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HOURGLASS



EYES ONLY

A Scenario for *Delta Green: The Role-Playing Game*

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WASHINGTON

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INNOCENCE FEEDS APPALLING APPETITES

“A minute before I was locked in the library, and then I was there where she had gone with my body—in the place of utter blasphemy, the unholy pit where the black realm begins and the watcher guards the gate.... I saw a shoggoth—it changed shape.... I can’t stand it....”

Edward Derby Pickman, 1932

In an Internet video, already viral, a harried-looking woman stands on a park bench in a small-town park. She is crying and shouting at a handful of befuddled people. She says they live with a community that does awful things. They accept that community. They take its money. And it takes women and children. “It takes them and it—it—” Suddenly she vanishes, screaming in agony.

“Hourglass” is a horrifying scenario for *Delta Green: The Role-Playing Game*, available from Arc Dream Publishing. It reveals Hourglass, Oregon, and secrets that your Agents may wish they had never uncovered.

But if they don’t seek the terrible truth, who will?



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This is a work of fiction.

DELTA GREEN ACCESS

Hourglass

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Briefing

In an Internet video, already viral, a middle-aged, dark-haired, harried-looking woman stands on a park bench in a small-town park. She is crying and shouting at a handful of befuddled people. She says they live with a place that does awful things. They accept that place into their community. They take its money. And it takes women and children. “It takes them and it—it—”

Suddenly she vanishes, screaming in agony. The handful of people in the crowd scream in fright and recoil. The young man holding the phone shouts, “Whoa!” He turns the camera toward himself, a white teenager, and says, “You see that shit? What the fuck!” The camera jostles and the video stops.

The Agents are in a secure meeting room in the FBI offices in Portland, Oregon. Their case officer turns off the video screen and gives the rest of their briefing. It is 10:00 A.M. on a Thursday.

If your campaign features the Outlaws rather than the Program, the Agents got the video and relevant details from their cell leader in a couriered envelope, on an encrypted thumb drive that’s programmed to erase itself and the attached computer if the wrong password is used more than twice.

The Video

The video was recorded Sunday—four days ago—at 1:13 P.M. The case officer says experts cannot find signs that the video was produced with special effects. In a Program campaign, the Program’s security section is already suppressing that fact, uploading doctored versions that show subtle signs of having been generated with special effects, establishing a narrative that it was produced by clever hoaxers, and backing up that narrative by posing as low-credibility viewers who insist it is genuine.

The video went online Sunday night, 86 hours ago. It began to go viral 37 hours ago. It came to Delta Green’s attention 33 hours ago. It was posted by the boy who held the phone, a 17-year-old would-be

A minute before I was locked in
the library, and then I was there
where she had gone with my body
in the place of utter blasphemy
the unholy pit
where the black realm begins
and the watcher guards the gate
I saw a shoggoth—it changed shape
I can't stand it

Internet star using the pseudonym “Rawdog.” He is Hourglass high schooler Herbert Roderick Salsbury. The briefing includes Salsbury’s address. See **WITNESSES** on page 7 for details.

The Victim

The woman in the video is Terri Santos, née Terri Harding, then Terri Wilkins, a resident of a religious compound outside Hourglass, Oregon. She has worked off and on for 25 years as a retail clerk. Terri moved to Hourglass about ten years ago when her then-husband Edward Wilkins got a sawmill job. Five years ago, Edward Wilkins died in a bar fight. Four years ago, her son Lawrence Wilkins died of leukemia at age eight. Two years ago, Terri Wilkins moved to the property of a religious commune called the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. One year ago, she married another resident of the church compound, Robert Santos.

Terri Santos has had minimal presence on social media, and none whatsoever for the past two years.

The Agents receive a dossier with Terri Santos’ known relatives and associates. See **INVESTIGATING THE VICTIM** on page 5 for details.

Objectives

Find out what happened in the video. Stop the incursion. Save lives. Establish a mundane narrative to explain it all away. Protect Delta Green from exposure.

Background

Terri Santos died because of a sorcerous ritual cast by of a worshipper of the Great Old Ones, a survivor of centuries of unnatural life and reincarnation. The killer is Samuel Woodman, an ancient and evil cultist in the body of a 12-year-old boy named Jake Elliott. Woodman serves the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. The church is led by a more powerful cultist still, Gyles Root, in the body of Erol Salzo III.

Erol Salzo III is the 3rd-generation heir to leadership of the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. His followers call him The Host because he incarnates a returning spirit lifetime after lifetime, a part of the heavenly host, the Sabaoth, the uncountable army of Heaven that serves the throne of God. Erol Salzo III assumed the mantle 16 years ago, when the prior Host, Erol Salzo, Jr., died of a heart attack. Erol Salzo, Jr., had assumed the mantle 25 years before that when his father, Erol Salzo, died of a stroke.



Erol Salzo III had two younger brothers, Silas and David. Silas died in an apparent suicide 19 years ago. David died in a terrible car accident 17 years ago. In fact, Erol Salzo III had both murdered to prevent them from betraying the church. No evidence remains to link the deaths to the Host or his followers. Erol Salzo III never married and has no children on public records. His mother, Rhea Salzo, manages the business affairs of the church. His paternal grandmother, Ann Salzo, died six years ago of dementia. Ann's and Rhea's families have always been estranged from the Salzo line.

The Sons of Cerunnos

The Host is in fact Gyles Root, leader of an old band of sorcerers called the Sons of Cernunnos. Root has possessed the bodies of descendant after descendant for 200 years.

The Sons of Cernunnos began in 17th-century New England, a cult of warlocks dedicated to alchemy and sorcery. They hid among the Puritans but scattered when witch trials threatened. They met occasionally in rural Maine for hideous rituals in black caverns, joining a clutch of hidden shoggoths to worship Shub-Niggurath.

Their rites earned them long life and a postponement of the rigors of age, but not the perfect immortality they craved. That came only in the early 20th century. One of their allies, a scion of Innsmouth, found the secret in the *Necronomicon*: a way to transfer life and consciousness into the brain of another. But that ally was murdered, and word of their meetings spread to their enemies. The sorcerers wandered for nearly 20 years, seeking a new site to make contact with their grotesque gods.

They found it in 1948 near Hourglass, Oregon. Hills that rose wild with woods and rivers had once been home to the indigenous Takelma tribe, and to certain hills, groves, rock formations, and endlessly deep caves where a despised Takelma offshoot worshipped a spirit called the "Great Bat." The Takelma and their enemies were driven from the land in the 19th century, leaving only white settlers who knew nothing of the haunts of the Great Bat.

But among seekers of certain kinds of esoterica, the legend lingered.

Gyles Root went first. He went to work for landowner Erol Salzo, and took opportunities to explore the area and find the forgotten vaults where the old powers held sway. He gradually used his sorcery to suborn Salzo's mind and body, until he took possession permanently. Above the caverns sacred to the worshippers of the Great Bat, Salzo built a church, a home, and ultimately a compound where followers could live.

The other Sons of Cernunnos gathered. In the Vault of the Bat, they prayed to Shub-Niggurath. On a Hallowmass Sabbath, the last of their number, Gyles Root's half-shoggoth son Silence, joined them from the depths. The sorcerers used rituals to house their essences in magical candles, from which they could emerge to possess new victims as the fancy took them. The Martyrs sometimes took long-term hosts, and sometimes returned to their candles when they grew bored.

Gyles Root, in the body of Erol Salzo, founded the Church of the Twelve Martyrs with a perverse, private glee. Silence Root assumed a form that looks like a black meteorite. Gyles Root dubbed the black meteorite the Ark of Sabaoth and called it holy. Decades passed. The Church of the Twelve Martyrs thrived. Seekers came. Those with wisdom fled. The weak and biddable remained.

The Sorcerers Today

Today, Gyles Root reigns in the body of Erol Salzo's grandson, Erol Salzo III. Two other Sons of Cernunnos live permanently in the bodies of young men born to Salzo and the desperate women who worship him. Silence Root thinks his strange thoughts.

The sorcerers have grown complacent. The Host's followers recruited Terri Santos, a seeker of wisdom who had been broken down by loss and grief. But she saw too much, too soon, and some unbroken part of her recoiled. She spoke out. In their arrogance and folly, the Sons of Cerunnos silenced her in the one way sure to attract the attention of angry outsiders—this time, the attention of Delta Green.

Hourglass, Oregon

Hourglass, Oregon (population 31,253) is a rural, insular town among forests and hills, founded by trappers in the early 19th century. The origin of its name is forgotten. It expanded for 100 years with the growth of the lumber industry, but lumber declined in the 1970s and never fully recovered.

Every decade, the area's economy is driven more and more by services, mainly outdoors tourism: hiking, fishing, and rafting. With the legalization of cannabis, a handful of local investors have planned marijuana growth operations and related businesses, but they have been slow to develop.

Hourglass stands at the crossroads of an interstate and three state and county highways. It has half a dozen motels and small inns. Interstate 5 runs through Hourglass, north to Eugene, Portland, and Seattle,

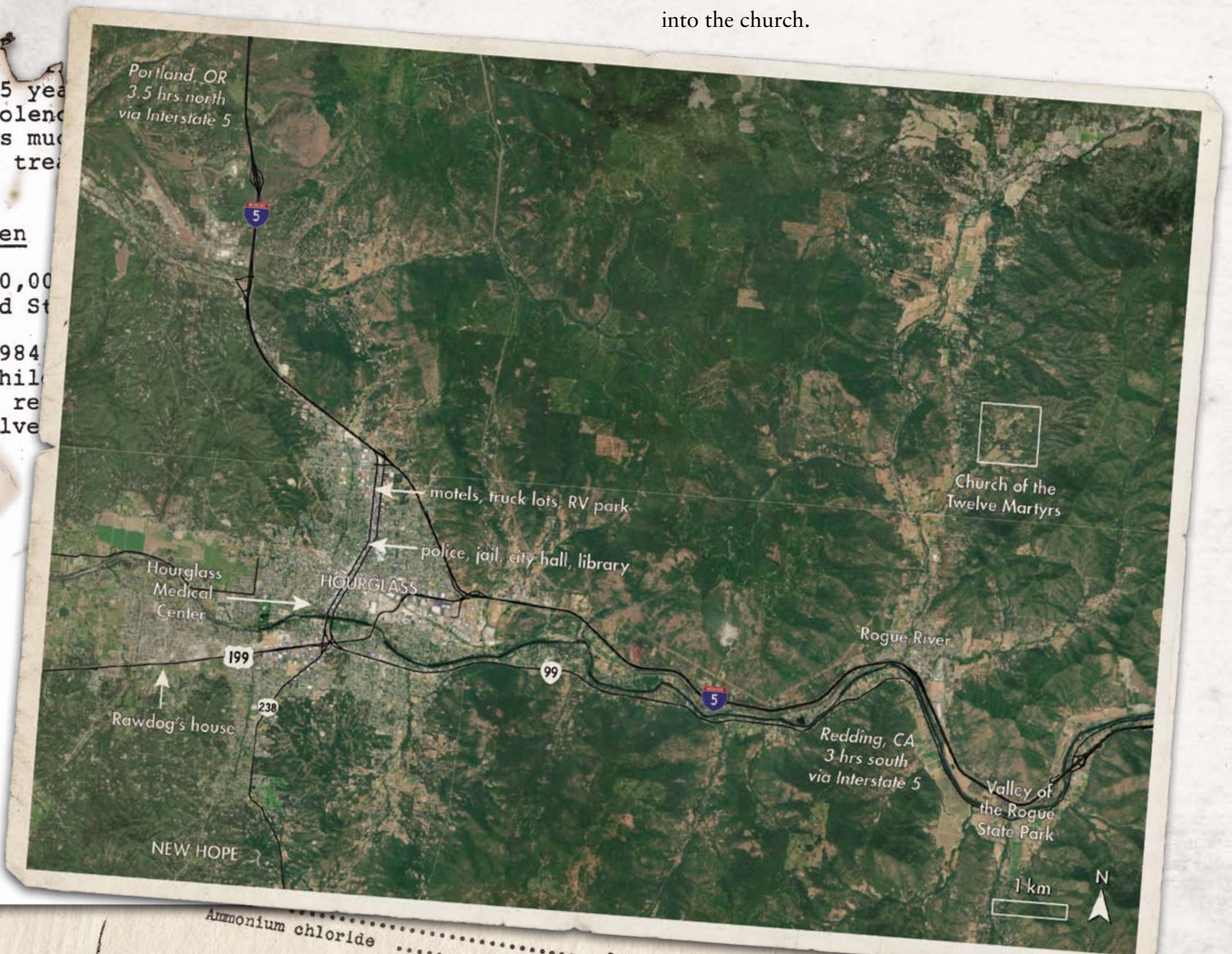
and south to Redding and Sacramento. If the Agents ask about fire lookout towers for camping or spying, the nearest are 17 km north, 21 km west, and 25 km northeast of Hourglass.


