

SAVAGE EXPLORER WORLDS

6



EAST TEXAS UNIVERSITY: THE CURIOUS DEATH OF VIOLET EVANS
DEADLANDS NOIR: A FACE BY ANY OTHER NAME
THE SIXTH GUN: SIX MORE RELICS

SAVAGE EXPLORER WORLDS

EAST TEXAS UNIVERSITY THE CURIOUS DEATH OF VIOLET EVANS 2

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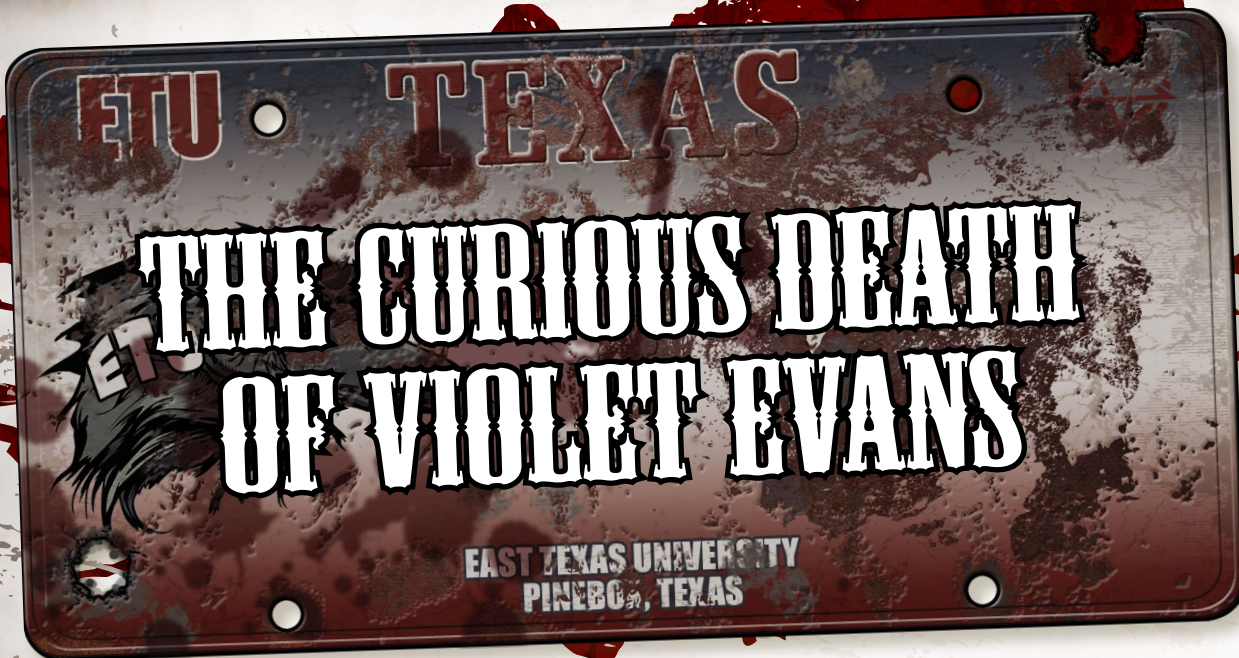
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"The Curious Death of Violet Evans" is a horror mystery for *East Texas University* that offers students of Sophomore rank or higher (preferably with some Ritualism under their belts) a chance to be heroes and save lives. During a late-night class project in the Big Thicket, students meet a 10-year-old girl named Violet Evans. She's a ghost, and she died on her birthday. The investigation of her 50-year-old murder reveals an ancient cycle of supernatural evil, with a trail of unlikely victims in its wake.

Due to disturbing themes, this mystery is best suited for mature and adult players. It can be integrated into an existing *Degrees of Horror* campaign (with the years in which events happen altered as needed), or you can run it as a one-shot with the pre-generated characters provided at the end of the adventure.

THE FIRST SACRIFICE

On March 20, 1968, Violet Evans turned 10. She lived on a ranch with her family just outside Pinebox. Her gentle and caring brother, Gilbert Evans, who was 20 years old at the time, was put in charge of her while their parents were away in Houston. Unfortunately, while exploring a long-hidden cave he discovered nearby, he found a strange pendant which seemed to call to him, and upon picking it up he was immediately possessed by an evil demon spirit named Kromax.

Gilbert returned home, cut a wire out of the family piano, went into the living room where his sister played with a doll — and strangled her to death. He discarded the wire in the cold fireplace, and performed a blood-draining ritual on Violet's body in the

basement, guided by the ravenous demon-spirit within him. When his parents, Richard and Lucy, came home the next morning (March 21), he locked them in the basement with his dead sister and set the house on fire.

Gilbert was subsequently accused of arson and murder, but with no proof the jury was forced to acquit. A few years passed, and the pendant Gilbert wore changed him mentally and physically. He became more muscular, his face developed mild deformities, and his voice became slurred and mush-mouthed. After several years' absence, he changed his name to Tom Gil and moved back to a large plot of undeveloped land only eight miles from the old Evans ranch. Kromax began to thirst once more.

AN ELUSIVE PATTERN

Kromax is ancient. He first appeared at the dawn of man, and has killed hundreds of people over thousands of years following a simple but elusive pattern. The demon spirit thirsts for blood at an exact interval equal to the age of his current host's first victim when he or she died. Subsequent victims must have been born on the day when his first victim was killed (The First Sacrifice). This makes each subsequent victim progressively older by the interval amount. When potential victims have all died off, Kromax simply seeks a new host and the cycle begins again.

In the past, this pattern has gone unnoticed by would-be investigators because it is almost undetectable in its infrequency and variability (for example, one cycle might have had an interval of 23 years, five months and three days). In Tom Gil's case, however, the timing of his sister's murder offers the heroes a



unique opportunity. Violet was killed on the exact day of her tenth birthday (March 20, 1968). Because the date she was killed (March 20) is also the birthdate *and* death-date of all future victims, it is much easier to spot what is happening than at any other time in Kromax's history.

Thanks to Kromax, Tom Gil is instinctually drawn to the victims he needs. Now 70 years old, he has been expertly following this supernatural schedule for 50 years.

VIOLET EVANS

Killed — March 20, 1968. Violet was Gilbert's sister and the "First Sacrifice." Kromax murdered her on her tenth birthday. He covered up his crime by setting fire to his house with his parents and Violet's body in the basement. The charred remains of her and her parents are buried at Pinebox Cemetery. Gilbert subsequently changed his name to Tom Gil.

TOBY WILLIAMS

Body Found — March 22, 1978. A local boy in the Morganville area, Toby Williams was about to turn 10 when Tom Gil kidnapped him on March 18, 1978. His body was found a few days later, drifting down the Trail Blaze Stream outside Pinebox. Toby is also buried at Pinebox Cemetery.

DIANA WHITESIDE

Reported Missing — March 17, 1988. Diana Whiteside lived in Pinebox. She went missing 30 years ago, three days before her twentieth birthday. Her body was never found, and she was later presumed dead.

KEVIN RAY

Reported Missing — March 18, 1998. Kevin Ray lived in Shinbone Springs. He went missing two days before his thirtieth birthday, 20 years ago, and was later presumed dead. His body was never found.

DARLA SWEET

Reported Missing — March 16, 2008. Forty-year-old Darla Sweet was kidnapped from her hometown of Blackburn. She is still officially listed as missing.

50 YEARS LATER

On the morning of March 18, 2018 — the day the adventure starts — Tom Gil kidnaps Zak Riley, a 50-year-old pediatrician, born to a native tribe in Alaska, but living in nearby Timberland Village.

Zak is a gentle-spirited and well-respected doctor, beloved by his young patients and their parents. He also lives alone, having lost his wife to cancer several years ago. There is no evidence Zak was kidnapped except that he is missing. As the scenario begins, he is locked inside a cage in Tom Gil's basement and still alive — but not for long.

A GHOST AMONG THE NIGHT BLOOMS

On March 18, 2018, it is spring break at ETU. One or more members of the study group use the break as an opportunity to complete a homework assignment for their biology class: studying certain varieties of night-blooming flowers in the Big Thicket just outside Pinebox.

They may be camping, or just out for the evening, and others not in their class might have come along for the fun of it, for romantic reasons, or simply because they have a vehicle that can accommodate everyone. In any case, the students should all have a reason to be there. Read the following:

It is unseasonably cold, and the moon shines bright as you study and catalog various flowers. Suddenly, the ghostly form of a little girl appears in front of you. She clutches an old-style doll in her arms and wears a new-looking but dated sundress. She whimpers in a distant voice, "Help me!" and beckons for you to follow her. She recedes down an old, overgrown driveway that otherwise would have been almost impossible to spot.

It's easy to see the style of the girl's dress isn't modern, but a Knowledge (Fashion) or Common Knowledge (-2) roll nails down the period as the late Sixties.

THE EVANS RANCH

As the little girl leads the students a short distance to the Evans ranch, she talks to them, but it takes effort. She says her name is Violet Evans and offers other telling phrases like, "It's almost my birthday," and "That's when my brother killed me."

RUNNING THE INVESTIGATION

Don't try to predict or dictate the students' path or method of investigation. Instead, familiarize yourself with the clues and find ways to give them out based on the students' approach. Don't panic if the gang finds several clues very quickly after their visit to the Evans ranch. The meat of the story lies not in making the clues hard to find, but in what the students do after finding them.

Think of the rest of this adventure as a series of suggestions about how the heroes might proceed. It is not set in stone. As Dean, be as generous as practicality allows with the clues, while being clear and honest with students about which investigative paths are relevant and which are not.

The overgrown driveway gives way to a clearing where the outline of what used to be a ranch house remains. It is cluttered with old debris, and plants have taken back the land. The only standing structure is a crumbling fireplace. Violet leads the study group to the house and slowly points at the fireplace, repeating,

"My brother killed me. Please help."

Under some rubble in the fireplace students find the coiled-up piano wire Tom used to kill Violet (see **Forensic Clue 1**, page 6). Because of its location, it did not burn in the house fire and still has old, black bloodstains on it — one on the center of the wire (Violet's) and two more on either edge of it (Tom's). Only DNA testing can determine this definitively, however. The piano wire is a critical clue, and does not require a Notice roll to find.

Students who explore further find the remains of a root cellar under some rubble. Violet points to the cellar and says,

"Mommy and daddy. He killed them too."

Gaining access to the cellar requires a Strength roll to deal with the rubble. Failure still gains them access but causes each digger a level of Fatigue (from Bumps and Bruises) that lasts for 24 hours.

THE VISION

Once in the basement, students have a vision of Gilbert, Violet, and what happened to their parents just before they died. Alternatively, heroes may instead see the vision in the form of a dream later that night. Read the following:

You find yourselves in a lit, finished basement with 1968-era decor. Violet's dead body lies in the corner inside a pentagram. She is eerily thin and pale white, with papery skin. A 20-year-old kid with a blank look on his face leads his parents through the door and downstairs, telling them, "She's down here. Follow me."

