



SMUGGLER'S RUN

The
Whispering
Vault



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SMUGGLER'S RUN

A pool of brackish water forms at Our feet, and within its murky depth We see the Suppliant. We feel his pain, his longing for justice – and revenge.

Again We hear the summons. We can feel the delicious call of the others. The circle was gathering, soon there would be need of Our talents. Even now the Advocate's attendants are entering our Domain. We must prepare, for the trip will be long and arduous and the tasks which await – perilous.

We gather the sterile implements of our youth. Tools of the healing trade, now imbued with our essence to serve Us again. We mold from Our flesh, a plain black bag and lovingly place our devices of cleansing within its warm pink interior. The satchel sighs contentedly as it receives the probes, hypodermics and sutures of wire. It quivers excitedly as We distill the bonesaw from the essence of Our domain. Greenish light pours from the maw of the bag as it devours Our saw.

Then We wait for the emissary of the Gathering. Seated upon a simple stool clutching our satchel before Us and contemplating the many good works to come. The wait is neither long nor short, for time passes fitfully in Our Domain. The call comes again, stronger this time. A pool of brackish water forms at Our feet, and within its murky depth We see the Suppliant. We feel his pain, his longing for justice – and revenge. Stepping into the pool, We travel to meet the others, the warm waters softening Our passage. Gushing rose elixir announces Our arrival to the others.

The Doctor is in.

GAMEMASTER NOTE

Smuggler's Run is set in the city of Chicago Illinois and is designed to be used with *The Whispering Vault* role-playing game. The adventure may be played with only the basic rulebook, although play will be greatly enhanced by using any of *The Whispering Vault* supplements. *Smuggler's Run* has been written

for a group of up to four stalkers. Including more can be easily accommodated by increasing the number of Minions at the Unbidden's command. Shadows presented in this adventure use the standard attributes from *The Whispering Vault* rulebook, unless otherwise indicated.

The format of *Smuggler's Run* progresses in a very linear manner,

but there are a couple of sections where the action can diverge in a number of directions when the players may investigate various leads. It is important that the Gamemaster read the adventure in its entirety before playing the scenario in order to be prepared for these diversions.





STRAIGHT TALK

A renegade aesthetic has descended upon Chicago in 1930 intent upon controlling the population and feeding its perverse desires. The creature inhabited the form of an aging hood, who had never quite made it big called Nicoli Franco. In this guise and utilizing the numbing properties of the enigma which accompanied it, the creature rocketed into a position of control in the city's underworld. Using the corruption, which has infected a still and perverted its product, Nicoli has attained a very powerful position in the city. He has also used shadows he has sum-

moned to manipulate the legal and bureaucratic powers within the mundane population to make himself untouchable to all except one ambitious young Treasury agent.

Agent James Cutler is a man with a mission – to make the city and the world a safe place. If that means striding boldly into Nicoli Franco's insidious web, then so be it. Cutler is a man willing to take on the world in order to save those he is charged to protect, unfortunately he has been struggling against forces from two worlds: flesh and essence. He has been unsuccessful in even locating the illusive Franco.

The brass downtown has thwarted his every move and cut back on his manpower. Even his partner has abandoned the quest for justice. It seems that everyone in power has been subverted to the crimelord's will and James has been forced to rely upon his own resources to pursue the criminal and his gin empire. Against the forces of Flesh and Essence, Cutler's meager resolve has failed him and in despair he has cried out for help. Tonight his cry has been penetrated into the realm of the Primal Powers and the circle assembles.

EVENING CONSTITUTIONAL

James Cutler is an up-n-coming federal treasury agent, a real Elliot Ness wannabe. He has been working in Chicago to stem the tide of illegal rum running, and has had some success over the past ten years. He is well known and respected in his field because he has an intuitive understanding of the criminals he hunts. This is because James is a sensitive and can actually read the intentions of the criminals he interrogates. He can't read minds, as such, but does get hunches' as to what a mobster might be planning. He calls it God's way of evening up the score. Recently however, his track record has been drastically reduced. There is a new player in the bootlegging game and try as he might James just can't seem to get a handle on the illusive Nicoli Franco's activities. Add

to this, the extremely potent and addictive gin the mobster is peddling and James has become very frustrated with his own ineffectiveness and the dire threat Nicoli poses to Chicago.

