

STUMPTOWN

Chronicles



The World of Darkness

an alternative reality setting for

MAGE
THE AWAKENING

Aldrian Kimmel flicked a cigarette as he watched the two Sleepwalkers hauling the crates out of the ferry. There were around fifty in all, assorted sizes, innocuous in every way. They looked like moving boxes, if anything, as if some wealthy son-of-a-bitch had his possessions boated instead of flown. The men eyed Kimmel as they worked, although they tried not to. The Filipino Moros had the look of someone who might kill at any moment, just for fun, in sharp contrast to his relatively festive fedora.

Daishiro Shimura stood next to him, hands deep in the pockets of his six thousand dollar suit. The Japanese businessman had the look of someone whose face was chizzled out of stone. "Is this everything?" He growled low rather than spoke, and it made one of the Sleeper dockhands look twitchy.

"Just about," Kimmel replied without looking at him. "These shipments always go off without a hitch, Councilor." He took a slow pull of his cig. "You've never showed up before."

"This one's important," Shimura said. "I wanted to see the box in question with my own eyes."

Aldrian shrugged, then nodded to one of the laborers. "It's your dime, Councilor. Let's see that one."



Wordlessly the man went over to the accumulating pile and picked up the most ordinary looking of any of the containers and spun it around. Kimmel and Shimura walked closer as the flaps were pulled back and the contents revealed.

Shimura looked over a large book with large brass hinges, a silver pocketwatch, two ruby-colored crystals and a wicked-looking Aztec knife. All the objects had a bright resonance, almost pulsing to the rhythm of the nearby ship's engine. The businessman made a deep, short sound of approval and leaned away. "Make certain you deliver that yourself," he said, and began to walk back toward where he had come from.

"That's it?" Kimmel said on an exhale of smoke. "You had me steal all of these right under the rest of the Consilium's nose, pack them off to Mozambique and then two weeks later you want them back, like it was nothing?"

"Couldn't leave a trace on them. Once this is over I can't have any Time magic giving us all away."

"You're playing with fire, friend. We're both forfeit if we get caught."

Shimura didn't bother looking behind him. "This is Portland, *friend*. Nobody ever gets caught."



Credits

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STUMPTOWN *Chronicles*

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INTRODUCTION

Necessity is not an established fact, but an interpretation.

- FRIEDRICH NIETZCHE

Reality is what you make it.

- ANONYMOUS

This book is intended to be an alternate reality setting for **Mage: the Awakening**. It is designed to be completely self-contained and related specifically only to the corebook, although principles and ideas from other sourcebooks can be easily imported. Rules or mage society changes are written about in section two; if no mention of an idea or rule occurs, assume that is kept the same as in the core book. As well as a substitute setting, *The Stumptown Chronicles* is a city book. In this volume you will find information on Portland, including its history, current culture and condition, notable locations and haunted places. Finally, this book contains a detailed explanation of mage society, including storylines and potential plots and a full *dramatis personae*.

The Stumptown Chronicles is not a judgment on the canon reality and mechanics already established in *M:tA* or its source books. It is merely a way to play with a set of codified rules in a slightly different mage universe, where the streets are a little meaner, tempers are a little shorter, and mages are much less powerful. Consider this book an experiment exploring the core premises of mage from a different angle.

Impetus

Mage is an intricate and complex game with perhaps the most pervasive and in-depth magic system in existence. This can of course make for exciting, high-powered games, but due to the hubris in each gamer, the basics tend to become a bit overlooked. And because one's creativity is leashed only by his knowledge, knowing the low-end of the magic scale is vital to the experience.

This is an experiment in dealing with *only* the low-scale abilities for improvised casting. Scaling the power structure back necessitated scaling

the society and history back, as well. The result is a World of Darkness that is differently balanced, with mages being smaller in number and less able to effectively combat the things that go bump in the night.

The ulterior motive behind these changes is to serve as a learning tool for newcomers to mage or groups that feel they don't have the tightest grip on the powers and improvised ability. Starting characters in this reality will only have their Primary Arcana at 2, and no other points. By scaling the powers down to this level, players are forced to use more of their mundane talents to solve problems, with their abilities only enhancing rather than providing a substitute for natural skills. By being limited to two low-powered Arcana, a player can more freely explore the foundations of the magical system and learn through necessity how to use cover magic to its full capability.

Other power stepped up to help fill the vacuum left by restricting characters' magical growth. Magical items and grimoires are now more common, sought after and powerful, and require adjustments to the working rules. Society at such a smaller scale drastically changes, creating a more solitary and paranoid existence.

Theme and Mood

The prevailing theme in *The Stumptown Chronicles* is the counterintuitive notion of "small fish in a small pond." Players are expected to be low powered, but amid other low-powered mages. Attaining the rank of Disciple is a major accomplishment that few ever progress past, and many live out their entire lives with no higher than 2s in their Arcana. Add to this there are only a comparative handful of Awakened in any given community, meaning that complex forms of government never evolved.

The resultant theme is that players don't feel underpowered, or a burning need to advance their magical skill at the expense of the rest of their lives. Most are content with starting-level powers, and even ambitious people become satisfied with a three-dot sphere of influence. There are, of course, more powerful mages out there, some even in Portland, but they are meant to be considered extremely rare. In this reality, it unlikely there are more than a hundred or so Masters in the entire world.

The mood of this game is simpler: overwhelming mystery. It is harder to be certain of a mage's power in this reality, and so many take advantage of that by starting rumors elevating their ability beyond what it truly is. Several prominent mages are whispered to be Masters, when there can't realistically be more than one, if one at all (this reflects character mentality rather than literal truth). In this sort of society mages hold their secrets even closer, and keep their distance so the truth of them is never revealed. Also, because grimoires are more powerful, and in some ways more necessary, they are hoarded even more jealously, and information on them is harder to come by; they are also more numerous. It is likely that any random mage one encounters possesses a grimoire, and even construction of grimoires are easier, although those particular books

are far less powerful than the others presented here.

A mage in *The Stumptown Chronicles* can never be completely sure of his footing. Not only do mages cheat, lie and steal as they are able, they can be outright violent toward each other—the Duel Arcane is lethal in Portland, and secrets kept can be seen as worth the label of murderer. The flow of information is restricted, and other supernatural forces crowd in on a character's comfort level. In a sense, staying at the crest of the black stormy wave of knowledge is the only thing that can keep a player alive, and there can be no room for error, for every mistake is deadly.

This is a game in which mortals are constantly threatening character prosperity, and where even Sleepers can attain the power to startle a mage if not outright fight him. This is a game where no one trusts no one, and the Cabal a group of players is likely to form will be seen as the extreme exception, to be either envious or deeply suspicious of. This is a world of paranoia as well as mystery, this is a place where your wits must suffice because your powers often will not; this is a place likely to be the death of you.

This is Stumptown.



STUMPTOWN

At the border of Washington and Oregon two great rivers meet, and on that site rests Portland. Over two million people live in the area, and although it is the smallest major city in the Pacific Northwest, it is said to be one of the most pleasant cities in the country. Portland is noted for its abundance of green-mindedness, bicycle paths, excellent public transit, strong land planning and development, wonderful parks and gardens. Portland has pleasantly warm (but never consistently hot) summers and rainy (but temperate) winters, leading to the nickname "Rose City," as the weather is perfect for growing the flowers, which grow in abundance.

Of course, in the World of Darkness, the vibrancy of the Rose City is a little darker, a little paler. The Awakened know that Portland has always been a place of deep power, a wellspring of magic from a time before men first laid eyes upon this land. Multiple ley lines weave through each other here, and there is a resonance to the entire region, as if it were a place meant for important things. Of course, the power attracts more than just the Awakened. The beautiful parks and nature reserves are dangerous, not enough to shut down tourism but enough to fill observant hikers with subtle feelings of dread. People walk a little faster at night, and everyone hesitates when they see a dimly lit alley, even if they're just passing by.

Creatures stalk these forests and gardens, and even the zoo has become deadly at night. Dark beings prowl the unlit streets of the city, and extremely frequent hauntings make any old building potentially terrifying (for the relative youth of Portland, it has more than its share of ghosts). There are even places known only to Awakened that even they cannot explain, not only natural phenomena but underground temples and halls that have no recorded origins or mentions in any history.

Portland is indeed a grand city. It is youthful, alternative and full of promise. But there are deep undercurrents from an older time that still

linger here. Organized crime has a strong foothold in Portland, and an overly corrupt police force ensures it will remain that way a long time. The men behind the curtain of Portland are the same conservative, dirty folk that have always ruled this country; the only difference is they are much farther from the surface. The will of the people keep the city green and fresh, but there are forces at play that care little about the accoutrements, as long as they are in control. The newly elected Mayor of Portland promises change, and has become a symbol of hope and innovation, but this persona is a façade, a way to better control the masses as the same old politics continue to reign.

History

Portland began as nothing more than a clearing, for it was easy to log around the confluence of rivers. Oregon City was a burgeoning and greedy town, and so the land around one-day-Portland site was scoured for wood. No one thought on it any further, for Oregon City was clearly the future, so when Asa Lovejoy and William Overton arrived they purchased the land without trouble. One a Bostonian lawyer and the other a pioneer, the two saw the potential of the land, and in 1853 Portland was incorporated into the territory about to become a state.

Meanwhile in Maine, a young Acanthus named Francis W. Pettygrove got the urge to travel West. He was looking for something specific, he knew; he had dreamed it, and it was important that he be there soon. When he arrived in the clearing he met with Overton and Lovejoy, who had just purchased the huge tract of land. Immediately knowing that *this* was his destiny, Pettygrove talked Overton into selling his share, and in the end it was Pettygrove and Lovejoy that founded the city. The former wanted to name it after his hometown of Portland, Maine, and the latter wanted to do the same with Boston, Massachusetts; and so Lovejoy unknowingly agreed to a coin-toss with an Acan-

thus to settle the matter.

Portland sat for a time within the shadow of Oregon City, which was assumed would be the capital of the state once it was incorporated into the Union. But Portland's location was accessible to deep-draft vessels, and it was closer to the ocean; nearly every captain preferred never to enter the Willamette River at all, for the Columbia was wide and deep and calmer on the surface. Before long Portland was the main destination for all ship-based trade in Oregon; it so effectively killed Oregon City's growth to the point that when the state was finally inducted, Salem became its capital. Pettygrove moved on after only four years of development, but his Supernal ability made an enormous impact on the growth and success of the city. He later moved up into Washington, where he continued to develop new towns, but it seemed his interests had moved on to something else; he lived to be seventy-five, and while it is known he died working on something extraordinary, he hid it the day before his death, leaving a letter that could only be read by Awakened: *It is nearly ready. I have left it where it is meant to be found, when the right person is meant to find it.* No one knows exactly what it is, but his notes seem to indicate he had never abandoned Portland, and in his heart dearly loved her; many speculate that whatever he was working on, it was something that would markedly impact the Rose City.