As Richard and Lucy discover their daughter is dead, Gilbert runs upstairs and slams the door, locking them in the basement. Seconds later, smoke seeps under the door with the orange glow of flames beyond. They are trapped. The vision fades.

While experiencing the vision, a student who succeeds on a Knowledge (Medicine) or Healing roll at +2 can tell Violet's body has been emptied of blood. The vision or dream itself is **Supernatural Clue 1** (page 6). On a successful Notice roll (-2), students see a clear image of the pendant Gilbert wears around his neck (**Supernatural Clue 2** on page 6).

Students visiting the basement after seeing the vision or dream and succeeding on another Notice roll find an old, ceramic wall hanging collecting dust among the rubble. It has "The Evans Family" written on top,



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“Richard” and “Lucy” in the middle, and “Gilbert” and “Violet” at the bottom. There is no internet or cellphone signal at the Evans ranch, so further investigation must wait until students return to campus.

- **Violet Evans:** Use the Ghost profile in *East Texas University* with the abilities *illusion*, *haunting grounds* (the Evans ranch, and her grave), *resolution*, and *weak*.

THE CLUES

There are several avenues of investigation the students can pursue after their discoveries at the Evans ranch.

RESEARCH CLUES

The most straightforward way to find out more about Violet and her family is with an internet search, or at the local library or newspaper archive. Two newspaper articles (**Research Clues 1 and 2**, below) are easy to find with a simple Investigation roll. On a failure the heroes still find them, but it takes more time or creates some other complication.

Students who dive into occult research based on their experience in the basement easily find information on blood-draining demon spirits (**Research Clue 4**, below), but may not specifically identify Kromax (**Research Clue 5**, below) unless they either see his symbol in the vision, start to discern the pattern of the murders, or conduct further research on rare, blood-draining rituals based on components they might have seen in the vision. Identifying Kromax is a critical clue, so even if researchers don't find it right away, they find it eventually — preferably at the most dramatic time.

The crew only finds the newspaper article on Toby Williams (**Research Clue 3**) or information on Tom Gil's other victims (see **An Elusive Pattern**, page 2) if they know what to search for. They may find it when investigating similar crimes in 10-year increments if they obtain information on Kromax, or if they are lured to Toby's grave at the cemetery (see **Supernatural Clues**, below) and decide to research his name. This may lead dogged students to the ritual, *expulsé Kromaxia* (see page 9).

Research Clue 1: Newspaper Article — Evans Ranch Burns. March 22, 1968. *“A tragic fire consumed the Evans family ranch last night, killing owners Lucy and Richard Evans, along with their daughter Violet whose tenth birthday was on March 20. The Evans' 20-year-old son Gilbert was the only survivor, and has been taken into custody for questioning. The victims' remains will be buried tomorrow morning at Pinebox Cemetery.”*

Research Clue 2: Newspaper Article — Gilbert Evans Acquitted! July 18, 1968. *“Gilbert Evans, lead arson suspect in a fire that killed his parents, Lucy and Richard,*

USING THE CLUES

The entries designated as clues in this adventure are actionable pieces of information the heroes can use to solve the mystery. It can be very effective to hand them to the players at the table as they discover them. This not only allows them to feel they are making progress, but also lets them review the information they have obtained without relying solely on memory or note-taking. We provide a series of handouts starting on page 15.

Using physical clues as signposts to mark investigative progress is a powerful and fun technique. It can help prevent the dead ends and false leads that so often bog down roleplaying game mysteries. Remember too, the ultimate resolution of this adventure is not necessarily in solving the mystery, but in finding and defeating Kromax.

and his sister Violet has been acquitted of the crime by a jury of his peers. Mr. Evans showed little emotion throughout his trial and coldly insisted he was innocent. When asked for comment, the District Attorney lamented the verdict but admitted that arson cases are very difficult to prove. After the verdict, Mr. Evans claimed his insurance money for the fire and left Pinebox.”

Research Clue 3: Newspaper Article — Body of Toby Williams Found. March 22, 1978. *“The body of 10-year-old Toby Williams was found drifting down the Trail Blaze Stream outside Pinebox. The coroner's report indicates that the body was completely drained of blood. Speculation is rampant, but authorities have offered no official explanation on how this could have occurred. Toby disappeared on March 18, 1978 — two days before his tenth birthday. Official cause of death: massive blood loss. Toby's body was interred at Pinebox Cemetery.”*

Research Clue 4: Occult Book Entry — Blood Draining. *“Besides Vampires, who only drink living blood and therefore stop once their victim has died, there are several demons that consume human blood or demand it for their summoning ritual. In fact, some possessing demon spirits require their hosts to drain the blood of their victims through rare forms of ritual magic.”*

Research Clue 5: Occult Book Entry — Elusive Demon Spirits. *“One particularly elusive demon-spirit is known as Kromax (symbol shown). This spirit is even fabled to have appeared at the dawn of man, 40,000 years ago. Kromax possesses a human host and demands an immediate sacrifice. This First Sacrifice is then repeatedly reenacted at a precise interval determined by the age of the first victim, with fresh victims who were born on the same day as the First Sacrifice. This cycle continues until viable victims can no longer be found, at which point Kromax leaves its host, sometimes not reappearing in a new one for decades.”*

SUPERNATURAL CLUES

The Evans family is buried in Pinebox cemetery. The students can visit them readily during normal business hours, or they can break in at night and use Stealth or distractions to avoid the security guard. The cemetery supervisor is Karla Von — she is sweet and a bit creepy, interested in the supernatural but only as a hobby. She doesn't really believe in it. She happily helps the students find the Evans' graves, although she knows little about the family. Three simple gravestones stand side by side, one for each family member. They have not been visited recently except by cemetery maintenance.

The body of Toby Williams, the second victim, is buried here too. Toby reaches out to anyone with the Psychically Sensitive Edge (absent the Edge, the student with the highest Spirit) and tries to draw them to his grave. His tombstone reads, "Toby Williams. Born March 20, 1968. Died March 20, 1978."

Everyone feels Toby's presence at the gravesite. If they attempt a *séance of the dead* ritual (see page 9 for details), Toby's ghost tells the group,

"He said his name was Tom Gil. He promised me ice cream for my birthday. He hurt me and I couldn't even hear my own screams!"

Toby can describe Tom's basement, but not where Tom is located. If the students do not perform a ritual Toby still appears, but only very briefly in an unstable way. Either way, give them Supernatural Clue 3.

Supernatural Clue 1: Vision in the Evans' Basement. "A vision of the Evans family showing Gilbert locking his parents in the basement with an already dead Violet, just before starting a fire that would kill them both. Violet's skin looks pale white and papery, like her body has been completely drained of blood."

Supernatural Clue 2: Symbol. "Symbol on the pendant worn by Gilbert Evans in the vision."

Supernatural Clue 3: "His Name was Tom Gil." "The ghost of Toby Williams claims his killer's name was 'Tom Gil' and adds, 'He promised me ice cream for my birthday.'"

- **Karla Von:** Use the Campus Security Officer profile in *East Texas University*.
- **Toby Williams:** Use the Ghost profile in *East Texas University* with the abilities *imprint* and *resolution*.

FORENSIC CLUES

The students already have the piano wire (**Forensic Clue 1**, below), and there are ways they can follow up on it forensically. However, DNA collection and testing takes more time than new victim Zak Riley has, and Violet seeks resolution, not legal proof.

Insistent students can get the wire DNA-tested, which reveals two different blood samples. A

DNA sample from Violet's remains, and one from Tom Gil (if they can get one) confirms Violet's blood is on the center of the wire, and Tom's is on the edges. Scars on Tom Gil's fingers and signs of strangulation on what remains of Violet's neck further corroborate this narrative.

This can get a bit gruesome, but if investigators manage to gather all this evidence, they can legally prove Tom Gil killed Violet. It may not matter, however, since by the time all this is done, Zak's fate has already been decided one way or the other.

Forensic Clue 1: Piano Wire. "A length of piano wire with old blood stains on it. There is blood on the center of the wire, and more blood on each end of the wire."

CONFRONTING TOM GIL

Tom Gil lives in a simple ranch house on a large piece of property in the Big Thicket, just eight miles from the old Evans ranch. Tom is supernaturally strong and subsists on a garden, hunting, and trading. He lives "off the grid," and his house has no electricity or basic utilities. Tom's house has a front door, back door, and a locked storm door leading directly into the basement (a Lockpicking or Strength roll at -2 opens it).

Gil's neighbors are almost as private as he is. They describe him as a solitary type and rarely seen.

TOM'S HOUSE

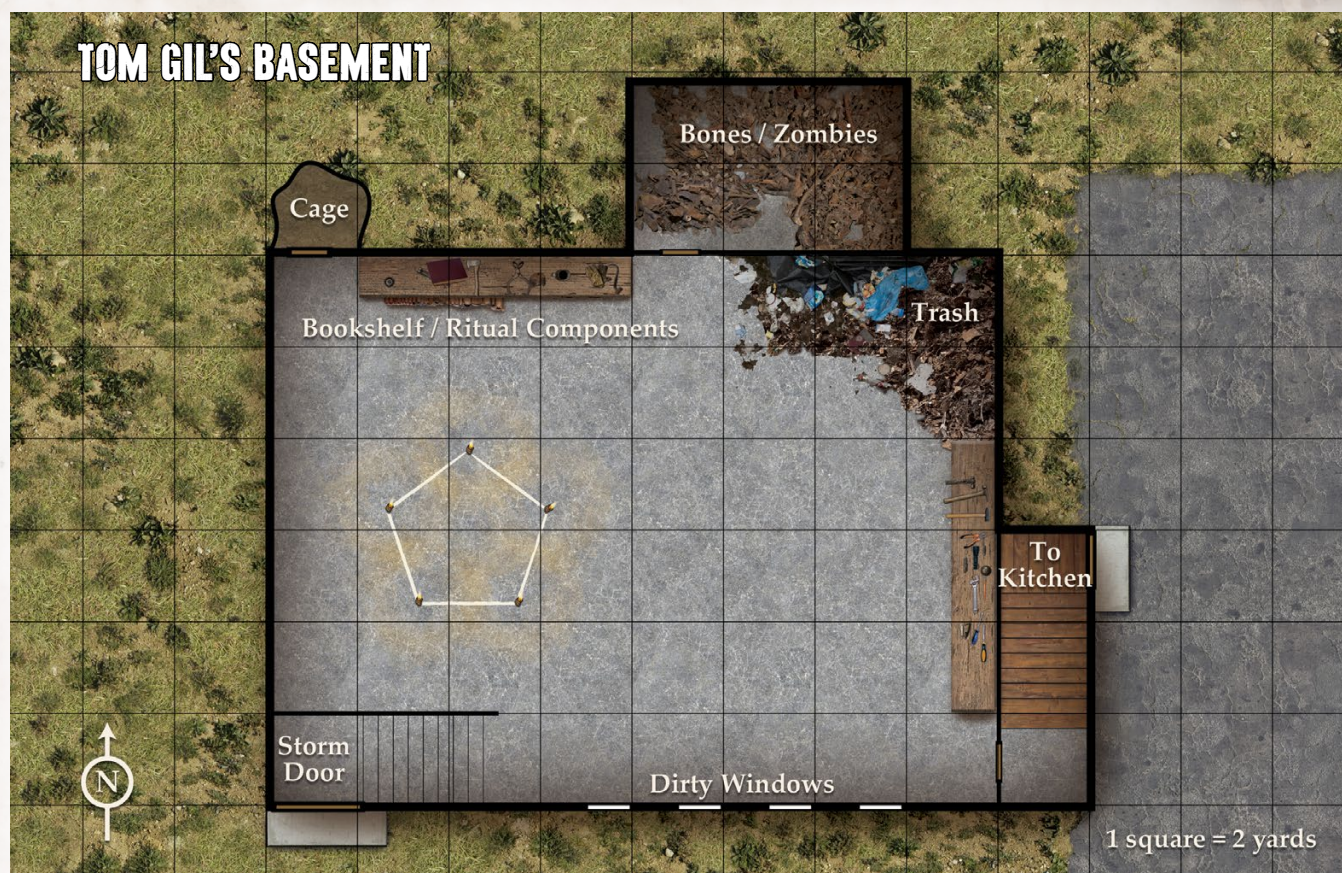
The students must find Tom's house before midnight on March 20. If they don't, Tom performs the ritual and kills Zak Riley. Any time before that, whenever students arrive, Gil is in the basement making final preparations for the ritual. He is unconcerned with anything outside, so a Stealth roll is not required to sneak up to the house (although you may call for one for dramatic purposes).