James is a sensitive but is unaware of his ability, which manifests as an ability to subtly read the intentions of a suspect. This talent has served him well in his career with the Treasury department, until now. The servants of Nicoli Franco, who is in fact a renegade Aesthetic are immune to the ability which James unconsciously relies upon in his work. To compound his dilemma James is watched around the clock by servant of Nicoli which report his every move. Franco's gang seems to know Cutler's every move in much the same way that he once manipu-

JAMES CUTLER The Supplicant

Fortitude	4
Vitality	6
Initiative	10
Defend	11
Perceive	11
Resolve	12
Attack	10
Strength	2
Sensitivity	1

(This ability manifests as an ability to psychically read the intention of people he talks with. James is unaware of his talent, which does not influence creatures of essence.)





lated lesser criminals in the city. Now, in desperation he has tried to call forth his ability to help him bring Franco to justice. In a manner he has succeeded, by summoning the Circle.

Whenever he has a problem, James has a habit of taking long walks along the Chicago docks to think through his dilemma. Tonight his problems have come to seem insurmountable, he has set himself upon a bench in the shadows of a ore freighter and cried out for help. Of course he knows that there is no one that can help him but himself. Yet something deep within him, a part of his being neglected and ignored recognizes his cry for what it truly is – the summoning. In his despair, Cutler doesn't notice the grating surging sound as of something massive scraping across metal decking or the greenish glow emanating from somewhere above him. When he does look up from his cupped hands, he sees a fading greenish light emanating from the gangplank of the freighter and the circle.

James instinctively trusts the circle and looks to them as allies in his war on crime. He doesn't understand why he trust them, especially with their outlandish appearance, he just does. IF the circle talks to them, as they logically should, he will explain his problem with the crimelord Nicoli Franco. Other than his certainty that Franco is involved in bootlegging, James has no concrete proof of the man's guilt. No witnesses, no informers, no evidence at least none that has survived of been lost. Even Cutler's superiors and partner



aren't convinced that Franco has done any thing wrong or at least criminal. James is unaware that the Unbidden has been using the corrupting influence of his still's gin and the Du'math twins to establish a number of pawns in the government, including his partner Charles Davis.

The only lead the agent has on Franco's operation is the location of one of his speak easies.

If the circle investigates the location of the speak easy, go to the section titled A Good Book. If they decide to look for Cutler's partner, go to the section called Partners.





PARTNERS

The circle may notice that Cutler does not completely trust his partner. If they ask, James will inform them that Davis called in sick today and should be at home. If the Stalkers travel to Davis' home, perhaps to find out what would alienate the agent from his partner.

When the players arrive at the home of agent Davis, they will find a very ordinary seeming three story house, completely indistinguishable from its neighbors. Inside Davis, will be found slumped on a sofa in the living room. He has a very peaceful look on his face, which is marred by a single bullet wound in his left temple and scattering of white feathers from a burst pillow where his head rests. In one hand is nestled a bottle of unlabeled Gin (from Franco's corrupted still) in the other hand is his revolver. The man is quite obviously dead, with a gunshot to the head, apparently self inflicted.

By using the delve discipline a Stalker (if the disciplined is mastered) will be able to find out that Davis is not the victim of an unfortunate suicide but has been murdered. An observer of the agent's memories will see that he was visited earlier this morning, by two beautiful women, wearing sunglasses and stylish clothing. What happens next is fogged by the gin the man imbibed and the masks of the two women (actually Thritch Kalvarr). The rider of Davis' memories will see that he drank heavily and appeared to proposition the women.

Speak Easy: A general term for an establishment which traffics in illegal alcohol. They were renown in the 30's as being a hotbed of criminal activity. While the activities within the business are considered tame by today's standards, most were controlled by organized crime and occasionally, targets during gang wars.

After that the memories become unclear but it seems the three engaged in a masochistic tryst, which Davis did not survive. The two women then faked his suicide by placing the man's 38 against his head and pulling the trigger.

