



Requires the use of the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.



"Howdy" from 12 to Midnight

In case you are not familiar with us, 12 to Midnight is a Texas-based RPG publisher specializing in modern horror. You might not normally think "Texas" and "horror" go together, but we are pretty sure you will change your mind after spending some time in Pinebox.

Pinebox, Texas, that is—a nice little rural community smack-dab in East Texas. There is a university nearby, a pine forest called the Big Thicket, and a mess of beautiful wildflowers every spring. Unfortunately, it is also the epicenter of a whole lot of bad mojo. We're talking dark magic, serial killers, haunted buildings—the whole ball of wax.

If you want to learn more about Pinebox, just visit our Web site at 12tomidnight.com. You can start using the free campaign setting on our site right now, then watch it continue to grow right here in the pages of *Modern Dispatch*. Of course, Pinebox is *our* setting, but all the material in these pages can just as easily be dropped into *yours*.

If you have any ideas for future issues, or if you want to comment on what you read here, please drop by the forums on our website.



Holiday Horror



The joyful season is upon us. Despite being a time of joy and giving, many people feel lost, lonely, angry, and suicidal. *Holiday Horror* provides you with three quick holiday adventure starters. In this issue we endeavor to provide scenarios for small encounters that you may place in your games as you see fit, and hopefully give you some tools and options to help you introduce some seasonal oddities into your game. We give you some details and background to kick off the action and the rest is up to you.

Episode I: Home Invasion

Background

Leroy Franks is bad news. He has been in and out of juvenile courts since he was seven years of age, served time in the state juvenile correctional facility, and spent numerous days in county jail since turning seventeen years of age. Franks runs a local gang of toughs calling themselves the Molitovs, ranging in age from 16 to 19. They have been running drugs for the Gonzales Cartel the past two years, and have been gaining a growing reputation as hardcore "gangstas".

Unfortunately their reputation caught up with them the week before Xmas. A rival gang hit them hard, taking out two of Molitovs and stealing \$15,000 that belonged to the Gonzales Cartel. Leroy, as the face man for the gang, is in serious trouble. In fact, he knows the Gonzales crew will kill him if he does not come up with the missing cash and fast. With utter desperation, he and the remainder of his gang have developed a plan. They plan to score several home invasions on Xmas Eve. They figure there should be plenty of high dollar items for the taking. They should be able to fence them relatively easily, and maybe even make a profit for their efforts.

Introduction

It's been a great Xmas Eve! You and your friends have eaten and snacked on many wonderful delectables and have just begun exchanging gifts. Suddenly with a load BAM, the front door flies open and several men wearing dark ski masks and wielding guns burst into the party. One yells, "Nobody move! Nobody!"

If you're feeling generous due to the holiday season, allow the heroes a *Listen* check (DC 20) to hear something outside the door. Remember, the gang is being quiet sneaking up to the home or apartment, and



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there is probably music and loud conversation inside during the party, so give circumstance bonus' as you see fit and as best fits your players' characters.

The attackers consist of two gang members per hero in the home. Each carries a 9mm pistol, except for Franks, who carries a pump action 12 gauge shotgun. For opponent statistics, use the appropriately-leveled Thug, Gang Member, or Gang Leader examples found in the *Friend or Foe* section of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*.

The gang is not interested in killing or harming anyone they don't have to, but are looking to steal all high priced items they can. However, they are desperate and if anyone decides to be a hero (and they probably will!) gunshots ring out.

What happens next is pretty much up to the heroes. If any shots are fired, the police arrive in 4 minutes (they are bored on Xmas Eve, so about 4 or 5 cars show up). This could easily turn into a hostage situation, and the Molitovs are capable of desperate actions when facing either jailtime or certain death from the Cartel. If the heroes are law enforcement personnel or private investigators, they could use their contacts (*Streetwise* DC 15) to track down the gang or to learn that they owe money to a major drug cartel. The gang is planning on hitting as many Xmas Eve parties as necessary to score enough merchandise to pay off their debt.

Episode II: Bad Santa

Background

Jerry Bender was a ne'er do well if there ever was one. He suffered from alcoholism and drug abuse, and was often on the wrong side of the law. In fact, he spent a third of his short life in the Texas Prison system. Even Jerry's childhood was horrible, and he grew to resent and despise children. He hated their innocence, and was guilty of several violent crimes against them.