If the students knock on an outside door, there is no answer. There are sealed, clouded basement windows next to the storm door, which reveal flickering candlelight and Tom's hulking shape moving around, placing candles around a pentagram.

Zak Riley is on his knees, locked in a small metal cage built into one of the basement walls. His head is badly injured from Tom's bat, and he is clearly terrified. He looks like he is pleading with Tom, yet the students hear no sound coming from the basement.

Entering the house from another direction reveals the creepy interior, with plain wooden furniture and only the bare necessities for life. Trespassers who make successful Notice rolls discover several tomes of black magic containing rituals like *zombie*, *invisibility*, and a

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unique *ward of silence* (see below). The door to the basement is in the kitchen, where knives, frying pans, and other improvised weapons are found.

WARD OF SILENCE

Tom has a special ward on his body that nullifies all sound within the basement area *except* his own voice and movements. The ward is so powerful that if Tom Gil makes no noise, no sound at all can exist in a radius of 12" (24 yards) around him. This is very disorienting, and inflicts a -1 penalty to Trait rolls by anyone except Tom Gil and his zombies.

Success on a Ritualism roll (-2) determines a patch on Tom's back is the focus of the silence ward. It can be broken with a successful Called Shot (-2) on the patch. Once sound rushes back in, Spirit rolls are required for everyone in the basement — except Gil and his zombies — to avoid being Shaken.

RESCUING ZAK RILEY

If the students delay or call the sheriff to deal with the problem, Tom begins his ritual. His slurred voice can be heard speaking an unknown language anywhere in the house, and outside the storm door to the basement. When he becomes aware of the students, Tom Gil calls his zombies — formerly Diana Whiteside, Kevin Ray, and Darla Sweet — from a room adjoining the basement

to aid him. They are rotting, bony creatures now, but still dressed in the tatters of their old clothes. They brandish claws and their eyes are dark and lifeless.

Seeing Tom up close requires a Fear roll (-2). If players think to ask, heroes see the scars on Tom's fingers consistent with cutting them on the piano wire 50 years prior. Tom attacks anyone who enters the basement or tries to free Zak from his cage (Lockpicking-4, Toughness 10). If the students attempt to remove the pendant from Tom, they can make a Fighting roll at -4 for the Called Shot to grab it, then an opposed Strength roll to wrest it from Tom.

If the pendant is removed, Tom Gil regresses to his old 70-year-old self — thin, emaciated, confused, and on the verge of death from his ordeal. When Tom collapses so do the zombies. However, the person who removed the pendant must make an opposed Spirit roll to avoid being possessed by Kromax (Spirit d8). Kromax uses a possessed student to fight their friends.

If the attempt fails, Kromax tries each round to possess anyone touching the pendant. If it's dropped, Kromax still resides inside it until *expulsé Kromaxia* (see page 9) is cast successfully to banish him.

Regardless of how Tom Gil is defeated, he expresses inconsolable grief for the murders he has committed, especially his beloved sister. Shortly afterward, he dies.

 **Tom Gil:** See below.

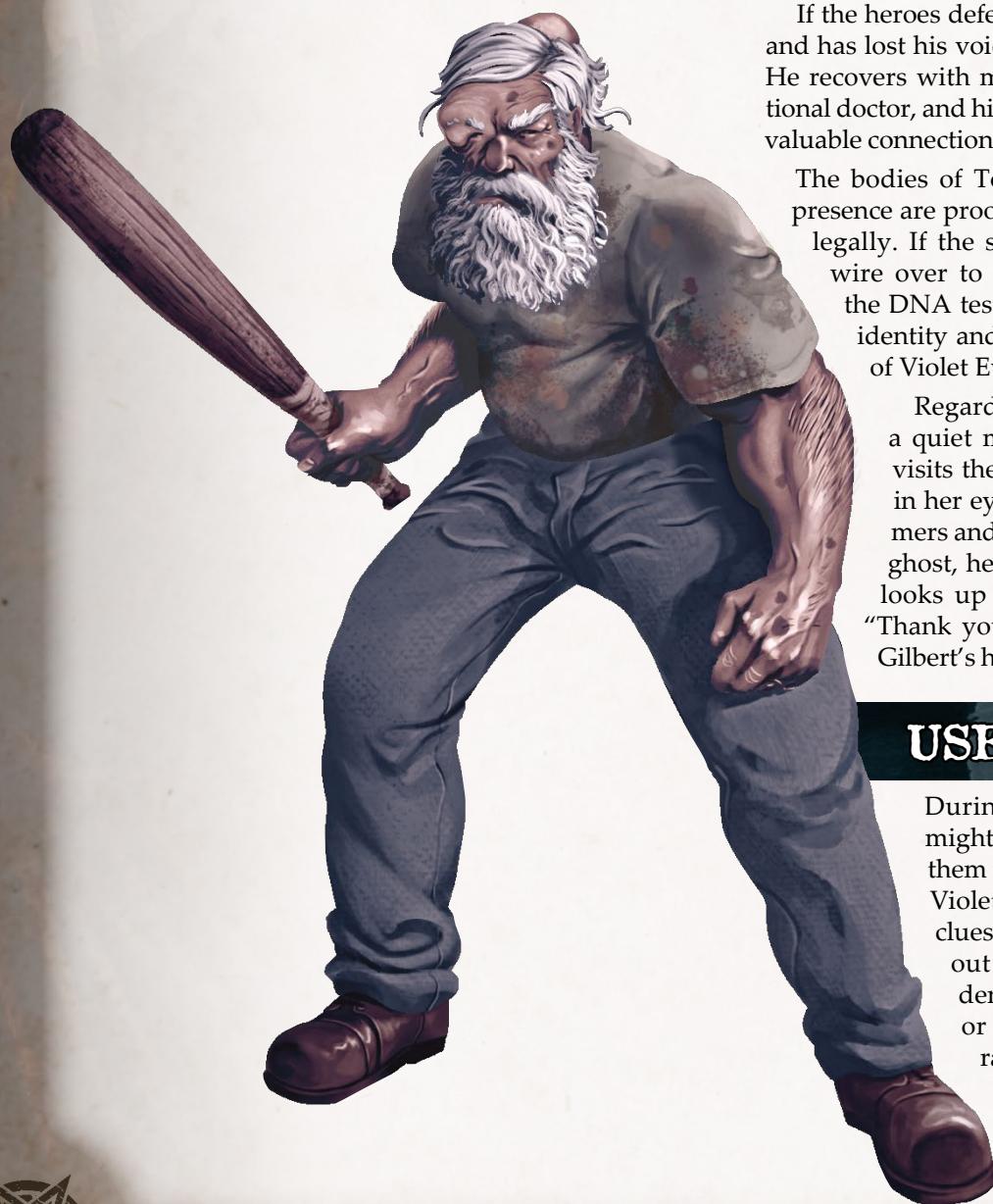
East Texas University

- **Zak Riley:** Use the Professor profile in *East Texas University*, but add Knowledge (Medicine) d12, Healing d10, and the Healer Edge.
- **Zombies (3):** See *Savage Worlds*. These are the zombie remains of Diana Whiteside, Kevin Ray, and Darla Sweet — Tom Gil's third, fourth, and fifth victims. They are dressed in the tatters of their former clothes and have dark, black eyes. They become Incapacitated automatically if the pendant is removed from Tom Gil, or if Kromax is banished with *expulsé Kromaxia* (see page 9).



TOM GIL

Tom Gil is actually Violet's brother, Gilbert Evans. His body and mind have been twisted and deformed by the demon spirit Kromax through a pendant he wears around his neck. His speech is so slurred he is barely understandable anymore.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Throwing d6, Ritualism d8

Cha: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Ugly

Edges: Brawler, Nerves of Steel

Special Abilities:

- **Fear (-2):** Up close, Tom doesn't look entirely human.
- **Size +1:** Tom Gil is an imposing, bulky figure.

AFTERMATH

If students wait for the authorities to arrive before confronting Tom Gil, or if Tom defeats them, Zak dies. If they rely on the sheriff's department to handle the problem entirely, Kromax kills Zak and also possesses one of the officers — and disappears.

If the heroes defeat Tom, Zak has a bad concussion and has lost his voice from screaming into the silence. He recovers with medical attention. Zak is an exceptional doctor, and his gratitude makes him a potentially valuable connection for the group in future adventures.

The bodies of Tom's previous victims and Zak's presence are proof enough to close the case on Tom legally. If the study group also turns the piano wire over to the authorities, they perform all the DNA testing required to also prove Tom's identity and his responsibility for the murder of Violet Evans.

Regardless of the state of legal proof, in a quiet moment after it is all over, Violet visits the students one last time with tears in her eyes and relief in her face. She shimmers and fades just as the outline of a larger ghost, her brother, appears beside her. She looks up and smiles, whispers an earnest "Thank you," to the heroes, and then takes Gilbert's hand as they both fade away forever.

