

Future/Perfect, Part 4

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

Written by Dennis Detwiller

Published by Arc Dream Publishing in arrangement with the Delta Green Partnership. The intellectual property known as Delta Green is ™ and © the Delta Green Partnership, which has licensed its use here. The contents of this scenario are © Dennis Detwiller. Editing, layout and additional material by Shane Ivey. Updated 14 OCT 2019.

Introduction

In *Future/Perfect*, Part 1, the Agents encountered the impact of a time gate built by the sorcerer Xichlasa of the serpent-folk in the guise of inventor Arthur Hunt. Another time gate still lurks at the heart of Hunt Electronics, at the headquarters of Hunt Specialty Services. Xichlasa meant for those gates to allow the serpent-folk to pour from the troubled past into a future that they could conquer. But meddling with time attracted minds even stranger and more potent than Xichlasa's.

The Great Race of Yith can never be fully understood by the minds of humanity, but since they play a major part in the possible resolution of *Future/Perfect*, we will attempt to make their machinations comprehensible. At best, what follows is what a researcher completely immersed in Great Race culture might be able to discover with decades of unfettered study. Even this explanation does not do justice to the plans of the creatures we call the Great Race. The minds of the Yithians—so vast they can conceive the entire universe in one unblinking thought—will never be accessible to a human who remains sane.

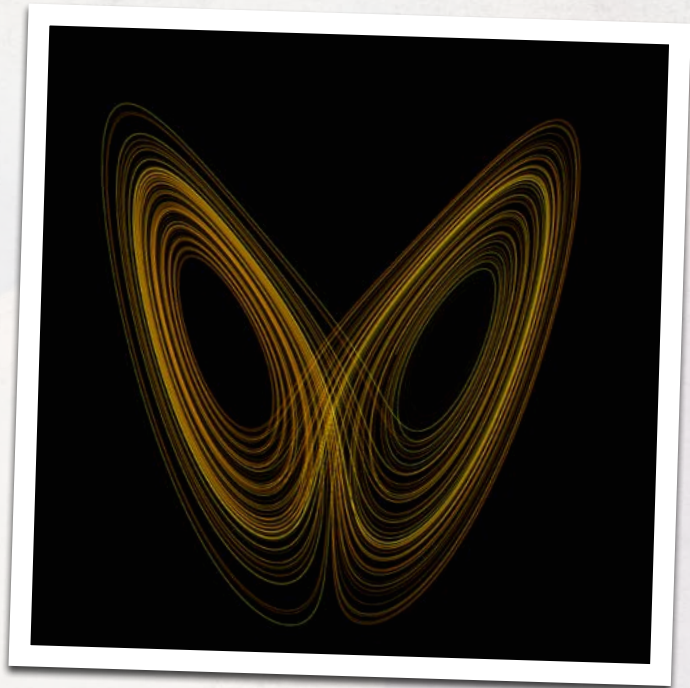
Before the Great Race of Yith were as they are now, they were tangible, mortal beings, trapped in the linear existence we call reality. At some point in what we consider the distant past, they managed to escape the shackles of physicality and move into a higher form of consciousness, unbound by time.

The Great Race do not travel through time. They exist within time itself, as if all the history of the physical universe were a single, giant object upon which their consciousnesses could move and interact with others of

their kind. For clarity, we call the physical universe as they perceive it “the Construct.”

Atemporal intangibility is their native state. What could be called the “physical” forms of the Great Race are their excursions into the Construct's materiality. The cone-shaped entities of the ancient past, their modern human puppets, and the coleopterons of the distant, radioactive future are merely temporary forms. Those forms are tools, as a shovel, a gun, or a flashlight is a tool to humanity.

The Yithians use and discard these forms as needed to maintain the integrity of the Construct upon which their real forms exist. Without the “environment” provided by the surface of the Construct, the native intelligences of the Great Race would perish.



Pivots

The Construct is fragile. There are great swaths of the Construct which the Yithians cannot enter, since there are no biological forms for them to inhabit. And there are areas dominated by creatures inimical to them and immune to their influence, such as the hideous things we call spectral polyps. But certain portions of the Construct are

awash with creatures and forms that they can easily access. Earth is one of these. At these points, the Great Race focus their efforts. We call these points “Pivots.”

The Yithians focus their consciousnesses in the Construct within biological forms such as human beings. While in these forms, their actions at Pivots can alter, sometimes quite drastically, the structure of the Construct. Small changes at certain points in history can bend, shape, cut off, or even obliterate the Construct.

To prevent the worst damage to the Construct, the Great Race have set up choke points throughout history. At these times and places, they gather a multitude of their consciousnesses, to control a Pivot or to maintain a “safe” store of information from other, more chaotic Pivots. Pnakotis, the library of the Great Race founded 65 million years ago, is the most secure Pivot contained within that portion of the Construct concerned with Earth. At Pnakotis, and in a distant, future time, the Great Race consider themselves “safe.” To the Great Race, these points exist simultaneously. In human terms, these two choke points, separated by time, are akin to two distant outposts separated by hostile terrain.

For a myriad of inhuman reasons, Pnakotis is ideal as a Pivot point. Even the spectral polyps—multi-dimensional monstrosities bent on the destruction of the Great Race in the Cretaceous—represent not a threat but an annoyance. The Great Race choose to exist within the moments of the Pnakotic Pivot that do not feature the spectral polyps. They built each Pivot with as much width and stability as possible, and project themselves into such protected moments.

From these Pivots, the Great Race monitor time and launch expeditions into it. These explorations are not simply scientific investigations. They keep the Construct stable. Humans transplanted to Pnakotis might mistake the records gathered there, from every period of Earth’s history, as a “library.” It is in fact a huge instrument to monitor changes in time, a sort of temporal barometer. This is one reason the Great Race abduct human consciousnesses to record recollections of their time in odd, rectilinear, indestructible books. It is also the reason the Great Race don’t simply spy on such creatures and write concise, all-knowing reports themselves. These books, gathered from beings at all points in Earth’s history, change as the Construct

changes. Those changes tell the Great Race when their influence has altered or broken the Construct.

The Great Race are not omniscient. They have a vast array of data, but some things are beyond their reach. They constantly strive to understand events and reinforce the Construct.

Servants and Actuators

Of all the unnatural but intelligent species known to humanity, the Great Race is the closest to benign. The net effect of their machinations on human culture is positive, in that they stabilize and normalize time. This is not to say they are friendly. They have deep contempt and disregard for human life. But at this particular Pivot, we are the only tool available to reshape the Construct. To the Great Race, humans are backwards, troublesome, and difficult to control. The Yithians seem distant, fickle and even downright evil to those humans exposed to their activities.

Their methods in our portion of history are two-fold. Their first and most often used tool a cult of human servants, known as the Motion. They are a disposable supply of temporal laborers, swayed by the magnificence of the Great Race and revering them as gods or ascended masters. Natives to a particular point of time at a Pivot have a limited range of effect on it. They are capable of subtle shifts in the future with minimal risk to the Construct itself. The Motion exist throughout all of human history, and go



by various names and titles, but their methods, access to Great Race technology, and fanatical selflessness remain the same. The Motion will do anything to complete missions assigned to them by the Great Race.

Second, the Great Race hurl their own minds into the Construct. Most often, this is simply to exchange minds with a temporal native in order to expand the library of Pnakotis. Most members of the Great Race have limited experience with the human portion of the Construct. Each jumps into a creature of such limited brainpower and perception damages a Yithian's consciousness.

Sometimes, however, they send special operatives called Actuators through time. Actuators are sent into human hosts repeatedly. Their expertise at fitting among humanity is an important, developable skill. Actuators deal with difficult problems, particularly temporal loops and knots, and threats to the very existence of the Construct. Actuators are prevalent throughout human history.

The largest threat to the stability of the Construct is the prevalence of time travel and gate technology. The Great Race must endlessly "update" history to correct interference in the structure of spacetime by beings incapable of seeing its long-term effects. Actuators are particularly likely to intervene when a gate in time is utilized.

The Hellbend and Duxbury Gates

The attention of the Great Race is drawn to the temporal gates at Hellbend, California and Duxbury, Pennsylvania. The Duxbury gate found in *Future/Perfect*, Part 3, is a convoluted puzzle in causality, thanks to the influence of the serpent-folk on humanity.

The Great Race have long since "completed" their regard of portion of history in which the serpent-folk were active, so interfering with them in the past is not an option. And they carefully monitored Arthur Hunt's development of the Gate, but attacking Hunt directly is likewise a last resort. Hunt's many inventions are a necessary linchpin in human technological development. Interfering with them risks altering the Construct too much. The Great Race identified a point where they could safely shut down the Hellbend gate, using an Actuator in the guise of Michael Grunning. But attempts to shut down the Duxbury gate have failed. Millions of times, they have launched concerted efforts to neutralize the effects of the Duxbury

gate, which opens the way between modern Duxbury and a base in the distant past. With tiny shifts in history, they have killed the entire population at the Offsite location. They have erased the Duxbury facility. They have folded both gates in on themselves, removing key personnel at particular points in time. Each attempt has failed to resolve the conduit through time. Each attempt either made things far worse at a later date, or simply disintegrated the Construct past that point in time.

The events of *Future/Perfect* present a possible solution: the Agents of Delta Green.

An Actuator in Part 3

Future/Perfect, Part 4, takes place on the other side of HSS's Duxbury gate, at a colony in the distant past called "Offsite." Infiltrating HSS in *Future/Perfect*, Part 3, is extraordinarily difficult and dangerous, but the Agents might get help from the Great Race. An HSS employee possessed by an Actuator of the Great Race could approach the Agents, either while the Agents are inside HSS, while they are supposedly hidden at a safe house, or after they have been captured and are waiting to hear their fate.

The Actuator

If the Great Race deem it necessary to contact the Agents, they dispatch one of their most resourceful Actuators. The Actuator is an ageless, relentless creature so far in advance of humanity that it has difficulty articulating anything but the most basic concepts to them. Even so, it represents the epitome of Great Race/human relations. For all its trouble communicating, the Actuator understands human behavior and reasoning to a startling degree. It is an encyclopedia of the human era spanning a block of time that stretches approximately from 100 years ago to a few years in the future. It knows the areas, people, places, and events around Duxbury and Offsite especially well, in a way a surveyor might know the subtle dips and changes in elevation on a worksite after documenting it for months.

The Actuator can aid the Agents in a wholly unobtrusive way, using its mastery of time to achieve results not possible otherwise. For example, the Great Race have meticulous, to-the-second, shifting records of all personnel, all codes, and all keycard combinations, as well as



personal histories and information about everyone in the facility. With such information, a single Actuator can ferry a team of Delta Green Agents through the HSS facility undiscovered.

The baffling aid of the Actuator, possessing HSS employees, may lead to distrust, refusal to cooperate, or just plain violence. The Great Race are, of course, used to such reactions. They do not give up due to something as simple as their human vessel being beaten, tortured or shot.

Continuously confronted by such creatures in human guise may be enlightening or disturbing. The knowledge that such beings haunts the periphery of all existence costs 1/1D4 SAN from the unnatural.