Hourglass features a large number of non-player characters. See **FEATURED CHARACTERS** on page 26.

Community Leaders

Hourglass is governed by a mayor and an eight-seat city council, all elected for four-year terms. A city manager oversees day-to-day operations.

The mayor (Steven Polk, white male, 60 years old) considers the Church of the Twelve Martyrs eccentric but harmless and, importantly to his election, staunchly conservative. The video of Terri Santos disappearing is clearly some kind of hoax. The woman had a nervous breakdown in the town square and then ran off. Unless the Agents are quick and cautious, Polk soon wants a clear answer as to why they are looking into the church.





Other community leaders—members of the city council, leaders of other churches, business owners—offer variants of the same opinion. The more devout Catholic or evangelical Christians among them regard the Church of the Twelve Martyrs with greater suspicion, since it is so secretive and its representation of Christianity is at odds with theirs. But the Hourglass community has a substantial financial stake in the Church of the Twelve Martyrs, which brings significant revenues from donors around the world. And after all, the Church of the Twelve Martyrs are traditional, conservative, God-fearing folk in all the ways that matter most.

Many community leaders regard federal government investigators with wariness and suspicion, considering them interlopers who do not have the good of the Hourglass community at heart.

The Police

The Hourglass Police Department has 27 patrol officers and six detectives. Six to eight patrol officers are on duty at any given time. The detectives work regular business hours. Eight of the patrol officers and detectives are also part of the department's SWAT team, along with four tactical medics from the fire department.

Police Chief Colin Hughs (white male, 55 years old) shows deep skepticism about the Agents' presence and mission in Hourglass. He shares the mayor's opinion of the video being a ridiculous fake. If the Agents pose as private investigators or federal law enforcement, he asks them to tread lightly and avoid drawing attention. He will not allow this video hoax to disrupt the peace of the community.

Meanwhile, a few officers from the department keep unofficial watch on the witnesses to Santos' disappearance and on the Agents. See **BAD COPS** on page 21 for details.

Investigating the Victim

Terri Santos lived at the compound of the Church of the Twelve Martyrs for 23 months before the video went online. She married fellow resident Robert Santos 11 months ago.

Robert Santos

The Agents can find a phone number and address for Terri Santos' husband in government records. He has no social media presence. He has no cellphone. He has a landline in his small house in the Church of the Twelve Martyrs compound. He rarely leaves the compound, where he works as a volunteer in return for room and board. His income is negligible.

If the Agents are careful not to alienate Santos, they could get the most out of him by interviewing him in person at the compound. (See **THE COMPOUND** on page 12.) He has not seen his wife in a few days. He has almost total disinterest in her or her fate. He obviously cares nothing for Terri except as a servant of the church. She betrayed the church, which means she betrayed him. He says she could not tolerate her failures.

He does not easily expand on what he means by failure. If it's gotten out of him with a **Persuade** roll, he lets slip that he was not the true father of the child that Terri lost. The Host was. The Host is father to every child born in the compound. God wills it so, and it is the honor of the compound's men to obey the will of God. Women of the compound wed their husbands of record under the law of man, but they wed the Host in the flesh and the Martyrs in the spirit.

If the Agents only speak to Santos by phone, the **Persuade** roll reveals only that she conceived a child with him, but it was a girl, not a boy as the Host's scriptures demand. She miscarried. He says God took the girl back to make room in her for a boy child.

Friends and Family

Terri Santos' always-small circle of friends and family lost touch with her over the past few years. Those that remained in recent contact include Kenneth Collins of Redding, California, an uncle on her mother's side; Tiffany Fritch of Redding, California, a cousin; Stephanie Vanderhoof of Redding, California, a childhood friend who stayed in touch; and Alice Padilla of Hourglass, Oregon, a coworker from a few jobs back who became friends with her. None of them had heard from her in the last couple of months before the video went online or since then. Interviewing them can uncover these details.

COLLINS OR FRITCH: Terri's first husband, Ed Wilkins, was an abuser. He was never arrested for it, never on any record. But everyone close to Terri knew. Her friends were relieved when he died, but Terri felt lost.

VANDERHOOF: Terri was always desperate for some source of meaning and grounding. Always a seeker, she filled her bookshelves with one spiritualist fad after another. Then she lost her husband and her son. Friends worried she might not survive.

PADILLA: Not long after her son's death, Terri met Rhea Salzo, a woman who belonged to the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. They became friends. Rhea took Terri to the church for services. Padilla can reveal her suspicions about the church; see **SUSPICIONS AND FEARS**, below.

PADILLA OR VANDERHOOF: After Terri joined the Church of the Twelve Martyrs, things seemed to turn around. Terri at least found some reason to live. But what she described was disquieting. She told friends privately that, after worship services at the Church of the Twelve Martyrs, she felt close to the Martyrs, but it was like they pushed her away. They preferred to influence men and boys, guiding them to righteous leadership. That only convinced Terri that she needed guidance.

ANY OF THEM: A few months after joining the church, Terri stopped communicating with friends outside it. She moved to the church's compound. About a year later, friends heard from strangers that Terri had married a man belonging to the church. They did not hear his name.

Suspicious and Fears

Terri Santos' friend Alice Padilla has more detailed suspicions about the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. The sorcerers who protect the church neglected to obscure Padilla's memories of an interview with them. But talking about the church frightens her. Drawing her out requires a **Persuade** or **Psychotherapy** test. Failing that, an Agent could draw her out by meeting privately, one on one, two or more times to establish a rapport and build trust.

Padilla suspects the church of coercing and brainwashing its members with mind games and physical abuse. She tried to convince Terri Santos to leave. But after she

called too often and tried to visit the compound, other church members began visiting her at home and work.

The visitors said that everyone who lived at the compound was there by choice. They said that living at the compound fulfilled them and gave them peace. They said no loving friend of Terri's would try to stand in the way of that. They said the church community looked out for its own. They never came right out and made threats, but something in their tone and body language was frightening.

Worst of all, strangely, was a boy who accompanied two of the visits. He was only 10 or 11 years old and hardly ever said a word. But looking in his eyes felt like staring into a black abyss, a well with no bottom or light. It left Padilla terrified without being able to articulate why.

Padilla does not know the boy's name and has no photos of him. She can give a general description: a white male who would be about 12 years old now, with short brown hair, dressed like a grownup in khakis and a flannel shirt. A sketch-artist's rendition would look like half the boys in Oregon, except for the attire. Shown a photo, she identifies Jake Elliott with a chill of recognition.

Witnesses

If they have the right contacts to ask for help from the FBI, and make a **Bureaucracy** roll, the Agents can request facial recognition analysis on people in the video. That identifies ten of them. A few others are seen only in profile but can be recognized if the Agents meet them later. One of those is 12-year-old Jake Elliott. See **JAKE ELLIOTT/SAMUEL WOODMAN** on page 25 for details.

In the Background

Several people can be seen only in profile or with their backs turned, and cannot be identified.

Four people are identifiable in the footage and were near enough to hear Terri Santos shouting, but were not paying attention. Those include fast-food worker Theresa T. Babb; her husband, truck driver Robert H. Babb; hiking guide Craig D. Harmon; and Harmon's girlfriend, housecleaner Andra A. Kelly.

These individuals did not see what happened to Santos and assume she ran away.

Up Close

Seven people saw Terri vanish: retired photographer Thomas P. Braley; bookkeeper Margaret W. Brito; rafting tourists and Southwestern Oregon Community College students Ismael M. Hay and Robert K. Jensen; Hourglass City Hall secretary Tammy A. Perry; nurse Etta D. Warren; and Herbert Salsbury, who recorded the video.

Most have talked themselves into believing it was some kind of dumb magic trick, a stunt she coordinated with the kid who recorded the video.

Brito, Hay, and Perry cannot be budged from that story. They dig into it harder and harder, either because they can't let themselves remember the truth or because they are friendly with the church and cannot bear admitting they were wrong about it.

What They Really Saw

Braley, Jensen, and Warren—and Herbert “Rawdog” Salsbury, the videographer—can be talked into admitting what they really saw: weird sparks floated out of her and away into the air as she died screaming; and a horrible rising whistling or howling noise. Inexplicably, neither of those details can be seen on the video. Talking any of these three into sharing the truth may take simply asking, if the Agents are patient and say that the witnesses won't have to say any of this in public. Or it might call for a **Persuade** roll.

Rawdog

The youth who recorded the video is Herbert Roderick Salsbury, but he insists on going by “Rawdog.” All his online usernames are some variant of that nickname. Until recently, Rawdog was active on his social media and video feeds multiple times a day. For the first two days after the Santos video went live, he can be seen responding to viewers: some say it's obviously a dumb fake, and he good-naturedly insults them back; others admire its production values and ask how he did it, and he says he might show them his tricks someday. The third day after he posted the video, Salsbury

stopped going online. His feeds have been silent since, all comments from viewers going unanswered.

Salsbury is a junior at Hourglass High School. He lives with his parents Amelia Salsbury, a day-shift nurse, and Rod Salsbury, a network administrator. Both work at Hourglass Medical Center, a small local hospital.

The Salsburys live in a three-bedroom house on a wooded residential street, with small yards in front and back and a few meters between the houses on either side. Herbert Salsbury lives in a large basement that has been converted to his apartment and make-shift recording studio.

RAWDOG'S CLAIMS: Salsbury wants the notoriety and pageviews that the Santos video brings. He has dreams of striking it big as an online influencer. But he has grown deeply afraid. He claims that he did *not* upload that video to the internet. He says he recorded Terri Santos “acting crazy,” but someone must have hacked his account. They must have edited the video to look like Santos caught fire and put it online under his account. Trolls who wanted to get him in trouble, maybe.

He is obviously lying. Any Agent with **HUMINT** 40% or higher or **Psychotherapy** 20% or higher, or who succeeds at a roll for either, recognizes that Salsbury is desperately trying to convince himself that what he saw, filmed, and uploaded was not real.

Confronted with that, he admits he uploaded the video, assuming Terri Santos had pulled some kind of trick. At first, he was enthusiastic about the attention it started to get. Then the blowback began. Two local police officers (he remembers the names Brown and Welch; see **BAD COPS** on page 21) paid him a visit, pressing him on the “hoax” video, and on the damage it could cause to the Church of the Twelve Martyrs, which is such an important part of the community. They warned him to take it down and made him afraid without explicitly threatening him.

Now, Salsbury is terrified of the church’s influence. He is terrified of the police. Worst of all, his fears have made him remember the details of what happened to Terri Santos more clearly. He did not see a trick. He saw something impossible. And he thinks that whatever happened to her could happen to him or his family.

Local Legends

The Hourglass region has long been a hotbed of anti-government conspiracy theories, UFO abduction claims, and Bigfoot sightings. An Agent who looks into them finds all the claims are spurious, driven by hallucinogens or the conspiracy theorist’s desperate need for recognition. Reaching that conclusion takes a few hours if the Agent succeeds at an **Occult** roll, or a few days if the roll fails.

The Great Bat

An Agent who spends a day researching less standard esoterica, and who has an **Occult** or **History** skill of 50% or higher (or who succeeds at a roll), finds an interesting passage in *Rogue River Adventures*, a history of the region published in 1948 to mark the centennial of the California Gold Rush.

The passage mentions a legendary creature that 19th-century woodsmen called the Great Bat. Many claimed to either have heard its evil chittering or to have known someone who knew someone who saw its vast black bulk in the night. The book includes a quote from an old-timer named Gyles Root who worked for the Salzo logging company. It describes Root as “an ancient woodsman with keen eyes and a New England drawl.” See **A QUOTE FROM GYLES ROOT** on page 9.

All other references to the Great Bat ultimately derive from this one book, and all “sightings” of it occurred only after its publication.

If the Agents ask, experts at Oregon Caves National Park (a drive of a little more than an hour away) say they have no records of a cave in the region with any connection to the Takelma or the Great Bat spirit.

The Takelma Today

An Agent can learn more about the Great Bat by seeking descendants of the Takelma. Fewer than 20 remain. The Takelma people were scattered to reservations after the Rogue River Wars and fared poorly. A few of their descendants moved back to the Rogue River area in recent decades, but their original language is long dead.

Agents who look for experts on Takelma history find a family living in a small house just outside

A Quote from Gyles Root

"You'd have to ask the Takelma about the Great Bat. They were here first, you know. Indians of the Rogue River. They worshipped the Great Bat as their god. The hungriest of all the spirits! But you can't ask them, can you? Whites killed most and drove the rest out. Their Great Bat was mighty, but I reckon they weren't."

Hourglass. Hawilité Johnson is a 40-year-old real-estate lawyer and a spokeswoman for the local Takelma community. She lives with her four children, ages 8 to 17, and her 90-year-old great-grandmother, Shasta Walker. Shasta Walker grew up with ancient survivors of the Rogue River Wars.