USEFUL RITUALS

During the investigation, the heroes might gain access to rituals that can aid them in tracking down and dealing with Violet's brother. Treat these rituals like clues, and be generous in handing them out — giving them freely if the students think to look for useful magic, or awarding them as bonuses for raises they get on other Knowledge: Occult or Ritualism rolls.

Give the heroes *séance for the dead* before play if you're

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running a one-shot. Toby is one of the few who knows Gilbert Evans is Tom Gil, so talking to him is a good way to find Tom.

Another way is for the students to find the *precisi anima* ritual. This encourages a visit to Zak Riley's home, 70 miles from Pinebox in Timberland Village, to find something personal of his to cast it.

Finally, *expulsé Kromaxia* allows the gang to get rid of Kromax for good, and to deal with his host Tom Gil without having to physically subdue him. If they still have the piano wire, they've already got one of the components.

SÉANCE FOR THE DEAD

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 4

Range: Touch

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Ouija board, candles, chalk, fresh grave dirt

See the *gravespeak* ritual in *East Texas University*. Violet and Toby are cooperative spirits and volunteer information.

PRECISI ANIMA

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 4

Range: Smarts × 10 (in miles)

Duration: Instant

Trappings: Special

This ritual allows the caster to locate a specific person with a soul (e.g., it cannot locate demons) in range. If successful, the ritual reveals a glowing map to the target's location. The ritual requires a personal item belonging to the target, as well as the usual two common and one exotic ritual components (see *East Texas University*). Hereafter, each time this ritual is to be cast, roll for a different exotic component.

EXPULSÉ KROMAXIA

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 4

Range: Smarts

Duration: Instant

Trappings: Clove of garlic, 6 oz. holy water, a murderer's weapon

This is a rare ritual purported to banish the demon spirit Kromax from its host's body and into the netherworld indefinitely. It requires a Dramatic Task as normal, but the final success requires an opposed Spirit roll with Kromax. When successful, all the ghosts of Kromax's past victims appear en masse to subdue him and drag him to the netherworld.



THE CURIOUS CHEERLEADER

Your mother groomed you for one thing: to be a star. Dancing, singing, and pageantry were thrust upon you at an early age and you walked away with many awards and titles.

You really came into your own during high school when you joined the cheerleading squad. You loved the athleticism and teamwork; your mom loved that her little girl was getting the fame she deserved.

Your senior year you applied to lots of different colleges, but with *East Texas University* only a couple hours away you knew in your heart that it was the one for you. After careful consideration, you and your mom decided on a Meteorology major. That gives you the best chance of appearing on television, where you can really be discovered.

Best of all is that you nailed summer tryouts and earned a place on the ETU cheerleading team! You get to keep doing what you love in front of a whole new crowd.

Go Ravens!

GAME STATISTICS

Rank: Seasoned

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (History) d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Swimming d4

Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Academics:** -1

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Curious, Overprotective Parents

Edges: Attractive, Common Bond, Luck

Gear: Pepper spray, cellphone, laptop computer, 6 oz. holy water, mid-size car, purse.

Extracurricular Activity: Cheerleader (Add +1 to all Agility Rolls)



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THE FASHIONABLE PARTY ANIMAL

Being a foster child most of your adolescence, you felt different from everyone else — that you didn't belong. Other kids might have tried to change themselves to fit in. You, on the other hand, did your best to stand out — especially when it came to fashion or mainstream culture.

The system wrote you off as a lost soul of misguided youth, but most saw you as a rough and tough chick who could knock anyone's teeth down their throat. After you and your fashions were profiled in the anti-mainstream fashion magazine *Teen Anarchy*, suddenly your classmates — and even adults — treated you differently. For the first time you saw respect rather than fear, and it got you thinking about the possibility of a real future after high school.

East Texas University is just about the last place you expected to end up, but it's the only one that offered a scholarship. You keep reminding yourself you always wanted to stand out like a fiery blaze of red against a stonewashed blue jean society. You figure you can push the envelope in creativity and fashion while you party it up...at least until the money runs out or your grades catch up with you. Whatever happens, you know it's gonna be a wild ride.

GAME STATISTICS

Rank: Seasoned

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Fashion) d6, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Ritualism d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

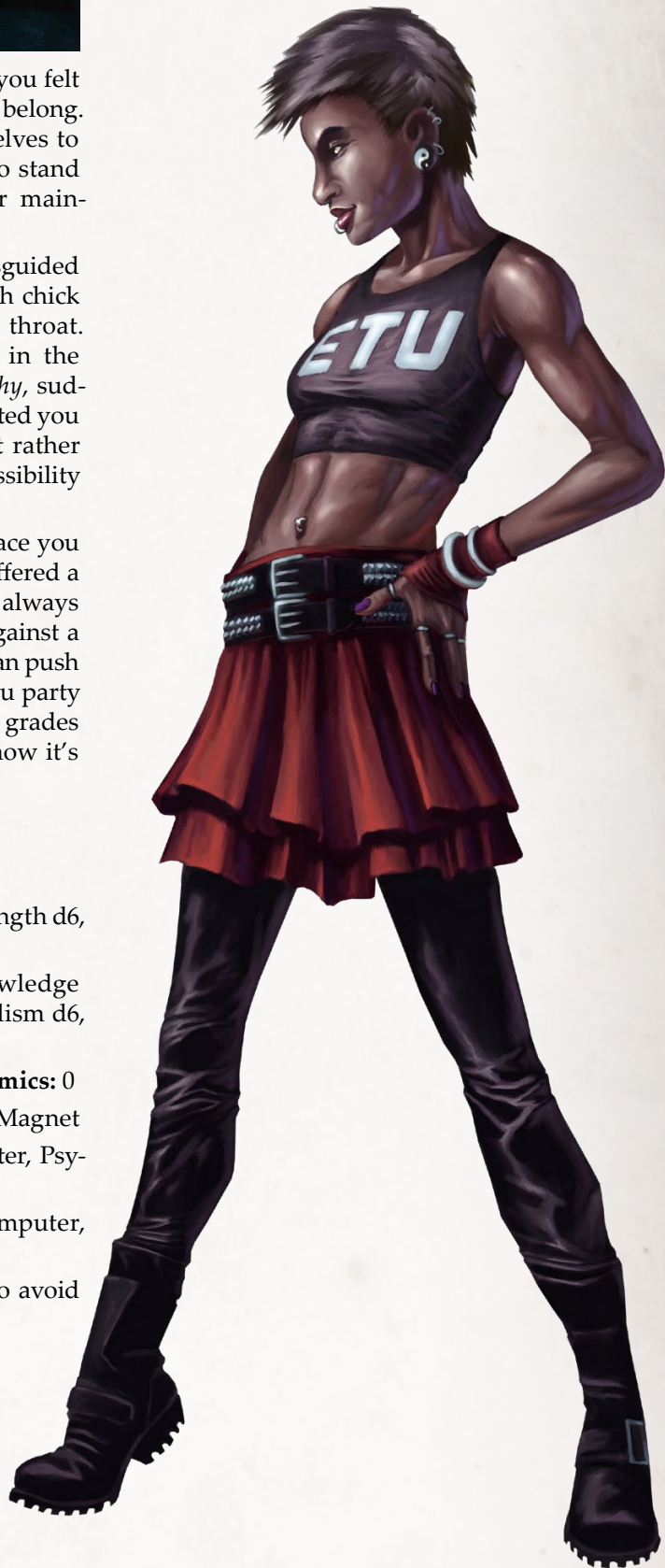
Cha: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5; **Academics:** 0

Hindrances: Arrogant, Party Animal, Trouble Magnet

Edges: Attractive, Brave, Improvisational Fighter, Psychically Sensitive

Gear: Pepper Spray, cellphone, Laptop Computer, Satchel, Compact Car.

Extracurricular Activity: Fitness (+2 to rolls to avoid Fatigue)



THE RITUALIST GAMER

Your parents knew very early on in your adolescence that you were growing up to be one very special child. At the age of five, your cognitive and mental capacity scores on the Dunbar's Child IQ test were almost off the charts.

In high school you fit the mold of the stereotypical nerd. You gravitated towards chemistry, mathematics, and computer programming, and you were socially awkward — especially around girls. A love of games is one of the few things you have in common with other teens, so you tend to talk about them a lot. Putting your computer programming knowledge to good use, you even designed and developed your very own first person shooter entitled "Banditos in Arms."

Many first-rate universities tried to recruit you, but it was a letter from *East Texas University's* Chemistry Department that made you decide to become an ETU Raven. Being the inventor of the next Nobel Prize winning chemical compound would be very exciting, or at least that's what your letter alluded to.

GAME STATISTICS

Rank: Seasoned

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Chemistry) d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d6, Repair d6, Ritualism d8, Tracking d4

Cha: -1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4; **Academics:** 0

Hindrances: Habit (Makes game references to real-world events), Phobia (Talking to members of the gender they're attracted to), Small

Edges: Elan, Jack-of-all-Trades, Psychically Sensitive

Gear: Cellphone, laptop computer, handheld gaming console, messenger bag, Vespa scooter.

Extracurricular Activity: Gaming (+2 to any Knowledge roll concerning lore, myth and the supernatural)



THE PRE-MED SCHOLAR

Science fiction, fantasy, the weird and supernatural, you have always loved them. In fact, your whole family is like that. On vacations, you didn't go to the beach or the mountains, you went to Area 51 looking for UFOs or to the geek Shangri-La, ComicCon.

It's weird other people don't see these things as easily as you do, but you've always had a sixth sense about you. Everyone said your family was crazy, so to prove them wrong you started studying psychology. Turned out you really liked it and it even helped unveil a hoax or two.

Once you had decided on your major, there was no other choice for college other than ETU. Cryptid Weekly lists it on the top ten hot spots worldwide every year, and there's even a rumor the Big Thicket is home to Hogzilla. This is going to be the best four years of your life!

GAME STATISTICS

Rank: Seasoned

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d8, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Medicine) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d4, Ritualism d4, Streetwise d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Academics:** 0

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Loyal, Second Fiddle

Edges: Be a Zebra, Brave, Martial Artist

Gear: Cellphone, laptop computer, first aid kit, stun gun, hospital restraints (handcuffs), hand-me-down Smart Car.

Extracurricular Activity: Library Tech (Add +2 to rolls related to Library research)



East Texas University

THE LOYAL JOCK

You're the son of a fifth generation cattle rancher deep in the heart of Texas. You learned at a very young age that nothing is ever simple in life, and that you had to work hard for every inch you gained and even harder to keep it.

You exploded onto the sports scene during high school as a star athlete where football soon became your true sport of choice. Your physique and skills broadened exponentially as did your ego and attitude towards those you called "smart folk," up until you needed a tutor to graduate high school.

Many collegiate scholarships were thrown your way but since your entire family graduated from *East Texas University*, it was preordained that you too spread your wings and become a Fighting Raven. With a full ride to ETU, you haven't decided on a major yet but as far as you're concerned, there's plenty of time to figure that out... right after football season.

