life, and harbors a decided grudge against civilians and expendables who will never feel the weight of responsibilities she does.

Background: Josephine's first real encounter with unusual places happened when she was six. There was a spot in her closet she could crawl through, and so long as she went in at just the right angle, she'd end up in the other place. She told her parents about it a number of times, but how could a six-year-old explain that sort of thing to an adult? She's not sure what happened there or what she saw, but after her seventh birthday she changed. She got colder and more distant. She wouldn't talk about the other place any more. School said she had difficulty sympathizing with other children, and she would often daydream rather than interact with her classmates.

When she was eight, she went missing for a week and a half, lost into that other place. The police eventually found her lying naked

Derangements: Fixation (Morality 6), Compulsive (Morality 4)

Audio Prop

MTG reporting.

I cannot express more clearly how wrong I think JJ is. Her entire study on these phenomena is based on wild conjecture and no evidence. She's told me on several occasions that the biologicals are somehow interconnected from location to location. She goes on to speculate that the entities they seem to worship are manifestations of the locations themselves. She's called them the sleeping gods of the other places.

I've seen no evidence of this personally, and I must once again request you bring her in to HQ for full psychological testing. I respect her work, but in dealing with her I'm less than confident in her continued stability. The longer she spends in those places, the more it seems she's losing touch with reality.

Has she sent you that file of pictures yet? They are evocative, surely, but until they can be analyzed, how can any of us be certain they're legitimate?

She still refuses to let me join her in the field at one of these locations. With your permission I'd like to gather a small team and go in myself. I accept your rejection of this request in the past, but I feel as if I've learned as much from her as I'm going to without heading off into the realm of wild theory and conjecture.

Checking my notes, she also suggests that not only are they organized on the other side, but that they are planning something. She seems to think there are complicated strata of socialization and that they have different theories as to how to deal with those of us from the real world. She talks about hunters who seek us out either to keep us from their world or drag us into slavery. She talks about locations where they work in some kind of mutually-beneficial arrangement. I asked her who could have that kind of arrangement with alien biologicals in alternate spaces, but she won't say. She just says it has to be a group big enough to have something to offer, obviously. When I ask her what she thinks they want, she says bodies.

Per your request, I went through her files while she was out last week and have found maps that might lead to the locations in the pictures, including how she supposedly got there. If you allow me a small team, I will investigate these locations immediately. She continues to say that I don't know what I'm getting into. I think she's stalling so I don't threaten her work.

I await your orders.

To listen to the audio prop of MTG's report on JJ and her work double click the poster.

Once you start the recording you will not be able to stop it until it reaches the end without closing the pdf.