The Stalker using delve may not realize what is happening when agent Davis dies, as they may presume that the bullet to the head was the cause of death. Any Delving character sharing Davis memories of his death will suffer damage as explained in the Whispering Vault rulebook (p. 40). The two women are the Du'math twins who have been using their special talents to ensure the cooperation of Agent Davis. Unfortunately Charles has been attempting to exert his own will, forcing the Unbidden to intensify the indoctrination of the hapless agent. The intensity of the pain and pleasures inflicted upon him, while under the influence of the Gin, has unfortunately killed the poor agent. further examination of Davis' memories indicate that he frequently met the twins in a local speak easy, masquerading as the Chicago reading room.

A GOOD BOOK

If the Stalkers wish to investigate one of Franco's establishments, Cutler will direct them towards The Chicago Reading Room. James has known for months, that the business is merely a front for Franco's Gin peddling. However knowing and proving are two completely different things. Cutler has no proof that the well respected business which caters to the city's intellectual population or so it would seem. In fact there is a secret passage in the rear wall of a storeroom which leads to an underground bar in the basement. James suspects that this covert bar exists but has been unable to find it. To date James has raided the Chicago Reading Room three times, each time nothing suspicious was found. Now James suspects that Franco has been tipped prior to when the raid were to occur. He has no idea that the source of the information is his partner Charles Davis who has been subverted by Franco's otherworldly minions.

As the Hunters enter the establishment, they will find a number of intellectual types reading quietly from the scores of books arranged





JENAS & NIKOL DU'MATH

Pain Mother (Personalities)

Of the twin sisters of severity and ecstasy, little is known. Amongst the shadows named Pain Mothers, the two are shunned, even feared. Not, as one might think, because of the bestial savagery of their desires. Or the manner in which they fulfill them, by chain and hook and lash, but because they let their suitors survive. A cruelty far worse than any thing of flesh should endure.

Twin sisters, these shadows are inseparable, preferring each other's company to any others save that of their prey. During their years of service to their master, the two have become somewhat of an oddity in the social circles of Chicago. They are well known and well liked by the socially and politically powerful of the city. Jenas thrives on the attention while Nikol views it only as a means to feed her carnal desires.

The unbidden has enchanted the husks of the sisters in such a manner that they are irresistible to mortal men and women (difficult challenge) making it much easier to lure prey into his clutches. The unbidden enjoys watching the delicious torments the pair inflict upon their lovers as their vacillation between ecstasy and agony brings him much pleasure. Occasionally the Unbidden will set the pair upon some mortal rival, watching as the twin predators passionately consume their prey, only to call them off at the last instant. The longing for the sisters tormenting caresses allows the unseen to subvert the mortal's passions to his own ends. Many powerful mundanes within Chicago have savored the delicious taste of the twin's passion and will fulfill the Unbidden's every whim to endure it again.

on shelves throughout the building. Near the rear of the building is a rail thin man reading the latest issue of LIFE. A perceptive Stalker may

notice that this is a Rethett in human guise. He is guarding a secret passage into the Speak Easy and if he is threatened by the circle or they

reveal their true form in his presence by use of disciplines or servants, he will rush to Franco and relate what he has seen. If the Stalkers are known to be in the speak easy Franco will use his political influence to have the join raided by the cops. The sole objective of this raid is to arrest the Circle and the cops will ignore all other patrons of the club. A squad of eight of Chicago's finest, armed with pistols and trudgels, will arrive within 10 minutes of the Rethett escaping (use the thug Stats from Visit from the Boys).

The secret club is reached by a stairwell concealed behind a false wall in the storeroom. This stairwell leads beneath the Chicago Reading room to a riotous speak easy. A band is set up in one corner playing upbeat music and dozens of couples are on the floor dancing. In the corners of the club a few people can be seen sleeping or quietly talking. Of course there is plenty of Franco's gin being passed around and everyone seems to be having a good time – a little too good in fact. Along one wall is a huge bar being run by two huge bartenders, who are actually Ogyrs in human shells. There appears to be only one drink being served, an amber fluid which reeks of the enigma.

Upon closer examination the dancers seem to almost maniacal, yet strangely ecstatic. A perceptive Stalker will be able to tell that the dancers and all the patrons of the club are being influenced by the Enigma. The enigma has mutated Franco's still into a corrupt machine





which produces an equally corrupt product. The gin is highly addictive, instilling in its drinker, a longing for it and enhancing the perception of pleasure. Once under the influence of the enigma a mortal will find an intense enjoyment in any sort of physical activity, be it an energetic jog or a more destructive form of exercise. The majority of the club goers are indulging their addiction to pleasure by dancing, though from the sounds emanating from a couple of side rooms, it appears that other less wholesome activities are also underway.