GAME STATISTICS

Rank: Seasoned

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Driving d4, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d4, Throwing d8

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7;

Academics: -1

Hindrances: Loyal, Overconfident, Stubborn

Edges: Brawny, Fleet-Footed, Quick

Gear: Cellphone, laptop computer, duffle bag, used SUV, baseball bat.

Extracurricular Activity: Athlete (+1 to Strength rolls and damage)



EVANS RANCH BURNS

BY HAL MORRISON

MARCH 22, 1968

A tragic fire consumed the Evans family ranch last night, killing owners Lucy and Richard Evans, along with their daughter Violet whose tenth birthday was on March 20. The Evans' 20-year-old son Gilbert was the only survivor, and has been taken into custody for questioning. The victims' remains will be buried tomorrow morning at Pinebox Cemetery. ■

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Gilbert Evans Acquitted!

By Susan Moore

JULY 18, 1968

GILBERT EVANS, lead arson suspect in a fire that killed his parents, Lucy and Richard, and his sister Violet has been acquitted of the crime by a jury of his peers. Mr. Evans showed little emotion throughout his trial and coldly insisted he was innocent. When asked for comment, the District Attorney lamented the verdict but admitted that arson cases are very difficult to prove. After the verdict, Mr. Evans claimed his insurance money for the fire and left Pinebox. ■

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Body of Toby Williams Found

By Frank Dooley

THE body of 10-year-old Toby Williams was found drifting down the Trail Blaze Stream outside Pinebox. The coroner's report indicates that the body was completely drained of blood.

Speculation is rampant, but authorities have offered no official explanation on how this could have occurred. Toby disappeared on March 18, 1978—two days before his tenth birthday. Official cause of death: massive blood loss. Toby's body was interred at Pinebox Cemetery. ■

MARCH 22, 1978

Blood Draining

Besides Vampires, who only drink living blood and therefore stop once their victim has died, there are several demons that consume human blood or demand it for their summoning ritual. In fact, some possessing demon spirits require their hosts to drain the blood of their victims through rare forms of ritual magic.

Elusive Demon Spirits

One particularly elusive demon-spirit is known as Kromax (symbol shown). This spirit is even fabled to have appeared at the dawn of man, 40,000 years ago. Kromax possesses a human host and demands an immediate sacrifice. This First Sacrifice is then repeatedly reenacted at a precise interval determined by the age of the first victim, with fresh victims who were born on the same day as the First Sacrifice. This cycle continues until viable victims can no longer be found, at which point Kromax leaves its host, sometimes not reappearing in a new one for decades.



PLAYER HANDOUTS



A FACE BY ANY OTHER NAME

In *A Face by Any Other Name*, the gumshoes are hired to look into a puzzling burglary. As they dig deeper, they're drawn into a tale of art, greed, and vengeance. Set in New Orleans during the 1930s, this investigation is suitable for characters of any Rank.

SCULPTING HORRORS

Pierre Broussard was a shyster with only slightly more money than ethics. He hatched a scheme to open a wax museum in Marigny-Bywater several years ago, in the hopes of suckering folks out of their hard-earned wages for the promise of seeing exotic sights and famous people without ever leaving their own neighborhood. While he was an undeniably gifted sculptor, potential customers found his oily mannerisms off-putting within moments of meeting the man, often scurrying out of the establishment before they'd even purchased a ticket.

Broussard's income from the museum was such he was rubbing two nickels together in the hopes they'd take a liking to each other and maybe raise a family. Facing a mounting stack of bills, he took the only course of action available to a con artist in his position. He set fire to his building to file an insurance claim.

BURNING THE CANDLE AT BOTH ENDS

Sadly for Broussard, he was only slightly better at arson than he was at wax sculpting. He did set fire to the building, but he also managed to trap himself in the blaze. The fire department arrived in time not only to douse the fire before it spread, but also to save Broussard's life — although he was horribly burned.

Presented with ample evidence of his crime, the insurance company refused to pay the claim. Left with little more than terrible scars and a nearly burned-out

building, Broussard vowed vengeance against everyone he felt had wronged him. He spent years making deals with the Red Sect and the dark entities they served, bartering his soul and more for a taste of power to exact the revenge he lusted after and secure all the riches he felt he deserved.

UNAUTHORIZED WITHDRAWALS

Melding the terrible necromancy of the Red Sect with his own talent for sculpture, Broussard learned how to create waxen zombies from the bodies of the recently dead. Operating from a small art gallery in the same building that once housed his failed waxworks, he preys on wealthy visitors, sending his undead creations to murder them. He replaces them with waxen zombies sculpted on their former skeletons just long enough to loot their fortunes to line his own pockets.

Most recently, he used the revenant of Mike Duffy, a two-bit loan shark he'd mistaken for a successful money lender, to murder a bank employee, Stephen Cole — which is where the heroes enter the story.

A DISCREET MATTER

Early on a Monday morning, Franklin LaFleur contacts the investigators. He identifies himself as the manager of the downtown branch of the Confederate Bank of New Orleans. He asks them to meet him at the bank as soon as possible, and he'll explain everything when they arrive.

Upon arriving, the bank is closed and blinds are down, even though it is after the 9:00 a.m. opening time. A knock at the door is answered by a teller though.

LaFleur greets them immediately. He says,

"We experienced a robbery last night. We simply can't turn a blind eye to this sort of thing — and the thief injured our night watchmen. I'm reluctant to contact the police, as the bank failures of the last decade still sit heavily on many customers' minds. Confederal has a very affluent clientele — who are also very careful with their monies — and it's been my experience police matters have a habit of becoming newspaper matters."

The manager tells gumshoes he was the first to arrive at the bank at 7:30 a.m. He discovered the night watchman, Harry Ackles, unconscious on the floor. The vault was open and approximately \$3,000 had been removed. LaFleur offers their standard fee with a bonus of 10 percent of any recovered funds.

He then turns the investigation over to the presumed professionals. If they ask the appropriate questions, LaFleur shares the following information:

- The front door was unlocked and very slightly ajar when he arrived.
- There was no sign of forced entry.
- Only he, the assistant manager Stephen Cole, and the head cashier Florence Duvalle have keys. He and Duvalle are currently present in the bank.
- The guard was lying on his back, with his pistol on the floor next to him.

CONFEDERAL-BANK

The bank's layout is a fairly standard affair, with teller stands to one side and officer desks to the other. The vault is accessed behind the teller stands. It stands open.

The gumshoes can find the following clues around the lobby, either by specifically investigating the noted area or succeeding on a Notice roll:

- **Front Door:** It has not been forced, and there's no obvious signs of the lock being picked or jimmied.
- **Wall by Door:** Two bullet holes sit at about chest height. A careful extraction recovers two largely intact bullets. An appropriate Knowledge roll tells the detective the bullets were not deformed when they entered the wall.

VAULT

Like the front door, the vault not forced. If asked, LaFleur confirms it was locked. Only he and Duvalle the combination. It is not on a time lock.

Miss Duvalle can tell the heroes the amount taken was \$3,236 dollars. It was all in small denominations, mostly \$1 and \$5 bills. A Smarts roll tells a player this might fill a moderate-sized bag or briefcase.

Examining the vault and its contents — while Duvalle supervises, of course — yields the following clues. Shamus specifically checking the listed area automatically

find the noted clues. Otherwise, they need to make Notice rolls.

- **Vault Door:** A waxy substance is smudged on both the dial and lever/handle. Knowledge (Chemistry) identifies it as primarily petroleum-based wax.
- **Contents:** All the money appears to have been taken from a single cart closest to the vault door.

NIGHT WATCHMEN

Should the heroes question LaFleur further about the guard, he tells them Harry Ackles has been with the bank for almost seven years. He had a large bruise on his forehead, making the manager believe he'd been struck by a blunt object or blackjack. LaFleur had him taken to the University Hospital to be treated.

If asked, LaFleur says he kept the guard's duty belt. The investigators can look at it if they want. The guard was armed with a .38 revolver, from which two rounds have been fired. If they found the bullets in the wall near the door, they can tell the slugs are roughly the right size to match the pistol's caliber.

STEPHEN COLE

At some point the characters are likely to ask about the assistant manager, Stephen Cole. He is the only employee with access to the keys and vault combination who is not present Monday morning. LaFleur tells the detectives Cole hasn't been to work since Thursday of last week. He did not call in sick Friday, and calls to his residence went unanswered, so his boss is a little concerned.

The manager doesn't believe Cole was involved in the theft. He describes him as a quiet, polite, and reserved young gentleman. He's worked for the bank for nearly a decade, rising from a teller to his current position. In fact, he's in line for a managerial position at another branch. To his coworkers' knowledge, Cole has no monetary problems, doesn't drink, and doesn't gamble.

LaFleur can provide Cole's home address in Uptown, or the gumshoes can find it easily through a search of the city directory.

VISITATION HOURS

The investigators may decide to check on Harry Ackles before heading to Cole's residence. Asking at the nurse's station at University Hospital tells them he's being kept overnight for observation, but he can see visitors.

Ackles is in bed but awake when they arrive. His head is bandaged, and he seems a little rattled, but coherent. He suffered two injuries, one to his forehead and the other to the back of his head when he struck the ground.

The guard identifies his assailant as Cole.

"I knew something was wrong, 'cause I heard keys in the door at 4 a.m. Nobody ever comes in before 7:30 a.m., but there was Mr. Cole before the sun was even up!

"I asked him if there was a problem, but he didn't say nothin', just kept walking straight at me. It gave me the heebie-jeebies, so I pulled my heater and told him stop. He didn't listen, so I got scared and shot him twice.

"I swear I hit him with both bullets, but it didn't have no effect — like he was a ghost or somethin'. Then he punched me in the head, and it sure didn't feel like no ghost. Knocked me off my feet, and I smacked the back of my head on the floor. That's when I blacked out.

"Next I knew, Mr. LaFleur was kneeling over me, shaking me awake."

His injuries are consistent with his story, as is any physical evidence the group may have uncovered so far. Ackles doesn't know anything else of real value, though.

EXPANDING THE INVESTIGATION

It's possible the players may decide to look for a larger pattern of similar disappearances. If so, they can approach the search by either Hitting the Books or Legwork (see Deadlands Noir), either of them at a -2 penalty for the rather wide net they're casting to fish for information.

Their efforts identify names of several individuals who've also seemingly vanished into thin air. Nearly all of the recent disappearances involve members of the upper crust of society. With a raise, the sleuths discover that in most of the cases, there was also an apparent theft of some sort associated with the missing person.

The only one who seems to break the pattern is one Mortimer Jones, a reporter for the Times-Picayune who specializes in art and culture reviews. Jones's last piece was on a new gallery in the French Quarter, Broussard's. Any gumshoe who makes a point of comparing it to other reviews he's written can make a Smarts roll at -2 to notice the style of the article is dissimilar to the earlier ones — almost like a completely different person wrote it...