The Actuator knows and understands things no one could possibly predict or understand. This knowledge should startle the Agents. For example, the Actuator might know that Elaine Walcott of 931 Deerlake Road in Duxbury will fall down the stairs in her home at 5:33:04 A.M., or that a dog belonging to Burt Brooker of Carlcliff Farms in Duxbury will be struck and killed by Walcott's car on the day following due to her stiffness after this fall. This complex interplay of facts is as clear in the Actuator's mind as a road map might be to a human. Knowing such detailed information about the "future" makes the Actuator capable of complex tasks outside the realm of possibility for normal people.

Agents who come to grips with such knowledge can easily test the Great Race's powers by asking questions about the past or future. What the Actuator chooses to share with the Agents, if anything, is up to the Handler. It should quickly become clear that something inhuman and unimaginably powerful is attempting to stop HSS from using the Gate. But the Actuator will consistently fail to

explain that the Agents need to travel to the Offsite location simply because that is what happened...or is happening...or will happen.

Once in the Gate room, the Great Race's Actuator can create a confluence of coincidences sufficient to remove attention from the Gate for a few minutes while the Agents travel through. Using the Gate is draining and disturbing, costing each traveler 1 WP and 1 SAN.

Another Way

If the Agents refuse to comply with the Actuator, it forces them. A dozen members of the Motion unceremoniously kidnap the Agents. They use Great Race technology, such as stun guns made of television remotes and garage-door openers.

When the Agents wake, they are securely bound to wooden kitchen chairs in a dilapidated house. They have been stripped of weapons and equipment. No one else is present. Surrounding them are what appear to be thousands of meters of cable lines and high-voltage lines, all intertwined and woven through the chairs, connected to the chairs, and connected to hand-made boxes filled with humming, spitting, and arcing electrical equipment. This is a Great Race gate machine.

The Agents should not be permitted to escape, though giving them a glimmer of hope would be a nice touch. As they struggle to get free, a low hum builds. An old lightbulb above the stove explodes in a huge shower of blue-white sparks. A huge, high-pitched whining, like that of an enormous generator, fills the air. It drowns out all other noise.

Blue, white, and red lightning leaps from the boxes, arcing toward objects in the room. They seem to find an item, strike it once, and then pepper the target with growing tendrils of power until—to the Agents' horror—the object vanishes in an eruption of blue-white light, leaving a scorch mark behind. Seeing this weird destruction costs 0/1 SAN from the unnatural.

When all large, metal items in the room have been disintegrated, the lightning begins hitting a random Agent. The process is agonizing to experience and terrifying to watch, costing 1/1D6 SAN from the unnatural. A stricken Agent takes 1D20 damage per turn. When the Agent reaches 0 HP, their body vanishes in a blue-white flash.

This entire process is painfully drawn out, until, one by one, all Agents are disintegrated.

They wake in a lush green field under a humid blue sky. A perfect circle is seared black around them, 12 meters across. The Agents are all present and unharmed, though their clothing and hair are scorched. They are surrounded by lightning-kissed and ruined kitchen appliances. The wooden chairs in which they were secured are lighter, as if sapped of all water, and are now easily broken into chunks of brittle wood and ash.

Just outside the burnt circle are sets of jump suits and boots to clothe all the Agents, folded carefully on the ground in a perfect row. The Agents' names are inscribed on the name tags for each jumpsuit. No one else is present.

Coming over a nearby ridge, the Agents see Base Camp, the heart of Offsite.

Offsite

The Offsite colony is an enormous undertaking, representing hundreds of millions of dollars worth of personnel, equipment, and supplies. Its soaring costs were covered by the recovery of valuable metals in the past, which were transported to the future and sold. But William Lassiter's attempt at paradise still remains a long way off.

Offsite has two inhabited areas and a number of work sites. The inhabited areas are Base Camp, which holds the Gate and supplies, and the Compound, where a large, permanent residential colony is being built.

Offsite is, quite simply, an attempt to create a completely self-sufficient home for the "rebirth" of modern humanity. Personnel and supplies come through the Gate at Base Camp. The larger community is still in construction at a site called the Compound. The Compound is still two to three years from completion, but the capture of Jonathan Emery at LaGuardia Airport with 100 kg of illegal gold (described in *Future/Perfect*, Part 3) has collapsed HSS's timeline. Now, equipment and materiel are being shoveled through the Gate at a breakneck pace. Everything is coming in greater quantities than ever before. More people, more equipment, more food, more supplies, and more tools.

There has been no official announcement at the Offsite location, but the message is clear: It is only a matter

of time before the Gate is closed and their trip to the past will become their world of the present.

Habitation

The Offsite location is a bit hot, but otherwise ideally suited for human inhabitants. There are no significant predators. There are abundant fruit bushes, and small game is recognizable as predecessors of modern species. Experiments in planting seeds of fruit-bearing plants which would have existed at this date succeeded, leading experts to believe a long-term effort to colonize this time period would be easy.

The water supply was a significant problem but was rapidly overcome by HSS money and resources. Early tests on Offsite water found virulent, unknown microscopic organisms which could easily sicken or kill humans. Artesian wells pulled up cleaner but still dangerous water, filled with different species of unknown bacteria. A concerted effort was made to develop a water ecosystem with redundant, experimental water-scrubbing facilities. Nearly two dozen wells have been dug and made safe.

Destroying these wells or sabotaging the scrubbing equipment is a fast way to bring the camp to its knees. Everyone has become used to clean water, and the lack of it will be felt within hours. Within days, HSS must begin carting fresh water through the Gate, a very time-consuming and expensive undertaking, while the damaged equipment is repaired or replaced. The second time such equipment is set up, there will be guards watching over it, making a quiet sabotage nearly impossible.



Transportation

Transportation within inhabited areas (Base Camp and the Compound) is generally on foot. Travel between areas is accomplished by large, military surplus trucks that were moved in components through the Gate to be reassembled. There are 20 trucks, and on any average day three or more are being worked on at the motor pool at Base Camp. There is always a shortage of transportation between Base Camp and the Compound, because almost all the truck space is occupied with construction supplies. These trucks run 24 hours a day, ferrying equipment, supplies, and personnel from Base Camp to the Compound, and bringing workers back. It's easy for a single person to catch a lift on one of these trucks during off hours, particularly in the middle of the night. More than one person hoping to head out to the Compound will find space very limited.

There are 30 or so methane-powered mini-front-loaders, used to move supplies. These are everywhere in Base Camp, and are easily commandeered. Everyone seems to use them.

There are a dozen or so light ATV quads that are for use by specialty crew such as the Away Team (described on page 12) or the Security Detail. These light vehicles are carefully accounted for, and are not for general use. They are the only vehicles at the camp that require keys to activate. The trucks and front loaders simply have a push starter.

Gasoline, as can be imagined, is a strictly managed commodity. It is rare since it must be carried through the Gate, and since it goes bad it must be replenished rather than stored indefinitely. Weekly fuel deliveries are made in large oil drums, which are brought up to the main Base Camp area and stacked along the inner walls of the camp.

Location, Location, Location?

Star positions indicate that Offsite is approximately 1.1 million years in the past, in the vicinity of Greenland, but some have their doubts. The location is strangely humid and warm for what experts expect in that region at that date. And the various species of megafauna expected to be found at such a location and date are nowhere to be seen. Experts expect mammoths and giant sloths, but not one has been seen.

Some theorize that some a catastrophic event or biological shift either has occurred or will occur to cause the dispersion of such creatures in a relatively "rapid" timeframe to fit with the modern paleontological evidence. Another theory is that mankind simply misunderstood the fossil evidence. A less well-received theory is that the group is misplaced in time and is misreading its position, or even is in another dimension.



Base Camp

Base Camp is a permanent base built around the point in space where the Duxbury gate materializes. It is an intimidating structure, built to house and defend up to 1,000 people. It is, by far, the most sturdy and modern of all structures built Offsite, and could hold off an outside assault for days or weeks.

Base Camp is surrounded by a large, reinforced wall of cement and stainless steel, nearly 30 cm thick, which rises to 4 meters. The wall is built at a slight outward slant, meaning there's a negative slope. Climbing it is impossible without equipment. The wall is topped by razor-wire on the outside lip.

The interior of the wall has a steel walkway that runs the entire perimeter, allowing guards to spot and fire upon targets outside the wall. This walkway is accessible from multiple points inside the wall, and is occasionally broken

by fixed heavy weapon emplacements such as mounted machine guns.

Cement bunkhouses extend from the interior wall. Each can house nearly 100 people. There are more facilities below ground, just as at the HSS plant.

Three large towers break the silhouette of the wall. They afford clear views of the countryside. These towers appear to be all glass, but they are actually bulletproof glass with gun-slits, allowing the ground to be fired upon from nearly any angle. They are manned at all times by one or more guards, who use high-tech optics to scan the environment day and night for threats.

There is a single entrance through the wall, a huge, 20-cm-thick double door of stainless steel, which recesses mechanically into the walls. The door requires power to open quickly, though a manual “ratchet” opening mechanism allows it to be opened in under ten minutes. Two murder holes in the ceiling above the entrance allow unrestricted fire on enemies below. The door is almost always closed, and is open only for specific tasks like moving equipment or large amounts of people or goods in or out. During these times, lights throughout Base Camp indicate the facility is on alert, and the presence of weapons increases dramatically.

The wall encloses an area of approximately half a hectare (1.25 acres), composed of mostly open ground, small, squat, one- and two-story cement buildings, and large depots filled with storage boxes, equipment, and goods to be transported to secure areas. The interior buildings are heavily reinforced concrete, broken only by recessed plexiglass windows and airlocks with steel doors like those on a battleship. These buildings have three, four, or five rooms, with general-use areas, speciality office areas, stairs, and elevators leading down into the earth. It is easy, from the surface, to mistake the squat concrete structures as unimportant, but they are the entrances to the most secure areas of Base Camp, including the Gate. They lead to subterranean facilities that comprise nearly forty percent of the overall structure’s area.

The underground complex is an air-locked series of tunnels, warrens, and sealed-off sections. Huge elevators move up and down, opening to ground level from a huge, fold-out, stainless steel hatch which swings up when the elevator arrives. It is here that the largest items sent

through the Gate are sent to the surface. This elevator is also used to move newly arrived recruits to the surface for a tour.

Security at Base Camp

Security at Base Camp is relatively light. Base Camp security officers are rarely armed with anything more than a pistol. More often than not, they seem to be either distracted or wandering the grounds without a clear indication of what they are up to. A few minutes wandering around the camp makes clear that security there is not all it could be.

Twice a day, security drills are called with a siren, causing all the Security Detail in the Base Camp to rush to pre-set locations and prepare heavier weapons such as fully automatic assault rifles. These drills seem to be for a hypothetical siege, as if the group expects outsiders to attempt to storm Base Camp.

Anyone wandering around for more than an hour, taking careful note of the Security Detail members’ positions, can see large, exploitable holes in it.



Goods and Services

Supplies in the camp are readily available, though they tend to be all of the same type. Want a plastic razor? It and 500,000 more just like it can be found packed in crates all over the place. Need a DVD player? Hope you like Sony. The methods of the HSS purchases seem

somewhat mad on the far side of the Gate. An entire group of buying personnel spend weeks sourcing supplies and buying them in bulk through resellers.