Glancing into the eyes of anyone of the patrons reveals the extent of the enigma's effect on these hapless people. A weariness emanates from the dancers, who's features alternate between sheer ecstasy and exhaustion. They all have the vacant, glazed look of extreme addiction, a few can barely keep their eyes open but valiantly try to keep dancing to the music. At odds with the apparent fatigue of the dancers, is their frantic pace. The Charleston is preferred for its frenzied pace and the pleasure it produces. Occasionally a dancer will collapse and a bouncer (one of two ogyrs in human husks) will stride unto the dance floor and drag the near-dead mortal to a booth. The other dancers are too far gone to notice their fallen companion or the crimson trail left by the victim's mangled feet, or their own ravaged bodies.

If the players talk to the bartenders, they will find them very difficult to learn anything from. The creatures are just too stupid to be aware of their surroundings. The only information they have concerning Franco and his operation is that it is based out of the Ritz hotel. The gin comes from there and Franco lives there as well. The Stalkers may be unaware that Nicoli Franco is the Unbidden, but will definitely realize that the gin he produces is corrupted by the enigma. Unless threatened, the bartenders will mind their own business.

Each night, Nicoli Franco will send either the Du'math twins or Snappy Jim to select one of these exhausted dancers to be brought to him. The unbidden knows that the enigma will equal any pain inflicted upon a victim with a pleasure which exceed the pain. Many of the club patrons have already discovered this and have turned to more violent indulgences than simple dancing. Some of these unfortunates turn to self mutilation for their kicks others are picked up by Nicoli's minions and have no choice in the matter. Franco uses the enigma to strengthen his hold over Chicago's politically powerful by manipulating their access to the vicious rapture only his servants can supply them with. Cutler's partner Davis is one such unwilling tool. He knows that he is selling his partner out but can't help himself. He need the pleasure that only the unseen can give him.

If the Stalkers wait long enough, The Du'math twins will arrive to capture the evening's repast for Franco. The two pain mothers are dressed in the highest of 1930's fashion and have a radiance about them which is unearthly in its beauty. They will look around the club, with their sightless eyes, until they notice one specific woman. The woman is barely more than a girl and is sprawled in a booth near the back of the club. The two shadows will walk over to the girl and , each supporting an arm, will lead her out.

The twins are taking the girl back to Nicoli Franco's penthouse suite at the Ritz, to satisfy his carnal desires. They leave the girl with Franco in the hotel's lobby and return later to dispose of the remains. It is possible for the players to follow the twins and their captive to the very doorstep of the Unbidden's lair, wait for them to leave and then confront Franco alone. This is the wisest course of action, but not the only one.

The Stalkers may decide to confront the sisters in the Speak easy. If they do they will have to deal with both pain mothers and two ogyrs, not an easy task. The circle may decide to wait until the Du'math's leave the club before jumping them. If a melee does occur the Ogyrs will fight to the death, not knowing any better, but the if the twins lose more than 3 points of vitality they will flee.





VISIT FROM THE BOYS

As the circle hunts, they will undoubtedly come to the attention of Nicoli Franco. This can occur in any number of ways. If the circle meets Cutler again they will be discovered by the Unbidden, as Nicoli has two Rethrett watching the cop at all times. These shadows keep him apprised of the movements of the man and have allowed the unbidden to know James every move and thwart his most carefully laid plans. These watchers will immediately recognize the Stalkers for what they are and scurry off to alert Nicoli. If the Stalkers interfere with Nicoli's operations within the city he will also be alert to their presence.

Once the Unbidden knows of the Circle's appearance in Chicago he will use his Tracker ability to find them. At this point the players will get a visit from the Franco Mob, in the form of Snappy Jim and three human enforcers armed with Tommy guns (D10).

Jim's orders are simple, find the circle and kill them. Unfortunately Nicoli has neglected to inform Jim that he is facing creatures of Essence. Jim will stride up to the Circle, completely oblivious to their actual origin, and announce that.