Early Portland

At the turn of the century Portland was quickly becoming a people town, seen as a place of sophistication. Fountains were built around the city to provide free drinking water, which still flow today. Parks were quartered off as the city expanded, and many bridges began to spring up as Portland prospered on all sides of the rivers (it is easy to imagine Vancouver, Washington being apart of Portland had the state lines been slightly different). At the time it struck city planners to make the city pedestrian-friendly, and blocks were made to be half the size of other towns. Small blocks and sometimes small parks had benches and lawns to lay on all over the city, and the multitude of bookstores had every area filled with readers in the summer. Limits on growth kept nature within a twenty minute drive. Most noticeable were the rose gardens, which started as a modest business creating new strains of flowers, but quickly became one of the largest rose industries anywhere.

By the beginning of World War II, there were nine bridges throughout the metropolitan area; "City of Bridges" became another nickname for Rose City. For a time there were more cars per capita than in Chicago or New York, and it turned Portland into one of the most well-planned cities in the country, lined with markets, auditoriums and gorgeous waterfront parks and vistas.



Along with the Sleeper community, the Awakened population was growing. Word began to reach those back east that Portland, Oregon was a place of power. Discoveries were being made new inventions were shipping out from there. The first five mages to come to Portland arrived within the same year, and met Pettygrove on his way out the door. Pettygrove gave them his blessing to help the city, and so they created the first Consilium and used their power to help develop it. Other mages began appearing in Portland almost immediately, but the Consilium was already established, and although its members initially intensely hated one another, they ended up with a tight alliance to keep control of Stumptown.

As the number of mages grew, discoveries began to be made. A beautiful coliseum-like amphitheater was found under the earth, of unknown properties from an unknown civilization. Massive natural formations of magical energy were revealed, and for a time there was a massive surge in mages to the area as a gold-rush for magical ruins and artifacts overtook Portland. In 1910 there was a world fair, which contributed to Portland's population doubling, both Sleeper and Awakened alike.

Modern Portland

In the post-war era, Portland's expansion slowed, as Cold-War paranoia swept the country.

Operation Greenlight targeted Portland to test no-notice evacuations on the core of the city, to prepare for the event of a nuclear attack. These drills were mandatory, and frightened the population so badly many left for good. By the sixties this had abated, but the population was only 400,000, when at one point it was predicted at two-million by 1950. Around the same time, mages began to assume that the most exciting discoveries to be found had been. Many stayed to study what was already discovered, and others continued to find what small treasures that still remained. Portland's Awakened population remains higher than most other areas, but is still now smaller than it once was.

The Rose Gardens and parks were renovated in the sixties and the Memorial Coliseum and Lloyd Center (a massive shopping mall) were erected. Portland began to prosper again, but it was now far behind cities that had once been its peers. The nickname "Stumptown" originated because of the quick clear-cutting that leveled the city's site; it is said that there was a time when one could look over Portland and see an endless field of stumps. However, as America industrialized and modernized, Stumptown became something of a joke, for Portland never developed the incredibly tall skyscrapers of other major US cities, the tallest here not even reaching 550 feet. But what Portland lacked in a majestic skyline they made up in many other ways.

From early on, environmentally friendly people moved to Portland. Its beautiful surrounding nature made it an ideal location for any lover of the outdoors, and even as it developed into a city Portland was known to be a place both amid the steel and the trees. The art and history museums were constructed, and late in the century the Convention Center and Rose Garden Center were built for massive concerts and sporting events. Chinatown became a popular attraction, made complete by the Classical Chinese Gardens. Public



transit became a priority, and bike paths were preserved along with beautiful pedestrian walkways and trails.

Rose City Today

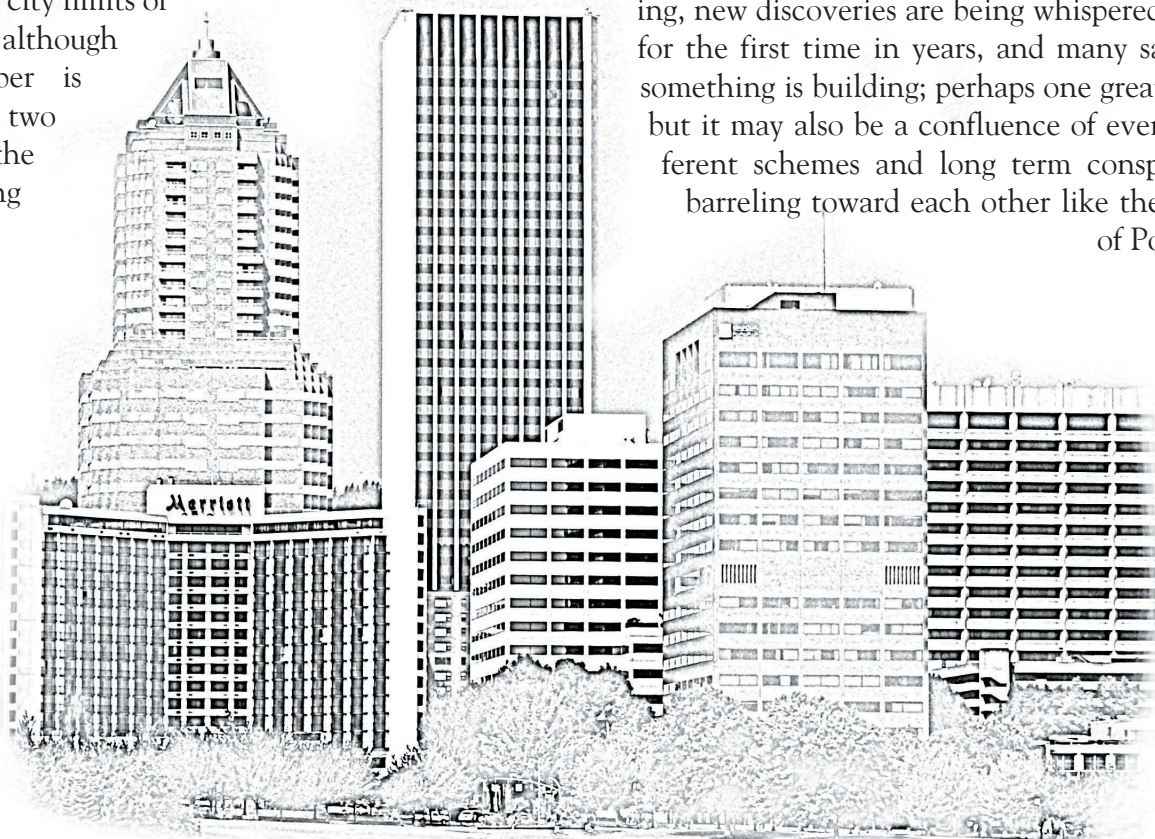
Money Magazine declared Portland the number-one American city to live in, and for many years things were continuing to get better. At the start of the Iraq War heating was cheap, housing was cheap, and taxes were low (Oregon is one of the only states without a sales tax). Business was good, and the River Renaissance was even proposed, a massive long-term strategy to link the natural river system to industrial businesses and neighborhoods, adding beautiful waterfront property and shopping centers. But in recent years things have taken a turn for the worse; the housing market has crumbled, the cost of natural resources has quadrupled, and everything has begun to smack of desperation. Thyrus joke that the Unemployment Spirits are finding easy feeding. Portland wavers on the edge of a precipice, and everyone is holding their breath to see which way things will go. Right at present day things are just beginning to look up, but sometimes one sees a light at the end of the tunnel that is nothing but an oncoming train.

There are less than 600,000 people living within the city limits of Portland, although the number is more like two million if the surrounding area is taken

into consideration. Like Seattle, Portland is a city of sprawl, preferring to dot the landscape around nature rather than tear everything down and build upward. The city is governed by the City Council, consisting of a Mayor, four other Commissioners and an auditor. Each is selected every four years, but recently a new Mayor has managed to hold on for the last two elections. Jonathan Perez is a handsome man in sharp suits with a four hundred dollar haircut and a housewife-wooing smile. Riding the tide of the eco-friendly movement, the Mayor has promised to continue green development and alternative transportation. Everybody is focused on the Mayor, not seeing the four Commissioners behind him, fat, white and scowling.

Portland has been a major source of alternative entertainment, especially zines. There are dozens of Do-It-Yourself stores, lesbian radical feminist and activist groups, and an active music scene. Over 75 art venues hold theatre, music, dance and folk art performances. Portland is well known for its microbreweries, and has a major beer festivals every year.

The Awakened community is scattered throughout the urban area, ruled by an unforgiving Consilium. Recently, additional discoveries have been made that are causing Portland to begin buzzing again. Spiritual activity is increasing, new discoveries are being whispered about for the first time in years, and many say that something is building; perhaps one great thing, but it may also be a confluence of events, different schemes and long term conspiracies barreling toward each other like the rivers of Portland.



ROSE CITY, AWAKENED

There is no dedicated Atlantis myth, no packaged explanation for why mages are as they are. What is known is that as long as there has been human civilization, Awakened have been in the background. They have been called druids, priests, magicians, sorcerers, witches and devil worshippers. They have witnessed history and its true happenings, recorded from a wholly different perspective than the Sleeper lie that continues to perpetuate itself. Spirits influencing leaders to start wars, battles and coup de tats over magical trinkets, an Awakened Rasputin attempting to seize control of an empire—mages have ever been there, guiding events, trying to help humanity limp along in a world so ready to snuff it from existence.

Because mages are, undeniably, human. They have found enormous power somehow, but at the end of the day they are mortal. And so they live nestled in humanity itself. Their numbers are small—around sixty mages live in and around Portland, but that population is terribly high, for nearly the same number reside in New York City and its surrounds. While there may be enough mages in the world to create a functioning civilization if someone gathered them all, nobody has done either; it would require abandoning who you are, and becoming someone else, and as much as Awakened love their newfound identities, it doesn't change who they were, and *are*.

And so a society has developed as it can, slowly and over many hundreds of years. There are certain similarities between societies, rules, culture and etiquette from city to city, but most of the time there are huge differences as well, for there is no centralized codex on how to behave, no international treaties or official doctrines. Mage cultures tend to develop in cities separately, and while there is bleed over from mages traveling and moving to

new areas, this makes things begin to show signs of influence rather than markedly impacts. The information here is presented for Portland only, and may be fundamentally different anywhere (and quite possibly, everywhere) else.