The three areas that were not “bargain-hunted” are survival gear, military electronics, and weaponry. Though this equipment is just as abundant (that is, there are hundreds, if not thousands of them for use in the camp), it is of high quality. Life preservers, waterproof boots and jump suits, night-vision equipment, and guns are all of a uniformly high quality.

A common worker Offsite has access to nearly any amenity they had on modern Earth. Turbine power from the nearby falls powers the electricity at the Base Camp, and the Compound (described on page 9) has its own water-driven power plant. People in their rooms or dorms watch DVDs, play video games, and pursue other normal, boring activities. Table tennis, air hockey and more amusements are available in a cantina, though no alcohol is served. (There is medicinal alcohol, and a few bits of contraband, but little good alcohol.) Personnel are required to mingle during “down time” and are encouraged to participate in group activities like charades, movie watching, and sports. Dating is not restricted, but public incidents stemming from romance are strongly punished by restrictions. Restriction to one meal type for months remains the most popular and, strangely, most effective punishment.

No one has become pregnant Offsite...yet.

Food is mostly freeze-dried survival rations secured from the U.S. Army in huge quantities by a shell company. Entire hallways beneath Base Camp are filled front to back with tons of these meals, a supply which could keep Offsite alive for nearly five years.

These MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) are surprisingly variable and palatable. Even soft drinks are available in abundance, though only in the form of generic brands, something which upsets not a few in the camp; mostly, people drink distilled water.

Waste that cannot be recycled is discarded in huge, bulldozer-dug pits a little more than a kilometer from Base Camp. These vast pits are filled with trash such as MRE containers, cans, and useless biological matter like coffee grounds, rotten food and more.

Common services such as haircuts, massages and even personal trainers are also available at Base Camp. The

gym, a vast affair filled with cutting-edge equipment, is a popular social destination. As strange as it may seem, the HSS personnel are used to a particular lifestyle, and Off-site management has done its best to maintain such perks.

The Daily Grind

Most in Base Camp are either in logistics or are recent arrivals, support crew, or under medical care. Base Camp is the hospital, the gathering place, the starting point. The Compound is usually the destination for those coming through the Gate.

Base Camp is the established “port.” All other sites are are outposts that rely on Base Camp to survive. Some places, like the Compound, could survive for long periods on their own, but they are not yet self-sufficient.

As such, those personnel lucky enough to live and work in Base Camp are concerned with the planning, support, and execution of the HSS plan: to establish a permanent colony of humans here, 1.1 million years in the past. During an average day, such personnel move equipment, account for equipment, plan the use of equipment, or coordinate with their counterparts at the Compound.

Moving and Storing Supplies

The Gate is active fewer than 20 hours per week. When it is in use, a complex dance of personnel and equipment takes place in the Reception Chamber beneath Base Camp, where gear, people and goods come through.

A huge amount of logistics, support and tracking must go on for goods and supplies to be stored and accounted for. These flurries of activity are so ingrained in the personnel that few even think about their importance anymore. Crates are rushed out of the Reception Chamber by lift or hand and stashed in tunnels bored from the rock. The outer areas of the under-levels are complex warrens with barely enough room to walk, filled floor to ceiling with food, weapons, equipment, and other supplies.

Fitting In

All Base Camp personnel wear similar, loose-fitting cotton jumpsuits with their names written in marker on the right breast. All wear a single brand of boots, selected because its material has anti-bacterial properties. This sometimes makes it difficult to pick out who is whom in the

camp. These jumpsuits are an ideal ticket into nearly any populated area.

Jumpsuits are stashed in plastic containers all over the Compound and Base Camp. Grabbing one and slipping it on requires only a few seconds of privacy. Wearing jumpsuits, unless they draw attention to themselves, Agents easily blend into the background of most areas.

Boots, however, are a commodity, and are far more difficult to come by. Most people don't pay attention to what kind of footwear a person in the camp is wearing, but since almost everyone in the camp wears the same brand of boots, wearing something else can be a dead giveaway.

Agents foolish enough to tool around the camp in their own clothing are likely to be instantly called out by security officers. Keep in mind, all in the camp are aware of the serpent Ahmed's attempt to infiltrate the HSS plant, and all are willing to kill intruders to prevent a catastrophe that might threaten the survival of humanity. Fitting in is vital.

The Reception Chamber

Just eight meters beneath the ground, in what was once a natural cave, is the "Reception Chamber." Here is where the Duxbury gate burrows from the future into this time, splitting spacetime open into a hovering gate of light and fog.

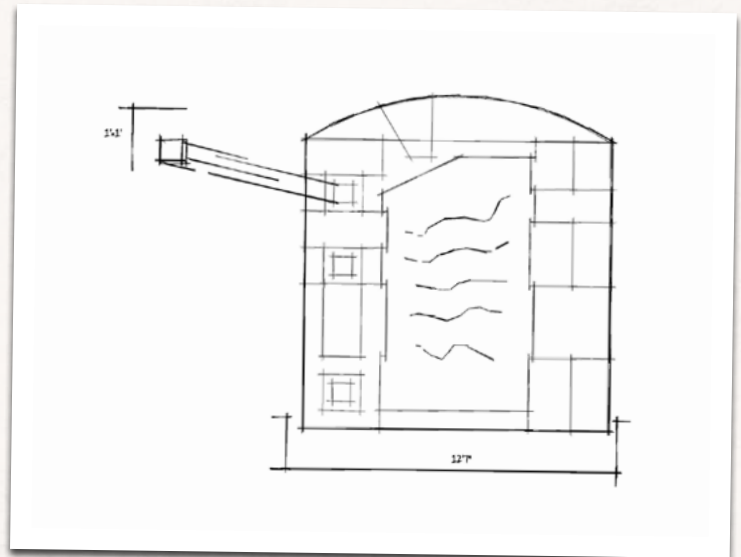
The chamber has been retrofitted as a control room. Walls and the floor have been evened out to make it suitable as a reception area. A large, raised platform is built to within a couple of centimeters beneath the active Gate. A ramp allows wheeled vehicles to roll up to receive supplies.

When the Gate manifests, it appears as a hovering doorway, nearly four meters wide and tall, composed of mist and light. Any living creature touching the mist is immediately drawn back through the Gate to the future at the Duxbury plant (described in *Future/Perfect*, Part 3), losing 1 WP and 1 SAN. Workers are very careful not to get too close to the mist when it's active. A yellow warning line is painted on the ground to mark the safe distance.

Most of the time, the Gate is not active and the room is occupied only by personnel sorting and moving equipment. The Gate opens once a week like clockwork,

running for shifts of four or eight hours, depending on what is being transported. Personnel and light equipment are generally sent in the four-hour shift. Heavy equipment is moved during the eight-hour shifts.

Movement in and out of the Reception Chamber during "transit" (as the open Gate is described) is restricted. The three entrances to the Reception Chamber are closed and locked, just in case of a malfunction. All who come through from HSS are stuck in that chamber for as long as the Gate is active. A small waiting area, off to the side of the room, holds seats and cots for these personnel to rest.



The Compound

One kilometer from Base Camp, secured in a box canyon fed by a swift river, is the Compound. The Compound sprawls across nearly two hectares (five acres) with paved roads and a hundred or so low-lying buildings. Two completely finished three-level dormitories stand near the center. There are cafeterias and meeting halls. A small facility produces concrete. Another fabricates metals for use in the buildings. Construction vehicles dot the Compound.

Approximately 25% of the Compound is complete. The rest is in various states of construction, being constantly worked on by members of the Construction Detail. The Compound is much more limited in facilities and

services than Base Camp, far more “rustic.” Some buildings have no power, others no water.

At any time, nearly 200 individuals can be found toiling away here, working from dawn until dusk. These individuals stay at this location full time. Once complete, the Compound will support a population of 1,000 indefinitely.

The Compound's Environment

The environment around the Compound is roughly analogous to the Scottish Highlands if they were in Malaysia: green, wet, and hot, averaging between 29 and 37 degrees Celsius (85 to 98 degrees Fahrenheit). The terrain is choppy, split by large deadfalls that rise and fall like sand dunes, but covered in thick mosses and grass.

Evergreen trees and large ferns are seen but are uncommon. There are places to hide during the day, and security personnel can spot someone approaching at significant distance.

The box canyon where the Compound is built is more than three kilometers deep at its base and a kilometer wide at the mouth. The rocky walls of the canyon are marked by moss and slippery, switchback paths. Water spills down these walls at intervals, feeding the river on the east side of the canyon. It is geologically stable, but dangerous to climb.

The road from Base Camp to the Compound looks like any freshly made, modern road, split by a single white line and markers indicating every hundred meters. The perfectly paved, black flattop runs the kilometer from Base Camp through the canyon mouth into the Compound.

Security at the Compound

Security at the Compound is light during the day. A dozen guards armed with AR-15 carbines and walkie-talkies walk the perimeter. Anyone coming in from the uninhabited lands surrounding the Compound, rather than on the road, will be detained. If an intruder resists, they will be shot.

Nighttime security is handled by fewer personnel but is more stringent. Six lookouts climb conning towers on the edges of the Compound, facing the front of the canyon, equipped with night-vision goggles and high-powered rifles. They have a clear shot at anything moving. No

foot traffic is allowed out of the Compound at night, so anything outside the perimeter is shot if it fails to respond to a radio call.

The best way to enter the Compound is to hitch a ride with a construction crew coming from Base Camp. There are no ID checks, or anything more complex than a nod from a guard, upon entering the Compound. It is easy to blend into the Compound personnel, as long as you wear the same jumpsuits and boots as everyone else.

It is also possible to traverse an outside path which sweeps to the top of the canyon, and then climb down the rough, barely manageable switchbacks that descend towards the Compound. That allows the Agents to enter outside the line of fire of the nighttime snipers. During the day, Agents taking this route are quickly spotted and detained. See **SECURITY DETAIL** on page 13 for more information.



The Turbine

A squat, two-level cement bunker sits on the river just 200 meters from the utility road that leads from Base Camp to the Compound. It is clearly visible as you drive past. It houses a single, large water turbine capable of generating power for two or three Compound-sized projects at once. Eleven individuals run this plant, with a minimum of two personnel on duty at any time. Its crew pay little attention to security or the risk of sabotage.

The Falls

The final Offsite structure is a larger power station than that at the Compound. A paved road leads to it, lined by a power line on timber poles.

Located approximately six kilometers south-southwest of Base Camp, it appears to be a one-story cement bunker poised on the edge of a natural waterfall. But that is simply the lip of the structure; the rest hangs off the side of the cliff. Four large turbines generate electricity, which is delivered to Base Camp by high-capacity lines. This facility, known as “The Falls,” is entirely self-sufficient. Almost a Base Camp unto itself, it has a permanent crew of 30 individuals responsible for its upkeep and power management. They have enough food and distilled water to last weeks.

This power turbine was the earliest structure built Offsite, and is thought to be capable of generating enough power to support the average use of about 3,200 people. Right now, the entire population of Offsite fluctuates around 1,000.