"Franco says youse guys been muscling into his turf. Youse looks like smart guys. Too bad's youse weren't smart enough to stays out of Chicago. Boys explain it to them."

Jim will then motion to his three friends who will open up on

the circle with their Tommy guns. Nicoli wants to make a statement to the cops and the Primal Powers. Namely that they will never take him in.

Snappy Jim will watch the action from the sidelines, unaware that his victims are creatures of essence. If the circle reveals their avatars or exhibit preternatural powers he will flee in fear. If they players deal with the thugs in an obviously mundane manner, per-

haps by rending them and masking the attack as a pistol shot, he will join the battle by grappling with the enemies of his master.

If James Cutler or other civilians are present, the circle may be forced to protect them, making it more difficult to subdue Jim and his henchmen. Snappy Jim is smart enough (barely) to use any advantage he can in the combat and will not hesitate to endanger innocent lives.

SNAPPY JIM Bogey Man

Bound into the skin of a strikingly handsome mortal, Snappy Jim is a fear-somely huge minion. Justifiably proud of the comely shell he wears, the Bazreth fancies himself a ladies man and spends much of his time courting the Du'math twins. This attraction frequently requires his unbidden master to reweave Jim's husk.

This Bazreth serves as Nicoli Franco's lieutenant in the city, and is similar to others of his kind, save for his vanity. The renegade is a skilled weaver and has given Snappy Jim a beautiful husk. The creature appears to the unenlightened as a strikingly handsome man with an incredibly charismatic bearing. The vanity of the creature will cause it to go to great lengths to preserve its appearance and Stalkers threatening to mar or rupture its casing may be able to force it to their will.

The attractiveness of Snappy Jim and the Du'math twins have served Nicoli well and he has no shortage of flesh to satisfy his twisted desires.

Thug Stats

Fortitude	4
Vitality	4
Initiative	5
Defend	10
Perceive	9
Resolve	6
Attack	8
Strength	3
Tommy Gun (D10)	





If the circle successful subdue or dominate Snappy Jim, they may interrogate him. If the shadows husk has not been broken and the stalkers threaten to mar its beauty, Jim will answer all their questions freely. He is so proud of his handsome features that any threat to its perfection will ensure his cooperation. Jim knows little about the operation of Franco's criminal organization but does know that it is centered in the Ritz hotel. Nicoli Franco runs his empire from the penthouse suite and rarely leaves the apartment. He also knows the following information:

- Jim or the Du'math twins will bring one sometimes more mortals to serve his master each night and return in the morning to remove their lifeless corpses.
- The night's feast is always selected from one of the many Gin joints, which use Franco's corrupted Gin.
- The Gin is produced by a still in the basement of the Ritz.
- Jim is never allowed into the basement but knows that the still is there.

Franco is well aware that the Circle will be able to defeat Jim and the pitiful forces he sent to destroy them. Furthermore he knows that the circle will not give up the hunt until he is incarcerated in the Vault or



destroyed. He has sent this force to merely weaken the Stalkers and also to lure them into his lair where he intends to take them apart, slowly and painfully.

It is possible that this section may be skipped altogether, if the Circle is particularly efficient. The players may be able to track the

Unbidden within hour of arriving in the realm of Flesh. However if they become sidetracked or begin chasing dead ends, the unbidden will become aware of their presence in the city. Once he knows they are here Franco will send Snappy Jim and his leg-breakers to deal with the group.





PUTTING ON THE RITZ

If the Stalkers follow the Du'math twins to the Ritz, they will see them leave the exhausted girl with a handsome man of swarthy build and Latino blood. This is Nicoli Franco, whom the Stalkers may or may not at this point be aware is the Unbidden. The lobby is a bustling mass of humanity, any attack here by the players, will be sure to invoke the Forbiddance, not to mention the fact that they would be facing an Architect and two Thritch Kalvarr (pain mothers). The players may also seek out the enigma, which is located in the basement, if they do go to the section titled A Quick Nip.

After a brief discussion, the two shadows will leave the girl with Franco and seek their pleasures elsewhere. Franco will then walk the girl to a private elevator and proceed to the penthouse. The elevator is the only access to the penthouse and is operated by a gold key which only Franco, Snappy Jim and the Twin sisters have copies of. Of course there are many ways a Stalker may gain access to the penthouse, the elevator is merely the most mundane of their options. It may also serve another purpose.