Three years ago on Xmas Eve, consumed with self-loathing, hatred, and alcohol, he dressed up in a Santa Claus suit, assaulted three neighborhood children, and committed suicide by shooting himself in the head as the police arrived to arrest him.

Unfortunately, the darkness of his soul combined with his suicide to manifest even after death. Now, his spirit returns at sundown every Xmas Eve and is free to wreak evil havoc until sunrise of Xmas Day. He is a powerful lost soul, and the heroes may have a difficult time stopping him.

Fortunately, he is bound to haunt only the street block upon which he committed suicide. This night, he has appeared to a single mother and her two children as they were passing Bender's old apartment building on their way to spend the evening with the heroes. The mother arrives in terror and tears and describes

what happened. The rest is up to the heroes. Do they investigate and take on the Bad Santa?

Introduction

Patsy and her kids have finally arrived for the party. It's not unusual for her to be late, but tonight she arrived in tears, shaking in fear. She spins an unbelievable tale of a haunting just blocks away.

"We were walking past the Horizon apartment buildings, just twenty minutes ago. There was...a... a...Santa there. He seemed to appear out of no where in front of us. I couldn't see his face too well, but he laughed and his belly jiggled like a bowl full of jelly, and he merrily asked to say hi to Janie and Sam. Of course the kids stepped forward to see him, but when they did they disappeared! It was complete darkness; I couldn't see them or Santa. [Here she pauses and cries hysterically, before continuing.] I called for the kids, and I could hear them screaming. Oh God, I was so scared. I could hear him laughing, and then there was a gunshot. He was gone, and the kids were back standing in front of me screaming. He just...vanished. I thought about calling the police but no one would believe me. Whatever he was, he was evil. I felt it in my soul. My poor babies."

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Sure, Modern Dispatch is great and all, but you have to wait a WHOLE WEEK between issues. If you just can't get your fix of modern gaming goodness, then head on over to the new Modern d20 Yahoo Group. It is sponsored by the same four companies who publish Modern Dispatch, so you can ask questions about what you read in these pages or any of our other products. Swap ideas with your fellow gamers. Get top secret, advance information on our upcoming products, and get coupons for titles that are already out. And it's free!

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Janie and Sam are seven and five years old respectively, and are constantly crying since the encounter. They repeatedly ask, “Why Santa? Why did he do it?” If the heroes take time to calm the kids down through roleplay, they may answer a few more questions. They tell of Santa Claus roughly taking the kids in his arms and shaking them violently. His face was covered in blood and he told them he was going to take some children with him to Hell. Janie managed to wiggle out of his grasp and pulled her brother away from him. He took out a pistol and with a big smile on his face put it to his temple and pulled the trigger. Then he was gone.

The big clue here is that he is planning on taking some children to Hell with him when he returns. This is a warning of imminent danger for the night, and hopefully the heroes will take note. If not, the next morning’s newscast tells of three children from the Horizon Apartments who had gone to see Santa on the street, but were abducted. The police have issued an Amber Alert, but there has been no sign of the kids since. Of course next year, Bad Santa will be back and this time he has three elves with him!

How the heroes investigate and what happens next is up to you. We recommend having them wait until a family happens by to see the Bad Santa manifest. Anyone with the resources to do *Research* (DC 15) may discover the story of Jerry Bender and his suicide the year before. If the heroes have lived in the area for over a year, allow them an Intelligence check (DC 12) to remember someone talking about a suicide during a previous Xmas Eve in front of the Horizon Apartments.

Episode III: Payback

Background

This scenario is for teams who have done some paranormal investigations and have fought against the Shadow. The premise of this adventure is that some true evil adversary is angry with the heroes for their interference and has decided to attack them on the most holy of nights, Xmas.

This requires some work on the GM’s part to decide the nature of the evil manifestation. It could be a demonic intelligence, an alien entity, or even a cult that calls upon “that which man was not meant to know”. It is also easily possible to modify this adventure idea to take place at any time of the year.

Simply put, the evil wants revenge on the heroes. Therefore it summons six Streilberk demons and four Jimmlyn to attack the heroes wherever they may be this night. The Jimmlyn materialize first, outside of the home, apartment, or wherever the heroes can be found shortly after midnight on the night in question. These diminutive creatures stealthily take out the phone lines, rewire electrical appliances and inside wiring, and do anything else they can to keep the heroes disoriented and cut off from escape or aid.