COLE'S RESIDENCE

A visit to Stephen Cole's residence leads the detectives to a nice, two-bedroom cottage in an Uptown middle-class neighborhood. Characters who canvas the neighborhood learn with a successful Streetwise roll Cole usually keeps to himself and is a model neighbor. A raise on the roll tells the shamus no one has seen Cole since Thursday afternoon.

From the outside, the yard is obviously well tended and the house is in good condition. The backyard is ringed by six-foot-tall hedges, effectively hiding it from outside view, and a shed holds a variety of lawn maintenance tools but nothing else of interest.

Investigators knocking on the front door receive no answer, and it is locked. Newspapers from Friday through Monday sit uncollected on the stoop. A small pile of mail (nothing of note) sits in the box beside the door.

A check of the back door finds it closed, but the door jamb has been broken. It swings open at the slightest push.

Inside, the house contains a kitchen, two bedrooms, a bathroom, living room, and dining room. The back door opens into the kitchen. The house is as neatly kept as the yard. A number of paintings hang along the walls in the dining and living room.

The following clues can be found by either specifically examining the listed locations or with a successful Notice roll:

- **Bathroom:** All Cole's personal toiletry items (razor, toothbrush, etc.) appear to be present.
- **Bedrooms:** Only one of the bedrooms appears to have been occupied. The sheets are in disarray as if it had been slept in but not remade. Under the edge of the bed, there is a worn, dingy fedora with "M. Duffy" stitched into the soiled hatband.
- **Closets:** There do not appear to be any clothes missing from the closet.
- **Kitchen:** There is garbage in the trashcan. A Smarts or Tracking roll tells a nosy investigator the garbage is probably a few days old.
- **Living Room:** Although there are a few photographs around the room and house, all are of Cole and/or his parents. He appears to have been a true bachelor.
- **Paintings:** The paintings are nice, but a Knowledge (Art) or Common Knowledge roll from a character with an appropriate background (or just Wealthy) tells her none are particularly expensive. Cole was clearly a connoisseur on a budget.
- **Painting Frames:** The paintings have been purchased from several local galleries.

M. DUFFY

City directories in this time period usually contain a large amount of information on those listed within, including address, phone number, and even employment. (Allow your characters a Common Knowledge roll to remember this if no one suggests it.) An investigator who performs a search of the New Orleans City Directory quickly learns there is only one Duffy in the city with the first initial “M” — Mike Duffy, proprietor of Rainy Day Credit & Loan. Duffy’s address is the same as that of his business, located in the Lower 9th Ward.

Alternatively, enterprising gumshoes can learn the same things using Legwork to pump their contacts for dirt. Furthermore, shamuses who get a raise on the Streetwise roll here also learn Duffy uses his operation as a front for a loan-sharking operation and a local numbers game. Word has it Duffy might even be involved with the Black Hand to some degree.

Should the detectives decide to do a little more digging on Duffy and his business, successfully Hitting the Books tells them Duffy has the appropriate licenses and permits, but his business tax filings reveal Rainy Day has not been particularly prosperous at any point.

RAINY DAY CREDIT & LOAN

Arriving at Rainy Day, the investigators discover an obviously shady operation one step above a pawn shop — which is somewhat ironic, as it is located on the second floor above a pawn shop. If they arrive after 5 p.m., they find the stairway to the building’s upper floor to be locked.

The pawn shop’s proprietor, Gilbert Pinkus, owns the building. The gumshoes can wheedle it out of the man on a successful Persuasion (–2) or Intimidation roll, or for a measly \$10 bribe. Pinkus is neither brave nor particularly pricey, it seems.

A group arriving during business hours finds a few other threadbare businesses on the same hall open. However, no one else in building or area can recall seeing Duffy for about a week. Any hero making a Notice roll can see no one cares all that much, either. Although no one speaks badly of him without a Persuasion or Intimidation roll (–4), it’s fairly common knowledge the man’s a legbreaker running a numbers game.

Breaking in requires two Lockpicking rolls, one at the bottom of stairs and another at the door to Rainy Day

RAINY DAY OFFICES



itself. Behind the building, a fire escape is accessible from Rainy Day, but it's unlikely the investigators can figure this out from street level.

THE OFFICE

Duffy's office is a two-room affair. In the front room sits a couple of ratty chairs and an old desk covered in a variety of paperwork. The papers include bills, loan applications, receipts, contracts, and so on, but nothing of any real interest. Inside the desk are more bills and so forth, but also Rainy Day's "legitimate" ledger. Even with a successful Investigation roll no names stand out.

A Notice roll spots an out-of-place painting behind the desk. It's an overly colorful impressionist piece — not good art by any stretch, but also not the type of art likely to be found in a loan shark's office. If any of the detectives examined the art in Cole's house, she notes the frame is similar to one from there. A small plate on back identifies it as coming from Broussard's. A Common Knowledge roll or simple gander at the city directory provides a French Quarter address for the gallery.

THE BACK ROOM

This room obviously served as Duffy's residence. A threadbare, stained couch occupies the wall opposite the door, and a pair of holey, yellowed sheets lie crumpled at one end. A chest of drawers sits under a window leading to the fire escape. On the other side of the room is a small table with a hot plate resting atop it, and a single chair sitting slightly askew.

At the far end of sofa, a blanket lies draped over a cube-shaped object about two feet on a side. The blanket has been pulled back to reveal a small safe with its door standing slightly ajar. Inside safe there is no money, only another pair of ledgers. An Investigation roll (at -2 for non-shady types) identifies one as a numbers game record and the other as a list of debtors who are paying a much higher interest rate than those listed in the book in the front office. Some names are in two books, and a handful of names are in all three, but Cole's is nowhere in any of the books.

THE RENT IS DUE

After the investigators have had time to look over both rooms fully, a Black Hand enforcer, Milo Ventalli, arrives with a few of his goons. Duffy is deep in debt to the Black Hand and missed the last week's vig. Ventalli questions the group about Duffy. Regardless of their answer, he thinks they're covering for the loan shark.

Ventalli mentions the "vomit on the canvas" is new, so obviously Duffy's got some scratch. If the back room is open, Milo spots the open safe and now assumes the heroes have robbed the joint. If the door's closed he moves toward it, thinking Duffy is hiding back there. If the team tries to stop him, a fight likely breaks out. If they don't, he sees the open safe and again assumes they've stolen "his money."

It takes fast-talking and a **Patter** attempt (see *Deadlands Noir*) to convince Ventalli not to play rough. If they can't talk their way out of it, the enforcer orders his men to rough up the heroes. The Black Hand thugs aren't looking to off anyone, but if the shamuses pull their gats, all bets are off.

The goons don't dare back down until Ventalli does. Ventalli stops the fight after he takes a wound or loses more than half his muscle. Whether the gumshoes convince him to talk peacefully or beat it out of him, Ventalli doesn't know anything beyond the fact no one's heard from Duffy in over a week.

 **Milo Ventalli:** Use the Mafia Capo profile in *Deadlands Noir*.

- **Goons (1 per hero):** Use the Thug profile in *Deadlands Noir*. They're armed with blackjacks and brass knuckles (Str+d4).

BROUSSARD'S GALLERY

Eventually the gumshoes should arrive at Broussard's, as it's the only common factor between Cole and Duffy. It occupies the first floor of a building on a side street just big enough not to be called an alley.

Broussard's joint presents itself as an upscale gallery. Broussard believes he has an eye for art, but if he does, he needs a pair of glasses. After only a moment inside, any character with an appropriate background or Knowledge skill sees most of the displays lack any actual style or taste. Likewise, the investigator quickly recognizes there are no real masterpieces on sale, mostly just second-rate works by local and foreign artists with a modicum of talent.

Inside, the walls are lined with a variety of mediocre paintings. A few sculptures of varying quality occupy the center of the gallery. A guestbook rests on a pedestal near the entry and a single desk sits in the back. In addition to the front door, there is a locked fire exit leading to an alley behind the building.

THE CURATOR

Broussard rushes to meet any visitors to his gallery almost immediately. His manner is greasily obsequious and more than a little off-putting to anyone not



susceptible to obvious flattery. A character posing as a potential buyer can distract him for several minutes with a successful Persuasion roll, buying time for the rest of the group to wander the boutique unmolested.

Should the detectives question Broussard about Cole or Duffy, he initially denies knowing either. If confronted with evidence to the contrary, he claims forgetfulness:

"I have so many clients, I often lose track! However, now that you've refreshed my memory..."

He then spins a rather bland tale about their visits, noting Duffy was obviously out of his element in the gallery, shopping for his piece more by (lowest) price than taste.

 **Pierre Broussard:** See page 24.

POKING AROUND THE GALLERY

A hero paging through the guestbook finds the names of both Duffy and Cole, dated about a week before the disappearance of each. If the investigators identified other missing persons, they find a few overlaps with Broussard's customers, mostly among those from the higher social circles.

With Broussard present, the heroes' ability to search the premises is limited. However, anyone who searches the area near the door to the stairway and makes a

Notice roll (-2) spots a small splash of wax on the floor. If a sample is collected, it matches the wax found on the vault door.

Nosing around either of the building's street-level exits allows for a Notice roll as well. A success reveals both have a few vèvè placed inobtrusively along the frames. A Knowledge (Occult) or Faith (Voodoo) roll immediately identifies them as benign markings associated with voodoo and with good luck in business dealings.

AFTER HOURS

If the heroes return after the gallery closes, they have to get past one of the gallery's locked doors with a Lock-picking roll. Doing so at the front door may attract the attention of passers-by on the street, depending on the hour, but the back door lets out onto an empty alleyway. Once inside, they're free to dig through Broussard's desk at their leisure.

An Investigation roll on the receipts inside quickly tells the shamuses both Duffy and Cole purchased paintings shortly before their disappearances. If they've identified other victims of disappearances, another Investigation roll allows them to correlate some of those names to the guest book and sales. This reveals only customers — not just visitors — are among those listed as missing.

OBITUARY FOR A REVIEW

If the investigators discover the link to Mortimer Jones or just research the Menagerie further, they discover the reporter reviewed the museum shortly before the fire. Describing Jones's review as a "hit piece" would be like calling the sinking of the Titanic a minor boating accident. He was particularly brutal, condemning nearly every aspect of Broussard's old endeavor, calling it a "cheap sideshow" and an utter waste of money and time.

DIGGING DEEPER

Although there is circumstantial evidence linking Broussard to the two missing men, there's not much else to find at the gallery to help the investigation. At some point, the shamuses have to do a little digging into Broussard's situation to solve the robbery disappearances. There are two main avenues the heroes can follow to get the next vital clue in the mystery.