It is conceivable that the Stalkers may corner the Renegade Aesthetic before he gets to the penthouse. The elevator would be perfect for this. Up to three stalkers will be able to fit in the enclosed space, with the girl and Franco. Franco will be unable to use his teleport ability which requires line of sight and

there is not enough room for him to summon help. Then again the space is limited and close in combat with the unseen can be deadly for all concerned, double so for the hapless girl, which Nicoli WILL use as a shield. Attacking Franco in the elevator without trying to protect the girl or take her to safety will anger the Primal Powers. Each Stalker involved in such callous disregard for innocent life will suffer 1 point of vitality loss.

A far safer (for the captive) course of action, would be to wait for the elevator to reach the penthouse, or perhaps to beat it there and wait for its occupants to emerge. If the Stalkers confront the Franco in the penthouse they will find it to be richly upholstered with only the finest furniture and artwork. The entire suite is beautiful and very elegant, save one room. The master bedroom is filled with monstrous instruments of torture and the wall is splattered with dried brown stains, obviously blood small piles of fetid gore litter the floor each a feast for scores of flies. As the door the room is opened the Circle will be assaulted with a stench far worse than any abattoir. Where the bed would be is a steel table, spotlessly sterile in contrast to the rest of the room.

If the unbidden is given enough time (10-15 minutes), the girl will be strapped to this table and Franco will be preparing his tools. If the Circle arrive much later (an hour or so) they will interrupt the Unbidden, who has proceeded to horribly muti-

late the body of the innocent girl. The girl appears to be experiencing equal measures of pain, terror and ecstasy, due to the influence of the Gin Franco has been feeding her. At this point it is possible to save the victim but if the Stalkers do nothing or arrive later the girl will be beyond help and hope. The unbidden will not kill her, but her mind will have fled the horror her body has undergone. Once sanity leave the flesh, the Unbidden can no longer draw any sustenance from the shell and the girl will be useless to him.

Later that night, Snappy Jim will arrive to remove the girl. Franco believes the girl is to be destroyed, as are all his victims, such is not the case. Jim does not enjoy the torture his master inflicts upon the innocent but is bound to serve him. Snappy Jim will bundle the girl in a blanket and take her to an orphanage just outside of town, where he knows she will be well cared for. The orphanage contains dozens of Nicoli's discarded casualties, as do others scattered across Chicago. If the Circle locate, heal or dispatch these living corpses, the Primal Powers will be very pleased and heal any lost vitality and award the circle extra experience (GM's discretion).

Franco repeats this feast every night and never leaves his penthouse lair, save to meet his new meal or attend to emergencies. The final battle between the Circle and the Unbidden will most likely occur here.





NICOLI FRANCO

The Unbidden

Fortitude	5/6
Vitality	16/18
Initiative	13/12
Defend	15/15
Perceive	17/13
Resolve	19/17
Attack	15
Strength	4
Attack	13
Damage	5

Nicoli was once a well respected Chicago socialite, those days have long passed. The old man's respect has passed along with his mortal soul, consumed by the unbidden creature which now inhabits his shell. The renegade feasted upon the poor souls infected by the corruption, tightening its stranglehold upon Chicago's alcohol trade.

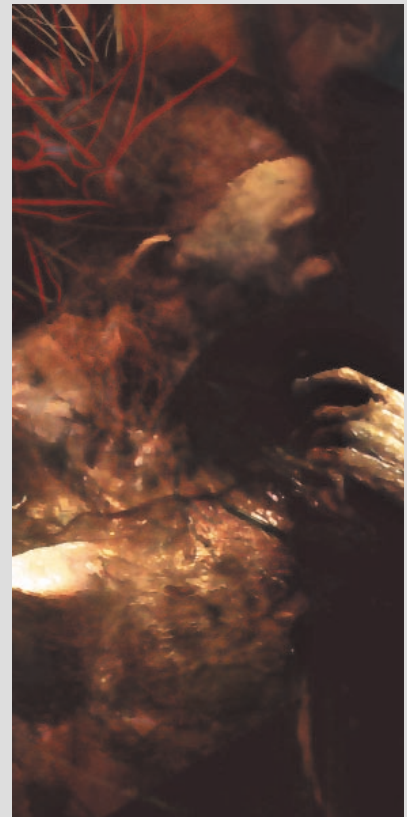
Special Abilities: Chameleon, Summoner, Healer, Weaver, Track (an ability similar to the innate ability of the Tracker servitor. By using this ability the Unbidden can seek out any creature of Essence in a given area. It is commonly used to locate awakened shadows but can also be used to pursue Stalkers.) Translocate (as the Stalker discipline except that the Unbidden can only Teleport Shadows – and Stalkers. Nicoli will use this power to Teleport allies to him or enemies away from him. The range is line of sight, which partially explains Nicoli's preference for the penthouse suite.)