Twenty minutes later, the Streilberk demons appear and attack the heroes. The demons may take on most any medium-sized creature’s form, but on Xmas they make themselves look like Santa’s elves, wearing red and white suits, pointed ears, and sharpened, fanglike teeth. These demons are powerful and very dangerous. Luckily, they may only manifest on this plane of existence for a total of ten combat rounds. So if the heroes survive their attacks, the demons simply disappear at the end of the combat.

The Jimmlyn may attack, but prefer to create dangerous situations and trick the heroes into suffering from their improvised traps. They turn on the water and rewire the electricity to electrocute any heroes

entering the bathrooms. They destroy light switches and connect the hot wires to the flip switches with small wound pieces of wiring to electrocute anyone attempting to turn on the lights. They have the powers to spoil any food or drink and each may use their *sicken* power once per day. They may run trip wires across door frames to trip unwary heroes, or manifest their *chaos* attack once per day.

Santa’s Gifts

If you would like to reward your players after they successfully overcome one of these tales of Holiday Horror, provide each with a mysterious present under the Xmas tree. Maybe it comes from a friend, a friendly spirit, or even Santa himself (though if your players are like mine, they have been more naughty than nice). Here are some suggestions:

- A watch. This charmed item allows one reroll per game session. It’s a “timely” intervention.
- A small gold ring. This item is from a deceased loved one, who watches over the hero. The ring only works once, but it causes a successful attack against the hero to fail.
- A silvered handmirror. This magical object only works once when the GM decides it’s appropriate. It reveals a possible future for the hero that gazes into it. This is a great foreshadowing device, and can lead to an adventure in itself.

Xmas Bestiary

The following are the new creatures presented in this Modern Dispatch.

Bad Santa Phantom

Phantom (CR 7); HD 5d12

Initiative	+1	BAB	+5	STR	-
Defense	11; touch 10; flat footed 10	Melee	+5	DEX	12 (+1)
Hit Points	30	Ranged	+6	CON	-
Save Fort	+5	Grapple	+5	INT	12 (+1)
Save Ref	+1	MAS Dmg Threshold	-	WIS	12 (+1)
Save Will	+1	Action Points	-	CHA	12(+1)

Attacks *Terrifying Slam Attack*: Atk +6; Dmg 1d6 electrical + special (see below)

Cluster Attack: Special (see below)

.45 Spirit Weapon: Atk +6; Dmg 2d6 30 ft. range increment (see below)

Attack Options Frightful Moan, Ghastly Appearance (see below)

Speed 30 ft

Skills *Sense Motive* +5; *Spot* +6; *Languages English (speak, read/write)*

Feats/Talents *Simple Weapons proficiency, Personal Firearms Proficiency*

Special Qualities Incorporeal (Ex); Invisibility (Ex); Rejuvenation (Su); Darkvision (Ex); Cold Spot (Ex); Lesser Telekinesis (Su); Cluster Attack (Su); Visible Form (Ex); Terrifying Slam Attack (Su);

Ghastly Appearance (Su); Frightful Moan (Su); Spirit Weapon (Su)

- **Rejuvenation (Su)**: If destroyed, the spirit restores itself in 2d4 days. As a rule, the only way to get rid of the phantom is to determine the reason for its existence and set right whatever prevents it from resting in peace, or by exorcism. In Bad Santa's case, only by having a child show him some sort of genuine affection can he be defeated. (Yeah, I know, how do they do that? I dunno! That's for the heroes to figure out!)
- **Darkvision (Ex)**: The phantom can see in total darkness up to 60 feet.
- **Cold Spot (Ex)**: The phantom can drop the ambient temperature by 20°, covering a five foot radius from their location and lasting up to 10 minutes.
- **Lesser Telekinesis (Su)**: The phantom can move a single object

(<=1 lb.) across short distances. The phantom must be within 30 feet of the manipulated object. The object cannot strike any other object or being with damaging force.

- **Cluster Attack (Su)**: Once per day the phantom may manifest a paranormal attack by picking up small objects and tossing them about the room in a mini-mailstrom of mayhem. The phantom chooses a 30ft circumference area or less to attack. During the attack everything in the area is subjected to that particular attack. Anyone caught in the effected area or passing through the effected area is subjected to the attack and may make a Reflex save (DC 14) for half damage. For five rounds, the phantom may throw up to:
 - Eight small items weighing 5 lbs. or less; 1d2 damage.
 - Four items weighing 10 lbs. or less; 1d4 damage.
 - One item weighing 20 lbs. or less; 1d6 damage.
- **Visible Form (Ex)**: May manifest as a visible ball of energy for short durations (up to a minute).
- **Terrifying Slam Attack (Su)**: Each successful attack causes 1d6 points of electrical shock damage. The recipient of a successful slam attack must make a Will save (DC 12) or become terrified. Failure means the

creature flees as fast as possible for 1d4 rounds. The victim cowers if unable to flee and defends normally (but cannot attack). This attack is also a *Great Fright* check if using the optional *Fear Effects* rules.