Johnson and Walker say that the Great Bat was never the "god" of the Takelma. The Takelma honored many spirits of the natural world. Some Takelma clans honored the Great Bat, a spirit of night, the earth, and things that grow and feed in the dark.

Walker recalls her own great-grandmother once complaining about a Takelma clan that she disliked. Walker's great-grandmother disliked this clan because they kept to themselves, always fought their neighbors, and stole things rather than working together. Its leaders went into a deep cave, the story goes, and made a song to gain strength from the Great Bat in order to fight the white settlers. As far as Walker knows, that clan died fighting the whites. She has no idea whether the "deep cave" of their war song was real or where it might have been.

Investigating the Church

The Church of the Twelve Martyrs is housed on a compound in the wooded hills about 10 km northeast of Hourglass. The property's 120 hectares (300 acres) enclose crops; grazing land for sheep, cattle, and a handful of horses; a printing plant and warehouse; a dozen houses of varying size; and the central church building itself, not large but beautifully constructed of stone and wood.

A glossy, professional website displays big, well-lit photos of wholesome families smiling and enjoying the simple charms of rustic life, as well as videos and podcasts of the Host's sermons.

The Altar Names

An Agent who studies the church's website spots something interesting. In a close-up photo of an old wooden altar can be read a dozen engraved names: Joseph Adams, Makepeace Cotton, Goodman Griswold, Increase Hartwell, Nicholas Heaton, Ephraim Hikes, Hezekiah Hynde, Josiah Joiner, John Pemble, Gyles Root, Silence Root, and Samuel Woodman.

Agents have a few possibilities to find references to the names on the altar.

LOCAL RECORDS: By carefully sifting city, county, or state tax documents, an Agent can find the name "Gyles Root" as an employee of Erol Salzo for five months in 1948. If the Agent specifically looks for records around 1948, this takes a few hours. Otherwise, it takes a day or two. Root's employment came just before Salzo shut down his company and established the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. There are no birth or death records for Root, no Social Security records, nor any other records of him at all.

NAMES OF THE MARTYRS: Agents recognize the style of the names of the Twelve Martyrs. They closely match the naming conventions of early Puritans of New England.

If they investigate the names further, an Agent with **History** or **Occult** at 50% or higher (or who succeeds at a roll) can find the names Increase Hartwell and Samuel Woodman online, in a scanned page of an old book, after searching for a day or two. The book is *Witch Trials of the Miskatonic*, a 19th-century collection of first-hand accounts of the 17th-century witchcraft scares of northeast Massachusetts, with a focus on communities near Arkham on the Miskatonic River.

The scanned text says that a witch named Vanity None Tyler named Hartwell and Woodman as two brothers of the Sons of Cerunnos, which she called a cult of warlocks. The page says nothing more about Hartwell, Woodman, or the Sons of Cerunnos. It ends

with a report of Tyler's death at the stake. Witnesses reported fearfully that, at first, the fire would not harm her. But good people prayed to God until suddenly the witch shrieked out and vanished, no doubt claimed by the Devil for an eternity of torment.

SONS OF CERUNNOS: An Agent with **History** or **Occult** at 40% or higher (or who succeeds at a roll) can find a cursory mention of the Sons of Cerunnos by digging through Wikipedia entries for a few hours. The mention gives it as an example of a rumored New England warlock-cult, the kind of rumor long disparaged by anthropologists and Wiccans alike. The entry cites three anthropology texts asserting that many such cults were simply trade or craft guilds, or informal clubs for men of shared academic interests, sometimes inspired by the same 17th-century Rosicrucian manifestos that inspired Freemasonry. In adopting mild and dissociated occult terminology, they aroused the fury of the witchcraft panics.

WITCH TRIALS OF THE MISKATONIC: Physical copies of *Witch Trials of the Miskatonic* can be found in the Miskatonic University central library in Arkham, Massachusetts, and in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Neither copy can be requested by inter-library loan or taken off site, but either is available in the library's restricted stacks for on-site review. An Agent who spends a day traveling, a day reviewing the text, and another day traveling back can find the full list of the accused Sons of Cerunnos. It perfectly matches the names listed on the altar in the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. The book records no trials of any of the Sons of Cerunnos. One judge reported that an attempt to find Samuel Woodman ended when his former neighbors said the old man—locally infamous for his leering ways and the strange sounds and smells that emerged from his house—had departed New England with the rest of the Sons of Cerunnos. One neighbor said, "Woodman threatened to come back in a young, new body and take such revenge as to make Satan laugh."

Residents

The church compound is home to 10 men, 13 women, and 20 children, 15 of them boys. There is no crime on record for the church compound. Some members

have had criminal records. Those that moved in stayed clean. The few who began attending and did not clean up their acts left without moving in. Another 80 regular members attend services twice a week but do not live on the compound.

Finances

The Church of the Twelve Martyrs makes money selling books around the world, soliciting donations via sermons by the Host, inviting visitors to come visit for a weekend at a time (after especially exorbitant donations), and selling top-quality farm and ranch produce around the region. The church's squeaky-clean tax returns are overseen by accountants and lawyers whose fees take up a substantial share of the church's nonprofit income.

Beliefs

The Church of the Twelve Martyrs emphasizes service to and communication with the triune God through the intercession of the Twelve Martyrs. Service is emphasized above all else: having a servant's heart as an expression of Christian love.

The church is led by Erol Salzo III, the grandson of the founder. He is called The Host because he incarnates and is inspired by an ancient enlightened spirit who returns lifetime after lifetime to guide the Church in the name of God, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ. That blessed spirit is part of the heavenly host, the Sabaoth, the spiritual army of Heaven that serves the throne of God.

The spiritual leaders of the church are the Twelve Martyrs, followers of the Host and founders of his church, of which the Hourglass compound is only the latest incarnation. The Twelve Martyrs do not reincarnate. Their heavenly spirits share their wisdom with the Host.

The Host's daily noon sermons are recorded and livestreamed once or twice a week.

High Holy Prayers are held once per week, at midnight between Saturday and Sunday, only for church members who reside on the compound. High Holy Prayers are led by the Host, who reads from his personal, private Bible. They are not livestreamed or recorded.

Social Work

If the Agents contact a county social worker about the church, they learn that the church is very insular. It is the kind of place that raises suspicions, but its activities are legal. The demoralized, even traumatized, condition of women in the church community is distressing, but the social worker is not allowed to investigate them based only on misery. If the Agents specifically ask to review birth records, they find that about 75% of babies born at the compound since 1995—the first year for which records are available—have been boys. The social worker finds that unusual but she leaves it at that. There are many, many more pressing issues to address.

Medical Records

No medical clinic or hospital in the state agrees to share data about patients, including patients from the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. If the Agents find a way to access such data illegally—perhaps by blackmailing an employee or hacking into a system through USB-stick insertion—they can find no records of abortions provided for residents of the compound.

At the Library

The Hourglass librarian, 40-year-old Magdalena Munsch, is also the town archivist. Documents pertaining to the cult tend to go missing (stolen by the cultists), but there are a couple she squirreled away. Agents who don't think to approach the librarian may find clues by searching obscure websites twenty years old.

The most important document is a little-known audio recording of a High Holy Prayers sermon at the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. The librarian does not know it exists and there is no record of who donated it. The Agents can find it if they commit to searching the library for a few days between them, as long as each searcher has a skill such as **Anthropology, History, or Science (Library)** at 30% or higher, succeeds at a roll of one of them, or succeeds at an **INT×5** test.

The recording is held on an audio CD in a paper envelope, hand-labeled "C. 12 Martyrs Hi H. Prayers," in a long-unsorted "Local Interest" collection.

Examining the CD's audio file digitally finds that it was created on Monday, 14 SEP 1992.

The audio is a preacher reading from a sacred text. An Agent with **Anthropology, History, or Occult** at 30% or higher (or who succeeds at a roll) recognizes a passage from 2 Thessalonians:

"The word of God says: The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."

The speaker is not Erol Salzo III, but the voice is similar. An Agent who has listened to Salzo speak, and who has **HUMINT** or an audio- or speech-related **Art** or **Science** skill at 60% or higher (or succeeds at a roll), recognizes uncanny similarities in the speaker's cadences, pronunciation, and enunciation. Reviewing the audio file with a recording of Salzo confirms it. It's like Salzo today is doing a remarkably faithful impression of this speaker from 1992.

About 23 minutes into the sermon, the speaker is carried away on an ecstasy of inspiration and transitions into glossalia, speaking in "tongues." An Agent with **Unnatural** 15% or higher, or who succeeds at a roll, recognizes prayers to an obscure fertility goddess called Shub-Niggurath, who is said in certain occult texts to have inspired the worship of fertility goddesses around the world.

About 31 minutes in, the speaker reaches an emotional crescendo and reverts to English: "Show us the inner temple, the Holiest of Holies! Let the sacred Ark of the Sabaoth reveal its glory!"

There is a sudden, very long silence. Any listener with a **SAN** of 50 or higher thinks it's because the preacher and congregation have switched to silent prayer. It lasts a full, excruciating hour. Analyzing the audio (requiring **SIGINT** or an appropriate **Craft** at 20%, or **INT** 14; or succeeding at a **SIGINT** or **Craft** roll; or succeeding at an **INT×5** roll at -20%) finds that the room sounds have not changed. But there is

no sound of breathing, shuffling, sniffing, or coughing. There are no sounds of the room's occupants.

Suddenly, one hour and 33 minutes into the recording, the audience's sounds return all at once. Shouts and weeping. Some thank the Lord for showing them the glories of the heavens. Others weep. One bellows as if their mind and spirit have broken. The recording ends.

Families of the Faithful

The families of members of the Church of the Twelve Martyrs are very unwilling to talk, especially on official records, for public reports, or in court.

An Agent with HUMINT 40% or higher, or who makes a successful roll, can tell they are afraid. Most can't say exactly why they are afraid. They hedge around it, saying only that the church makes them uneasy.

If the Agents did not speak to Alice Padilla (described in **INVESTIGATING THE VICTIM** on page 5), one relative of another recent church recruit can convey those suspicions about the church.

Former Cultists

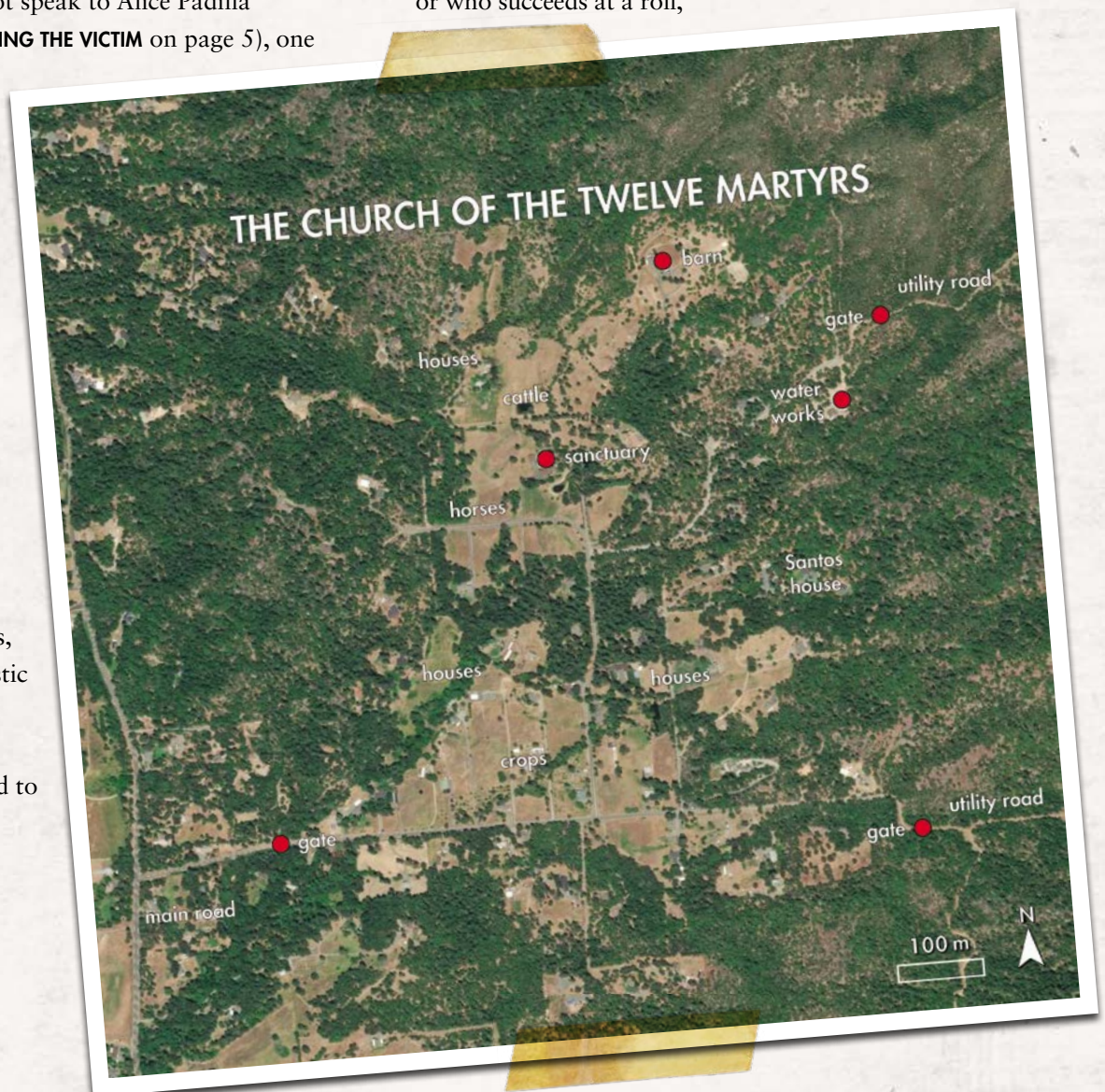
Improbably, there are no former residents of the Church of the Twelve Martyrs. Those who have moved out and split with the Church uniformly died early from accidental overdoses, car accidents, suicides, disease, domestic abuse, or other violent crimes. None of those deaths can be connected to the Church in any way.