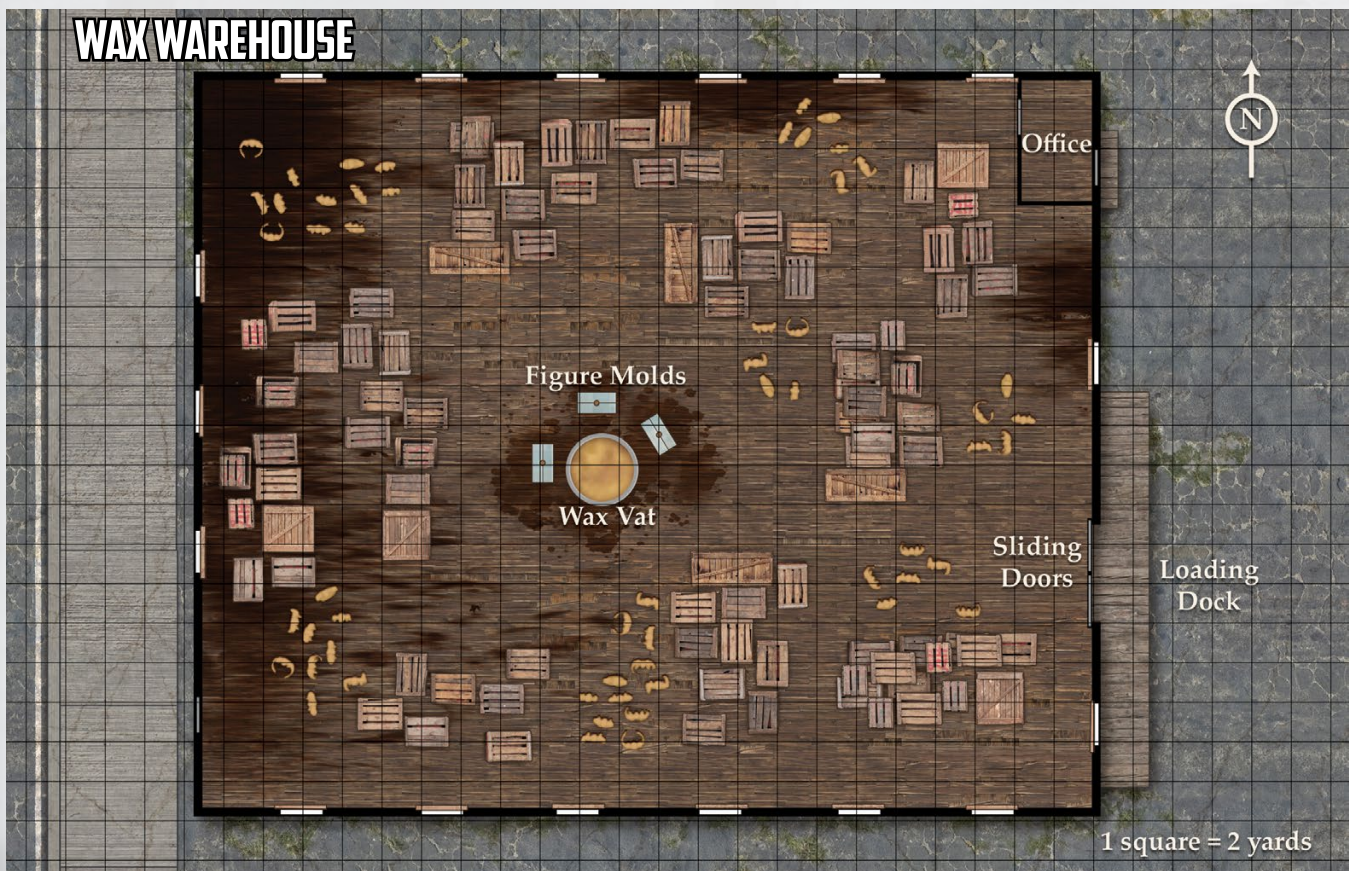
One way is to look into Broussard's past before jumping straight to breaking and entering. Hitting the Books or Legwork turns up Broussard's history as a failed wax museum owner, as well as the fire that ended that particular endeavor. Afterward, Broussard dropped out of sight until the opening of his gallery in the Quarter. Either of these methods also turns up the address of the old museum in Marigny-Bywater, which the heroes quickly learn he still owns.

More direct investigators might simply tail Broussard from his gallery to see what he's up to in his spare time. Use the rules for **Tailing** (from *Deadlands Noir*) if they decide to shadow the gallery owner. He leaves the gallery around 8 p.m. on most nights, grabs a bite to eat at one of the Quarter's cheaper eateries, then heads toward the old building in Marigny-Bywater.

WAREHOUSE OF TERROR

The warehouse is a fairly nondescript building in a largely industrial part of the neighborhood. At night, there are few people in the area, and none most honest folks would like to encounter at any time. Any investigator who succeeds at a Notice roll spots the telltale signs of cheaply repaired fire damage from the not-too-distant past.

The building appears to be abandoned, or at least unoccupied. It is a single-story structure, with a loading



dock and office entrance in the front and a single rear exit. All the doors are locked, regardless of the time of day. There are several windows, but all have been blacked out or boarded over, blocking any attempt to snoop from the street.

POKING AROUND

With the exception of a small, empty office at the front, the entire building is one open room. The darkened windows make the interior shadowy, even at midday. Broussard uses the building for storage of what remains of his former business, including a large paraffin vat and furnace. Mannequins, crates, and other storage containers fill the large open room. A Notice roll (-2) is necessary to realize the mannequins are just that and not people standing in the darkened room.

At the center of the warehouse stands a large vat, and molds from Broussard's original endeavor. All are heavily marked with vèvè as well as other less savory occult symbols. If the heroes visit during the day or have any light source, the odd shape of the vat and molds immediately draws their attention.

If the detectives visit during the day or other time Broussard isn't present, the wax mannequins remain inanimate. Success on a Notice roll at a -4 penalty turns up a wallet with Stephen Cole's driver's license in it, but little else. If confronted later, Broussard denies any knowledge of the wallet, suggesting perhaps Cole broke into his warehouse believing he'd find valuable pieces stored there. This does put Broussard on alert to the heroes' actual motives, though.

Should the heroes examine any of the mannequins, they may recognize the likenesses of Cole or another missing person, assuming they have seen a photograph of the victim. Less than a dozen of the sculptures are his waxen minions, and Broussard claims they were special commissions if they're brought to light. Of course, if the shamuses melt or otherwise cut into one of his "special" sculptures, they might find all the evidence they need to end Broussard's spree of horrors!



THE SCULPTOR IS IN

If the investigators enter the warehouse while Broussard is present, his actions depend on whether he's aware of them beforehand or not. If they surprise him, he stalls for time as he retreats to the wax vat. Should he be expecting them — perhaps by having spotted a Tailing attempt — he awaits them in the darkened warehouse, beside the vat. In this case he's already cast *armor* on himself.

On the first round of combat, Broussard's wax mannequins animate and attack the interlopers. Broussard casts *armor* on himself if he hasn't already. Otherwise, he summons the wax abomination from the bubbling vat. On subsequent rounds, he pulls a hose from the vat and sprays molten wax on either his attackers or his creations. If he can catch both in the blast, all the better.

His constructs fight to the death — possibly more than once! — but Broussard tries to escape if he suffers two wounds. Failing that, he surrenders and confesses.

Pierre Broussard: See page 24. His wax spray uses a Cone Template, and Broussard makes a Shooting roll at +2. Defenders who make an Agility roll equal to or greater than his Shooting dodge out of the way and suffer no damage. Otherwise, they take 2d10 damage from the boiling wax. Wax mannequins and the wax abomination in the area of affect are completely healed by the wax. They recover from Shaken and are even resurrected if they were Incapacitated.

- **Wax Shambler:** See page 24.
- **Wax Mannequins (2, plus 1 per hero):** See page 24.

AFTERMATH

If the heroes capture Broussard alive, they learn he still has most of the cash his mannequin stole from the bank, possibly earning them a bonus from their employer. He's hidden it beneath the floor of the warehouse. He already spent his take from his other robberies on his gallery, repairing his old building and living far beyond his means.

Should he manage to escape, Broussard uses his *disguise* power to sneak out of the city and start over somewhere else. Although he'd relish an opportunity to exact vengeance on the meddling private eyes who ruined his plans, he's also smart—and cowardly—enough to know when to cut bait.



PIERRE BROUSSARD

A short, slim man with a finely trimmed moustache and goatee, Broussard dresses in what he believes is stylish clothing and affects a European air. A person of any actual status immediately recognizes his poor execution of both.

Broussard's hair is slicked back, apparently from a generous slathering of pomade, and his skin glistens with a seemingly constant sheen of sweat. In fact, this is due to the waxy mask he wears to hide his horrific scars.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Art) d4, Knowledge (Occult) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d8

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Black Magic), Comfortable, Connections (Red Sect)

Powers: *Armor, disguise, healing* (himself only). **Power Points:** 10

Gear: Sculpting blade (Str+d4).

Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** When Broussard is Shaken his waxen mask falls away, revealing the burned wreckage of his face. Any character seeing it must make a Fear check.
- **Puncture Resistant:** +2 Toughness. Broussard's body is covered or replaced by wax, rendering him difficult to damage due to deadened nerve endings.
- **Wax Magus:** As long as he is within range of his cauldron, Broussard has unlimited Power Points for his Black Magic powers. All his Trappings are tied to wax and his waxy skin.

WAX MANNEQUIN

Sculpted with paraffin encasing victims' bodies, Broussard uses corpses as frames for his unholy creations. These abominations bear an almost perfect resemblance to the original individuals. But extreme heat causes their waxy skin to melt, revealing the victim's skeleton—and the terrifying truth.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Shooting d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Gear: Mannequins can use any melee weapon or firearm.

Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; no extra damage from called shots; immune to disease and poison; no wound penalties.
- **Doppelganger:** Wax figures nearly perfectly resemble their model. Only a Notice roll at -4 detects the deception, at least visually.
- **Fear:** Once exposed for what it is either by damage or melting, all viewing a Wax Mannequin must make a Fear check.
- **Fearless:** These creatures are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Fist:** Str.
- **Puncture Resistant:** Wax mannequins take half damage from piercing weapons and firearms. Shotguns, cutting, and bludgeoning weapons inflict full damage.
- **Weakness (Fire/Heat):** Direct exposure to excess heat or a nearby flame (within 1") causes 2d6 damage per round. Any heat -or fire-based attack causes an additional 2d6 damage.