- **Ghastly Appearance (Su)**: This phantom manifests as the post-suicidal Jerry Bender in a Santa Claus suit. Any creature within 60 feet who views the phantom must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 18). Failure results in the immediate loss of 1d4 temporary Wisdom damage and is requires a *Medium Shock* check if using the optional *Fear Effects* rules.
- **Frightful Moan (Su)**: The phantom can moan as an attack action. All living creatures within 30-feet must succeed at a Will save (DC 18). Failure results in 1d4 temporary Intelligence damage and requires a *Medium Shock* check if using our *Fear Effects* rules.
- **Spirit Weapon (Su)**: Bender's phantom spent 2 hit dice of his energy to manifest with a .45 pistol. This pistol acts as a normal .45 pistol with limitless ammunition. However, he only shoots at anyone attempting to exorcise him.

Wealth: +0

Reputation & Allegiances: 0; None.

FX Items: None

Possessions: None

Description

Jerry Bender is a tormented lost soul. He manifests every Xmas Eve and attempts to take children back to Hell with him. He may only do this by first damaging them physically to unconsciousness. One minute before sun-up, he can take anyone unconscious within 5 feet of him to Hell, where they become phantoms as well.

Jerry appears as a man dressed as Santa, but his temple has been blown away due to his suicide. He is trapped to only haunt one city-block. The best way to fight him is by having a priest perform an exorcism or by simply preventing him from taking anyone to Hell.

So, what's a Lost Soul?

Lost souls are the spirits of those who die, but are unable or unwilling to leave our plane of existence—usually because of some unfinished business, but in rare instances because of outside intervention. The lost soul template may be found in *Green's Guide to Ghosts*, and includes more detailed information regarding lesser manifestations, poltergeists, ABEs, phantoms, and dominating spirits.

Jimmllyn

Small Outsider (CR 4); HD 1/2 d8

Initiative	+7	BAB	+3	STR	8 (-1)
Defense	19; (+3 Dex, +1 size, Natural Armor +5); touch 16; flat footed 16	Melee	+2	DEX	17 (+3)
Hit Points	8	Ranged	+6	CON	10 (0)
Save Fort	+4	Grapple	-2	INT	16 (+3)
Save Ref	+7	MAS Dmg Threshold	10	WIS	10 (0)
Save Will	+4	Action Points	-	CHA	8 (-1)

Attacks *unarmed attack*: Atk +2; Dmg 1d4-1

Attack Options Spell-like abilities.

Spells (two from the following) *chaos*; *sicken*

Speed 20ft.

Skills *Balance*+4 ; *Climb*+2 ; *Craft (Electrical)* +9; *Craft (Mechanical)*+5; *Craft (Structural)*+5; *Disable Device* +5 ; *Hide* +8 ; *Jump*+2; *Move Silently* +4; *Repair*+4; *Search*+4; *Spot*+1; **Languages** *Abyssal (Read/Write)* *Latin (Speak)*

Feats/Talents *Builder* (+2 *Craft (Electronics)* +2; *Improved Initiative* (+4 Initiative); *Simple Weapons*

Special Qualities *Damage Reduction* (Su) 5/-; *Darkvision* 60ft. (Ex); *Immunity* (Ex) (Electricity); *Resistance* (Ex) (Fire 10); *Spell-like Abilities* (Ex); *Telepathy* (Su);

- *Damage Reduction* 5/- (Su): Jimmllyn ignore 5 points of damage from weapons and natural attacks. However magic items or blessed weapons ignore *Damage Reduction*.
- *Darkvision* 60ft. (Ex): Jimmllyn can see in total darkness out to 60 feet.
- *Immunity* (Ex): Jimmllyn are immune to any electrical damage.
- *Resistance* 10 (Ex): Jimmllyn are resistant to any fire-based damage doing 10 or less points of damage.
- *Spell-like Abilities* (Ex):

Chaos- Once per day a Jimmllyn may manifest a paranormal attack by picking up small objects using telekinesis and tossing them about the room in a mini-mailstrom of mayhem. The Jimmllyn chooses a 30ft circumference area or less to attack. During the attack everything in the area is subjected to that particular attack. Anyone caught in the effected area or passing through the effected area is subjected to the

attack and may make a Reflex save (DC 14) for half damage. For five rounds, the Jimmllyn may throw up to:

- Eight small items weighing 5 lbs. or less; 1d2 damage.
- Four items weighing 10 lbs. or less; 1d4 damage.
- One item weighing 20 lbs. or less; 1d6 damage.