The Compound

The sprawling property that is home to the Church of the Twelve Martyrs is green and lovely. A large portion is dedicated to farming. Another is a ranch that raises goats, cows, and horses, and sells popular grass- and corn-fed beef in town. Small, well-maintained, old-fashioned homes are scattered around. This idyllic vision garners donations and fans worldwide.

The Woods

Forest rises and spreads wild around the cultivated church property. For one or two kilometers, the soil is extraordinarily rich, even on rocky slopes where high granite should make the earth barren. Funguses are especially fecund, spreading deep and far in the earth. An Agent who examines the environment with **Science (Botany)** or an equivalent skill at 50% or higher, or who succeeds at a roll,



discerns that the ground is in fact far more fertile than the soil chemistry can explain.

By night, the woods rustle constantly with life and motion even when the wind is still as death. An Agent in the night woods who makes a **Survival** roll notices a strange smell in the air, not just soil and trees but something oily and fleshy, almost putrid. It is not a smell the Agent has ever encountered before. That realization costs 0/1 SAN from the unnatural.

IF THEY KNOW THE AGENTS: After the church knows about the Agents' investigation, another piece of strangeness appears to Agents who explore the woods near the compound by day, or who use flashlights or vision devices by night and succeed at a **Search** roll. They spot clusters of crude stick figures hanging here and there from the trees, hand-crafted by children of the compound. Each is a cluster of figures made of twigs and twine. All figures in a cluster are bound together by black electrical tape, stick arms facing outward as if reaching for something not there. Each cluster has exactly one stick figure for each Agent. Making that connection costs 0/1 SAN. An Agent with 50% or higher in **Anthropology** or **Occult** (or who makes a roll) suspects ritualistic meaning but can make no sense of the design.

Security

Every building that has electricity has a security camera watching the main entrance. The water treatment building—where well water is pumped up, filtered,

and piped out to the compound—has a motion-sensing interior burglar alarm. That alarm is silent, but it sends an alert to an old-fashioned pager carried by Andy Welks, who drives up within 3D4 minutes in a pickup truck with another man from the church.

There is no fence around the property, except for the wooden fences that keep horses and cattle from straying. Utility roads that lead onto the compound are barred by chains on steel posts. The chains are not locked. Prominent signs declare the compound private property.

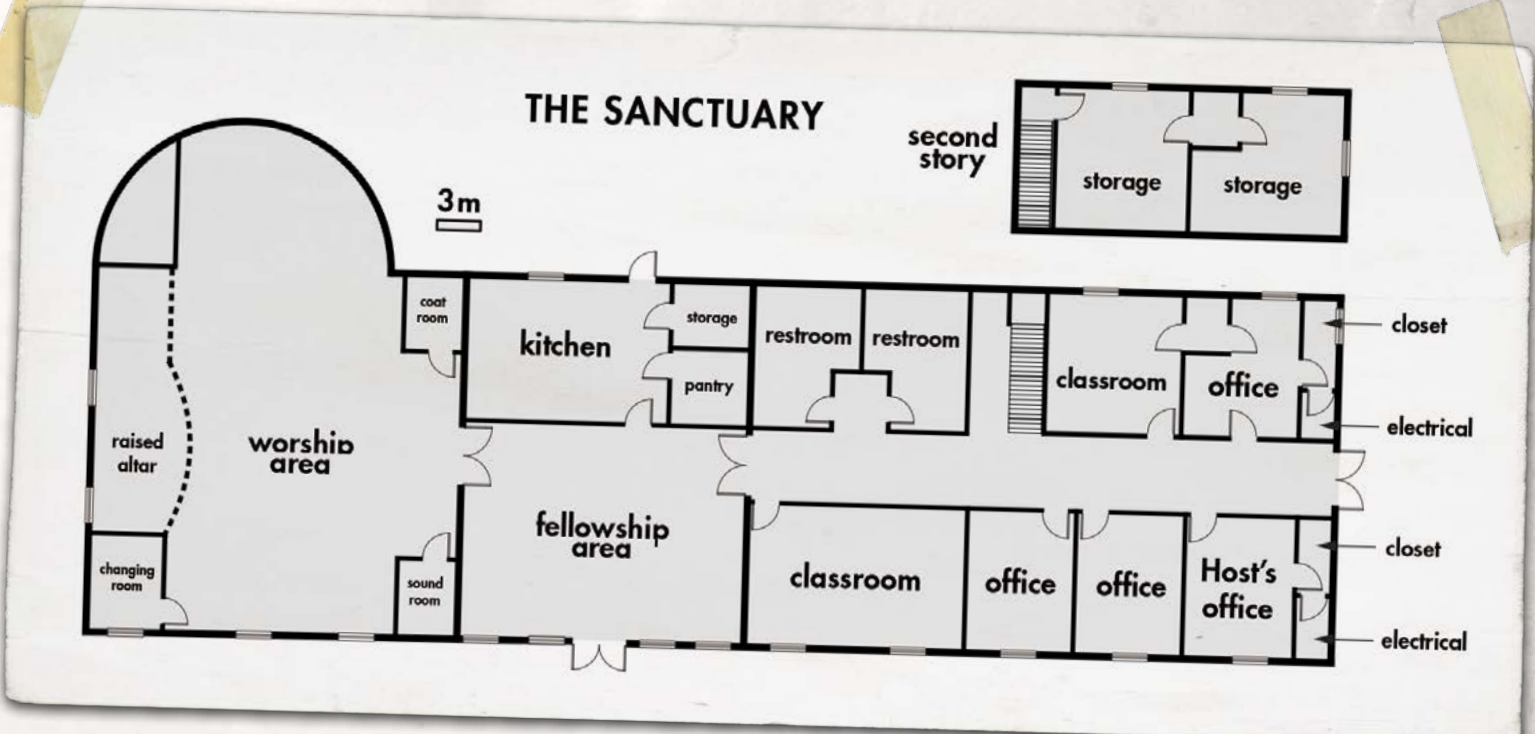
Church Services

Public services are held in the sanctuary each Wednesday at 7:00 P.M. and each Sunday at 1:00 P.M. They last about two hours and are innocuous, revealing nothing that the Agents could not find online.

High Holy Prayers are held at midnight between Saturday and Sunday. They are restricted to congregants who live on the compound. Agents surveilling High Holy Prayers hear or see an event much like that described under **AT THE LIBRARY** on page 11. If they have video, they see the entire congregation suddenly vanish at the moment the audio goes silent. The congregation suddenly reappears when the audio of them resumes. Seeing that recording costs 1 SAN.

A Tour

Visitors can contact the church a day or two ahead of time for a guided tour of the property on an



old-fashioned, horse-drawn hay wagon. Dead-eyed Robert Santos acts as guide, driving the wagon and pointing out highlights: the crops and farmhouses; the fenced fields of horses, cattle, and sheep; little springs between the tumbling trees; the printing plant; workshops; and finally the sanctuary, where the visitors can meet the Host for a few precious minutes. (See **THE HOST** on page 16.) The whole affair lasts about two hours, and then the visitors are ushered back to their cars and away with many smiles. Generous donations are welcome but not required.

Joining the Church

If an Agent asks to join, the Host encourages and welcomes them. They may come to noon services any day of the week, and of course they may donate to support the church's mission. After they have been members in good standing for a year or two, they might even be invited to move into the compound and dedicate themselves to the church full time. Under no circumstances does the Host invite newcomers to move in or even to remain more than a few hours at a time.

The Faithful

The women, men, and children who live at the compound are uniformly subjugated and fascinated by the Host. They adore him. They are terrified of him. The only thing that frightens them more is Agents coming to investigate. Visitors and supporters are one thing; investigators mean trouble.

The Agents see hollow-eyed boys and dead-eyed and cruel young men. All of them are on record as children of married men and women who live at the compound, but in fact all were fathered by the Host.

There are very few girls. Women at the compound were almost all recruited from outside. Those born and raised at the compound are mostly the Host's own daughters, who grow up to serve the church. (He only rarely takes one of them as a wife in the spirit and flesh.)

Most members of the church avoid strangers like plague. They speak only if the Agents approach with great care and reassurance. Those that do speak with the Agents are glad to share strange details about their living faith:

- » The spirits of the Twelve Martyrs reside in sacred receptacles called arks.
- » There are many arks, one to hold each Martyr.
- » The arks are candles that were crafted with the remains of the Martyrs.
- » During High Holy Prayers in the Inner Temple, the Martyrs emerge from the arks.
- » The Martyrs do not emerge in person but speak through the men of the church.
- » If a woman or girl of the church is asked about Terri Santos, she says it was sad that Terri "had to lose" her baby. If asked to explain that, she goes silent and flees out of fear that she has said something wrong.

About the Inner Temple

Church members say that the Inner Temple can be seen only in the church sanctuary, and only during High Holy Prayers. They say the Inner Temple is not a geographical place. It is more like a true vision of the sanctuary itself.

The faithful either cannot or will not remember further details of the Inner Temple or what happens there. If an Agent interviews one with great patience, they recall only sparks in the air, prayers, and weeping that they desperately insist was joyful.

An Agent can elicit more from a witness by conducting an interview of an hour or more and succeeding with a **Psychotherapy** roll. In that case, the witness says that the rites of High Holy Prayers are violent and sexual. The rites are led by a handful of young men who become possessed by the spirits of the Martyrs.

Such extended interviews are likely to attract attention. Men of the church investigate if they suspect a stranger is speaking at length with anyone on the compound. They tell the interviewee to be quiet, and the interviewee instantly complies. They tell the strangers to leave. If the strangers refuse, they call friends among the local police. See **BAD COPS** on page 21 for details.

Rhea Salzo

Rhea Salzo is the 73-year-old mother of Erol Salzo III. She is administrator of the Church's business and financial affairs, secretary to the Host, and the

undisputed leader of the compound's women. Warped by a lifetime of abuse and manipulation, she is a true believer in the Host's connection with the divine. She is one of the Host's most reliable and ruthless servants.

In her office in the sanctuary, Rhea keeps detailed notes that she feeds into a shredder at the first suspicion of outside investigation. An Agent can find the notes and recognize their importance by taking a few hours to search, or only half an hour with a successful **Search** roll. The notes reveal:

- » Rhea saw to Terri Wilkins' recruitment and kept her under control when Terri had moments of doubt.
- » Rhea persuaded Terri to marry Robert Santos under the law and to wed the Host in the spirit and the flesh.
- » A few months after the wedding, Terri Santos became pregnant.
- » At the 10th week of Terri's pregnancy, Rhea helped her perform an at-home DNA test and mailed the results to a lab for analysis. The results came in a week later: a girl.
- » The Host said that God told him that Terri Santos was meant to deliver a boy. Rhea administered strong doses of misoprostol and oxytocin to Terri over the course of half a day, ensuring a miscarriage.
- » There have been many other miscarriages by church women after DNA tests indicated female children.

In Rhea Salzo's home, a small trunk in the attic contains her extensive supplies of misoprostol and oxytocin, and enough scrawled records of off-the-books suppliers' addresses, names, dates, and costs to send her and half a dozen medical personnel to prison. If the Agents pursue that line of investigation, the Handler can invent details on one of Rhea's contacts who could be pressured into incriminating her: pharmacist's assistant Sean Horton at the Woodlands Women's Clinic in Salem, Oregon.

The Sanctuary

The Sanctuary is a single, large building. Its largest chamber is a church-room with pews and an altar. The building houses a fellowship room, a kitchen, bathrooms, offices (one for church administrator Rhea Salzo, one for the Host himself, and one for general use by church personnel), and storage. The Host lives in a small house nearby, but everything of interest to the Agents is in the Sanctuary.