Offsite Personnel

Key Offsite figures include Amida Bensonal, Mapping Detail and Away Team leader and Motion cultist; William Brandt, Security Detail leader; Julius Breen, water filtration expert and Motion cultist; and John Tucker, Offsite manager.

Dr. John Tucker, Temporal Pioneer

Everything about John Tucker is exceptional. By the age of ten, he could speak six languages, was a nationally rated chess player, and was an accomplished pianist, computer programmer, and all-around know-it-all. Unlike some in his situation, his social development continued apace. He was a member of the Boy Scouts of America and an eager participant in local gaming conventions and renaissance fairs. Few could believe how well the “child genius” was adjusted.

He began college at Columbia University studying molecular biology at the age of 16. He was a world-known scholar in molecular biology before he could grow a beard, publishing twice before graduation. In 1993, at

age 17, he worked on a project (concerning the disposition of human-like traits within portions of the genome of the fruit-fly) that was nominated for a Nobel Prize. Tucker had nothing to prove, and was eager to work with others. That drew offers of fellowships, jobs, and positions in a way his discoveries never could.

Failing to win the Nobel Prize did not concern him. Tangential research studying fractals thrust him into the world of mathematics, and he received a master’s degree in mathematics from Princeton in the summer of 1997. Two papers he co-authored in the summer of 1999 re-imagined fractals and their relationship to large multicellular structures. This scientific model, called the “Tucker model,” predicts the disposition of growth of large, multi-cellular organisms using fractals. For John Tucker, this detour into mathematics was the equivalent of a mental vacation.

Tucker and HSS

In 2002, Tucker was approached by William Lassiter with a job offer. Such offers had been coming at Tucker for as long as he could remember. After several polite refusals failed to discourage Lassiter’s pursuit, Tucker agreed to meet on the condition that no further distractions would be forthcoming. Lassiter agreed.

Lassiter was quite convincing on his own. One look at the serpent-folk captive Ahmed was enough to make Tucker a true believer. Since 2002, Tucker has been one of the brightest names at Duxbury, and in 2012 he was sent through the Gate to lead the Offsite crews as Lassiter’s right-hand man.

Tucker has changed in his years at HSS. With Lassiter’s money, Tucker spent nearly five years researching the bizarre skein of books, manuscripts and archaeological sites that hint at something bigger than the “understood” history of the world. He has come to view the world of science as full of huge holes that it quietly ignores but can never fill. If he were a priest, he would be one who has lost his faith. Science is no longer the ultimate tool to pry apart the universe. Sometimes, things cannot be mechanically explained. It was difficult for him to reconcile the shattering realization that science is either blind or dumb when exposed to certain unknowns, but he reached that conclusion by logic, not belief. Everything in Lassiter’s possession was too convincing to ignore.

Managing Offsite

Tucker runs the entire Offsite operation. He is in absolute control of all aspects of the colony, at the express request of Lassiter, and has served flawlessly. Offsite is far from a democracy, and Tucker's commands are enforced by the unquestioning loyalty of security crews who take his word as law. So far, he has never steered the group wrong, and there has never been a reason for rebellion. Almost everyone present understands that Tucker operates on a higher level of intelligence than they could ever hope to achieve.

Tucker's decisive actions prevented a fatal outbreak of "the Rot" in Base Camp and the Compound. His stringent but understanding work/rest ethic has won over many of the more menial workers. Tucker is seen as a fair but exacting leader. He doesn't play favorites, broker deals, or say one thing when he means another. He is also sociable to a fault, mingling both in Base Camp and the Compound on a daily basis. His questions and suggestions are never seen as "management." When he speaks about something, he understands it. When he doesn't, he asks.

Tucker and the Yithians

In the last three months, Tucker has been changing. Most in the colony have not noticed, but Tucker's usually amiable demeanor is being replaced by nervous energy, something like low-level paranoia. Tucker has been having dreams of a giant, inhuman library populated by huge cone-shaped creatures that know every aspect of his life.

In more ways than one, Tucker is not the person he once was. What he would have dismissed in the old days as a bad dream or minor anxiety episode, he now views as threatening and very real. He doesn't know what the dreams mean, but they mean something, and they threaten his efforts Offsite.

John Tucker has long been a target of the Great Race's inquiries into the gate paradox. Unfortunately, his past is so significant to future human development that altering it is not a viable option.

Instead, Tucker's intellect has been tapped dozens of times with nightly jaunts to Pnakotis, where he is interrogated and forced to write recollections of his interactions with Lassiter and the specifics of the Duxbury gate.

These visits have jumped in frequency in the last three months, and Tucker has begun to notice the odd feelings

associated with them. The thought has recently occurred to Tucker that if these beings are real, and can trade minds with him, they might be able to do so with others, and not only if they are asleep.

Tucker, an outspoken opponent of violence, has begun carrying a sidearm, just in case.

The Away Team

Jokingly named after *Star Trek's* exploration teams, the Away Team is responsible for locating, identifying, and recovering valuable metals from the mountains near Base Camp. The Away Team was one of the earliest groups to come through the Gate. It quickly located valuable ore concentrations in the soil, 100 to 200 times stronger than those found in Greenland on modern Earth.

The Away Team numbers approximately 100 geophysicists, geologists, surveyors, and miners. It is split into two groups, the Mapping Detail and the Mining Detail. The mappers tend to travel in small groups that are heavily armed, exploring the countryside as far as 80 kilometers from Base Camp. Mappers are gone for as long as three weeks at a time.

The miners move in when the mappers locate something worth exploiting. The Mining Detail explores the vein to see if it will "play." If it does, a long-term mining camp is constructed at the site, and regular circuits of people and equipment are moved in from Base Camp.

In the past, the Away Teams played a vital role in the Offsite mission, but with the seizure of Jonathan Emery at LaGuardia, Lassiter is moving to slow down and possibly stop the Away Team's mission. Further, the Away Team is the group which was first afflicted with the Rot, the disease the camp has had to deal with in the last year and a half. It seems to always afflict one of these team members first. The science team suspects that the infection is native to caves.

In its time of operation, the Away Team located three rich mineral veins, and have successfully played out one of them (codenamed AUBURN), pulling the equivalent of a hundred million dollars worth of precious metals from the ground. Projections by the team indicate that one of the two remaining lodes could easily yield fifty to sixty million dollars (site OCHRE) on the "current" market. The third (site VERMILLION) may be much larger, and might

account for two or three hundred million dollars. As can be imagined, the Away Team is not pleased with the idea of turning back.

Until they get the call to stop their activities, they will continue to explore, map, and use geolocation technologies to reveal valuable ores.

The Away Team's most senior member and team leader is Amida Bensonal, a servant of the Great Race of Yith. See **AMIDA BENSONAL** on page 16 for details.



Construction Detail

The Construction Detail comprises the lion's share of personnel who come through the Gate. They are responsible for building the Compound and all that it encompasses. The Construction Detail is composed of architects, cement experts, road engineers, water management personnel, electricians, bricklayers and more. The Construction Detail is filled with no-nonsense, young, eager workers who are all briefed in the realities of the HSS situation.

There are so many in the Construction Detail, and so many people coming and going on the site, that it is nearly impossible to detect outsiders—that is, if they are dressed properly. Most just assume the Security Detail has the situation covered. They take nearly anyone in a coverall at face value until they see some reason for suspicion.

This is not to say the Construction Detail workers are non-confrontational. HSS looks for people who are

independent and questioning, pioneers who are eager to make their mark. Tempers sometimes flare in the high stresses of the colony, and fistfights are not uncommon.

Security Detail

The security team responsible for the physical safety of the facilities and personnel is relatively small, at least compared to the insane level of security at HSS. It is composed of fewer than 40 individuals. Most view even that many as entirely unnecessary. Many workers consider the security officers as slackers who don't perform any real work, when there is more than enough work to go around.

But the security officers are not goldbrickers. Their leader, William Brandt, is honestly concerned with his job and the safety of his camp, and his men have a similar mindset. Brandt was a brownshirt at HSS for eight years before being given the assignment of defending the camp. He has found his three years at Offsite disappointing. In the absence of significant threats, the level of watchfulness in the camp has dropped by a huge margin. Brandt is still certain creatures like Ahmed are constantly trying to gain entry to the camp, but most workers think that risk is HSS' problem on the far side of the Gate.

Several attempts by Brandt to get further backing or initiative from Tucker have failed, leaving Security a largely unused appendage of the Offsite crew. Brandt is waiting for a significant security threat—like the Agents turning up—to push Tucker further.

On duty, Security personnel wear pistols. They carry either AR-15 carbines on outdoor posts or shotguns on interior posts. At the Compound, tower guards bear high-powered rifles. Heavier weapons are kept in lockers at Base Camp.

At the Compound, guards patrol during the day and keep a standing watch at night. At Base Camp, it is more lax. The Base Camp facility is almost always closed to the surrounding wilderness, and there is little need for a concerted effort to "guard" the site except when the Gate is open. Even so, Base Camp houses Brandt's headquarters. He endeavors to maintain discipline, running drills twice a day.

Disputes

Disputes in the colony are usually minor issues: who is dating whom, what food is being served for the third time in a week, or a bunk mate's headphones being too loud. Such disputes are dealt with easily. If they escalate, offenders punished by restrictions on food or other privileges.

Larger disputes, such as over the direction of leadership in the camp, occur in private. Dr. Tucker very effectively manages the social structures of the camp, and enjoys widespread support that makes a coup unlikely. Few can match his calm, reflective manner or grasp of the facts. Tucker plays the camp like a chess game, and is always a dozen or so moves ahead of any who disagree with him.

Open defiance has yet to be seen in the camp. When it does occur, Tucker's response escalates quickly from an initial call to back down to threats of bodily violence. Some will find this frightening and unexpected. But after the incident, Tucker persuades them of his point of view. The colony represents the only future humanity has. He will not risk it for something as silly as a juvenile power-grab. He would rather shoot a dozen innocents than to see the entire human race perish.

The Security Detail has been looking for excuses to seize power in the colony, and under Tucker's leadership it will put down any resistance gladly, even gleefully. After such an event, the mood of the personnel will shift significantly. The fervor for the project remains, there will be a noticeable silence. The first glimpse of the non-democratic nature of the project will be a sobering reminder that the sacrifices the personnel have made in the name of HSS are greater than most considered.

Offsite Dangers

Other than ruthless guards, the greatest dangers Offsite are native fauna, a disease nicknamed "the Rot," and emotional burnout among workers.

Native Species

Various native species, many far outside the realm of "understood" science, have been discovered. Most are not threats to the humans Offsite.

All but 12 identified species of plants are off-limits for ground crews to eat. The 12 edible types of shrubs

grow nearly tasteless fruits of varying descriptions, edible but not tasty.

Standard animal species can be classified loosely as "predecessors" to modern species: large hares, shaggy goats, and yak-like creatures. These ready food sources have not yet gained a natural fear response to humans. Hunting them is as easy as walking up to one and shooting it.

Two unknown animal species have caused great dismay among the Offsite leadership. The first are a species of squat, hairy humanoids that have begun attempting to infiltrate the Compound at night. These creature stand only 1.5 meters tall, are covered in fur, and have human-like features. Various anatomical studies have indicated, however, that they are another species entirely.