That Small Town Feel

The mage society in *The Stumptown Chronicles* is a small town inside a big city. Because of the low number of mages in the world, Awakened are isolated in a crowded world. Almost against their will they are forced to gather, but the truth is they don't want to. Secrets and information is what fuels this world and even its economy, so dozens of friends and a loose attitude is a good way to get yourself straight up murdered. The *assumption* that the world is so dangerous you have to be on your own is vital, and while your players are expected to form a Cabal, this should be the exception rather than the rule—even in merely forming a group, your players will do something that ruffles some feathers and makes others nervous.

As a result, Awakened Portland should feel like a small town amid isolating geography. Everybody knows everybody—that's just how it is. The character section of this book isn't a sampling; it's meant to be a near-comprehensive list. In a small town you just can't avoid people indefinitely. By whatever chance or fate makes it happen, Awakened are extremely likely to run into each other when out running errands. Rumors about people spread like wildfire, surprisingly fast, but in a tiny town in the middle of nowhere there just isn't anything for it—everybody knows everybody else's business. While true motives and goals can usually be concealed, it's hard to shroud one's actions completely. Anything that leaks out is quickly snatched

Seattle

Every small town has another, slightly not-as-small town that stands as their mecca. Sometimes there isn't even anything particularly spectacular about the place, it isn't Tokyo or Paris or the Sistine Chapel, but at least it isn't . . . here.

Seattle, Washington is like that for Portland. The population of Seattle's Awakened community is significantly smaller than Portland's, and there is less of Supernal interest there. And yet it's still a larger city and a change of pace. It might not be a grand arena of supernatural excitement, but it's still Seattle, and a place where many mages escape the daily grind. Seattle for its part is surprisingly placid, and a peaceful place to vacation, especially if you want to forget about Awakened life and just be a human being for a while. That's not to say that one can't get wrapped up in the politics and craziness up there, but it is more subdued than in Portland, easier to ignore and at least possible to stay out of. Chances are, if a Portland mage is nowhere to be found in his city, you can find him in Seattle.

up by the entire populace, and people begin to put things together. That means working twice as hard and stepping twice as fast to stay above the curve, because even rumor can be your downfall.

Awakened Portland, like small towns, is incredibly insular. While not every current mage in Portland was born here, most have lived in the city for a very long time. Newcomers upon their arrival are treated with deep suspicion and mistrust, sometimes even aggression, simply for not being fortunate enough to have already lived in Portland for decades. It's an irrational dislike that seems to be unavoidable, the curse of a closed and crowded community—for indeed, fifty mages even in the largest cities in the world seems crowded. And besides a

mandated dislike of out-of-towners, Awakened Portland is very quick to turn on its own. Crime, misdeeds, even a general bad attitude can quickly cause someone to end up on the Stumptown Blacklist, which is slang for anyone who is intentionally treated with disrespect because of their unpopularity in town. While only the Consilium can officially exile, it is easy to become blacklisted; no one will help you, trade with you, or give you more than a cursory nod before walking away. There isn't a time or place where this is agreed upon—like in a small town, it sometimes just happens to people, often without any justification at all. One who finds herself on the Stumptown Blacklist is as good as exiled—no one is actually *forcing* her to leave the city, but there's no longer anything for her there, either. It's possible to get out of this situation once you're in it, but there aren't a set of standard hoops you have to jump through to accomplish it—anyone who winds up on the Stumptown Blacklist must find their own way to get their name removed, and it's different for everyone. Whatever one might do, it has to be something big, big enough at least to help renew the good will of an entire small town.

Of course, what is interesting about this small-town dynamic is that it is set against the backdrop of a major city. Awakened life, then, becomes a contradiction, and one ends up having to straddle both during every moment. Because in dealing with most events, mages interact with a city.

So their personalities, impatience and foibles are all what you'd find in a city. But their interaction with *each other* is as if they are in a small town. The result is something like a bunch of city slickers trying to make it in Sawpit, Colorado.

Consilium

In Portland, at least, if not in the rest of the world, the Consilium is the leading authority, but is not strong enough to completely rule. The governing council exists, but lacks most of the normal staff that allows it the support any administration needs.



For the most part, this isn't because of any one reason in particular, other than a result of the fact that there aren't a lot of mages to be governed, so the number of administrators has no need to be terribly high, and that many lack the qualifications to be part of the inner circle. Add to this that the Consilium members, like the rest of Awakened society, are deeply mistrustful and don't wish any one to have power that doesn't have to have it.

There are only two Sentinels currently in duty, and they are the first in decades to exist at all. There is only one Provost and one Herald, and these mark the culmination of official staff in Portland. Now, for the most part this is sufficient, because of the relatively small number of mages in Portland...but this small town resides in a big city. It is easy to hide, disappear, do your thing even if it is forbidden, because chances are you can get away with it, and as long as you aren't caught, and you haven't personally offended a Consilium member, you may be able to get away with it.

This attitude is almost necessary, as the Consilium itself is nothing short of tyrannical. The Consilium is meant to lead, to mitigate, to protect—in theory. That power corrupts is an axiom, and no one in a position of power is willing to give that up. The Consilium, then, becomes primarily about keeping power and one's own agenda; all other considerations are secondary. A powerful need to keep secrets and to promote their own goals, mixed with the paranoia and fear that comes from acting like you have other people's best interests at heart but don't, created a Consilium that dominates rather than rules. To the member the Consilium is deeply feared by nearly everyone; all of the Council are powerful, and some may even be Masters. They issue blanket decrees that are likely not theirs to make, and attempt to rule the entire city with a tight iron fist. Their own agendas keep them from becoming completely concerned with other Awakened's activities, but if their ire or suspicion is aroused, dire consequences are to be had. Their edicts are so numerous, so hard to enforce and so frequently violated that when the Consilium does punish someone, they feel forced to do so harshly.

Chosen

The Consilium is as shrouded in mystery and obfuscation as any other aspect of Awakened society. What is known is this: every five years, a gath-

ering is held. Anyone is allowed to attend, but it is never mandatory and few show up. Those who do are taken to a secret location, and a contest begins. No one knows what happens in this contest, or how it is measured, but the participants gain a rank based on their success. The top five winners become the Consilium for the next five years. That's it. There is no way to appeal, no popular vote of community input. The contest is designed to ensure that the five most powerful mages in Portland are placed in charge.

Of course, this method is not without its flaws, and chief among them is that not everyone has to participate, so it isn't an accurate measurement (assuming the methods of the actual contest are sound, which they may not be). Most mages will never participate for two clear reasons: outcome isn't assured, because no one knows what everyone else's power is (and few are confident enough to think themselves Consilium-worthy), and maybe more importantly because it reveals to the other contestants what one's true power-level is. It makes sense that the Consilium would be aware of each others' power, but in this reality the truth of ability is a carefully guarded secret, and no one would give that information up willingly. And of course the Consilium contends that it is an accurate measurement anyway, since those who don't show up aren't possibly powerful enough to be in the running (this seems to ignore the possibility of Masters-in-hiding, though the truth is that is more myth and spooky-campfire-story material).

Warring Councilors

The other major factor in Portland's politics, and one that is no secret to anyone, is that on the whole the Consilium does not get along at all. One of the Councilors is friends with two others, and there the affability ends—everyone else hates everyone else, and with a passion only powerful people can feel towards others of deep power. From the first among them to achieve the Council onward, each has tried to hinder the others' ascension, causing bitter resentment and rivalries impossible to diminish.

This hostility has not yet spilled out into the rest of the community. But it is no secret that the Consilium have dozens of plots and schemes *solely against each other*. There are attempts to dethrone going on, maybe plans for assassinations, black-

mail or simple attempts to discredit each other. This cold war is well known, and yet other mages have no idea if they're already being played in this larger game. It also keeps the Consilium slightly more aloof, and some mages liken it to a war of gods, powerful and fearsome but high in the clouds where the mortals won't be affected. Perhaps these plots are the reason Consilium members don't seem to mingle with the common folk, why they are rarely seen and suddenly bring down the hammer on some poor mage, why they are so strict with their power and so inscrutable in their reasoning.

You Can't Take the Sky from Me

Because of all this, most mages have adopted a slightly rebellious demeanor. Any time there is a slightly oppressive hierarchy in place, most of its subjects will do what they can to lessen the effects. And in a society that, whatever small town feel it may have, still exists in an enormous area, it is easy to oblige. Most recognize that there are simply some areas in Portland to avoid, or at least behave in—these are the Consilium haunts, where they keep an eye on things, where they have spies, where they *are*. None are foolish enough to defy even the strictest, strangest law on the books in these regions. That is best left to the outer territories.

Throughout Portland, even including downtown, there are wide sections of the city where the Consilium just doesn't have eyes. An entire city is too much for five people with four assistants to keep track of, especially when everyone is already warring with each other. So mages recognize that in some places, anything goes. There is an expression in Portland, "Every block is ruled by different laws." While not literally true, the reality of the situation feels like that; three blocks from a place where you would be punished, you can get away with something. As long as you're careful, secretive and smart, there are a lot of lines you can cross, a lot of boundaries you can push.


Of course, this all comes with the price of what happens if caught. The Consilium is terribly ruthless and severe when it comes to their judgments, especially because they *know* this sort of rebellion is going on all the time. As a result, they treat nearly everyone like they are a potential smuggler or spy, to the point where there is no such thing as a pleasant meeting with a Consilium member. The Coun-

cil is sort of like the Alliance from *Firefly*. They are to be avoided at all costs, and if you do get snared by them, keep your head down, your mouth shut and do whatever they tell you; and hope they let you go, so you can get as far away as you can and redouble your efforts to avoid them.

Secrets and Lies

Power is both harder and easier to come by in this World of Darkness. One's own magical might is usually fairly limited, but if a mage plays his cards right, he can collect treasure that will help augment that power. Because of this dichotomy, a culture has evolved wherein mages will try to mask their power-level (some up, some down), and this knowledge is in some ways the ultimate weapon against any given Awakened. It is also harder to detect how someone is casting a spell (whether by self, by rote, or by item), and so it is initially easier to disguise one's true gifts. But in the long-term, it is far harder, for there are certain things that one must occasionally do in public that would reveal one's true potency, and one cannot always prepare in such a way that uses items to fool onlookers into thinking their effects are one's own. And so massive propaganda campaigns sometimes happen,





when a mage tries to start rumors about himself as subtly as he can. Fostering the notion that he is a Master, or playing down that he is an Adept, requires incredible cunning, for who else do you start such a rumor with besides mages? Any discovery that you started your own rumors will have you instantly discredited and possibly put on the Stumptown Blacklist. And yet mages continue to do this, so many in fact that the entire society is built on a set of truths built on a set of lies built on a set of truths. As much as you may know everybody's business in a small town, in Portland what you know may mean nothing; it could be a diversionary tactic, it could be outright deception, or purposefully done so you will interpret events incorrectly.