The sacred Ark of the Sabaoth, a strange black meteorite that weighs about 20 kg, rests upon the altar in the worship chamber. It is about the size of a bowling ball. Examining it closely costs 0/1D4 SAN from the unnatural. What the examination reveals depends on the SAN loss, whether or not any is projected onto a Bond.

- » **0 SAN:** The meteorite smells of fear and death.
- » **1-2 SAN:** As above, and the smell triggers scent memories from things the Agent has never experienced. Choose one for each Agent: (1) alchemical reagents bubbling, acrid over charcoal smoke and the oily scent of burning lamp oil; (2) fat and brain matter melting into hot pork tallow; or (3) a distressing blend of sex, decay, and some unknown scent-shock that reminds the Agent of the taste of a live battery's terminal.
- » **3-4 SAN:** As above, and some of the sense memories are not scent but sensations that can barely be comprehended or articulated by the human brain: energy conversion, magnetic attraction, electrical connection, or movement in and out of the four dimensions of spacetime.



Beneath the meteorite can be seen the seams of a lid in the top of the altar, the sort that would open to reveal a space for a bible or other supplies. The space holds only an old padlock key. It opens the iron door in the secret sacristy, described on page 17.

The meteorite remains inert if the Agents touch it or pick it up. It remains inert even if the Agents smash it with pickaxes or blow it to pieces. But if the Host is injured for 4 or more points of damage, or if the Host cries out for help, the meteorite comes hideously alive. Its broken pieces reform and it suddenly grows in size and mass. See **SILENCE ROOT** on page 27.

On the side of the altar, the names of the Martyrs are engraved: Joseph Adams, Makepeace Cotton, Goodman Griswold, Increase Hartwell, Nicholas Heaton, Ephraim Hickes, Hezekiah Hynde, Josiah Joiner, John Pemble, Gyles Root, Silence Root, and Samuel Woodman.

The Host

Erol Salzo III is a 50-year-old white man, slim and good-looking, serious yet friendly, with magnetic eyes. He presents an earnest face to the world, embracing honesty and meaningfulness. He speaks eloquently. His sermons are enormously popular.

Salzo's goal is to satisfy the Agents' curiosity with lies that make the church seem harmless, and then to send them on their way in mock friendship. He welcomes the Agents. Even if he meets them unexpectedly, if they have trespassed onto the compound and broken into the Sanctuary, he invites them to join him in the kitchen for coffee. He offers to answer their questions to the best of his ability.

If the Agents indicate that they know something they should not, then his goal changes. He tries to get them talking about what they experienced and what they heard that was so distressing. He pretends to be alarmed at what he hears and to have an earnest wish to set things right.

The Agents can see through Salzo's deceptions by opposing his Persuade roll with their own **HUMINT** rolls, or get him to reveal too much by opposing his Persuade roll with their own **Persuade** rolls.

Salzo denies sleeping with the women in the compound and denies a boys-only birth policy. He says that

some of his followers get carried away and say metaphorical things that are easy for outsiders to misconstrue.

OCCULT ERUDITION: Salzo could be drawn out by an Agent who focuses on occultism, and who succeeds at either an **Occult** roll or an **Unnatural** roll.

An Agent who succeeds at an **Occult** roll while discussing occultism and faith with Salzo sees Salzo's interest piqued despite himself. Salzo gives nothing away concretely but he takes an increasingly sharp interest in the matter, belying his earnest pretense.

An Agent who attempts an **Unnatural** roll while discussing such matters with Salzo truly catches Salzo's attention. If the roll fails and the Agent's **Unnatural** skill is lower than 10%, Salzo mockingly warns the Agent not to dabble in deadly matters beyond the Agent's understanding. Salzo's eyes become cruel. If the roll succeeds, or the Agent's **Unnatural** skill is 10% or higher, Salzo drops every pretense. He demands to know what the Agent seeks here. What has the Agent come to steal? Which allies wait for the Agent to bring out some prize? Salzo takes this brief exchange to decide whether the Agents have unnatural protection. If he thinks they do, then he tells them to leave at once, and warns that they'll be killed if they return. If he decides they don't, then he tries to excuse himself so his followers can assault and capture the Agents for interrogation in the Inner Temple. Salzo is far too canny and paranoid to be persuaded that erudite Agents can ever be his allies.

GUARDIANS: While the Agents interview Salzo, five of his followers gather at the Sanctuary with pistols on their belts, led by young Andy Welks. They quietly surround the kitchen or office where the meeting is held. An Agent who makes an **Alertness** roll hears them. If the Agents threaten Salzo, Welks steps in and says the Agents should leave. If the Agents attack, the armed men fight back while Salzo dodges and flees. If Salzo is injured for 4 points of damage or more, the Ark of the Sabaoth comes vengefully alive to defend him; see **SILENCE ROOT** on page 27.

If the Agents attack Salzo, his placid and earnest act drops to reveal his true nature: vicious, cunning, supremely arrogant, and vindictive.

The Martyrs

Two other Martyrs permanently possess the Host's descendants, Nicholas Heaton in 20-year-old Andy Welks and Samuel Woodman in 12-year-old Jake Elliott. The sorcerers inside them are prone to boasting and gloating. They may offer clues that the Agents have not uncovered.

The rest of the Martyrs are stored in their Arks, which are large candles stored in a secret place (see **THE SECRET SACRISTY** on page 17) and brought out for High Holy Prayers. They are lit for an hour at a time so that the Martyrs may awaken. Those Martyrs are content to remain inert and only to awaken for their cruel joys. When a candle gets low, its Martyr begins possessing a favorite victim more extensively, over the course of a month, until the possession becomes permanent.

The Secret Sacristy

In a walk-in closet in the Host's office, a door is concealed by wall paneling. Finding its hidden seams while searching the room requires a **Search** roll, with a bonus of +40% if the player specifically focuses on the walls. The door opens with firm pressure, that of a grown person leaning against it or a child pushing hard, suddenly released. It reveals cement stairs that lead down about five meters to a locked, steel trapdoor.

The padlock can be opened with a key that the Host always carries around his neck. It can also be opened with lockpicks, using **Craft (Locksmithing)** skill or a **DEX×5** test and special training with lockpicks. The padlock can be broken with a boltcutter or crowbar and a **STR×5** test; each failed attempt costs 1D4 WP or inflicts 1 damage, at the player's choice.

Beneath the trapdoor is a bunker strong enough to survive a conflagration or tornado. The bunker is the Host's private sacristy. It holds his private Bible and eight large, sacred candles; see **ARKS OF THE MARTYRS** on page 23. (There are no candles for Samuel Woodman, Nicholas Heaton, Gyles Root, and Silence Root.)

For High Holy Prayers, 12-year-old Jake Elliot and 20-year-old Andy Welks help the Host take the candles to the sanctuary. They are the only ones who know of the trapdoor and what it contains. Other residents of the compound know that they set out big candles but do not know where the candles are kept.

At the far wall of the sacristy is a simple iron door, bound into bedrock and secured by another heavy padlock. Its key rests underneath the black altar stone in the Sanctuary. Beyond the door, an uneven, narrow cavern leads away and around and gradually down, carved by water or other forces over countless years. After an hour of walking in the dusty blackness, it opens to the Inner Temple—the Vault of the Bat.

Captured!

Agents captured by the Host and his followers are bound, blindfolded, and held in the worship hall. At midnight, the Host, Jake Elliott, Andy Welks, and Silence Root (in a human form) light the Martyrs' candles and conduct an unscheduled and much abbreviated version of the High Holy Prayers ceremony. They cut out the preaching and leave only the "glossalia," a casting of Whispers of the Dead.

That brings them and the captives to the Inner Temple (see **THE INNER TEMPLE** on this page).

Each Agent is psychically assaulted by one of the Martyrs (other than Silence), who attempts to use Exchange Personalities to possess the captive. First a Martyr must succeed for a turn, then for a minute, then for an hour.

When a Martyr succeeds at possessing an Agent a third time, lasting an hour, he greets his old companions through the Agent's mouth, uttering praises to Shub-Niggurath and the shoggoths of the Deeps. The others release that Agent so the possessing Martyr can use the Agent's flesh to torture the other Agents. Suffering torture costs 1/1D8 SAN.

After one Agent is possessed, a Martyr possessing another Agent only on the second attempt grows impatient. Despite the possession not lasting long, the Martyr greets his comrades and they cut the Agent's body free. Then the Martyr's influence fades and the Agent regains control. At the beginning of each turn that follows, the Agent must make a **Luck** roll or the Martyr tries to possess the Agent again, spending 4 WP with each attempt.

An Agent who hears a possessed Agent win freedom can try to mimic the phrases and win freedom. That requires a **Persuade** roll, with a bonus equal to the Agent's **Unnatural** skill rating.

After a few hours of this, the Host, Elliott, Welks, and Root summon a hideous spawn or fragment of Shub-Niggurath from the deep pits. That takes an hour or so. It takes the captives as a sacrifice. At that point, nothing the Agents can do can stop it.

The Inner Temple

Congregants visit the Inner Temple only during High Holy Prayers. The Host leads the church in elaborate prayers and speaking tongues—really, a casting of Whispers of the Dead—in the presence of the candles of the Martyrs. To everyone within the Sanctuary, the chamber seems to reshape and fold in on itself amid a rising, keening psychic noise. The Sanctuary around the worshippers vanishes, giving way to a vast, black cavern: the Vault of the Bat.

Anyone watching it happen from outside would see the congregation giving in to an ecstasy of prayer and shouting, and then suddenly vanishing. The black meteorite—the Ark of the Sabaoth—vanishes from the altar.

In the Inner Temple, the Host stands with the congregants. The Ark of the Sabaoth now rests on a rough-hewn stone altar at the edge of a pit that gapes like a hungry maw. From time to time, a strange whistling or howling echoes up from the unseen depths. An Agent who has inspected the Ark closely enough to smell it recognizes the same scent everywhere here. Visiting this place costs 1/1D6 SAN from the unnatural, or 1/1D10 if transported here by a ritual.

The vault is dimly lit by the Martyrs' candles and by streaks of phosphorescent green fungi along the walls. Ancient gouges in the wall crudely depict an immense bat that looms over dancing human figures. An Agent with **Anthropology** at 50% or higher or who makes a successful roll recognizes a few similarities to centuries-old northwest Native American designs.

Here the spirits of the Martyrs emerge from their own Arks, their candles lit for the ceremony. The Host leads the congregation, aided by young Andy Welks and even younger Jake Elliott, in brutal, unspeakable, unnatural rites. The other Martyrs cast Exchange Personalities to possess living bodies for an hour and enjoy the pleasures and pains of the flesh. The glow of

the fungus and the keening from the depths grow with the intensity of their rites.

If the Host detects intrusion by the Agents, he cries out: “Hear me, Hosts of Heaven! Smite them with the word of God!” If the Martyrs have already possessed men and boys of the Church, they begin attacking with the Withering ritual: drifting spores that glow like sparks and a psychic keening sound emerge from the victim. The Martyrs are not perfectly coordinated. In any given turn, if the Agents fail a group **Luck** roll, one Martyr casts *Wither* on a random Agent, or two Martyrs if the **Luck** roll is a fumble. Everyone else cowers, overwhelmed by horrors.

If those gathered in the Inner Temple came during a ritual, killing the ritual’s operator returns everyone to the Sanctuary’s worship hall.

Exchanges

Once the Agents catch the attention of the Church of the Twelve Martyrs, 12-year-old Jake Elliott begins watching them from the concealment of storefronts and playgrounds. Elliot is the permanent vessel of one of the Martyrs, a centuries-old sorcerer named Samuel Woodman. He singles out the Agent who seems to be most nervous or psychologically fragile, preferably male due to Woodman’s prejudices, and casts *Exchange Personalities*.

An Agent who gets a good look at Elliott and makes an **Alertness** roll recognizes the boy’s profile, seen briefly and at a distance in the video where Terri Santos vanished.

A MOMENT: If the spell’s opposed **POW** test fails, the Agent feels a sudden sense of vertigo and *déjà vu*. If it succeeds, the Agent feels a sudden, fleeting sense of disconnection, as if for an instant he were watching himself from outside.

A MINUTE: The second time, probably the next day, the exchange lasts a full minute if successful. The Martyr then casts *Obscure Memory*. If that succeeds, the Agent simply has a blank space where that minute was.

AN HOUR: The third time, probably the next day, it lasts a full hour. See **WOODMAN’S WORK** on page 20. The Martyr again attempts to obscure the possessed Agent’s memory.