Sicken- Once per day a Jimmllyn may cause all food and drink in a 30ft. radius to spoil and become sewage like in its taste and smell. Such food or drink that is consumed causes 1d4 points of internal damage.

- *Telepathy* (Su): Jimmllyn may communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet who has a language.

Wealth +0

Reputation & Allegiances 0; To Summoner

FX Items None

Possessions None

Description

The Jimmllyn are a fiendish relation to gremlins. These demonic outsiders are masters of tricks, traps and deception, and love causing as much suffering and death as they can. Jimmllyn are small creatures, their skin blackish green and covered in small scales. They have large pointed ears, much like a Doberman Pinscher's, and an overly large mouth with sharp razor-like teeth.

Jimmlyn use their great skills with electronic and mechanical devices to create or manipulate items, or create devious and deadly traps to torture and kill their victims.

Jimmlyn must be summoned to this plane of existence, and then only during the night hours. Direct contact with natural sunlight immediately destroys Jimmlyn, sending them back to the Hell from which they came.

Streilberk Demons

Medium Outsider (CR 4); HD 5d8+15

Initiative	-1	BAB	+5	STR	20 (+5)
Defense	21, touch 9, flatfooted 21 (-1 Dex, +12 Natural)	Melee	+10/+8	DEX	8 (-1)
Hit Points	37	Ranged	+5	CON	17(+3)
Save Fort	+7	Grapple	+10	INT	11 (0)
Save Ref	+3	Dmg Threshold	17	WIS	12 (+1)
Save Will	+5	Action Points	-	CHA	12 (+1)

Attacks *Claws:* Atk +10/+8; Dmg 1d6+7

Speed 30ft.

Skills *Climb +10; Hide +4; Knowledge (Occult Lore) +5; Listen +6; Move Silently +4; Search+5; Spot+6; Survival +6* **Languages** *Abyssal (Read/Write), Latin (Speak)*

Feats/Talents *Multiattack; Simple Weapons Proficiency, Track*

Special Qualities Fast Healing 3 (Ex); Immunities (Ex) Bludgeoning damage; Fire Resistance 10 (Ex); Shapechanging (Su); Telepathy (Su); Limited Manifestation (Su)

- Fast Healing 3 (Ex): Regains hit points at 3 points per round unless the demon is reduced to -10 or more.
- Immunities (Ex): Immune to bludgeoning damage.
- Fire Resistance 10 (Ex): Damage by fire based attacks must equal or exceed 10 points of damage to hurt the demon.
- Shapechanging (Su): The Streilberk demon may manifest as any medium-

sized creature when summoned to this plane of existence. However, once its shape is chosen, it may not be changed until a second summoning takes place.

- Telepathy (Su): Demon may communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.
- Limited Manifestation (Su): The Streilberk demon may only manifest in this plane of existence for 10 combat rounds per summoning.

Reputation & Allegiances 0; To Summoner

FX Items None

Possessions None

Description

The Streilberk Demon has been used by evil cultists and diabolic summoners as assassins for centuries. Occultic lore states that the first to summon one of these assassins was a Prussian named Rolf Streilberk, a member of the Beilgeld Society of Diabolists. Rolf took power of

the state of Hass-Kassel (a member-state of the Holy Roman Empire) in the 15th century by using these demonic assassins to take out all who opposed him.

The demons may take any medium-sized creatures shape when summoned, but may only manifest for 10 combat rounds. They typically go into a frenzy of attacks against their targets, moving to melee immediately in a charge.

PINEBOX NEWS

December 19, 2005

Volume V, Issue 69

Home Invasions on the Rise

The third in a series of violent home invasions throughout Golan County occurred last Thursday at a home off West Church Street. Sheriff Butch Anderson stated in a news conference on Friday that there has been an “increase in gang activity throughout east Texas.” He went on to say that “These home invasions are obviously related and are being done by the same crew. We have a few leads and the robbers will be caught shortly.”