Interaction

A deep mistrust, therefore, permeates the culture of Portland. Even friends are looking over their shoulders at one another, and friendship itself is hard to come by to begin with. It has become so bad as to be reflexive, at this point; Portland mages are so cagey and paranoid by nature they often let that get the better of them. When two mages meet each other for the first time, both must immediately roll Wits + Composure – other mage's Gnosis. If a roll fails, that mage is distrustful of the other to the point of irrationality. This is just a first impression, of course; it is possible to get around it, but the point is it needs to be gotten around. Mages have to work to like each other, and it is incredibly

hard to ever truly trust a fellow Awakened.

To further complicate things, a mage's very Wisdom impacts how well he can integrate into this society. Every mage falls victim to hubris at some point, but as his Wisdom slips he becomes more and more mistrustful of those around him as well as morally bankrupt. This is immediately reflected by the fact that a mage with a Wisdom of 4 or below subtracts 2 dice from the above roll. But on a general level, the implications are far more bleak: the more powerful a mage becomes, the harder is to maintain friendships and loyalty. The price one pays for true power, after all, is to be completely alone. It would seem mages inflict this upon themselves voluntarily and prematurely.

Cabals

This suspicion prevents most tepid alliances or fleeting joint ventures from becoming full-blown Cabals. In fact, Cabal is something of an unused phrase in Awakened society, almost antique. Legend records a time when Cabals were more frequent, but whenever that was it is not now. In most instances, mages consider themselves on their own. Temporary situations often present themselves, and with powerful mages some merely end up working together more often than against.

But actual Cabals? They are the exception rather than the rule. Paranoia drives factions apart, but so does paranoia that turns out *to be right*, which

Telecommunication

There are so many ways in which Portland is a small town, isolated place for mages, but at the end of the day this is still the information age. Apprenticeships have lasted down through the centuries, and the style of training leaves some uncomfortable with the most state of the art and sleek technology, but most still use it.

In fact, with such an emphasis on research and investigation into valuable artifacts and items, long-distance communication is almost essential to many ways of Awakened life. As a result, in certain respects it is just as easy to develop a relationship across the country as it is in Portland. Many of a mages contacts aren't local, and it is advantageous to having eyes and ears in as many different cities as possible. In some ways the cities closest are the best, but in others major Sleeper metropolitan areas (New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong) have better access to resources, equipment and information even in Awakened circles. Portland maybe a major Supernal hub, but the biggest trade cities are still where you'd find the largest flow of needed goods. The nice thing about contacts in these locations is that friendships are easier to maintain; a Portland mage's private life and personal collection are less important to someone on the east coast or Europe, and there's likely to be few threats that your overseas pin-pal will be the one to steal your precious grimoire or leak your secrets to the Consilium. Some mages keep their closest friends at such a distance, and there are a few that loathe any personal contact and prefer to do everything online.

is often the case. Those few groups who manage to sustain an official cabal are accorded respect by the community at large. Beyond that, most of the other advantages to having a Cabal are removed. They don't make much of an impact politically, with perhaps the exception that a group of weak, unimportant mages might be more likely to be heard by the Consilium than one weak, unimportant mage alone.

Most mages toil by themselves, perhaps with friendships but nothing with any real trust. The sad fact is that most Awakened are aware of what the benefits of a Cabal would be, but can't bring themselves to bother. Good habits are hard to maintain and bad habits are easy to begin, and so even though the community at large knows they would be better off trusting at least a few people in their lives, this never seems to stretch to developing into anything permanent.

Party

That is not to say that players shouldn't be involved with each other. In fact, four Cabals are established in the character section of this book, mainly to set precedent for their existence. Your player party can be merely friends mostly working together, or you can be an outright Cabal. While it is an interesting experience to play a game with the players against each other in a world of paranoia, sometimes it is just easier to start players off as friends. Later in the book, there is a discussion

about possible vacuums in Portland a player Cabal could fill.

Apostate Nation

In a world that is more isolated, withdrawn and suspicious means means that society never got going at a truly high-functioning level. Oh, legends speak of mage utopias, but with a few exceptions most don't heed them any more seriously than Sleepers do Atlantis or the Garden of Eden.

One of the most immediate and noticeable changes that comes from such a world is that there are no Orders. Everyone is considered an Apostate, and therefore no one is, for there is nothing to compare being Order-less with. Mages in this reality don't even particularly enough Cabals, much less global, concentrated alliances.

There are order-like schools of thought, but they are not organized in any way. They are philosophies only, writings that can be burrowed and lended during the exchange of ideas. And while some follow these philosophies, nothing external occurs because of it: no one judges these mages or has stereotypes against them (besides a bigoted few of course), and nothing is gained like joining an actual order is. Of course, two mages of the same philosophy might be more inclined to become friends, or help each other out should the need arise.

These philosophies are usually regional, although a few might spread across the country. It isn't necessary include this as a story or mechan-

ics arch in any way; it simply allows some of the models of thinking from orders to carry into *The Stumptown Chronicles*, the easier for players to generate characters with. But really, these ideas are just that, and nothing more. They might shape a character's life and thoughts, and even give him simple tasks to do for himself, but in that way is no different from an individual reading a Wayne Dwyer self-help book and following its advice.

Another way to look at it is through the eyes of the Catholic monestary: Orders are almost separate religions or political structures. Instead, use the analogy that all mages are Christians, but some follow St. Benedict and others St. Augustine.

Treasure Hunting

In *The Stumptown Chronicles*, objects of power are paramount. They are the things that men kill and die for. These items—artifacts, grimoires, wands—are how a mage makes up for his lack of power, to become at least vicariously a Master of whatever you wish. Items are so sought after that the very concept of treasure hunting helps drive Awakened society. It is the reason many mages interact at all, and one of the primary motivations for long distance mage interaction and travel.

New Things

There are several new types of items for use in a *Stumptown Chronicles* game. Besides artifacts and imbued items, there are:

Arkhos grimoires: These are powerful grimoires that have all the properties of magic tomes plus the ability to allow mages to cast certain spells (arkhos rites) beyond their level or Arcana knowledge. Like artifacts. No one knows how these properties come to be. For more, see page 28—available as a new merit on page 29.

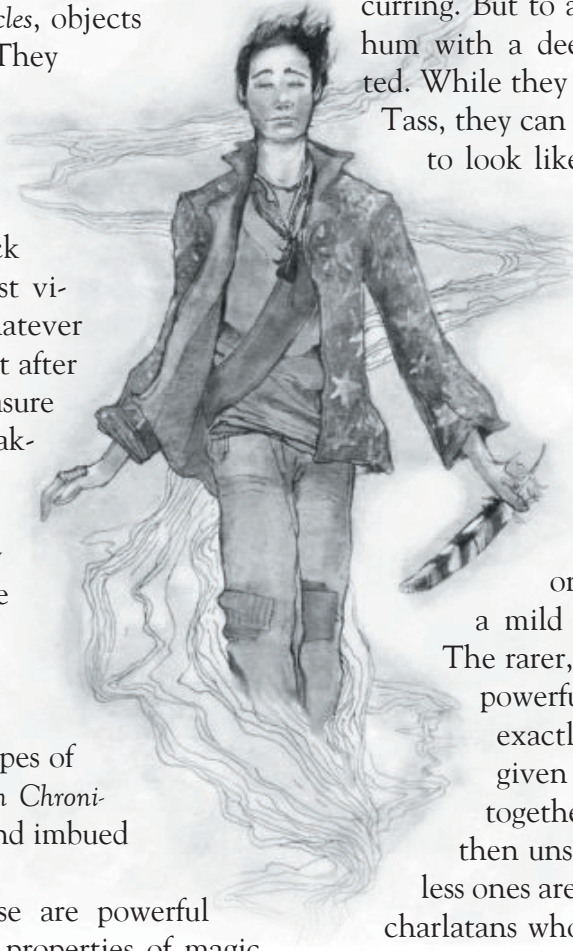
Arkhos wands: Extraordinary, lethal magic devices that shoot out arcs of power from any one Arcana (based on that wand's construction). They are

terribly vulgar but allow mages able to manipulate enough Mana to do aggravated damage in combat, although they take time to recharge. These can be created like imbued items, by any mage with a Gnosis of 5, a Prime of 2 and one Arcana at 4. For more, see page 30—available as a new merit on page 31.

Lacrimo: There are things like artifacts in the world that seem entirely natural in origin. Much in the way that a Hallow can leak Tass into the world, there is some puncture in reality of a kind heretofore unidentified that congeals these Tass-like items. Lacrimo look and feel like whatever object they resemble, and behave in the same way. Lacrimo can be rocks, twigs, bones, water, jewels, shells, or anything one could find naturally occurring. But to an Awakened's sight, these things hum with a deep Resonance that is easily spotted. While they do not grant a point of Mana like Tass, they can be manipulated with Prime, made to look like other objects (although they resist transforming into anything

other than something naturally occurring). They each have magical powers or effects that cause them to be intensely sought after. Lacrimo are one of the most commonly found magical items, and most of them aren't particularly powerful—there are many Lacrimo that keep you cool, or prevent airsickness, that act as a mild antidepressant or a sleeping aid. The rarer, however, can be among the most powerful objects in existence. No one is exactly sure what the properties of any given Lacrimo are, and when brought together items exhibit properties until then unseen, so even the seemingly worthless ones are worth a little cash. There are also charlatans who travel from city to city pawning underpowered Lacrimo for quick cash and disappearing before anyone's the wiser.

These new things, with artifacts and imbued items, make up the types of items sought after by treasure hunters. This spills into research, archeology and all the rest of course—tomb raiders are sophisticated and respected members of their society, and everything revolved around their findings.



Each time a new artifact is discovered, each time a grimoire is found or a wand is made, the economy surges a little more. Most mages don't wish to give up their treasure, of course, but enough makes it out into the market that commerce still works. With that come the bottom feeders of course; the grave robbers, the professional thieves that take from other Awakened, even strong-arm mages who try to bully their way (either physically or politically) into ownership of items.

An entire industry leads to a shadow industry of crime, and in keeping with the theme of *Stumptown Chronicles* every mage is right to be overly cautious, secretive and downright overprotective about their treasures. One of the reasons it gets so hard to track where items are or have been is that few are willing to divulge their secrets. Add to this that many magical items have a way of vanishing, only to reemerge later, and tracking and hunting down items becomes no easy feat. Not only this, but mages try to create disinformation about the treasure they themselves are hunting for, to throw others off their trail. Slogging through the mud and lies is sometimes harder than the actual quest itself.