These creatures have been dubbed "natives" by the work crews. There have been no known attacks by natives on humans. The few face-to-face meetings ended with the native dead or having fled. The natives seem desire for metal items, and several "caches" of pilfered items have been found in area sweeps outside the Compound. Security believes that natives have successfully infiltrated the Compound in the past.

The second species is considered far more dangerous. One of the Away Teams stirred some sort of huge, single-celled creature from its slumber in a cave. It attacked, claiming the life of one miner, before being killed with a phosphorous charge. This thing was effectively invisible in a shallow pool of water. Examining the remains, biologists theorized it to be a direct descendant of the first undifferentiated organism on Earth. It has been deemed such a significant threat that briefings to field crews include warnings about shallow, still pools of water.

The Rot

The Rot is a disease not native to modern earth, but which has claimed 23 Offsite lives in the last sixteen months. It first struck suddenly, claiming two personnel tasked with mining a site called AUBURN, within days of their return. Despite biohazard protocols, the disease managed to "jump" to a doctor before a complete lockdown of the camp stopped it. Since then, it has appeared four times, claiming lives each time. It is now simply part of the routine in the camp.

The symptoms are always the same, beginning with bloodshot eyes, rashes, and fatigue, and ending with fever, heart palpitations, brain swelling, blood poisoning, leprosy-like symptoms, and death. No one has survived an active infection.

Unfortunately, time from first symptom to death can vary from hours to weeks, and the earliest symptoms are so subtle they can easily be overlooked. There is a strong fear that an undiscovered outbreak could claim hundreds of lives in a single wave of infection.

Examination by the Offsite science team has identified an unknown plant-like substance in the bloodstream of the infected individuals. This bluish-red plant cell is of an unknown species and seems to flourish and reproduce in the blood. It spreads slowly at first, then suddenly overwhelms the host in a flurry of reproduction which compresses blood vessels and bursts veins.

A relatively reliable blood swab test has been developed, allowing a simple pin-prick of a finger to establish whether someone is infected or not. This is now routine for all people entering Base Camp. Still, the science team and Dr. Tucker fear the possibility of an unknown microbe simply wiping Offsite from the map in a matter of weeks.

Burnout

Occasional burnout occurs in the high stresses of Offsite. The most serious cases have involved people being sent back through the Gate to Duxbury. This procedure, once commonplace, has ground to a halt. Two days after being informed of the possible exposure of Duxbury's illegal shipment of gold abroad, Tucker gathered his leaders together and they assembled a list of people they believed "could not hack it." This group of 34 people were sent back through the Gate to Duxbury.

Individual leaders then met with their groups and informed them of the dire circumstances on the far side of the Gate, and of how contact with the "modern" world might not last much longer. Even worse, they claimed, they could no longer sanction movement back to Duxbury from Offsite. Those who wished to leave were required to do so by a set date. This group, consisting of 12 personnel, left seven days after the seizure at LaGuardia Airport. Since then, personnel and equipment only come through, they don't go back.

No one is under any illusions about such measures. They mean that the luxury of "burnout" will no longer be allowed. Those pushing the limits of the new system with anti-social behavior might find themselves on the wrong end of a gun.

The Dream

Everyone Offsite has the Dream, though few remember it. The Dream is always the same. They wake in a monstrous, wholly inhuman time in a library the size of a stadium. Odd, yet somehow harmless-looking, alien creatures glide about like snails the size of mini-vans, observing the world through huge eyes on tentacled stalks. They mill about the alien library, clutching strange "books" of metal and some unknown, solid substance. They bring the books to tables large enough for an elephant. The books are filled with incomprehensible, rectilinear writing.

Some of the creatures seem confused or ill. They stand at the tables and carefully write into the books with clumsy tentacles and enormous writing implements like curved scalpels made of gold. They are carefully watched by the more confident members of the species.

The dreamer attempts to stand, and finds their point of view buoyed off the ground to a great height, like a balloon tethered to the ground. They see their reflection in a vast polished bronze wall, and see one of the immense creatures looking back. They realize they are that creature, that reflection, and abruptly wake up in unaccountable shock.

Those who remember the dream lose 1 SAN from the unnatural.



The Great Race: Out of Time

The camp has become a significant Pivot in the history of Earthly affairs, and is monitored by the ageless minds of the Great Race. The Great Race is everywhere and nowhere in the camp. Their Actuators leap in for short periods, observe, and then evacuate their hosts before the change is noticed. The longest “kidnappings” last less than a day of local time. After it was discovered that Actuators effecting drastic changes would only unravel the Pivot, the Great Race switched to a more subtle role. They now observe, record, and search for seams that might unravel this “Gordian Knot” in time.

Only the most skilled Actuators of the Great Race are dispatched to this Pivot. They are experts with an encyclopedic knowledge of everything about it. No detail is too small for their gargantuan minds. The Actuators know, down to the single bullet, how many rounds of ammunition are stored in camp at any given minute, hour, or day. How many liters of kerosene. They know all “Offsite” personnel, as well as all the events leading to their conception, education, and travel to the location. In short, they could reconstruct from memory every aspect and detail of the camp, as well as its journey through time as it changes.

The Motion

The Great Race has insinuated two members of the Motion into Offsite. The two Motion agents have no knowledge of one another. Each has been extensively “altered” through the machinations of the Great Race, both temporally and physically, to fit the requirements of HSS and to end up at the right place at the right time. Alterations were made in their history to ensure their education in particular sciences necessary for the camp’s maintenance, other physical shortcomings were corrected through temporal manipulation and Great Race science, making them physically perfect.

They are otherwise unremarkable members of the Motion, tasked with monitoring the situation. In case of unforeseen changes, opportunities, or any of a list of myriad events (some so bizarrely minute that they baffle the mind) the Motion is to alert the Great Race using one of two hidden communicators.

Julius Breen

Julius Breen is a fourth-generation member of the Motion. His great-grandfather was Ulysses Breen, a collector of knickknacks, sundries, and antiques. In 1924, Ulysses Breen discovered a burnished, bronze “projector” in an estate sale. It was an artifact of Pnakotis. Over the next few months, he was brought under the influence of the Great Race.

Ulysses Breen’s name is obscure but is known to historians of U.S. assassination history. In 1935, Breen killed Senator Bryant Jennings White on the steps of the newly opened U.S. Supreme Court Building. While shaking hands with White, Breen detonated a World War I vintage *Kugelhandgranate* grenade, blowing them both to bits.

Ulysses Breen’s sacrifice in 1935 was just one of the attacks the Breen family has made to alter history. Julius has committed arson, assault, and even murder for the Great Race. Such sundry tasks are left to the Motion, dictated either through a mind-swap or through the odd, baroque technological devices the Great Race give its servants.

At Offsite, Breen serves as a water-purification expert, tasked with maintaining one of the two huge desalination/purification machines that supplies the camp with fresh water. Breen has been altered so his history suits such a task. He is an expert in up-to-the-minute technologies in water treatment.

Breen is a selfless servant of the Great Race. He will sacrifice himself in a moment to protect even the “shell” of one of their Actuators, motivated by the incorrect belief that he will be reborn as one of the conical “Keepers” of the Great Library of time.

This belief, often repeated by the Great Race to its servants, is true from their alien point of view. After all, the Motion all have existed at one point in time as one of the conical creatures in the library, dragged back in time to prepare them for upcoming tasks. To the Great Race, this is the equivalent of always existing in such a state.

Amida Benson

Amida Benson is a native of Malaysia, relocated to the U.S. at great expense by HSS. She is a geological expert with a sterling reputation and a resume that reads like hyperbole. Amida has done all the things listed in her CV and is an expert in geological formations, fault mechanics

and the recovery of precious metals from the earth. But prior to 2012, none of this was true. She was homeless, HIV positive, and ready for death at the age of 26. She still has clear memories of that existence. But it no longer happened, and the reality of it dwindles with each day.

The Great Race recruited her and restructured her past, transforming her into a suitable Motion agent. The choice of Amida over six billion others in the world was due to myriad temporal requirements the Motion agents must fulfill, reasons understood fully only by the Great Race. Suffice it to say, she was the temporal equivalent to the Great Race of a stone to step across a shallow stream, so as not to get their shoes wet.

In exchange for success, education, and wealth, Amida has sold her future. She serves the Great Race out of grudging necessity, having seen first-hand their ability to “change” time. She understands that if she serves them and completes her task, she has a chance of enjoying her new life free of disease. If she does not, they will return her to life on the streets of Kuantan to die.



Actuators

At any time, as many as five Great Race Actuators occupy select Offsite individuals. They monitor progress, examine options, and getting a clear picture of activity. Those familiar with Michael Grunning, from *Future/Perfect*, Part 1, might make a Luck roll. If it succeeds, they spot a blank stare similar to that seen on Grunning’s face. However, capturing an Actuator is virtually impossible. Even indicating a suspicion that an individual is “odd” is enough to cause the Actuator to flee back to the Library at Pnakotis.

By the time the Delta Green Agents get their hands on an individual occupied by the Great Race, the alien is gone.

The Actuators are prepared, at a moment’s notice, to seize control of the Gate. Almost all the time, at least a single member of the Gate crew is under their control. They have caches of hidden technology around Base Camp, including time gates and electric guns.

The Actuators are fully aware of everyone Offsite, including the Delta Green agents (whatever cover they might have) and of course the Motion agents.

Great Race infiltration of the camp is total. They have the full run of all aspects of Base Camp and the Compound, and can jump from person to person instantly (at least in our limited conception of time).

They do this mostly to observe, but they are known to act on occasion.

Goals

The overarching goal of the Actuators and the Motion is to permanently shut down the Duxbury gate without interfering with the Construct. The Great Race believes its best bet lies with first ruining the Duxbury gate with Great Race technology from the Offsite side, and then removing Arthur Hunt on October 7, 1947. To do so, they require the Agents.

If the Agents have already decided to destroy the Gate, and are on the right track but might be sideswiped by an Offsite member’s action, there is a chance the Great Race might intervene. But there are rules to such an intervention. Nearly any event can send the Construct spiraling off into darkness. The Actuators and the Motion are careful to avoid killing any Offsite personnel, due to some important part they must play in some future events.

Secondarily, if they can help it, they only seize control of an individual out of sight of others. That reduces the risk to the Construct that might arise from, say, inciting suspicion and causing a witch-hunt which destroys the stability of that point in time.

Finally, the Actuators and the Motion reveal themselves only if there is no other contingency to get the Agents to act.

Shutting Down the Gate

The Yithians have attempted to shut down the Duxbury gate in order to stop the threat of the serpent-folk. They have attempted it millions of times and it has failed millions of times. That is no longer the goal of the Great Race. They have decided instead to destroy Arthur Hunt, or rather the serpent disguised as Hunt, in 1934, before he set to work on the Gate.

Due to various temporal dangers, a window of opportunity to destroy the hidden serpent has been established between October 8 and October 12, 1934, in Chester, Ohio. Hunt must die between these dates. And those who kill him must not be of the Great Race or members of the Motion.