The first attack happened November 25th, a day after Thanksgiving—known for being the biggest shopping day of the year. Lana James, an English school teacher at Pinebox High, had returned from a day of shopping when two late model Oldsmobiles followed her into her driveway. Four masked men wielding pistols and one carrying a bowie knife forced her into her house, tied her with telephone wire, and stole her day’s shopping as well as several of her personal valuables such as jewelry.

On December 3rd, Kevin Mawye of 2107 Redden, reported he was the victim of another home invasion. He stated that seven masked men forced their way into his home, assaulting Mr. Mawye and his girlfriend and stealing several thousand

dollars worth of personal merchandise including jewelry, computer items, and a gaming system.

In each case the perpetrators have attacked the home suddenly, been very violent, and wear ski masks.

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Community Calendar

December 20

Young Ranchers Tamale

Fundraiser—The Young Ranchers Association is once again selling their highly addictive X-Mas tamales outside the county courthouse from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Crime Prevention Meeting—

Home burglaries have been on the rise. Meet with Pinebox PD at the city library at 7 p.m. to learn tips for keeping this holiday season safe and secure.

School Board Meeting—The

school board is holding their last public meeting of 2005. Included agenda items are reports from head coach Terry Hawkins and PHS Principal Black on the upswing of fights at PHS sporting events.

Campus News

ETU Scores Noted Physicist

East Texas State officials announced the hiring of Dr. Krystal Manning, a specialist in microbiology and chemistry, to the staff of the Chemistry department.

“Dr. Manning is a proven veteran in the field of microbiology and is a boon to our school,” said Dean Bennit. “She graduated from NYU, received her masters at Florida State, and her doctorate from Boston. She has spent the past few years teaching at UCLA, and her work has been invaluable in assisting the US government’s anti-biological and chemical agents division of the Department of Homeland Security.”

Dr. Manning expressed her happiness at being selected to join the ETU staff, “I’ve wanted to spend more time in lab work and this affords me great opportunities to do so. I am in love with this part of Texas, and look forward to making great progress with the Chemistry department.”

Dr. Manning is replacing Dr. Tewes, who disappeared early this year. Despite an extensive investigation, no one has been arrested in the case, and there has been no evidence of what happened to him.

Jackson Green, a reporter for 12 to Midnight, claims Dr. Tewes is another victim in a worldwide conspiracy to kill microbiologists.

“There have been over thirty cases the past three years of scientists being killed, dying in one-car accidents, or simply disappearing never to be heard from again,” he said.

Local and federal authorities deny that any such conspiracy is taking place.

GM Ideas

- For more on the possible real-life conspiracy check out the following links:

<http://cobrapost.com/documents/Death%20of%20Microbiologists.htm>

<http://gatorpress.com/badsam/page7.html>

- Dr. Manning is actually coming to Pinebox to work for the government’s top secret research facility known as the Quad. She is studying alien tissue cells, though she can only guess as to where the tissue is actually from. It shows regenerative properties and is very adaptable against viri and bacteria.

The closer she gets to the answer,
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Home Invasions (continued from pg 1)

Sheriff Anderson warns that these men are “armed and should be considered very dangerous.” Anyone with information are asked to contact the city or county law-enforcement officials or to contact crimestoppers at 555-TIPS.

Adventure Ideas

- The heroes are friends of one of the victims and have been asked to locate a precious ring that was a family heirloom. The ring can be found at a local pawn store, but there is no legal proof of to whom the ring belongs. The owner of the pawn store refuses to reveal who he purchased the ring from and does not return the ring. Truth is that he is working with the gang to get the merchandise. This story can work to support the home-invasion adventure in this issue of Modern Dispatch.

- Have the heroes go Xmas shopping, where they get tailed by several gangmembers after making some high-dollar purchases. Allow *Spot* checks to notice the trailing bad guys. The gang uses cell phones to communicate and attacks the heroes either in the parking lot or outside their homes.

Physicist

(continued from page 1)

the more danger she is in. Have the characters befriend her and slowly reveal that they are being followed by the men-in-black or otherworldly beings who are sworn to never allow such knowledge among the powers of the earth.

- The characters are hired by the family of Dr. Tewes to investigate what happened to him. Is it a government conspiracy? Terrorists? Alien attacks?

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