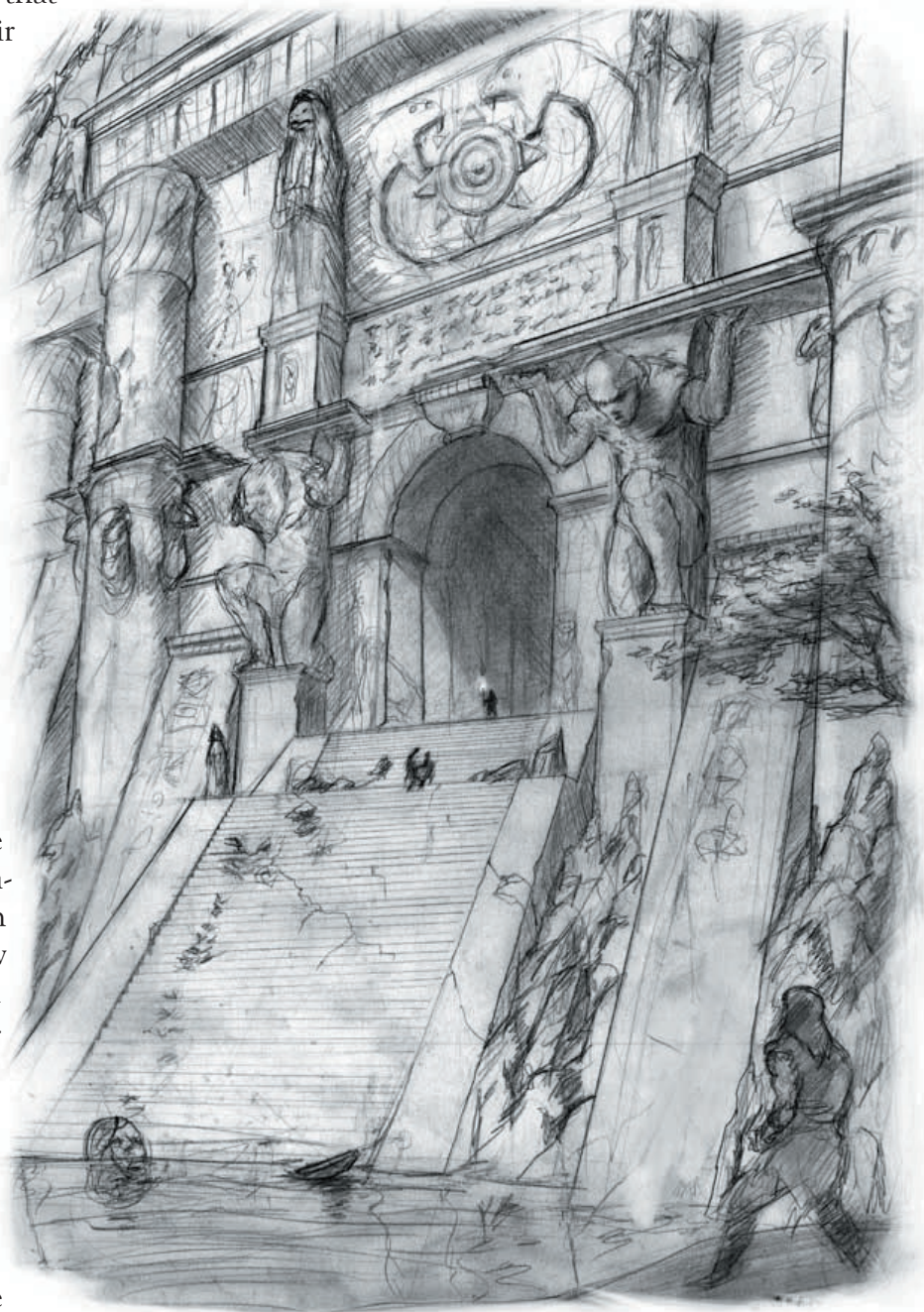
Beneath Thy Feet

Rumors persist that Portland is not done revealing its secrets yet. The city has always been a source of great power, drawing mages from all over the world, but recently some have begun to suspect there is a reason for that. Texts have begun revealing the possibility of new temples and other subterranean ruins that may exist under Portland. Like the Chamber of Amber, they would be mysterious and from an unknown culture, but as they are discovered perhaps the true identity of those who left these mystery structures will be revealed. Since the

movement to begin digging under Portland has begun again, an arms race of books and artifacts has renewed as well, as people prepare themselves to discover catacombs or labyrinths no one yet knows exist.

Brokers

There is a certain kind of Sleepwalker out there that garners more respect among the Awakened than all others. These Sleepwalkers are almost seen as equals, even though they can do no magic and possess no items. They are the Brokers, the keepers of secrets. There are only a few in the world, and they dedicate their lives to collecting information about objects, and sell this information to others.



Because their neutrality, Brokers are trusted, and so used to mediate trades between parties of Awakened.

Brokers are experts in mage history, lore, myth and culture. In some ways, they know more about mages than mages do, for the only way they are of value is to be the keepers of information.

Many secrets they trade are used to accumulate defenses, so that their wares cannot be forcibly extracted. It is also a major crime to kill, threaten or steal from a Broker in any way in nearly all Consiliums. Although Brokers rarely if ever have items themselves, they are considered to be integral to the entire culture of treasure hunting.



External Forces

The following are alterations to possible antagonists that may exist for the mage community as a whole and your players specifically. There are other forces out there besides what is listed below, but these remain unchanged, and there is likely little mages know about them.

Sleepers

In *The Stumptown Chronicles*, the magic in the world reverberates perhaps a little more closely to Sleepers than it normally does. Don't forget, in the World of Darkness there are *things* out there, unexplainable things, and they do not hesitate just because a potential victim is a Sleeper. These things care not for the enlightened state of man, and so Sleepers *do* encounter supernatural activity. Not all Sleepers, of course—most are content to live out their lives without ever truly knowing that magic and spirits exist. However, they live close to the line. Sleepers will invoke Disbelief as normal,

but the chances of running into a mortal who is also a Sleepwalker is slightly greater. This section of Sleepwalker hasn't had the truth revealed to them because of Awakened interaction, but rather their own horrific experiences with the World of Darkness. These mortals usually turn to some explanation to both comfort and protect them from the world—or else they use the opportunity to seize power for themselves, as is the want of humanity's fickle, greedy nature.


Hedge Magic

Most mortals who encounter magic or terror turn to the Hedge, where they attempt to recreate either what they see on television or the power of a mage they have witnessed in action. Spellbooks, potions, alchemy, pacts with evil spirits...it quickly gets away from them. Before they know it they are *magicians*, powerful among their peers. What they don't realize is that what abilities they managed to glean pale in comparison to Awakened magic. Mages, however, sometimes have difficulty with these folk. Their magic is harder to instantly detect, and sometimes combating mystical energy



that doesn't come from the Supernal Realms proves to be tricky. Hedge magicians rarely take on mages full on, of course; but their activities can terrorize or dominate Sleepers, and the ripple effects of such harm can make their way to impacting Awakened society. Most see magicians as little more than annoyances, but even annoyances must be dealt with. The occasional magician that manages to become incredibly powerful also makes mages cautious when they approach these people, for in a world of secrets the unpredictability of the Hedge will give anyone

pause.



Demonology

Some mages are intimately familiar with demons, and are not easily manipulated by the creatures—usually a deal with a demon is invoked willingly, and even if it gets out of hand later initially began due to the Awakened's own greed. Sleepers, however, are much more easily duped. Demons wait in the nether regions, either the abyss or some hell dimension, waiting to be freed by an errant mortal. The reasons for communicating with demons can be tempting: promises of immortal life, power and riches, secret knowledge seemingly lost to mankind. And some demons can actually deliver on those promises, but *all* demons exact a heavy price for being summoned. A few turn their would-be masters into pets, keeping them around to remain on this plane while they indulge their unearthly vices. Many simply possess the Sleeper, having no corporeal body of their own; these demon-human hybrids act an awful lot like Ridden, only a demon needn't fight with a Sleeper who has already invited it in. These demons are hard to spot, for they do not often show up as strange to Mage Sight unless they are actively using their powers. Of course, it is possible to detect even a dormant demon if one looks hard enough, but the problem there is that one would *need* a reason to look hard enough, and so a subtle and careful demon can go for decades undetected, their host slowly decaying as mortals do, the occupier biding its time until it can switch bodies.

Of course, some of the most truly terrifying are the mortals who manage to actually gain control of demons. These demonologists begin to grow in power quickly, for each time they manage to beat a fiend into submission they gain new ways of controlling others. Soon these Sleepwalkers possess a powerful arsenal, but even more worrisome is that during an encounter with mages trying to stop her, a demonologist won't just summon devils to her aid, but she will in the heat of combat lose control of them; and a dozen demons angered at being dominated for so long will cause a world of havoc before they can be stopped. Demons seem to be resistant to mage magic, and there is no one Arcana that affects them better than the others, making the creatures among the hardest for willworkers to engage.

Agency

Perhaps worst of all, some Sleepers encounter the darkness and decide not to play by its rules. Organizations of Sleepers can gather and crusades begin. The Salem witch-hunts, the Spanish Inquisition, all of these terrible times in history are among the reasons why Awakened knowledge is so rare; Sleepers with knowledge of magic can become iconoclasts, and every new emergence of an association of witch hunters destroys tomes and documents and history. In modern times, a mage has to be extra cautious: vampire hunting organizations are out there, and so too are mortals who hunt down mages. Sometimes they seem poorly organized rabble, but they seem to have a way of eluding Awakened and their abilities. Others, it seems, are part of a government organization, with suits and badges and codes of conduct, but most importantly a state-sanctioned mandate to capture and detain what Sleeper society would deem to be normal people, and without parole or due process. A mage has to be wary when Sleepers come snooping around, and they seem to often, some with technological devices that seem to sniff out Supernatural energy. Mages have yet to codify the nature of this threat, but in Portland at least there are certainly Sleeper groups out there who want to bring the Awakened down, and seem to see no difference between Willworkers, hedge magicians and demon summoners.

Vampires

Not much is known for certain about the undead. Death magic affects them best, and it seems hard to affect them with anything at all without mixing that Arcanum in. No one is completely convinced of their sentience; perhaps they are fully aware, only turned dark by some horrid curse or demon-plague, or maybe they only approximate human emotion and logic in order to better hunt. This concept of a philosophical zombie is intriguing to some mages, and there may even be some in Portland trying to discover these secrets. What is known is that they are certainly dead, have an aversion to sunlight, fire and anything living or once living stabbed through the heart.

There are many of them, probably more in the city than mages...some even believe by whole factors. Mages seem to know when they are around,

but identifying them in a crowd can sometimes be difficult. The Awakened are left with an uncomfortable truth: they share their city with the undead, who might be organized or at least self-aware enough to work together should the need arise. Mages are cautioned to tread lightly, for vampires can be dangerous foes, and seem to be able to get Sleepers to do their bidding, whether by social grace or mystical domination.