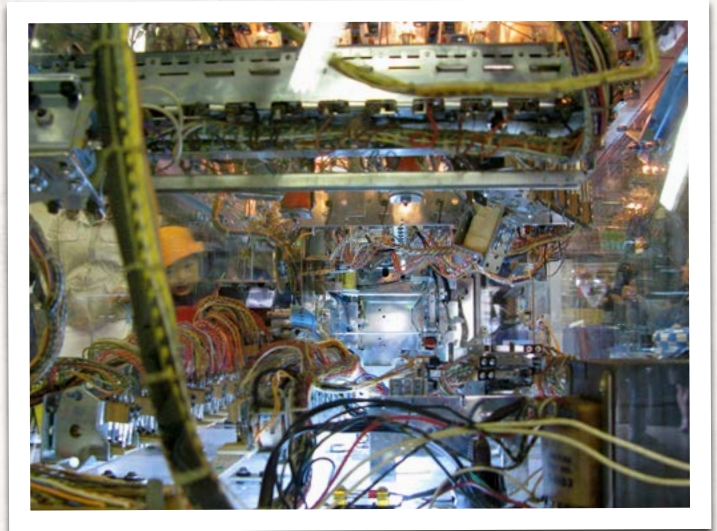
The time period in question is fraught with hundreds of thousands careful temporal folds to maintain the Construct. Cataclysmic events such as the world wars and the development of the atom bomb lead to the Yithians' stable outpost in the distant radioactive future. Any direct movement by the Great Race or its servants in 1934 risks the dissolution of their previous or subsequent temporal changes. The Agents, however, represent a new and interesting tool to manipulate.

If the Agents enter 1934 and destroy Hunt, the Construct should "snap back" to its correct shape. Changing causality will hurl the Agents back to their own time, removing the decades of interim developments: Hunt Electronics, the Hellbend gate, the Duxbury gate, and more. The technology that Hunt introduced that must remain in the Construct, such as the Hunt resistor, can be introduced by Yithians and the Motion.

There's only one catch. The Agents must enter the open Gate in the depths of the Reception Chamber while it is open to Duxbury. Even more dangerous, they must alter the Gate with a piece of Great Race technology before they do so.

Easy, right?

The Great Race tell the Agents as little as possible about their plan. They imply that entering the Gate with the device will be enough to "solve" the problem. What the Agents might not realize is that getting into the Gate with the device is simply the first step.



The Device

The Actuators have constructed a device to allow the Gate to transport the Agents back to 1934. It looks identical to a modern smartphone. Anyone glancing at it immediately dismisses it as mundane. Closer inspection reveals that the casing has been split and its innards replaced with a spray of wiring and chips culled from dozens of sources. Obviously, it does not function as a phone any longer.

An Agent holding the device close to their ears hears an indistinct, low droning, like a distant propellor aircraft. Anyone examining it at length gleans that it includes parts from blenders, electric shavers, televisions, and more, all assembled in a mish-mash of bizarre circuitry for an unknown purpose. Those doing more than examining it (such as disassembling it) find it useless. The Great Race can replace such a damaged item instantly: that is, retroactively; the Actuator had two because the Great Race knew such an outcome must occur.

When carried through the Gate, the device "bends" it to 1934 utilizing principles known only to the Great Race. What the Great Race *do not* tell the Agents is that only their minds will be transported. Their bodies will be destroyed the moment they enter the Gate.

Getting In

Getting into the Reception Chamber when the Gate is active can be as easy or as difficult as the Handler chooses to make it. If you feel you need more action, seizing the Reception Chamber by force is a fun option. The Actuators

and the Motion can jump in to save the Agents if they are close to failing. Alternatively, with the Great Race's mastery of time, entering the Reception Chamber could be as easy as simply looking at a watch and moving when told to do so. What the campaign needs at this moment is, as usual, up to you.

The Singularity

Entering the portal with the Great Race device is far from just another jaunt through the Gate. Entering seems normal for the first split-second. Then shuddering flashes illuminate a vast and seemingly endless black. The sensation is of hovering miles up in a black void: not falling, but suspended somehow while the world blinks in and out in staccato flashes of light.

The Agents have just enough time in the void to realize the Gate is functioning differently than before. Then they are literally ripped to pieces by arcing sheets of fire. This process is exceedingly painful. It destroys the Agent's body, reducing it to a cloud of free-floating atoms in seconds.

Return to Chester

Agents who enter the Gate with the Yithian device wake in new bodies. The memory of their deaths, plus the realization that they are no longer themselves, costs 1/1D10 SAN from the unnatural.

When they recover their wits, the Agents find themselves in a room filled with hastily rewired electronics of vintage quality. The house is abandoned and empty, excepting this maze of wires, old radios, and other electronic devices. (Agents who were forced to the Offsite location by the Motion recognize an identical setup here.)

On the wall in front of the Agents, two lines are written in charcoal:

281 H, 7 M, 22 S
KILL HUNT

The Agents have four days to kill Arthur Hunt.

The Agents' new bodies are men of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern descent. They wear old-fashioned,

double-breasted suits. Their pockets contain no identification, but each has nearly \$500 in oddly large \$20 bills. Careful examination finds "Series of 1929" printed on the bills. In 1934, that's enough to cover an Unusual expense, or five Standard expenses, for each of them.

A wristwatch has been carefully set up on a sheet below a wall, as if it were some sort of holy item. It is an Elgin Aviator Chronograph, an exceedingly expensive and accurate timepiece. It has been modified extensively. Instead of a standard watch face, it counts from 1 to 281, and has only a single hand. It is ticking, but the hand changes places exactly once an hour.



October 8, 1934

Stepping outside immediately reveals something is off. Even Agents who do not realize the depth of their predicament feel something is wrong. The house is dilapidated, with peeling yellowed paint behind a copse of trees that shield a road. A picket of telephone poles can be spied over the tops of the trees.

A perfectly preserved 1930 Ford is parked out front. The car is pristine. Agents examining the car find the keys in it, as well as a pack of Topps Lemon Drops candies; a page ripped from the *Meigs County Examiner* with the notice "ESTATE LIQUIDATION NOVEMBER 22, 1934"; and a 1934 Ohio road atlas with several marked locations. Agents familiar with Chester, Ohio (from *Future/Perfect*, Part 2) immediately recognize the marked areas as the old Hunt plant (freshly opened in 1934), the Hunt farm, and the Serpent Mounds.

In the front glove compartment is a new-looking Colt M1911A1 pistol, manufactured in 1926, fully loaded with seven .45 ACP shells.

A sign nailed to the house door reads:

REPOSSESSION AND ESTATE LIQUIDATION
BY ORDER OF MEIGS COUNTY SHERIFF,
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1934

The Agents might now piece together the clues to realize when they are. Coming to this realization costs another 0/1D4 SAN from the unnatural.

Chester in 1934

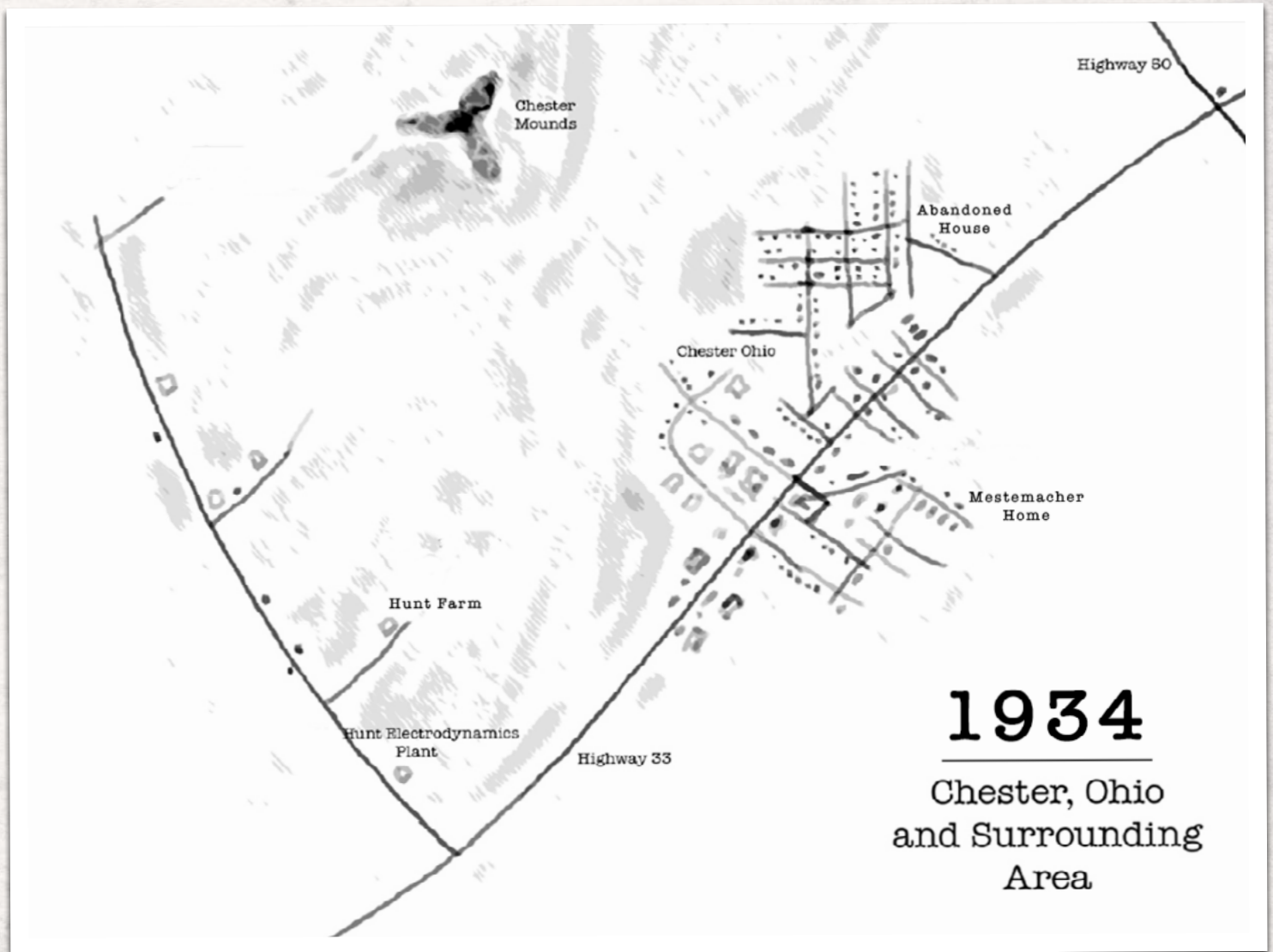
Agents who have visited modern-day Chester, Ohio recognize it in the Chester of 1934. Those expecting a dreary, Depression-era town will be disappointed in the clean, orderly streets. The town is held afloat by Arthur Hunt's

thriving electronics business. That business has kept the town working and its money has kept the town solvent. Most of the problems which have wracked the nation for the last five years have steered clear of Chester.

The town suffers from that deepest of American ailments, blatant and unapologetic racism. A carload of dark-skinned men quickly draws the attention of Meigs County Sheriff Thomas Cavanaugh.