WAX SHAMBLER

Rising from the molten wax in Broussard's cauldron, this massive horror is a vaguely humanoid shape of ambulant wax.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Gear: —

Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; no extra damage from called shots; immune to disease and poison; no wound penalties.
- **Fear (-2):** Any character seeing a wax shambler must make a Fear check at -2.
- **Fearless:** The monster is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Fist Bludgeon:** Str+d6.
- **Hardy:** A second Shaken result does not cause a wound.
- **Improved Frenzy:** A wax shambler may make two Fighting attacks around at no penalty, but each must be directed at a different opponent.
- **Puncture Resistant:** Wax shamblers take only half damage from piercing weapons and firearms. Shotguns, cutting, and bludgeoning weapons inflict full damage.
- **Size+2:** The shamble is roughly the size of a small horse.
- **Weakness (Fire/Heat):** Direct exposure to excess heat or a nearby flame (within 1") causes 2d6 damage per round. Any heat -or fire-based attack causes an additional 2d6 damage.

THE SIXTH GUN

SIX MORE RELICS

"Antiquities are history defaced, or some remnants of history which have casually escaped the shipwreck of time."

-Francis Bacon

Although we packed a heck of a lot of stuff into the core rulebook for *The Sixth Gun Roleplaying Game*, unfortunately, a few odds and ends didn't make the cut. A few of these "objets d'arcane" are currently in the possession of the Knights of Solomon, where they line the shore of their underground lake, all within reach of the sentinel that dwells within its depths. One is currently held by the Sword of Abraham, and another was last seen in the hands of the necromancer, Gord Cantrell.

Draw inspiration from these treacherous items, craft new adventures, or structure entire campaigns around them. But be warned—a few of these objects can be downright deadly in the wrong hands!

Glass of Galileo

*"As when by night the Glass
Of Galileo, less assured, observes
Imagined lands and regions in the moon"*

-Milton, Paradise Lost

Inspired by the crude creations of Hans Lippershey of Holland, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei (1564-1642)

set out to construct a far more powerful version of Lippershey's spyglass. Eventually he ground his own lenses and reengineered various elements to dramatically increase the magnification and allow for the viewing of extraterrestrial objects.

One autumn evening in 1610, Galileo pointed his new telescope toward the moon and not only discovered that its surface was "uneven, rough, full of cavities and prominences," but that the reflected lunar light also allowed him to see through the eyes of another!

At first, Galileo dismissed the strange flickering lights around the edge of the image as flaws in his lenses magnifying the twinkling light of distant stars. But when he looked closer, he realized that he was catching glimpses of familiar sights. He saw the lamp-lit stone steps leading up to his study, the worn oak door with its misaligned iron latch, and his golden silk robe as viewed from behind—all images seen through the eyes of one of his students!

After hours of experimentation, having the young novice examine items throughout Galileo's home and reading from randomly selected books, it was clear to the astronomer that he had created something more than just a simple telescope.



Despite several attempts, never again was Galileo able to reproduce the mystical abilities of this particular instrument. Following his death in 1642, the *true* Glass of Galileo disappeared, eventually resurfacing in the American West.

This spyglass may be used as a standard telescope offering up to 30× magnification. Its hidden ability may be tapped into at nights when the moon is visible in the sky. First, the user must have personal knowledge of the intended target. While physical contact (even a handshake) aids the process, a simple face-to-face meeting, or even a glance across a crowded room is usually enough to allow for a link through the glass. The instrument's user and target make opposed Spirit rolls (.2 for the user if physical contact has been made in the recent past), provided the target is within 10 miles of the operator.

If a user is successful, she can see everything being viewed by the target with enough clarity to even read viewed documents. If the target wins, he senses something is amiss and may suffer from a terrible headache, possibly closing his eyes to help relieve the pain. This shuts out the user's attempts at tapping into their vision and she must wait until the following night—provided the moon is still present—to make another attempt.

The Glass of Galileo has a Toughness of 8. Should it ever be badly damaged, it may be repaired enough to be used as a standard spyglass, but its mystical ability is no more.

Grandfather's Clock

*"Ninety years without slumbering
(tick, tock, tick, tock),*

*His life's seconds numbering,
(tick, tock, tick, tock),*

*It stopp'd short—never to go again—When the
old man died."*

—Henry Work, "Grandfather's Clock"

Originally manufactured by Thompson of Darlington in northeast Britain, this finely crafted, longcase, pendulum clock kept surprisingly accurate time for many years.

Acquired by the Jenkins brothers, co-managers of the George Hotel located in North Yorkshire, the clock stood, ticking away in a sunlit corner of the reception area, requiring little effort on the part of the brothers to keep it running. Somehow, though, the clock had synced up with the life forces of both brothers. When one of them suddenly expired, the clock's accuracy was affected, losing seconds, minutes, and eventually hours despite the efforts of local clockmakers. When the second brother died, the clock ceased functioning altogether.

The story was romanticized and turned into a popular song by composer Henry Clay Work, little knowing that the truth of the romantic tale was something far more sinister. The swing of the clock's pendulum had been at precisely the same rhythm as the heartbeats of both Jenkins brothers. Perhaps it was something passed down from previous generations, but whatever the cause, as the pendulum swung, a bit of life ticked away within each brother. The life drained from them was stored within the cogs and gears of the clock's elaborate mechanism.

Though the clock appears irreparable, it is just dormant, patiently waiting for another owner with the same inner rhythm. At that point, the pendulum swings again and the hands move once more. Time is hungry and waits for just the right man. How much life is stored within the mechanism is unknown, but by turning the hands counterclockwise, the captured life force can be shared. This heals wounds and even restores "permanent" injuries by casting greater healing once every 12 hours (no roll required).



Lamp of the Djinn

"He has an empire, and I have the lamp;
And so the scales are even." -Adam
Oehlenschläger, *Aladdin, or the Wonderful Lamp*

The infamous lamp from the tale of Aladdin—appearing in *One Thousand and One Nights*—is real, although the malicious creature trapped within wishes only freedom and destruction. It binds itself to whomever claims ownership of the lamp and assists in freeing it, but it is a bond few of right mind would welcome.

When the lamp is polished, the djinn emerges as a wispy cloud of swirling smoke. It then enters the host, dominating his personality (keeping it locked away as a fully aware, but impotent prisoner within), and taking control of his actions with bloodsoaked results. The creature empowers its new host, making the lame walk, the blind see, and the mute speak.

With countless centuries of experience and knowledge, the djinn tries to worm its way into a position of authority and power, eventually ruling over others with an iron fist.

Djinn

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Spell-casting d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

- **Domination:** Should someone intentionally—or accidentally—polish the surface of the lamp, the djinn is freed and seeks to dominate that person with an opposed Spirit roll. This is similar to the *puppet* power (see *Savage Worlds*) but costs no Power Points. Should the djinn fail, it becomes ethereal and temporarily re-enters the lamp, emerging 12 hours later to attempt domination once more. Should the djinn roll a 1, it is trapped inside its lamp until another individual releases it! With a success, the djinn possesses and assumes control of the lamp's owner. It has access to all the subject's thoughts and memories. Should the djinn use its host to commit a particularly heinous act, the victim may make an opposed Spirit test to wrest control for 1d6 hours (2d6 with a raise).
- **Gaseous Form:** Outside of its host, the djinn may become ethereal smoke by making a successful Vigor roll. While in this form, the djinn cannot be harmed by any means.
- **Invulnerability:** A djinn can be Shaken, but never Wounded by anything but its Weaknesses.
- **Magic:** Djinn have 20 Power Points and know the *blast*, *fear*, *havoc*, and *shape change* powers.



- **Variable Size:** Djinn can vary their size from that of a man (their base form) to over 100 feet tall. Each point of Size they gain gives them +1 Toughness and Strength. Changing Size requires a Smarts roll, with the djinn gaining or losing one level of Size per success and raise. The roll may be made once per round.
- **Weakness (Banishment):** A dominating djinn can be exorcised by successful use of the *banish* power.
- **Weakness (Fire):** Fire and flame-based attacks cause normal damage.

St. Vexi's Cross

"Others are coming. We must hurry. They bring weapons that could harm me."

-Asher Cobb

St. Vexi was one of the founders of the Sword of Abraham. A devoted holy man of the highest order, he fell at the battle of Espanto Hill against an army of ravenous ghouls. In his hands he clutched a large, expertly forged gold crucifix, enchanted by his godly devotion.



Sixth Gun

This relic now possesses the ability to ward, injure, and even destroy the undead. It generates a continuous aura of holy power equal to a Large Burst Template centered on the carrier. Supernaturally evil creatures cannot enter this glow without making a Spirit roll. Creatures within the barrier that fail this roll are Shaken. On a Critical Failure they are utterly destroyed in a flash of holy light. Wild Cards suffer a Wound instead and must immediately withdraw from the aura.

Totem Pole of Wakiash

"Then Wakiash made out of wood a house and another totem pole. They called it Kalakuyuwish, 'the pole that holds up the sky.'"

-Kwakiutl Legend



According to Kwakiutl lore, the very first totem pole was carved by chief Wakiash after he accidentally wandered into a crossroads and slipped into the Winding Way. There he spent time with a variety of enhanced skinwalkers like Frog, Raven, Beaver, and Mouse.

He traveled far and wide, flying upon Raven's back, eventually visiting a home before which stood a totem pole, something he had never seen before. Both the dwelling and the pole—magically folded into a small bundle—were gifted to Wakiash. He returned to the real world to present them to his people, but they both vanished from the earth.

So Wakiash carved a replica pole that he named Kalakuyuwish, "the pole that holds up the sky." This totem pole serves a number of purposes, including expressing social status, preserving tribal legends, and serving as an animated wooden protector of the house to which it is assigned.

Kalakuyuwish

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** Kalakuyuwish is a solid wooden golem.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from called shots, immune to poison and disease.
- **Fearless:** Kalakuyuwish is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Size +2:** Kalakuyuwish stands 15 feet tall and weighs about 1,000 pounds.
- **Slam:** Str+d6.
- **Weakness (Fire):** Kalakuyuwish takes double damage from fire and fire-based attacks.

Voodoo Dolls

"There are many artifacts of terrible power in this world."

-Brother Roberto Vargas

These crudely fashioned gris-gris dolls or poppets are crafted by powerful houngans, mambos, and bokkor to resemble the targets of their sympathetic magic. While the desired effects may be as mundane as motivating someone to find another person irresistibly attractive, some voodoo dolls are used to manipulate or even torture their victims.

The dolls themselves—crafted from wax, wood, cloth, straw, or even mud—must feature elements from their victims, such as hair, nail clippings, or personal effects like pieces of jewelry or scraps of clothing. Armed with a voodoo doll, the user may cast certain spells against his victim at a range of Smarts in miles. Only the following spells may be cast: *boost/lower Trait* (usually the latter), *entangle* (victim is paralyzed), *fear*, *puppet*, *stun*, and *telekinesis* (to toss the victim around from afar).

Creation: A character must have Arcane Background (Voodoo) and some sort of personal effect from the intended target to create a voodoo doll. After crafting the doll, the caster makes a Knowledge (Occult) roll at -4. If successful, the doll is fully activated in 1d6 hours. If this roll fails, the doll is useless and must be recreated from scratch.



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