In recent years, undead activity has seemed to have increased in the greater northwest, for reasons unknown. But vampires are becoming bolder in their actions, and while they do seem aware of the existence of mages, are growing less and less wary of them.

Other Mages

With no centralized Awakened myth, Seers of the Throne are not as numerous as they might be. They still exist, of course, but are greatly reduced in the scope of their power and influence. Among mages, the true threats are the Banishers and the Mad. The one area of Awakened life in which bickering is put aside concerns these forces. While a single insane mage or Banisher might not be enough to make bitter rivals work together, those who tacidly acquainted will easily badn together to stop the threat before it multiplies—these types of mage are like locusts, and one left alone will suddenly breed dozens. And of course, there are times when Banishers seem remarkably organized, and launch what could be categorized as terrorist actions against the mage community. This sort of activity will even get the Consilium working togeth-

er, although often not soon enough to stop damage from being done.

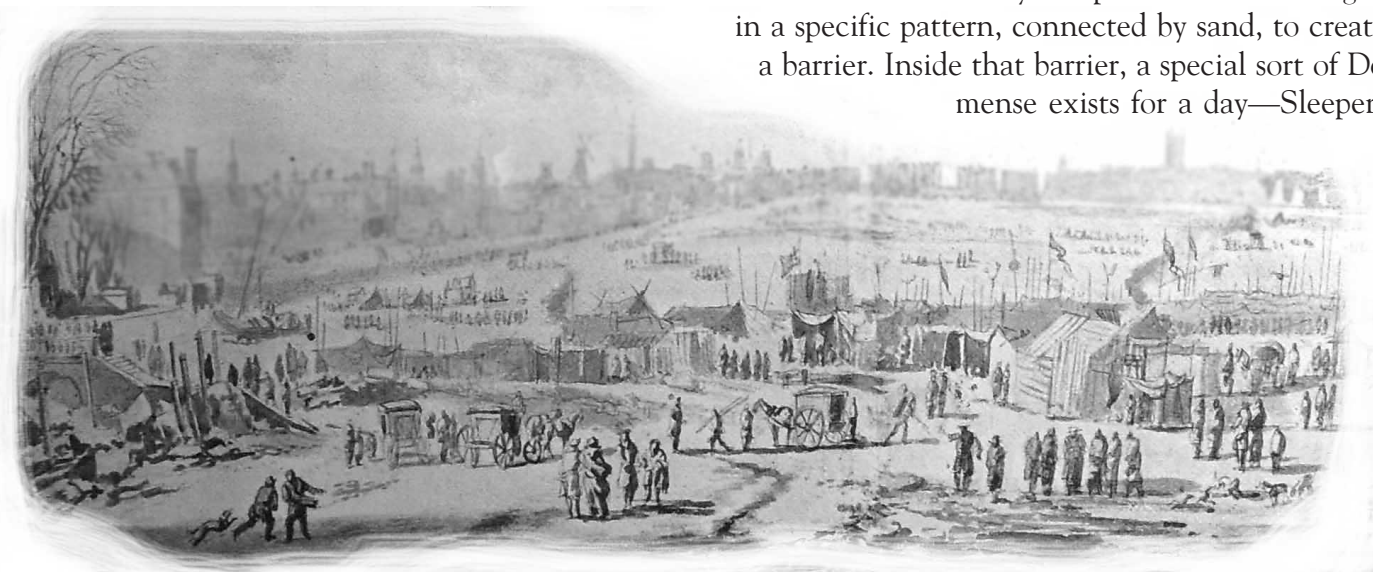
Saturn Day

The most important and unique tradition in Awakened Portland is that once a year, everything changes. For just a single day, the rules of society are put aside; the grudges and suspicions are withheld; the feuds and rivalries are paused. It was a tradition first founded during Portland's origins, when the first mages realized they would be here for a while. To help the culture prosper, and to help avoid conflicts turning into wars, the founders issued that every Vernal Equinox, a festival of lights should be held in a secret place where mages could be themselves for a day and a night. This celebration is called Saturn Day, the only Awakened Portland holiday. Mages plan for and look forward to it all year, and talk about it until the next one.

There is nothing else like it. Seattle, Vancouver, Boise, even San Francisco all look upon Saturn Day with envy, and many migrate to Oregon for the day to help celebrate—some sixty mages in Portland suddenly become three hundred.

The Thirteen Pearls

Saturn Day has been celebrated since Portland's founding, but it didn't become the holiday that it is until 1901, when a Thyrsus by the name of Osborne Russell gifted to the Consilium a magnificent gift; a set of thirteen Lacrimo pearls. The pearls are a startling white, but one day a year—the Vernal Equinox—they become a deep, churning blue. And on that day the pearls can be arranged in a specific pattern, connected by sand, to create a barrier. Inside that barrier, a special sort of Demense exists for a day—Sleepers



cannot find the location, and Paradox is nowhere to be seen. Each year, the sophistication of the technique improves, and the area gets larger: today approximately an entire square mile can be contained within the thirteen pearls.

The Fair

Over the years, the festival has evolved into something close to the ultimate expression of a fair. Once the thirteen pearls are set in place, mages move in and quickly set up shop. A large arena is constructed, dozens of small shops and even a restaurant, booths for games and contests, a jousting arena, an auction house, a playground—all of it goes up within hours. Then the rest of the people descend, and the true fun begins.

The look and feel of Saturn Day is a cross between a renaissance festival and a county fair, only with real and vulgar magic being cast everywhere. No one dares to cause violence on this day, and so the atmosphere becomes peaceful, even jovial, and Awakened for a day at least let their guard down.

Every year, some of the outsiders are the same. Third Coming Theater Troop, consisting of only Awakened and Sleepwalkers, tours all year round, bringing mage-themed plays to city after city, but on this day they are *always* in Portland. They share the arena with musical acts—Penelope Brash is there, as is Columbia Falls, but there are a few other mage bands that usually get up to play as well. Some of the best food to be eaten in the entire world can be found at Saturn Day.

The game booths have magic puzzles and contests of Supernal skill, which some always say are rigged, but no one ever truly complains. Prizes vary, but more commonly than not all one receives is a badge confirming they have bested the challenge. Each year, the winner of the most badges is crowned the King of Fools, and is allowed to jokingly command others around, even the Consilium, for the remainder of the day (provided he doesn't cause too much trouble).

The Game of Knights is played from dawn un-

til dusk, a series of Duel Arcane that end at first blood. The audience for some of the competitions can equal nearly the entire fair, as every year those some rare few come back to fight for the title once more. All of these men are like celebrities, and so close in skill it's never certain who will emerge victorious. Only second-level Adepts are allowed to participate, and they come from all over the world. The winner by elimination is declared the Knight



of Portland, protector of the city for that year. An out-of-town victor is allowed to remain in the city for that year, if he wishes, although if he does he is considered an official agent of the Consilium. Currently there is no sitting Knight, as the victor for three years in a row has refused to stay after Saturn Day is over.

Xander Graves, a Moros from Seattle, can also be found selling his drugs to make the day even sweeter. He is best known for selling Ascension

Weed, cannabis so potent it must be kept out of the hands of Sleepers lest the trip Wake them up. Ultimately potent, extremely mellow and even mildly hallucinogenic, Ascension Weed triggers mage Sights at random, including of Arcana not possessed (Sleepwalkers can also be affected this way).

With inhibitions down and dopamine levels up, Saturn Day is also, poetically enough, a potential saturnalia—rare is the year where some sort of group public sex act doesn't break out, and even when that's not happening there are always the Tents of Ecstasy in the south corner, where Sleepwalkers and mages alike go to get their ashes hauled. With over three hundred mages and half that number of Sleepwalkers, the Tents are always full, the pipes are always lit, the food is always cooking. If a mundane person were only to stumble across the sight, it would blow their minds. Jugglers throwing fireballs that stay in the air, contortionists floating around, puppet shows without puppet masters, wild sex on the grass, anything you can think of can be found on Saturn Day.

Truce

No one would dare disturb the peace of Saturn Day, and so even the harshest of enemies do not pursue their quarrels on the holiday. Because of this, such people are even put in a position to be cordial to each other, and perhaps even social. There is active encouragement by everyone to settle old grudges on that day, and there are many fun stories about bitter rivals turning into friends simply because of Saturn Day. There is even the long-standing joke that two bitter enemies can end up sexually involved after a combination of Graves's weed and the allure of the Tents. While this is not necessarily something that happens often, there has been occasion where two rivals with appropriate sexual preference wound up physically together for the day, only to increase their animosity toward one another with the day's conclusion. Often the fair causes rifts to become *worse*, but the repercussions of that are not felt until after Saturn Day; meanwhile, all seems peaceful, even between two intense rivals with sudden and deep regrets.

Consilium


Whether or not the Consilium members enjoy Saturn Day is unknown, but they certainly aren't allowed to act on any feelings they might

have. The Consilium has no involvement in Saturn Day—they are not allowed to run it, plan it, or have any say in it. While they still have ultimate authority in Portland, Saturn Day outside of Portland, and while it may technically be their domain it is written into the Lex Magica than on Saturn Day the Consilium will be silent. The King of Fools even gets to command them, just for one day. And what is worse, attendance is mandatory! Of all the Consilium members, only Willow Osgood has any sense of humor about the whole ordeal—the others look like they can't stand a second of it, but they aren't allowed to voice any objections. And the Consilium doesn't change this for one reason—they might be powerful, but the collective ire of three hundred Awakened isn't something even an entire Consilium of Masters would care to face down. One day of the year, gods dammit, we'll have our fun, Consilium be damned.

Colloquialisms

Any isolated area ends up with a separate set of language, sometimes developing entirely new branches of that language, like pidgin. Awakened Portland isn't *truly* isolated, of course, so things never progress *that* far. However, the properties that are small-town-like are strong, here; many colloquialisms have sprung up that are only used in and around Portland, or when people are speaking about the area. They have almost no bearing outside of this region, but are powerful tools and universally understood here. The following are just a few examples of colloquial Portland (feel free to include your own; slang related only to the game you're playing is an excellent mood-setter):

Come Saturn Day or Short of Saturn Day: Often Saturn Day is a place to reconcile differences, and because sometimes grudges can run deep, there are times when two men get in a tiff and avoid each other from there on in, but come face-to-face on Saturn Day. When this happens, usually the two men settle their differences, or Duel and finish things that way. To say "Come Saturn Day" means that one has made up his mind (usually negatively) about some situation or mage, and will refuse to change his mind until the next Saturn Day event. It is also said to mean "calm down," as in you might as well get over this because it'll get resolved then anyway. "Short of Saturn Day" usually implies that



the dispute is so egregious that the speaker won't budge even during the festival. This use usually means a Duel Arcane to the death is drawing near. **Usage:** *Settle down, friend, you'll feel better come Saturn Day.* or *I'm telling you you're a rogue and a villain and nothing'll change that short of Saturn Day!*

Stumptown Blacklist: An unspoken agreement between Portland residents about who should be isolated and ignored. The Blacklist is not real, and the Consilium would never condone such a thing, but to say someone is "on the Stumptown Blacklist" means that the person is being treated poorly by the rest of the town, usually to encourage the person to leave. Simply using the word "Blacklisted" in most conversations also suffices.