The Sheriff

Thomas Cavanaugh, the Meigs County sheriff, is a man of staunch morals by the standards of his time and place. In 1934 middle America, that means he's mostly honest, God-fearing, sexist, racist, and easily violent. He is bent on maintaining the status quo. Cavanaugh gleefully terrorizes individuals who do not fall into his definition of "human being." This includes Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Jews and Italians.



None of the legal niceties of modern law and culture are around to restrain the sheriff in 1934. He is not above breaking a nightstick or two over a couple of “foreigner” heads to “clean up” his town, or shooting them if they leave him no choice.

If the Agents are brought to Cavanaugh’s attention, he pursues them and attempts to scare them off. Failing that, he attempts to lock them up for “vagrancy.” If the Agents are captured, they find themselves in the Meigs County courthouse jail, two filthy cells in the back of a small, stone building. They are starved, subjected to insults and indignities, stripped of valuables, and driven to the county line in a truck. There, at gunpoint, they are invited to “come back whenever you fellas get bored of breathing.”

If it comes to gunplay, Cavanaugh breaks out a team of six deputies armed with shotguns to go on a full hunt for the Agents. They are soon joined by private citizens armed with hunting rifles to keep the peace. These posses criss-cross the town in flatbed trucks, looking for anything out of sorts. If the Agents have fired on law enforcement, these vigilantes won’t bother with a warning. They open fire the moment they spot the Agents.

More Guns

There are several hunting shops and gun shops near Chester. Even with the June 1934 passage of the National Firearms Act, which imposed taxes on firearm sales and requires registration of machine guns, short-barrelled rifles and shotguns, suppressors, and explosive weapons, heavier weapons than the Agents’ sole pistol are easy to find. The risk is drawing unwanted attention.

Agents trying to buy firearms or explosives must make a **Luck** roll. If it roll succeeds, the Agents acquire the weapon without trouble. If it fails, the merchant refuses to sell. And when the Agents depart, the merchant informs Sheriff Cavanaugh what they wanted, which draws a visit from the law.

The **Luck** roll is at a penalty of -20% if they are trying to buy a weapon that has a Lethality rating. If one of the Agents makes a **History** roll to recall enough about local customs to smooth things over, the **Luck** roll has a bonus of +20%. The bonus could also be gained if an Agent makes a **Demolitions** roll to, say, explain their need for dynamite by saying they work for a mine.

>> A 1934 Gun Shop

Weapon	Skill	Base Range	Damage	Armor Piercing	Ammo Capacity	Expense
M1911A1 pistol, .45 ACP	Firearms	15 m	1D10	N/A	7	Standard
M1911A1 pistol chambered for .38 Super	Firearms	20 m	1D12	N/A	9	Standard
M1903 Springfield rifle, .30-06	Firearms	150 m	1D12+2	5	5	Unusual
M1928A1 Thompson submachine gun, .45 ACP	Firearms	50 m	1D10, or a Lethality 10% burst	N/A	20, 50, or 100	Unusual
Browning automatic rifle, .30-06	Firearms	150 m	1D12+2, or a Lethality 15% burst	5	20	Unusual
Dynamite, 1 stick	Demolitions	N/A	Lethality 15%, Kill Radius 10 m	N/A	N/A	Incidental
Dynamite, 4 sticks	Demolitions	N/A	Lethality 30%, Kill Radius 20 m	N/A	N/A	Standard
Dynamite, 8 sticks	Demolitions	N/A	Lethality 60%, Kill Radius 40 m	N/A	N/A	Standard

The Hunt Electrodynamics Plant

The Hunt Electrodynamics plant is a huge facility to the southwest of town. It employs nearly everyone in Chester. In modern Chester, it is a long-abandoned relic. In 1934, it is still relatively new, having been built in 1928.

At any time of the day or night, the plant is awash with personnel. During the day, there are hundreds of employees working multiple shifts. At night, there is a large team of security personnel.

It is well known that Hunt himself appeared only once at the plant, at its ground-breaking, and has never set foot in it since. He remains in isolation at his family farm. He leaves only to take a private train to Chicago or New York, and then only in the dead of night. The Agents can discover all that by asking around; but a bunch of foreign-looking individuals asking questions about the town's favorite son will be sufficient to bring in Sheriff Cavanaugh.

The Hunt Farm

The Hunt farm is a large, clean cluster of buildings west of Chester. A pristine 1931 Packard is often parked in front of the house.

The farm is surrounded by a no-nonsense barbed-wire fence that rises three meters, with a starkly drawn wooden sign marked with a lightning bolt every 15 meters. (If the Agents visited in *Future/Perfect*, Part 2, the fence was not there in the modern day.) The fence is electrified to dangerous levels, and anyone touching it suffers 1D20 damage. An Alertness roll spots small, dead animals that brushed the wire, as well as a scorched bird or two foolish enough to attempt to land on it.

The front gate is a large, corrugated metal door which swings wide enough to allow a large flatbed truck. This too is electrified. There is no call box or visible mechanism to open the gate from the outside. The gate is in fact controlled remotely. One controller is in the Packard. Another is in the house.

Agents observing at length see the gate suddenly swing wide and then very quickly shut again after a pristine 1931 Packard pulls out. The car takes the municipal road towards Chester.



Getting on to the farm is relatively easy, as long as the Agents don't mind causing a ruckus. Smashing through the gate or fencing is easy with a vehicle. This also has the beneficial effect of drawing "Hunt" out from his house.

Comings and Goings

The Packard is driven by Allan Mestemacher. In the Agents' original timeline, he died in 1999, but they might have learned of him from Hunt Museum director Mary Jarrard.

Mestemacher is the only person to come or go from the Hunt Farm during the time allotted for the Agents to destroy Hunt. He runs errands, including sourcing, cleaning and preparing Hunt's meals. Most daily trips involve a visit to the post office and the grocery, and lunch in town. (Hunt forbids Mestemacher from eating or drinking in his presence.) Otherwise, Mestemacher is on the farm or at his home: a small, two-level house on the east side of town, bought with cash in 1930 by Hunt. Mestemacher works ten hours a day, from 4:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M., along with Hunt. After that, he usually retires to his house, has a meal, and turns in before 9:00 P.M.

Agents watching Mestemacher for a few days realize he does not visit the gas station. The Packard looks, moves, and sounds normal, but Hunt modified it because he hated the smell of gasoline. Instead of an engine beneath the hood, it has a 120-kg block of lead fastened to the chassis, and a tiny, intricately-carved bronze box. The box is connected to small mechanical input boxes pinned to the inside walls of the engine casing. Those do

everything from receiving pedal pushes to reading steering-wheel turns. A small, black box beside the bronze box makes the noises of an ordinary engine. Hunt added that only because Mestemacher mentioned his discomfort with the silent car. The bronze box can be popped out easily, rendering the vehicle inert. The bronze box defies study. No scientist, in 1934 or the modern era, can discern what it does or how it operates. The car is, most literally, a perpetual-motion machine.

Embedded in the dashboard on the driver's side of the Packard is a large, red push-button. This operates the front gate at the Hunt farm.

Mestemacher: The Key

Mestemacher was a farmhand known to everyone in the area when Hunt picked him as his personal assistant. That was the summer of 1925, just after Hunt's transformation. At first, Mestemacher was quite pleased to have fallen in with the growing local celebrity. But by 1929, Mestemacher found himself keeping the job out of self-preservation and fear. Despite the high pay and Hunt's growing fortunes, Mestemacher has become convinced, particularly over the last few months, that Hunt is not right. Worse yet, Hunt has noticed this. He has openly threatened Mestemacher with serious, undisclosed punishments if Mestemacher talks.

Mestemacher can hardly be said to be religious, but the various things he has seen over the past decade have turned his mind towards the supernatural. He is certain his employer is some sort of supernatural creature. He is also certain that Hunt's threats are not hollow, and that his reach is nearly infinite. In the coming decades, the secrets he gleaned at the Hunt farm will transform him into a raving religious lunatic. But now, he's just a terrified man looking for a way out.

People in town have noticed Mestemacher's discomfiture, but chalk it up to years of working for the brusque and abusive Hunt. If the Agents can discover and leverage this fact, they might find an extremely useful ally in Mestemacher.

Approaching Mestemacher is not easy. The best way is for the Agents to confront him in town and reveal the truth about Hunt and his plans. If they manage to confirm or explain things Mestemacher knows about Hunt—such

as his odd, serpent-like shadow in bright lights—he helps them destroy Hunt.

Mestemacher is a very valuable resource. He knows all the nooks and crannies of the Hunt farm, as well as Hunt's schedule. With Mestemacher's help, it is likely the Agents can kill Hunt as he rests in a torpor-like sleep between 1:00 A.M. and 3:00 A.M. That prevents Hunt from employing protective magic.

Killing Hunt

Confronting Hunt while he is awake is extremely dangerous. Anything short of dynamite, shotguns, or machine guns may be insufficient. Hunt maintains magical wards while awake, making smaller weapons nearly useless.

Hunt meets confrontation head-on, with no surprise or hesitation, using powerful magics to destroy its attackers. If the attackers break off the attack, Hunt pursues them vigorously. Once they are dead, he destroys Mestemacher (whether or not he was involved), and continues its work after padding the pockets of local authorities to silence the matter.

Hunt rests two hours a night, entering a voluntary torpor where he simply stands still in the main room of the farmhouse. The first impression upon seeing Hunt in such a state is that he is awake but drugged. His eyes are open but glassy. He does not wake due to noise, but a physical attack causes it to wake after 1D10 turns of inaction. If the Agents manage to discover Hunt during its two-hour torpor, he is exceedingly vulnerable.



The Price of Failure

If the Agents fail to kill Hunt in the allotted time, they are left in 1934 in their new bodies. While living in the past might seem to be Easy Street for any well-educated time traveler, the Agents are now also under the watchful eye of the Great Race. The Yithians prevent them from exploiting any knowledge of the future which might, in turn, disrupt it. Since the Great Race can “see” the outcome, they can prevent it. For example, scraping together enough money to buy stock in American armament companies and firms like Boeing, which will soar during the war years, will be actively countered. They do anything short of killing the Agent to prevent such disruptions. Money will be lost or stolen. Stocks will vanish or be the subject of fraud.

Even worse, the Motion actively stop any attempts to kill Hunt after the allotted time. The available window of opportunity has come and gone. Killing Hunt after those four days in 1934 will only make things worse.

The Great Race keep the Agents alive not out of some sort of distorted morality, but to preserve the future of the Construct. They must take other steps to deal with the repercussions of the serpent-folk scheme, if there are any that can work.

You could keep Agents in this situation for years, playing out a 1930s campaign. During this pause, the Great Race continues to work on the Gordian Knot of Hunt in 1934, sending various individuals of Delta Green back, manipulating which Agents become involved in the investigation in the hopes of resolving it. Finally, after many abortive, failed, and near-complete attempts, they discern the method to shut down the gates forever. Just when the players are certain they will remain in the past forever, and perhaps have developed new Bonds to replace those they left in the future, they suddenly snap back to the present.

Or the future may see an incursion of conquering serpent-folk through the Duxbury gate, as Xichlasa’s unnatural scheme comes to fruition long after its death. It is up to you.