An Hour With Andy

If Woodman’s casting of *Obscure Memory* fails, the Agent’s mind spends a full hour in Jake Elliot’s body—and the Agent remembers it afterward. The boy’s body is being guarded by the other incarnate Martyr, in the safety of a pickup truck belonging to the Church: the old sorcerer Nicholas Heaton in the body of 20-year-old Andy Welks.

The Agent quickly realizes they can act and speak in the boy’s body. In combat, they use Jake Elliot’s **DEX** score.



Backlash

If Jake Elliott, under the Agent's control, asks any questions, Welks smiles knowingly and cruelly. He controls the truck's locks from the driver's side and prevents the possessed boy from getting out. If Elliott, under an Agent's control, tries to draw attention, Welks drives somewhere more private.

The old sorcerer in the young man's body cannot resist taunting the hapless Agent. He may even revert instinctively to archaisms, laughing wickedly:

"I see old Samuel failed to cover his tracks. When he takes thee up the next time, mayhap he'll take an hour to enjoy thee. Wouldst thou like that? To be enjoyed in this little body by Samuel wearing thine?"

Welks says he is called Andy Welks in town, but "friends" like the Agent may call him Nicholas. He mentions Samuel Woodman only by first name. Amidst all his taunting, he might arrogantly answer some questions, giving clues that the Agents have not yet uncovered. In particular, he might boast of being part of the Sons of Cerunnos, survivors of centuries of would-be witch-hunters like the Agents. If the Agent tries to convince Woodman that they want to join the cult, Woodman laughs. He says there is no room for newcomers in their ancient order.

Woodman's Work

Spending an hour in the Agent's body, Samuel Woodman has time to do real harm. He looks for personally identifying possessions and memorizes their details. He studies names, numbers, and messages on the Agent's phone. Later, he will turn those details over to the church's allies (see **BACKLASH** on this page) to go after the Agents and their Bonds.

Woodman studies the Agent's teammates. He asks the team for an update. He asks to go over again what they know and what they need to do, saying that they might turn up some new, critical idea by starting fresh.

Another Agent who suspects strangeness might confirm it with a **HUMINT** test, or by asking questions that only the real Agent could answer. If that catches Woodman, he acts insulted and angry at being interrogated. If restrained, he returns to his own body.

The Church of the Twelve Martyrs has spent decades building connections that offer it protection from outsiders. The Agents could face interference from community leaders, local reporters, and local police on the take.

Congressional Review

Once the church realizes it is under investigation, its pricey law firm sends complaints to the DOJ and FBI. Even if the Agents have a perfect cover for their actions, the complaints can cause grief. The firm's private investigators try to confirm the Agents' identities, meaning to firm up details of the complaints. They begin legal proceedings, contacting the Agents' Bonds as part of the investigation, stirring up worry and trouble. What they uncover depends on how carefully the Agents have covered their tracks. If in doubt, let an Agent make a **Luck** roll to avoid having details uncovered.

If the church's lawyers find that the Agents are using false identities, they inform the FBI that the Agents have been pretending to be federal law enforcement officers.

Furthermore, Hourglass community leaders have an interest in the church's financial stability. If word gets around of a threat to the church, they are quick to contact their Congressional representative, who complains to the FBI and DOJ.

The Handler should decide how much impact this has. It could mean the Program's people in the FBI work with the Portland feds to quietly negotiate while the Agents cover their tracks and wrap things up. Or it could mean some Agents are at risk of firing or even prosecution as described in the *Agent's Handbook*.

Eyewitness News

If word gets out that federal agents are investigating the Terri Santos "hoax," a news team from Eugene, Oregon, comes to Hourglass in a bright "News at Nine" van. Reporter Henrietta Hyre and camera operator Ashley Willette spend an afternoon interviewing police ("It was a hoax. We know nothing about

any government investigation.”), tracking down and interviewing one witness (“She started screaming and everybody jumped. That’s when must have she ran off. It was crazy.”), and trying to corner one of the Agents for an on-camera interview.

If the Agents do or say anything to make the journalists think there is a cover-up, they stick around and continue to be a nuisance until they go a day without the Agents giving them anything interesting. That could easily mean more witnesses to unnatural events or to the Agents’ actions.

Bad Cops

The Hourglass Police Department is infested by a small cadre of brutally corrupt but well-connected officers. They include patrol officers Cynthia Brown and David Welch, Patrol Sergeant Calvin Maloy, and Detective Eugene Woods, and are led by Patrol Captain David Morales, the supervisor of all patrol officers. Morales and his four conspirators consider themselves untouchable, and experience has proved them right. Honest cops in Hourglass bend over backwards to not notice the extent of the gang’s wrongdoing. To do anything else would breach the trust that all the officers need to remain safe in their work.

These five bad cops are tightly bound to the Church of the Twelve Martyrs, thanks to years of steady bribery, and they facilitate and extort meth traffickers and producers in the region.

When the Agents arrive, they can spot the bad cops keeping tabs on witnesses to Santos’ disappearance. They go to great lengths to cover up crimes by the church. Their measures against the Agents rapidly escalate.

Once they become aware of the Agents’ interest in Santos or the church, these cops begin following the Agents around in unmarked cars or patrol SUVs, one or two of them at all hours.

They watch for opportunities to place bugs in the Agents’ vehicles and hotel rooms, and GPS trackers in the vehicles, when no Agents are around. If a player says the Agent is looking for surveillance devices, a successful **Search** roll finds it.

If they learn that the Agents are on the verge of raiding the church compound—not just visiting it but launching a raid to arrest or kill its leaders—the bad cops attempt a preemptive strike.

Death by Meth

If they decide to hit the Agents, the bad cops convince an unhinged, meth-producing family that the Agents are members of a rival mob come to kill them all and steal their business. Samantha Robinson, her brother Charles Smith, and her grown children Christopher, Joel, Judy, and Larry Robinson, hopped up on cocktails of crystal meth and PCP, attempt a clumsy attack on the Agents in their hotel rooms. The assault is unlikely to eradicate the Agents, but the bad cops figure it might draw enough attention to make them want to wrap up the investigation quickly.

When the attack goes down, officers Brown and Welch wait in their patrol cars nearby. Brown hears gunfire. After two combat rounds, she calls it out and asks for backup.

Meanwhile, one of the gangsters screams at the Agents that this is what they get for coming into Robinson territory. The Robinsons have cop friends on their side. They said just where to hit.

Brown and Welch reach the scene about a minute after the combat ends. If they think they can get away with it, they pick up guns dropped by the Robinsons and use them to finish off the Agents and the Robinsons alike. If not, they take any survivors of the Robinson gang into custody, escorting them in ambulances if necessary. The Robinsons immediately stop claiming that the local police had anything to do with it. Hourglass detectives interview the Agents exhaustively about their activities and what might have brought on conflict with a local drug gang. They take everything from the scene as evidence for processing, including all the Agents’ belongings, unless the Agents succeed at a **Law** roll on the spot to talk them into bagging only weapons and spent ammunition. If the Agents possess anything incriminating or clues as to their investigation of the church, the bad cops use those things to worsen the Agents’ backlash.

Arresting the Robinsons

The Agents may want to take surviving Robinsons into custody themselves and keep them out of the cops' hands. If they find a way to ask the opinion of their Delta Green case officer, the case officer sends an urgent message: "NO." It will draw too much attention.

Otherwise, it becomes a tense argument between the Agents, the FBI field office in Portland, the Portland-based U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon, and the Hourglass police chief. Allow the Agents to state their case and then allow one of them to attempt a Law roll. If it fails, the U.S. Attorney sides with the local police. If it succeeds, the U.S. Attorney approves asserting provisional federal custody over the Robinsons. If the Agents mentioned the Robinsons' claim that the police put them up to it, the U.S. Attorney instructs the Agents to establish a federal investigation of corruption in the Hourglass police department. That may give the Agents a great deal more latitude in investigating or covering up Terri Santos' disappearance.

Either way, the U.S. Attorney asks the FBI for a report on the Hourglass investigation within 24 hours. The Portland FBI office sends agents and lawyers to demand explanations and evidence from the Agents. Local and then national news catch the story. Within about 12 hours, the Agents will be surrounded by fellow investigators, every one of them ready and willing to learn about Hourglass corruption and the unnatural doings at the Church of the Twelve Martyrs.



Violence at the Compound

If there is combat at the compound, most women hide with the children. Men try to find and protect the Host. They attempt to barricade themselves inside the sanctuary. On the Host's orders, one of them calls the police for help, trusting TV news crews to hear it over police scanners and come as witnesses. Let the Agents attempt a Luck roll. If it fails, reporters hear and respond.

Jake Elliott and Andy Welks peer out from tiny gaps in curtains. It takes an Alertness test to spot one, at a penalty of -20% unless an Agent is exclusively watching the windows. The sorcerers possessing them attempt to possess Agents with the Exchange Personalities ritual. Possessing an Agent, they turn that Agent's weapons on the other Agents, or on unarmed women or children. Their weapon skills are poor, but they do not have to be terribly accurate to either have the Agents kill each other or force them to retreat to avoid prosecution. Failing that, one of them in an Agent's body casts Withering on another Agent in sight.

The police show up in 15 minutes. Patrol officers and detectives set up a perimeter and order the Agents to stand down so they can clear everything up. Failing that, the department's SWAT team sets up: five officers with extensive training and kitted out for battle in a military-surplus M-ATV, a sniper and a sniper's lookout riding a helicopter overhead, and four tactical medics from the fire department, all commanded by the SWAT team leader, Patrol Captain Morales (see **BAD COPS** on page 21).

Captain Morales coordinates from a headquarters van at the perimeter. The medics remain at HQ, ready to move in to treat casualties. The fire team moves in to arrest the Agents or kill them if they refuse to comply. They drive onto the compound in an armored, military-surplus M-ATV, one of them driving and the other four ready to bail out and assault.

The M-ATV keeps to paved roads to avoid getting stuck. When it runs out of paved road, the fire-team disembarks and continues on foot. The driver pulls the M-ATV back to the perimeter until it is needed to pick up the team.

If by this time the Hourglass Police Department is embroiled in a corruption investigation, the SWAT response may be sent by the FBI instead. Play it out the same.

A news helicopter arrives about the same time as the SWAT team, hungry to record the most lurid details and share them with the world.

Resolution

When their unnatural activities threaten to become public, the Host, Silence Root, and the incarnate Martyrs—Heaton and Woodman in the bodies of his sons Jake Elliott and Andy Welk—attempt to flee with the Arks of the Martyrs and the Salzo Bible, planning to start again in some distant place. Stopping them earns 1D4 SAN.

Permanently cutting off access to the Vault of the Bat, perhaps by collapsing the tunnels, earns 1D4 SAN.

Destroying the Arks of the Martyrs destroys the essences of the sorcerers bound in them. Doing so while knowing the consequences earns Agent 1D6 SAN, or 1D4 if only some were destroyed.

Destroying Silence Root earns each Agent 1 SAN.

Repercussions

How extensively did the investigation draw the Agents into conflict with police, politicians, and the Department of Justice? Use the rules for firing and prosecution from the Agent's Handbook to explore the ramifications for each Agent's life. If backlash from the Church reached an Agent's Bond, play through the trouble. It may call for a **CHA**×5 roll to smooth things over, with the Bond losing a point if that fails.

Saving Elliott and Welks

The sorcerers Heaton and Woodman have permanently possessed their young victims. If the Agents capture them and ask Delta Green what to do with them, their case officer sends unwelcome orders to terminate them and end the threat. Doing so costs 0/1D6 SAN from violence for Andy Welks and 1/1D6 for young Jake Elliott.

Heaton and Woodman could be driven out forever by the Exorcism ritual in the Salzo Bible. But the boys, and more importantly the sorcerers inhabiting them, would have to be restrained safely while the Agents study the ritual. That is a home activity that the Agents can pursue, so we leave the details to you. If the Agents succeed, each earns 1D4 SAN per boy saved.

The boys themselves, freed of their haunters, suffer multiple disorders but have not yet reached zero SAN. Each must then make a **CON**×5 roll to survive the surgeries and treatments required to excise cancerous shoggoth-growths from their bodies. The Handler can decide the repercussions of medical professionals being exposed to those. If a boy dies in the process, each Agent who learns about it loses 0/1 SAN from helplessness, or 0/1D4 if both die.

Artifacts, Rituals and Tomes

The Arks of the Martyrs and the Salzo Bible are found in the Host's secret sacristy. The Deathless Flame ritual is described in the Salzo Bible. Other rituals are described in the *Handler's Guide*.

Arks of the Martyrs

Artifacts. In the Host's secret sacristy are stored eight large, heavy candles, sculpted with esoteric designs but half-melted. These candles were fashioned by the Deathless Flame ritual, described in the Salzo Bible. Each candle holds the spirit of an undead sorcerer from the Sons of Cerunnos.

Deathless Flame

Complex ritual. Study time: *days*; 1D8 SAN. Activation time: *an hour*; 1D12 SAN, 3 POW.