Anti-Making: Thirty years ago, a case was presented before the Consilium of a diabolical but ingenious Master wreaking havoc with the Practice of Unmaking. When the Master was finally apprehended, his defense was a litany of law jargon and twisted logic in attempt to cast his destructive actions on *altruism*. At one point he was even quoted as defending, "It wasn't even an Unmaking spell. It was to prevent further Making spells! At worst it was an anti-Making spell!" The exact context has been lost, but what resulted was the expression of "Anti-Making." It means that someone is trying to justify their actions using political spin or outright lies, trying to make themselves look the martyr or hero instead of the villain. **Usage:** *And then he busted out a few Anti-Makings, and the Consilium actually bought it!*

Tass-favor: The standard currency for Awakened Portland, if one is to be had, is favors. It is such a standard that when offering Tass as payment of something it is often referred to as "the favor of Tass." Offering a Tass-favor, then, is a short way of cutting through the debate and straight-up offering physical Tass. **Usage:** *I need that, how about a Tass-favor?*

From go to whoa: Anytime Paradox causes a mage to lose control of a spell. **Usage:** *She tried to levitate, but she went from go to whoa and ended up face-planting into the telephone pole.*

Just down the road: Slang stolen from Australia. There, it means that something is literally down the road, but in the bush you don't know how far that road goes (so it could be minutes to walk, or days). In Portland, "Just down the road" is used to express limited knowledge of something's location

or how to find something. To tell this to somebody is to basically tell them they need to just start walking, and hope they find what they're looking for before they die. **Usage:** *I haven't seen that text in months. I know it's just down the road somewhere in the archives; knock yourself out.*

Pixie-Sticks: Tass. Six years ago at Saturn Day a wandering mage was selling Tass in pixie-stick form: they would allow you to absorb or use the inert point of Mana by consuming the sugar. They tasted great, gave a bit of a buzz, and of course a mana. Insanely popular for a week, they eventually disappeared, the name stuck and became applicable to all Tass. **Usage:** *I'll do it, but for six-hundred bucks and five pixie-sticks thrown in.*

Thunderbox: Any artifact that has unknown properties that are probably somewhat silly or useless even if discovered. Also, any magical item that is used for primarily mundane activities, and would be little or no good in dangerous situations. Any item with no explanation on why anyone ever bothered to make it. **Usage:** *I paid 50 Tass and an arkhos wand for this thunderbox, and after three months of testing I'm convinced all it does is make peas from nothing.*

How's your mind: Any invasive mental activity into another's brain. Used ironically, as if the aggressor is merely curious as to the victim's mental state. Usually used when intent to do harm exists. **Usage:** *Then he tied him up and did a how's your mind. I tell you, the man was a drooling lunatic for three days after that.*

Stumper: Stumptown is a much more common nickname for Portland among Awakened than Sleepers for some reason, so much that natives or long-standing mages refer to themselves as Stumpers. This is initially meant the way calling someone a New Yorker is used, but there is another level to it as well; in a close-minded community newcomers aren't as trusted and usually thought to be inferior. Therefore referring to oneself as a Stumper is often used to incite someone else isn't, as if that fact somehow makes a difference in whatever argument is occurring. Often used as a measure of degree; someone who has lived in Portland for longer, even only slightly so, might say this just a jab as part of a better overall point. **Usage:** *Well, says you, but as an actual Stumper, I can tell you that's not the way we do things around here.*

SYSTEM CHANGES

The following section is a set of alterations to the rules laid out in **Mage: the Awakening**, designed to create a mechanics environment more suitable for playing a low-powered game set in this slightly alternate setting. Most of these alterations are small when considered alone, but result in a much different feel to the system. Please note that the entire Magic system, that is the casting of magic through Arcana, is unchanged. These alterations occur to the mechanics and concepts around the core spell-casting system—a change in window dressing, if you will.

Assume any rule not mentioned goes unchanged for *The Stumptown Chronicles*.

What's in a Name

Because the Awakened community is so small, their integration on Sleeper society is essential to survival; few mages can afford to cut ties to mundane life, and so cannot give themselves gracious or hyperbolic pseudonyms. It is more likely that Awakened will keep the names given to them at birth, and it's easy to track someone's true identity even if they have adopted an alias. Therefore, birth names aren't special, and do not grant any sympathetic ties. There has been no evidence to show that casting at range on a target is at all affected by whether or not the caster knows the target's name.

However, there are two important possibilities to note. One is that there are rites designed around resisting against scrying that involve temporarily re-naming yourself and adopting that persona for the duration of the spell. So while knowing someone's real name makes little difference, there is something to be said for the potential of a

caster knowing a lie instead of a name causes difficulties with sympathetic casting. This isn't concrete, of course, and simply changing one's name does no good without the aid of this powerful Veiling magic.

The other thing to note is that there are Awakened legends that speak of True Names, or the spiritual name of the soul's true self, an identity that transcends the material realm. While no one has ever verified this possibility one way or the other, tall tales akin to alien abduction stories circle the Awakened community. They speak of mages turning True Names on other mages, and completely overpowering them. No one is completely certain about what advantage having someone's True Name would have, and the legends themselves are vague and contradictory. It could be that True Names allow for greater sympathetic casting, as is commonly believed. But is also possible that True Names work more like Soul Stones, in that if one has another's True Name he holds some sway over the man, perhaps favors or payment or



sacrifice. And there are other possibilities as well: perhaps True Names are for self-improving, Patterning and healing spells or allow for the ability to truly ascend to the Supernal Realm; maybe they are used like a voodoo doll or even give someone easy access to the very soul. The truth may never be known; what is known is that there are mages out there, searching for True Names like eccentrics digging for literal ruins of Atlantis.

Starting Mages

In a *Stumptown Chronicles* game, mages start with 2 dots in their Primary Arcana only. Like with any rule system, you can break this if you wish and assign the standard allotment of dots, but this reality is about containing less power than a normal mage. By placing a cap on starting Arcana, your chronicle forces players to utilize aspects of a mage character besides their raw power more frequently. Necessity is the mother of invention, after all, and so with such a limited set of powers but an unlimited set of challenges, players will be forced to become much more creative with what magic that they *do* have.

This is the central conceit of this game. The rest of the rules in this section are alterations to accommodate this primary change.

Mages also start with 15 Merit points instead of 7, because while not a requirement it is considered standard that most players will have at least a modestly-powered grimoire or wand (see below) from the outset of the game.

Paradox & Null Zones

The nature of Paradox is uncertain, and a point of much contention among philosophers. With no central Atlantean myth, the prevailing theory is that Paradox is the aftershock when altering reality. Like a rubber band, reality can be stretched to a certain point (represented by covert magics) before it starts to tear (when magic becomes vulgar). The result of straining the fabric of existence is Paradox. Manifestations seem to emanate from the Abyss, and the same feel seems to permeate the other effects of Paradox, but no one can say for certain why it works the way it does—like the speed of light, there seems to be a universal constant to the limits of reality, only a constant that's harder to quantify.

With magic's overall power reduced, the strain on reality is lessened slightly, and so the conse-

The Abyss

There are many differing theories about the existence and arrangement of the Abyss and the Supernal Realms. There are some who believe the arrangement is a hell that overtook Earth and keeps those on it from heaven, and those who think it is the temporary cap to human understanding. Perhaps the Abyss is the Shadow derivation of space, or maybe it is the top to the Underworld's bottom, and the Earth is just a flicker of light amid the inky black of existence. But there is a far more important line of thinking: that things just are the way they are, and questioning why the Abyss keeps the Supernal Realms separate is akin to asking why gravity is what it is. And since this is all intangible anyway, it's hardly dominating in daily Awakened life. In fact, many "atheist" mages believe the Supernal Realms are little more than myth, and that the Awakening process is merely a derivation of the collective conscience of man, five basic archetypes encoded in the genes, like hair color. Pulling power from the Supernal Realms is really nothing more than tapping into the collective potential of humanity, an impressive concept in and of itself. Whatever the truth, magic seems to work the same for everyone, so there must be a singular truth out there, waiting to be discovered. Of course, the theory of Atlantis exists, but it is not the dominant belief.

quences of straining reality are less severe. Sleepers do not add dice to Paradox pools when vulgar magic is cast in their presence. Disbelief, however, still applies: sleepers will react to witnessing impossible feats the same way, and will unravel vulgar magic in their presence. So while Sleepers are still terrified and uncomprehending of magic, and help reinforce reality itself, they do not make the consequences of abusing that reality any more severe.

There is, however, a form of naturally occurring "null zone" that permeates certain locations. Technology isn't literally the antithesis of magic, but in some ways it is close. Development and sterilization has drained much from the power of the world—objects made inert by industry have reduced the overall magic in the world. Because of this, there exist certain zones that seem harder



to cast magic in. These zones are always somewhat like Barrens in the Shadow Realm (but not completely; the spirit world is more accepting of technology and is more reflecting the null zone in the material rather than being polluted in the spirit), and the Gauntlet is always harder to pierce there. The reality in these areas seems a bit more tamper-proof if you will: all magic rolls suffer a -1 penalty, and vulgar magic receives an additional +1—also, *all* spells in these zones require 1 Mana to cast in addition to any other costs. Null zones seem to occur in extremely industrialized places, but there is no firm and fast rule: whole cities can exist without null zones, and Portland only has a handful (although where is up to the Storyteller; also, two have moved once each, leading to the possibility they might all be able to relocate). The one property that seems to hold true is that the longer a region has been industrially developed, the more likely null zones are to appear. There has never been a fully rationalized explanation for this phenomenon, but there are theories that posit null zones being a consequence not of industrialization,

but of Paradox: Willworkers constantly straining reality are beginning to more permanently wear down its fabric.

If casting magic through just the power of one's will bends reality, at least it is a possibility humans were born with; items forced to do this work seem to be even more egregious. Imbued items, artifacts and wands, as well as arkhos rites, all add +1 to the Paradox roll when being used to cast vulgar magic. Dedicated Tools continue to reduce Paradox from spells a mage casts from his own power.

Grimoires & Arkhos Rites

Books of power are far more necessary for survival in a world with low-powered mages. In many ways, grimoires fill the vacuum left by restricting higher-level Arcana. Without Orders, magical tutors are harder to come by and grimoires become even more valuable, for they represent the best way to learn new rites and improve one's overall knowledge of magic. But there is something more: in many grimoires, there exists a specialized type of rite, called arkhos.