The Unbidden has advanced to the Architect stage and has developed an iron grip over Chicago by fostering an insatiable hunger, for the gin he still produces, in the population. He practically controls the underworld from his stronghold high atop the Ritz-Carlton hotel. Disguised within a human shell, he masquerades as crimelord Nicoli Franco, and rarely leaves the luxurious suites where he indulges his vulgar pleasures. He prefers to have his indulgences brought before him by his lieutenant, the Bazreth Snappy Jim.

Nicoli has a mild aversion to silence and will constantly surround himself with sound. His suite is filled with blaring Italian operas or loud radio programs. On his infrequent trips into the city he will always be accompanied by two Rethrett masked as babbling gun molls, constantly discussing current affairs and fashion.

His overwhelming fetish is his desire for control. The creature called Nicoli desires

to dominate the entire city and reign like unto a god. He sees the criminal underworld as a good starting and has decimated the other rum running outfits in town. He also has an irresistible attraction to sadism and will frequently select one of the client of his assorted speak easy's to satisfy his urges for the evening. His rooms are littered with the remnants of his entertainment and the walls adorned with the tools of his pleasure. The Du'math twins will often assist him with his indulgences.





A QUICK NIP

The focus of the Enigma is a small still in the basement of the Ritz-Carlton. This focus produces the corrupt gin which Nicoli's crime syndicate distributes to the public. The still is hidden in the dark basement of the hotel nestled between huge rusting boilers. The heat in the basement is oppressive and few people venture into its shadowed depths. There was an accident three months ago, involving the death of two of the hotel's janitorial staff. Since their mangled bodies were carted out Ritz, the staff have avoided the basement. Franco has taken over the area as an ideal place to keep the source of the enigma close and safe.

To protect the still from prying eyes and the law, Franco has summoned two guardians. One is a Sanguinalan (lurker pg. 110), which has squeezed its enormous bulk into one of the hotel's colossal water heaters. It enjoys the warmth of the scalding water inside the tank, and is reluctant to emerge from its comfort-

Award experience according to the guidelines set out in the main rulebook (p. 79), however add the following points per Stalker at the GM's discretion:

- 4 points if all the victims of Franco's hunger (Putting on the Ritz) are released.
- 2 points if James Cutler is not killed.
- 3 points if no innocents are killed in the adventure.
- 3 points if not Shadows are destroyed.
- 2 points if the Forbiddance is not invoked.

able hole. Once disturbed it will attack ferociously, devouring any living thing to satisfy its hunger. It will then push its bulk back into the boiler and sleep contentedly until the next meal stumbles across it. The poor creature is kept so hungry by Franco that it will emerge hopefully at the slightest sound, hoping for prey. The creature is eerily silent and will not betray its presence until it strikes.

The second guardian is a Ghann Galowey (hangman pg. 108) which lives amidst the pipes and conduits dangling from the basement's ceiling. From here he waits for the unwary be they Stalkers or mortals. When anyone walks below him he will attack with his hook and noose. He is well aware of the Lurker living in the hotel's hot water tank and will attempt to lure the Circle within striking range of its ally. If the hangman makes a successful noose attack he will hang the victim within easy reach of the lurker. Players hung above the lurker may choose to defend, attack or get loose from the rope, it is recommended that the Gamemaster give the affected player a -2 die cap on any actions other than getting loose, which they may choose to perform. Of course the lurker will prefer to attack this 'gift' over more active prey.

Once the guardians are vanquished, it is a simple task to mend the enigma and destroy Franco's stockpile of corrupted Gin, unless Franco has not been dealt with yet.

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