The operator fashions a large candle using fat and brain matter rendered from the corpse of someone who died within the last 24 hours. If the activation roll succeeds, the ritual infuses the spirit of the dead person into the candle. When the candle is lit, the spirit awakens (losing 1/1D20 SAN from the unnatural the first time and 1/1D6 SAN from helplessness with each additional awakening) and can sense anything within the candle's light. The sensations are translated into the

senses that the candle's occupant most favored in life, usually sight and sound. The spirit in the candle possesses the INT, POW, SAN (except for costs sustained in awakening), and skills that it had in life. It can use rituals that allow psychic communication and have no overtly physical effects or requirements, such as Clairvoyance, Exchange Personalities, Speaking Dream, or some versions of Whispers of the Dead. The ritual may be recast to infuse a new candle with essences in the melted remains of a prior candle. If the candle is destroyed in any other way, the sorcerer's spirit is lost.

The Salzo Bible

A tome in English. Study time: months. Occult +4%, Unnatural +7%, SAN loss 1D8.

Salzo's personal scriptures contain haphazard translations from the words of the Ark of the Sabaoth, which only the Host can hear. It describes psychic correspondences with the Martyrs. It includes excerpts from John Dee's translation of the *Necronomicon*, the most extensive being a rambling disquisition on a protomythical, immortal goddess, called Shub-Niggurath in the oldest texts, as the source of all organic life. It makes incomprehensible claims that life forms exist both in and beyond four-dimensional spacetime. It expounds on the body-switching techniques of Ephraim Waite, a sorcerer from Innsmouth, Massachusetts. It describes Waite's service to Shub-Niggurath and his consorting with terrifying, protean slave-monsters called shoggoths and an aquatic species called "deep ones" that interbred with humanity.

It gives a detailed history of the Sons of Cerunnos, described on page 3. The Sons of Cerunnos used the Deathless Flame ritual to bind their spirits into large candles. They use the Exchange Personalities ritual for immortality and to enjoy the flesh by reincarnation into new bodies. The texts claim that male brains are better suited for magical power, and so the Sons of Cerunnos demand male children to raise and possess.

RITUALS: Call Forth Those From Outside (Shub-Niggurath), Deathless Flame, Exchange Personalities, Exorcism, Obscure Memory, Whispers of the Dead (the Martyrs), Whispers of the Dead (Shoggoths), Withering.

Researching Innsmouth

The Agents may read about Innsmouth and grow curious. A brief Internet search finds that Innsmouth is a small, long-abandoned town in Massachusetts. Agents can pursue further information on Innsmouth according to their skills and contacts. Details they uncover could connect them to the horrors of the scenario *Ex Oblivione*.

HISTORY: An Agent with a skill of 50% or higher, or who makes a successful roll, learns that Innsmouth is notable for the government raid that occurred there in February 1928. According to news reports and Massachusetts histories, the town was home to an inbred religious cult which traded in drugs, bootlegging, and worse. It had terrorized the area for decades. Their "church," called the Esoteric Order of Dagon, was linked to abductions and murders.

Finally, after a witness reported a rum-running operation in town, agents from the Bureau of Investigation (the precursor to the FBI) and the Treasury Department raided it, with assistance from Coast Guard and Navy vessels which ran interdiction on boats. They arrested most of the town.

Innsmouth never recovered. It remains a long-overgrown ruin on the shores of Massachusetts, which has taken on a local legendary "ghost town" status. Teenagers still drive into Innsmouth to make out, break what few windows remain, and mark up the abandoned buildings with graffiti. Stories are told of devil worship out on the long-gone reef, and of pacts struck with monsters for gold and treasure from beneath the sea.

OCCULT: An Agent with a skill of 50% or higher, or who makes a successful roll, learns that various conspiracy theories say that the 1928 Innsmouth raid was cover for the outright extermination of immigrants, the homeless, socialists, unionizers, or townfolk who were in league with aliens or demons.

BUREAUCRACY (NAVY): A successful roll by an Agent with extensive Navy connections can reveal several minor things which hint at the bigger picture. First, according to news reports, the federal raid on Innsmouth occurred on 23 FEB 1928. On that date, the Marines reported a dozen or so casualties, suddenly, in various far-flung locations far outside of the

United States. Five of those occurred in an attack on a Marine patrol on a coastal road just west of Chinandega, Nicaragua. The Marine Corps reported it as an ambush by rebels fighting the U.S. occupation. There was no pattern to the locations of the other deaths. A second Bureaucracy roll on any one of those names indicates their last location for receiving mail was listed as the Boston Naval Annex—even those killed in places like Nicaragua, whose mail should have been handled someplace farther afield.

PERSUADE (MARINES): A successful roll by an Agent with connections to any high-ranking Marine indicates that the contact has heard the name “Innsmouth.” It is a tall tale that some career Marines pass down from their fathers and grandfathers, about a town in the U.S. overrun by a devil cult which the Marines busted in a hard fight sometime in the 1930s. The Marine doesn’t believe such nonsense, of course.

Asking the Program About Innsmouth

Sending a request up the chain to the Program about Innsmouth is met with a solid rebuff. Innsmouth is beyond the scope of this investigation. Further prodding might be met with a telephone call from the Director himself. Notably, he is much more expressive in his commands that the agents leave it alone.

Asking the Outlaws About Innsmouth

Innsmouth is well known to the Outlaws. If the Agents ping A-Cell, it returns a scattered series of reports from different generations. These grant +1 to the Unnatural skill of any Agent reading through them carefully, and reveal the following:

YUMA-YUCCA II: An Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) subsection called P4 built and ran an Arizona facility called Naval Medicine Annex Yuma, code-named “YY-II” after its code on surveyor maps: “Yuma-Yucca Lot 2.” Naval Medicine Annex Yuma housed prisoners from a 1928 government raid on Innsmouth. There is nothing more available about P4 in public records or from A-Cell.

NOT ENTIRELY HUMAN: The Innsmouth prisoners held by P4 were *wrong*. Some were physically almost identical to human, but most had anomalous biology

that could not be readily identified. Some had functioning gills. These creatures are sometimes referred to as “Deep Ones” in the files. P4 added more captives to YY-II after a Marine Corps raid in Nicaragua in 1933.

DELTA GREEN TAKES OVER: At some point between 1939 and 1942, Delta Green took over Deep Ones research from ONI. Three Delta Green “actions” against the Deep Ones are noted, including something called OPERATION LIFEGUARD, which took place in France near the beginning of America’s involvement in the European war.

NOT CLOSED BUT MOVED: Due to a change in commands (from Delta Green to some other group), YY-II was closed in Arizona and moved to an unknown location in New Mexico. This facility was also called YY-II, or sometimes the ICE CAVE. Also stored at this location were “anomalous remains recovered at Corona, NM, in 1947.”

Characters

These are the characters most likely to help or hinder the Agents.

Jake Elliott/Samuel Woodman

On record, 12-year-old Jake Elliott is the child of Church of the Twelve Martyrs residents Hank Elliott and his wife Liza. In fact, he was fathered by the Host, Erol Salzo III, like most children at the compound. Jake was an ordinary boy—other than his unusual home and upbringing—for his first 10 years. About two years ago, during his first attendance of a High Holy Prayers ceremony, his mind was violated by sorcerer Samuel Woodman. The evil sorcerer attacked until the boy’s mind was his forever. Backed up by Andy Welks, Jake acts as the Host’s chief troubleshooter, going about without arousing suspicion and using sorcery to spy on or even kill troublemakers. It was his casting of the Withering ritual that killed Terri Santos. He dresses unusually for a boy his age, wearing a buttoned-up long-sleeve shirt and neat, khaki trousers.

Jake Elliott/Samuel Woodman

Old evil in a young host, age seemingly 12

STR 7 CON 9 DEX 10 INT 16 POW 17 CHA 7

HP 8 WP 17 SAN 0

SKILLS: Alertness 50%, Drive 30%, Firearms 25%, History 80%, HUMINT 70%, Occult 90%, Persuade 80%, Search 50%, Stealth 50%, Unnatural 40%.

RITUALS: Call Forth Those From Outside (Shub-Niggurath), Deathless Flame, Exchange Personalities, Obscure Memory, Whispers of the Dead (Martyrs), Whispers of the Dead (Shoggoths), Withering.

INFESTATION: Elliott's body is infested with bits of shoggoth-life thanks to his worship of Shub-Niggurath in the Vault of the Bat. It renders him slightly feverish all the time, with elevated counts of white blood cells that strive uselessly against the infestation. If he is injured for 4 or more points of damage but still has at least 1 hit point, tumorous flesh erupts and closes the wound. The pain stuns Elliott (as per the *Agent's Handbook*, page 55) but he immediately heals 1D4 damage. Seeing this costs 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.

Featured Characters

Italics indicate positions of authority. Numbers are page references.

Hourglass City Government

Mayor Steven Polk 4

Magdalena Munsch, librarian 11

Hourglass Police

Chief Colin Hughs 5, 22

Patrol Captain David Morales 21, 22

Patrol Sergeant Calvin Maloy 21

Patrol Officer Cynthia Brown 8, 21

Patrol Officer David Welch 8, 21

Detective Eugene Woods 21

Witnesses to the Disappearance

Theresa T. Babb 7

Robert H. Babb 7

Thomas P. Braley 7

Margaret W. Brito 7

Craig D. Harmon 7

Ismael M. Hay 7

Robert K. Jensen 7

Andra A. Kelly 7

Tammy A. Perry 7

Herbert R. Salsbury, aka "Rawdog" 1, 2, 7, 8

Etta D. Warren 7

Terri Santos' Circle

Kenneth Collins 6

Tiffany Fritch 6

Alice Padilla 6, 7, 12

Stephanie Vanderhoof 6

Eugene's "News at Nine"

Henrietta Hyre 20

Ashley Willette 20

Takelma Descendants

Hawilité Johnson 9

Shasta Walker 9

The Robinson Family

Samantha Robinson 21, 30

Charles Smith 21, 30

Christopher Robinson 21, 30

Joel Robinson 21, 30

Judy Robinson 21, 30

Larry Robinson 21, 30

Church of the Twelve Martyrs

Erol Salzo III, aka "The Host," aka Gyles Root 2, 3, 8-11, 14-16, 24, 25, 27

Rhea Salzo 3, 6, 14, 15

Robert Santos 2, 5, 6, 14, 15

Andy Welks, aka Nicholas Heaton 13, 16-20, 22, 23, 25, 27

Jake Elliott, aka Samuel Woodman 2, 7, 16-20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27

Terri Santos 1-8, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 25

Sons of Cerunnos

Gyles Root See Erol Salzo III

Joseph Adams 9, 16, 29

Makepeace Cotton 9, 16, 29

Goodman Griswold 9, 16, 29

Increase Hartwell 9, 16, 29

Nicholas Heaton See Andy Welks

Ephraim Hickee 9, 16, 29

Hezekiah Hynde 9, 16, 29

Josiah Joiner 9, 16, 29

John Pemble 9, 16, 29

Silence Root 3, 9, 16, 17, 18, 23, 27

Samuel Woodman See Jake Elliott



MEMO

FROM

SUB

Andy Welks/Nicholas Heaton

On record, 20-year-old Andy Welks is the child of Church of the Twelve Martyrs residents Orenthal Welks and his wife Eugenia. In fact, he was fathered by the Host, Erol Salzo III, like most children at the compound. Andy was an ordinary boy—other than his unusual home and upbringing—for his first 11 years. Not quite 10 years ago, during his first attendance of a High Holy Prayers ceremony, his mind was violated by sorcerer Nicholas Heaton. Heaton gradually took permanent possession. Nicholas Heaton has always been overawed by Samuel Woodman, regardless of which bodies they occupy. Welks supports Jake Elliott, driving the boy around and watching out for risks as they deal with threats to the Church.

Andy Welks/Nicholas Heaton

Cruel Samuel's acolyte, age seemingly 20

STR 12 CON 13 DEX 12 INT 15 POW 15 CHA 11
HP 13 WP 15 SAN 0

SKILLS: Alertness 40%, Athletics 50%, Dodge 40%, Drive 40%, Firearms 25%, History 70%, HUMINT 60%, Occult 90%, Persuade 60%, Search 50%, Stealth 50%, Unnatural 30%.

RITUALS: Call Forth Those From Outside (Shub-Niggurath), Deathless Flame, Exchange Personalities, Obscure Memory, Whispers of the Dead (Martyrs), Whispers of the Dead (Shoggoths), Withering.

INFESTATION: Welks' body is infested with bits of shoggoth-life thanks to his worship of Shub-Niggurath in the Vault of the Bat. It renders him slightly feverish all the time, with elevated counts of white blood cells that strive uselessly against the infestation. If he is injured for 4 or more points of damage but still has at least 1 hit point, tumorous flesh erupts and closes the wound. The pain stuns Welks (as per the *Agent's Handbook*, page 55) but he immediately heals 1D4 damage. Seeing this costs 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.