The Skein of History Snaps Back

Killing Hunt causes an instant and jarring restoration of the Construct. It snaps the Agents back into their original bodies at various points along the time-stream. Each returns at the moment when they became involved with the *Future/Perfect* investigation. They find themselves at the moment before the call came from Delta Green. Due to Hunt’s destruction in 1934, the Hunt Electrodynamics plant and gate in Hellbend, and by proxy the Duxbury plant and its gate, have all failed to exist. There is no investigation to undertake. The call never comes. Nevertheless, the Agents have all-too-clear memories of all that came before but now will never come to pass.

Changing bodies and realizing the ramifications of having altered time costs 1/1D10 SAN from the unnatural. Having saved humanity from the serpent-folk plot earns 1D10 SAN.

If Agents seek out other Agents who joined the investigation later, those Agents do not share those terrible memories. Only when the moment comes of their own recruitment into *Future/Perfect* will those memories descend.

Agents revealing such secrets to Delta Green are met with skepticism and a worried increase in surveillance. In the best case scenario, they figure, the Agents are inventing the whole scenario due to rising mental strain. But stranger things have happened in Delta Green.

Characters

Offsite Security

Offsite’s guards are brownshirts from HSS, military veterans dedicated to the preservation of humanity. They are psychologically worse off than their counterparts still at HSS. Living in the impossible past takes a toll.

Average Guard

STR 14 CON 15 DEX 12 INT 10 POW 11 CHA 7
HP 15 WP 11 SAN 42 BREAKING POINT 32

DISORDERS: Adapted to violence, post-traumatic stress disorder.

SKILLS: Alertness 40%, Athletics 50%, Demolitions 35%, Dodge 40%, Firearms 60%, Heavy Weapons 50%, HUMINT 30%, Melee Weapons 50%, Military Science (Land) 35%, Search 70%, Stealth 50%, Unarmed Combat 60%.

ATTACKS: .40 pistol 60%, damage 1D10.
 AR-15 carbine with advanced combat optical gunsight 60%, damage 1D12, Armor Piercing 3.
 12-gauge shotgun with laser sight (firing shot) 80%, damage 2D10 at close range.
 Springfield .30-06 hunting rifle with night-vision sight 60%, damage 1D12+2, Armor Piercing 5.
 M240G tripod-mounted machine gun 50%, Lethality 15%, Armor Piercing 5, Kill Radius up to 10 m.
 Heavy flashlight 50%, damage 1D4+1.
 Ka-Bar combat and utility knife 50%, damage 1D6+1, Armor Piercing 3.
 Unarmed 60%, damage 1D4.

EQUIPMENT: Offsite's security officers are regularly equipped with handcuffs, a flashlight (also usable as a club), a Ka-Bar knife, and a standard Glock pistol. They wear a heavy leather belt which also holds a radio, which has a threaded earpiece/microphone that sits in the right ear, making communication only a matter of speaking; no keys need be triggered. Guards on indoor duty carry shotguns; those on outdoor duty carry carbines; those on tower duty by night carry rifles with night sights. Machine guns are kept in lockers at Base Camp, just in case.

ACOG: Each guard's carbine has an advanced combat optical gunsight. It grants a +20% bonus to hit if the guard has taken no damage since his last action, and it doubles the carbine's base range if the guard has spent the previous action aiming.

LASER SIGHT: Each guard's shotgun has a targeting laser. It grants a +20% bonus to hit as long as the guard has taken no damage since his last action.

NIGHT-VISION SIGHT: Each guard's hunting rifle has a night-vision sight. It allows aiming and firing without penalty in conditions of reduced light, such as starlight. That effect is good out to about 400 m. It also doubles the rifle's base range if the guard has spent the previous turn aiming.

Great Race Actuators

An Actuator can reside in nearly any human brain. The Yithian's INT and POW are somewhat reduced due to the limitations of the human brain. Its CHA is usually 8, reflecting the strange mannerisms of even the most experienced Actuator. Its other stats are the host's.

Actuator

STR 10 CON 10 DEX 10 INT 20 POW 20 CHA 8
HP 10 WP 20

SKILLS: Total Knowledge 75% (see **TOTAL KNOWLEDGE**).

ATTACKS: Electric gun 75%, damage variable (see **JURY-RIG**).

JURY-RIG: Compared to the power of the Great Race, human science is pathetic. The Actuator can warp modern devices into far more effective technology. Sometimes, this can be accomplished in mere minutes. Often, these tools are rigged to explode or self-destruct after a period of time. The most common are:

- **Electric Gun:** This device can be as small as a garage door opener, and can inflict damage of the user's choosing: only stunning, stunning plus a jolt of 1D6 or 2D6 damage, or a bolt of lightning with Lethality 15%. It ignores body armor but can be blocked by cover.
- **Temporal Mine:** This can look like nearly any household object or device. Once activated, it causes everything within a small radius to be frozen in time, effectively isolating it from the Construct of spacetime. The scope and duration of the effect are up to the Handler.
- **Transfer Device:** When it enters the limited human mind, the Actuator cannot use its ability to jump to another form without first building a transfer device. This small box, composed of rods, wheels and mirrors, permits the mind of the Actuator to return to the Library at Pnakotus.

TEMPORAL IMMORTALITY: To an extratemporal being, death is only an inconvenient "blank spot" in the otherwise limitless expanse of four-dimensional spacetime. Even if the Actuator's human form perishes, the Actuator persists on, somewhere in time.

TOTAL KNOWLEDGE: As temporal explorers, the Great Race have access to endless epochs of knowledge from all times and cultures. Knowing a challenge is coming, they can learn all they must know before it begins. Only occasional, strange variances in causality limit them. The Actuator has the equivalent of 75% in every skill, alien or human.

"Arthur Hunt"

Xichlasa of the serpent-folk, dormant for millennia, took the form of Arthur Hunt and built a technological empire among the humans of the 20th century. Its goal was to build a temporal gate and bring its people through to conquer. The Agents have a chance to stop it.

Xichlasa is brilliant and devious. It prefers to flee rather than fight, knowing the local police will protect it. It uses unnatural rituals to buy itself time to get away.

Unless Xichlasa is in torpor, it has spent 3 WP casting *Armor of Yig* to gain an extra 9 Armor, bringing its totals to 12 Armor and 15 WP.

Its first action when confronted is to cast *Serpentine Thrall*. That brings its WP down to 8. If the ritual succeeds, it commands the target to slay the other Agents.

If an Agent is particularly troublesome, it casts *Venomous Pain* on them. That brings its WP to 4, the lowest it chooses to go.

Only if cornered or brought to a blood frenzy does it attack, and then it fights with awful savagery.

Xichlasa

STR 17 **CON** 22 **DEX** 18 **INT** 18 **POW** 18
HP 20 **WP** 18

ARMOR: 3 points of thick, scaly skin (or 12 after casting *Armor of Yig*).

SKILLS: Alertness 80%, Anthropology (Human) 35%, Disguise 40%, Dodge 60%, Medicine 99%, Science (Biology) 99%, Sciences (Serpent-Folk) 90%, Search 90%, Survival 70%, Unnatural 65%.

ATTACKS: *Bite* 55%, damage 1D6, Armor Piercing 3 (see **VENOM**).

Grapple 45%, damage special (see **BLOOD FRENZY**).

Sign of Power, damage 2D6 (see **SIGN OF POWER**).

BLOOD FRENZY: A target that is bleeding causes one of the serpent-folk to enter a blood frenzy. It attempts to grapple and pin the victim. If it succeeds, it drains 1 HP per round from blood loss until the victim dies. Only a **Dodge** roll allows the target to escape. A seized victim can attempt an opposed STR roll to struggle free, suffering 1D4 damage from tearing flesh. Any successful attack on the serpent during the blood frenzy causes this attack to cease. During this blood frenzy, the serpent cannot perform any other action until the target is dead or escapes.

CHARNEL VISAGE: The serpent-folk have no CHA stat as humans would understand it. A serpent that uses an unnatural ritual such as *Changeling Feast* to disguise itself as human gains a CHA stat, usually with a score equal to half its INT. Xichlasa has consumed many victims, allowing it to instantly switch its appearance to any of a dozen human forms.

IMMORTALITY: A member of the serpent-folk never grows old, starves to death, or perishes of natural causes. If it fails to feed on fresh meat or blood, after a period of time, it enters a torporous state which can sometimes last hundreds, perhaps millions, of years.

INHUMAN DODGE: Serpent-folk have preternatural senses and reaction speed, allowing them to Dodge even firearm

attacks. This includes Lethality attacks from machine guns, but not from explosives or hypergeometry.

VENOM: If a serpent-folk bite inflicts damage (in other words, if it's not stopped by armor), then the victim also suffers poisoning. The venom has a Speed of 1D6 turns and Lethality 15%. An antidote that treats snake venom is effective if the victim makes a **Luck** roll.

RITUALS: *Armor of Yig*, *Bloodless Sustenance*, *Changeling Feast*, *Create Time Gate*, *Infallible Suggestion*, *Obscure Memories*, *Open Gate*, *Serpentine Thrall*, *Venomous Pain*.

RITUAL—ARMOR OF YIG: Many serpent-folk know this potent protective ritual. It requires about a minute to activate. Each WP spent in the ritual gives the serpent 3 Armor. Each time the serpent takes damage, this Armor rating is reduced by 1. While the serpent has at least 1 Armor from the ritual, Lethality rolls against it automatically fail.

RITUAL—BLOODLESS SUSTENANCE: This ritual takes one turn to perform and costs 1 WP. It allows Xichlasa to gain the benefits of feeding on blood and flesh from eating vegetable matter, which does not trigger its blood frenzy.

RITUAL—SERPENTINE THRALL: This ritual takes one turn to perform and costs 4 WP. Hissing in the strange tongue of the serpent-folk and making weird gestures, the operator attempts to overcome the target in an opposed **POW** test. If it succeeds, the target comes under the influence of the operator for a full hour. An affected target willingly obeys any command given by the operator. A command that would cost the target **SAN** allows the target to attempt an opposed **POW** test to refuse. The command may be repeated in the following turn, when the target must roll again to refuse.

RITUAL—VENOMOUS PAIN: This ritual takes one turn to perform and costs 4 WP. It may be cast at a living target no more than 10 meters away. If the operator overcomes the target in an opposed **POW** test, the target is suffused with agony that contorts and overwhelms the body, senses, and mind. The target is incapacitated for 1D6 minutes; then is conscious but blind and filled with agony for another 1D6 minutes, losing 1/1D6 **SAN** from helplessness; then sight returns, but lingering pain inflicts a penalty of -20% to all tests for 1D6 minutes beyond that.

SIGN OF POWER: With a gesture, one of the serpent-folk can cause a single person to be flung backwards with extreme force, inflicting 2D6 damage. It is unknown whether this ability is a ritual or an inherent ability.

UNNATURAL BIOLOGY: Serpent-folk physiology would baffle any biologist. Making a called shot for "vitals" or another apparently vulnerable area inflicts normal damage, with no special game effect.

SAN LOSS: 1/1D6.