The Host, Erol Salzo III/Gyles Root

The Host seems to be a friendly, charismatic, earnest faith leader. It does not take much frustration to break that façade and reveal the razor-sharp flint underneath. Salzo is only the latest body to host Gyles Root, leader of an ancient order of sorcerers. Root is cunning and patient, but boundlessly arrogant. That readiness to revel in his power could mean overconfidence that Agents could use against him.

The Host

Favorite Son of Cerunnos, age seemingly 50

STR 9 CON 10 DEX 10 INT 16 POW 18 CHA 16
HP 10 WP 18 SAN 0

SKILLS: Alertness 50%, History 70%, HUMINT 80%, Occult 90%, Persuade 90%, Search 50%, Stealth 50%, Unnatural 50%.

RITUALS: Call Forth Those From Outside (Shub-Niggurath), Deathless Flame, Exchange Personalities, Obscure Memory, Whispers of the Dead (Martyrs), Whispers of the Dead (Shoggoths), Withering.

INFESTATION: The Host's body is infested with bits of shoggoth-life thanks to his worship of Shub-Niggurath in the Vault of the Bat. It renders him slightly feverish all the time, with elevated counts of white blood cells that strive uselessly against the infestation. If the Host is injured for 4 or more points of damage but still has at least 1 hit point, tumorous flesh erupts and closes the wound. The pain stuns the Host (as per the *Agent's Handbook*, page 55) but he immediately heals 1D4 damage. Seeing this costs 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural. What's more, his son Silence Root awakens in the Sanctuary and comes to its father's defense.

Silence Root

Silence Root is the half-human son of the sorcerer Gyles Root, spawned by a shoggoth during Shub-Niggurath a ritual centuries ago. A proto-shoggoth, Silence Root has kept the form of the Ark of the Sabaoth for decades. He sometimes takes a human form, but his stats are the same. If the Host is hurt or calls for help, he awakens, take a form half man and half roiling black impermanent flesh, and rushes glubbing and keening to Salzo's defense, making humanlike mouths to blubber "FFFATHER!" If the Host is slain, and a turn goes by in which the Agents did not attack Silence Root, he seizes Salzo's remains and departs. He returns to the black pits below the Vault of the Bat, never to be seen again.

Silence Root

Child of horrors, age seemingly 30 or incalculable

STR 25 CON 13 DEX 10 INT 9 POW 12
HP 19 WP 12 SAN 0

SKILLS: Alertness 80%, Swim 90%.

ATTACKS: Grapple and crush 55%, damage 1D8 (see **CRUSH**).

Smash 35%, damage 2D6 (see **SMASH**).

Impale 35%, damage 1D6, Armor Piercing 5 (see **IMPALE**).

CRUSH: A target grappled and pinned by Root, even if the target has already acted in that turn, may attempt a single, unopposed **DEX** test to struggle free. Failure means the victim is engulfed and crushed for 1D8 damage, which ignores armor. The victim must then make a **LUCK** roll once per turn to be spat back out. Failure means the victim is consumed, ground up into nutrients; the victim loses 1D4 HP each turn and Root gains an equivalent amount. Against a target that's larger than human-sized, Root simply squeezes whatever portion seems most vulnerable, inflicting 1D8 damage without absorbing nutrients.

ENDURANCE: If Root has at least 2 HP, it heals 1D10 HP, up to his maximum, every turn that he neither moves nor attacks. Root can survive comfortably in vacuum, in any depth of water, in freezing temperatures, and in catastrophic heat. Radiation which would cause cell-death in mammals is quite harmless to Root. Root suffers no ill effects from aging. Presumably Root must feed, but he has been known to sit in torpor for decades with no apparent harm. The limits of Root's endurance are unknown.

IMPALE: Root suddenly extrudes a thin tentacle tipped with a bone-talon, impaling a target and inflicting 1D6 HP damage. Each HP inflicted on the target is added to Root's own HP as it absorbs nutrients.

LOCOMOTION: Root can roll along the ground, disperse his density to rise lighter than air, or pull water or air through himself like a jet. Victims can escape by speeding away via automobile, boat, or airplane.

PLASTIC: Root can ooze, grow, shift or change his plastic form to fit through almost any gap. If air can pass through an opening, Root can as well. Any attack against Root inflicts no more than 1 HP damage, except one using hypergeometry or a weapon with Lethality of 30% or more.

SENTRY: Unless he is deliberately attempting to pass as human, Root often manifests shifting eyes that can see in every portion of the electromagnetic spectrum. All **STEALTH** attempts against him are at -20%. This does not apply while Root is dormant, in his rock-like form in the Sanctuary.

SMASH: Gathering up a dozen limbs, Root can smash or dismember a target for 2D6 damage. An attempt to **Dodge** this attack is at +20%.

TEKELI-LI: Can imitate sounds perfectly and is an incredible mimic. An Agent who specifically asks



whether an imitated sound seems wrong can attempt an Alertness test to tell the difference.

UNSTOPPABLE: If reduced to 0 HP, Root collapses into inert, hardened, desiccated bits of organic matter. However, he is not dead. If left in this state in an environment with access to oxygen and water, even trace water in the air, he reconstitutes to half strength in 2D20 hours. If this desiccated matter is burned or subjected to other destructive forces (even ones which would not usually affect Root), Root is permanently destroyed.

RITUALS: Call Forth Those From Outside (Shub-Niggurath), Whispers of the Dead (Martyrs), Whispers of the Dead (Shoggoths).

SAN LOSS: 1/1D10.

Other Martyrs

While possessing a man of the church, a Martyr uses his own INT (14, on average), POW (15, on average), CHA (8, on average), skills, and rituals. The Ark-bound Martyrs include Joseph Adams, Makepeace Cotton, Goodman Griswold, Increase Hartwell, Ephraim Hickes, Hezekiah Hynde, Josiah Joiner, and John Pemble.

Martyrs' Skills and Rituals

SKILLS: Occult 80%, Persuade 50%, Unnatural 30%.

RITUALS: Exchange Personalities, Obscure Memory, Whispers of the Dead (Martyrs), Withering.

People of the Church

The Church of the Twelve Martyrs forces men and women into specific, traditional roles. Women grow things, clean things, and bear and rear children. Men build things, repair things, earn money for the Church, and defend the Church. Unlike in other traditional churches, the men do not father children. That is solely the prerogative of the Host. Even in the Inner Temple, when a man of the Church is possessed by a Martyr and takes a woman for the dead sorcerer's sexual gratification, the Host makes sure any resulting pregnancies are terminated. In general, stats apply to adult residents of the compound, but only the men have weapons or attack skills beyond the skill base.

Servant of the Host

Victim of unnatural abuse, age 20–60.

STR 10 CON 10 DEX 10 INT 10 POW 7 CHA 8

HP 10 WP 7 SAN 23 BREAKING POINT 21

DISORDERS: Each suffers from dissociative identity disorder (often resulting from a Martyr taking over), intermittent explosive disorder, obsessive/compulsive disorder, and/or paranoia; adapted to helplessness and violence.

SKILLS: Alertness 30%, Athletics 40%, Craft (Butchering, Carpentry, Cooking, Electrician, Mechanic, Plumbing, Ranching, etc.) 40%, Firearms 30%, Persuade 30%, Ride 40%, Survival 30%, Stealth 30%.

ATTACKS: 9 mm pistol 30%, damage 1D10.

AR-15 carbine 30%, damage 1D12, Armor Piercing 3.

Hunting rifle with telescopic sight 30%, damage 1D12+2, Armor Piercing 5.

Knife 30%, damage 1D4, Armor Piercing 3.

Wood axe 30%, damage 1D10.

Unarmed 40%, damage 1D4–1.

TELESCOPIC SIGHT: The hunting rifle's base range is doubled to 500 m if the shooter spent the last turn aiming.

Hourglass Police

Protecting and serving.

Patrol Officer or Detective

Mostly honest, age 25–55

STR 13 CON 11 DEX 10 INT 10 POW 12 CHA 10

HP 12 WP 12 SAN 60 BREAKING POINT 48

ARMOR: 4 points from a reinforced Kevlar vest.

SKILLS: Alertness 50%, Athletics 50%, Bureaucracy 30%, Criminology 30%, Drive 40%, Firearms 40%, HUMINT 40%, Law 30%, Melee Weapons 50%, Persuade 50%, Search 40%, Unarmed Combat 50%.

ATTACKS: .40 pistol 40%, damage 1D10.

AR-15 carbine with holographic sight 40%, damage 1D12, Armor Piercing 3.

Extendable baton 50%, damage 1D6.

Stun gun 50%, stuns target. Unarmed 50%, damage 1D4–1.

HOLOGRAPHIC SIGHT: Gives a +20% bonus to hit as long as the officer has taken no damage since their last action.

SWAT Officer

Trained to kill, age 30–50

STR 14 CON 11 DEX 10 INT 10 POW 12 CHA 10

HP 13 WP 12 SAN 60 BREAKING POINT 48

ARMOR: 6 points from tactical body armor and helmet.

SKILLS: Alertness 60%, Athletics 50%, Bureaucracy 30%, Criminology 30%, Dodge 50%, Drive 40%, Firearms 60%, Heavy Weapons 40%, HUMINT 40%, Law 30%, Melee Weapons 50%, Persuade 50%, Search 40%, Stealth 50%, Unarmed Combat 50%.

ATTACKS: *MP5SD suppressed submachine gun with ACOG* 60%, Lethality 10%.

AR-15 carbine with ACOG 60%, damage 1D12, Armor Piercing 3.

.308 sniper rifle with ACOG 60%, damage 1D12+2, Armor Piercing 5.

.45 pistol with hollow-point bullets 60%, damage 1D10+1, doubles target's Armor.

Flash-bang stun grenade 80%, stuns targets.

Combat knife 50%, damage 1D6+1, Armor Piercing 3.

Stun gun 50%, stuns target.

Unarmed 50%, damage 1D4.

ACOG (ADVANCED COMBAT OPTICAL GUNSIGHT): The officers' rifles and submachine guns are equipped with advanced combat optical gunsights. An ACOG gives a +20% bonus to hit as long as the officer has taken no damage since his or her last action. It also doubles the base range if the officer spent the last turn aiming. Note that the sniper suffers a –20% penalty to hit while firing from the helicopter in the air.

FLASH-BANG GRENADES: Each SWAT officer carries two stun grenades. A stun grenade stuns everyone within a 10 m radius. Each victim also suffers a –40% penalty to all actions for 1D6 turns. The attack chance includes a +20% bonus for the blast radius.

The Meth Family Robinson

The Robinson family—Samantha Robinson, her brother-in-law Charles Smith, and her grown children Christopher, Joel, Judy, and Larry Robinson—manufacture crystal methamphetamine. They have a couple of crooked cops in their pocket, which helps them avoid trouble but also makes them pawns when those cops decide to disrupt the Agents' plans.

A Robinson

High on things other than life, age 23–54

STR 10 CON 8 DEX varies INT 8 POW 8 CHA 6

HP 9 WP 8 SAN 30 BREAKING POINT 24

DISORDERS: Adapted to violence; each suffers from addiction, anxiety disorder, intermittent explosive disorder, or PTSD.

SKILLS: Drive 40%, Firearms 30%, Persuade 30%, Pharmacy 40%, Stealth 30%, Survival 30%.

ATTACKS: As follows.

SAMANTHA ("MAMA"), DEX 12: *Desert Eagle .50 pistol* 10%, damage 1D12.

CHRISTOPHER, DEX 11: *AR-15 carbine* 10%, damage 1D12, Armor Piercing 3.

JOEL, DEX 10: *Kel-Tec KSG shotgun with targeting laser* 30% (firing shot at point-blank or short range; 50% with the laser, if Joel has not taken damage since his last action), damage 2D10 at close range; armor counts double against this damage.

JUDY, DEX 10: *Glock 30S pistol* 10%, damage 1D10.

LARRY, DEX 9: *Agram 2000 submachine gun with a suppressor* (a rare Croatian weapon, Larry's pride and joy) 10%, damage 1D10 or Lethality 10%.

CHARLES SMITH ("UNCLE CHUCK"), DEX 8: *Glock 19 pistol* 10%, damage 1D10.

ALL: *Knife* 30%, damage 1D4, Armor Piercing 3.

Unarmed 40%, damage 1D4–1.

STIMULATED: High on PCP and/or methamphetamine during their attack on the Agents, the gangsters suffer a –20% penalty to all skill tests except Melee Weapons and Unarmed Combat (already included in their attacks), and to Sanity tests, but gain a +20% bonus to CON×5 tests to resist shock, stunning, and unconsciousness. They do not fall unconscious at 1 or 2 hit points, but they die as usual at zero. They never shirk from violence, regardless of its SAN cost.