Other Grimoires

The concepts of these items are not meant to completely override what already exists, but rather to augment it. For example, while these new types of grimoires are meant to add a new level for players, the old grimoires still exist and are very much as impactful in this reality. *Grimoire of Grimoires* has many excellent magical books that would not fit the new definition of arkhos grimoires, and nor should they. These original grimoires should work as normal, and not be purchasable with Merit points, but instead be gained and lost only through the storytelling process, as was meant to happen. So too should even future grimoires be gained and lost. The grimoire merit is included only for this new concept of arkhos rites, and to allow characters to start with grimoires at the outset, if not an outright necessity than a needed potential benefit in a world of underpowered mages.

In all other senses, rites in grimoires work as they always have: a way for characters to learn those rites for themselves. Arkhos rites, however, are something different. Even the most powerful grimoires aren't likely to have more than two or three. Any arkhos rite contained in a grimoire may be cast by any mage, regardless of his actual Arcana ratings. These particular rites have been imbued with so much Supernal power that they are practically completed spells themselves, and by performing the ritual and reciting the words, any Awakened soul can finish them. An arkhos rite can only be cast by a mage holding and using the grimoire it is contained in. Also, a mage must have some familiarity with the text to use it with ease; picking up a book on the spot and attempting to cast an arkhos spell first requires an exceptional success on a Wits + Gnosis roll.

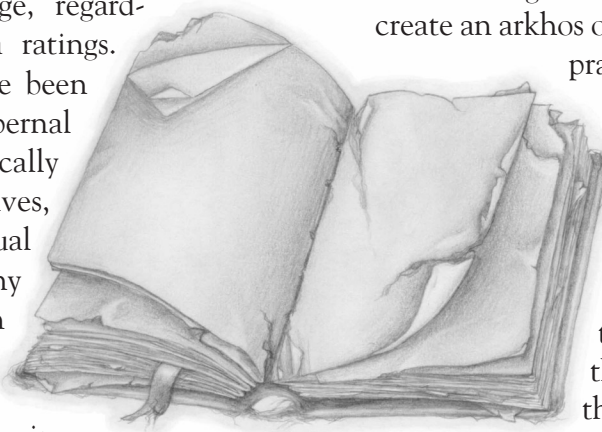
Although the amazing grimoires with embodied powers besides rites are mostly likely only created by the hands of a Master, low powered grimoires may be created by any mage with a Gnosis higher

than 2. Creation is no different than creating a Dedicated Tool, only instead of reducing Paradox this tool allows a mage to record the rites he has already memorized. By spending 1 point of Mana, the mage can record a rite into his grimoire so that it can be studied and learned by others.

Mages may also create their own rites without being Masters. At a Gnosis of 3 or higher, any mage may begin the process of making a new rite. The process is similar: the mage must decide on a spell and its effect, come up with an imago and define it, and begin casting it over and over the same way until it becomes second nature (at least 10 times, minus the character's Gnosis). At that point, the mage may record the new rite into a grimoire by spending willpower and Mana points both equal to the rite's spell level. The player must then spend experience points to purchase the rite for himself; at that point, the rite exists both for a player to use and in his grimoire (one must have a personal grimoire to create entirely new rites).

Of course, no one can create new arkhos rites. In fact, no one is sure how they come about, or how their creation is even possible. Even those few confirmed Masters have denied knowledge of this art. Arkhos grimoires aren't any rarer than the other magical books that exist, however, and this has led many to speculate that perhaps grimoires, in their magical state of existence, spontaneously create an arkhos out of a regular rite that was often practiced or used in the presence of that book. There are other legends and rumors of grimoires evolving or changing seemingly on their own, and while these phenomena are only spoken about in texts and not able to be duplicated, it does make thinkers ponder the possibility that grimoires become so infused with knowledge that they begin to assimilate that new knowledge in ways mages can only dream of.

Grimoires can also help with ritual casting. Any mage who uses any grimoire containing a rite he has purchased or created can use that book during an extended cast to reduce roll intervals based on Gnosis by half. For example, with a Gnosis of 1 each successive roll occurs every three hours; using a grimoire in this fashion makes each succes-



sive roll occur every hour-and-a-half. Other rules interact with Arkhos spells as if they are rites the character knows, but the rote also counts as an improvised spell.

New Merit: Arkhos Grimoire (●●● or higher)

Prerequisite: Awakened

Effect: Your character is in permanent possession of an arkhos grimoire, a book that is more powerful than other Supernal tomes. These grimoires contain one or more specialized arkhos rites that can be cast regardless of the mage's power level. Mages cannot create these grimoires, and their origins remain a mystery.

A grimoire's base Merit dot cost is equal to 2 dots plus the dot-rating of the Arcanum-level of the rote, plus one dot per additional power. If the grimoire has more than one arkhos rote or an arkhos rote that for a conjunctive spell, use the highest Arcanum dot-rating simulated.

Base Cost: 2 + highest Arcanum dots +1 dot per additional power.

Arkhos Grimoires have the following properties:

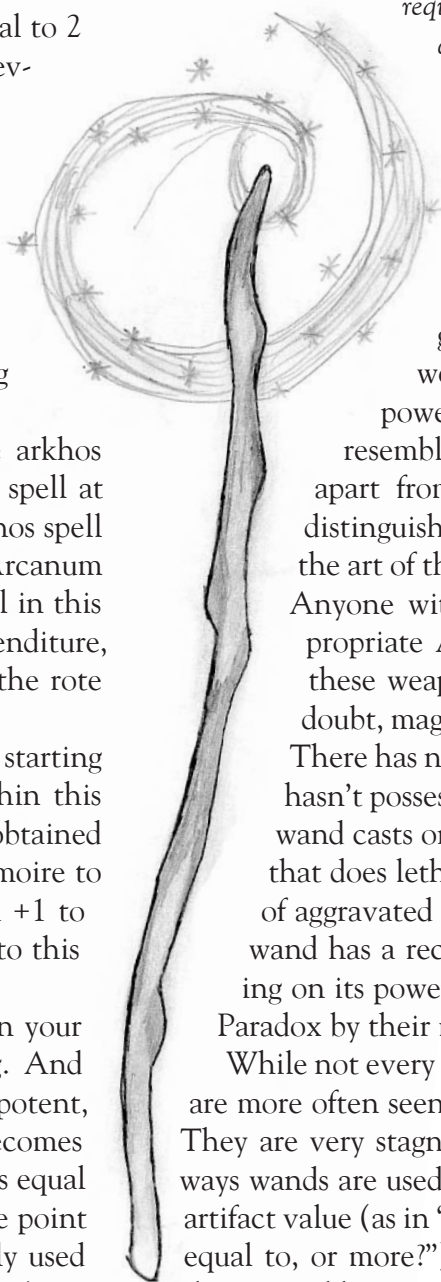
Casting: You can effectively cast the arkhos rote as if you had the ability to cast that spell at your natural Arcana level. Casting an arkhos spell requires a roll of character's Gnosis + Arcanum dots of the spell being cast. Casting a spell in this fashion requires no additional Mana expenditure, but the grimoire must be used as part of the rote casting.

Standard Rotes: All of your character's starting rites are considered to be contained within this same grimoire, (meaning that it was likely obtained early in the mage's career). Using this grimoire to cast any of your starting rites gives you a +1 to your spell pool. If you record new rites into this grimoire, they also gain from that benefit.

Cheap Rotes: There are blank pages in your grimoire, room left for your own writing. And because an arkhos grimoire is so magically potent, using it to transcribe and learn new rites becomes even easier. The number of your next rites equal to this merit's rating will cost 1 experience point less to purchase (a personal grimoire solely used for new rites does not gain these advantages).

Paradox: When a grimoire is used to cast or to help cast a vulgar spell, any resultant Paradox occurs upon the casting mage, not the book, and adds +1 to the die pool.

Example: Terrance is a Mastigos with a Gnosis of 3, Space of 2 and a Mind of 2. He has purchased the merit Arkhos Grimoire at a cost of 7 dots. He has chosen the grimoire to contain arkhos rites for the spells "Change Weather" (Forces ●●●●) and "Transmute Earth" (Matter ●●●). The base cost is 2 dots for the grimoire, plus four dots for the Forces spell (because it is the highest level), plus one additional dot for the second spell. If he wishes to cast "Change Weather," he opens the grimoire to that page, reads allowed from the text and performs the rote. He rolls 7 dice (Gnosis + 4, the spell's level). "Change Weather" requires no Mana cost, so Terrance doesn't need to spend any Mana to cast this spell, even though he has no dots in Forces.



Arkhos Wands

Another new type of item that help to fill the power gap come are arkhos wands, weapons of aggressive supernal power. These wands bear a passing resemblance to magical artifacts; but apart from the subtle differences that distinguish arkhos wands is the fact that the art of their creation is actually known. Anyone with a Gnosis of 5 and the appropriate Arcana at 4 can make one of these weapons. And they are without a doubt, magical *weapons* in the truest sense. There has never been an arkhos wand that hasn't possessed the following properties: a wand casts only a single, vulgar aimed spell that does lethal damage with the possibility of aggravated damage at the cost of Mana; a wand has a recharge rate that varies depending on its power level; and all wands increase Paradox by their mere use.

While not every mage in possesses a wand, they are more often seen in public than other artifacts. They are very stagnant in their use, and in some ways wands are used as a standard for determining artifact value (as in "is it less powerful than a wand, equal to, or more?"). They are easier to come by than an arkhos grimoire—but that doesn't mean

that wands are commonplace. Any mage that pulls out an arkhos wand is treated with immediate respect and fear—it is the Awakened society's equivalent of drawing a handgun in a bank. The social ramifications are equally as dire.

New Merit: Arkhos Wand

(●●●●● to ●●●●●●●)

Effect: Your character possesses an arkhos wand, a powerful mage weapon. It grants him the ability to cast a deadly aimed spell at a target. A wand's powers mimic those of an aimed Unraveling spell from the Arcana of the player's choice.

A wand's cost is equal to 2 dots, plus dots at the level of the spell you wish to place on it; 3, 4 or 5. The spell can be from any single Arcana you choose; neither conjunctive spells nor any additional spells can be placed upon this wand; the spell is to do damage only.

Base Cost: 2 + dot level of spell

Wands have the following properties:

Discharge: To attack with this wand, your character rolls Gnosis + dot level of the wand's spell as an *aimed spell*. The aimed spell works as normal, with range, cover and defense rules applying as normal. Each success inflicts one point of lethal damage.

Lethality: By spending Mana, your character can make your wand even more deadly. Three points of Mana causes the damage done to become aggravated. This can be done regardless of the Arcana level of your character.

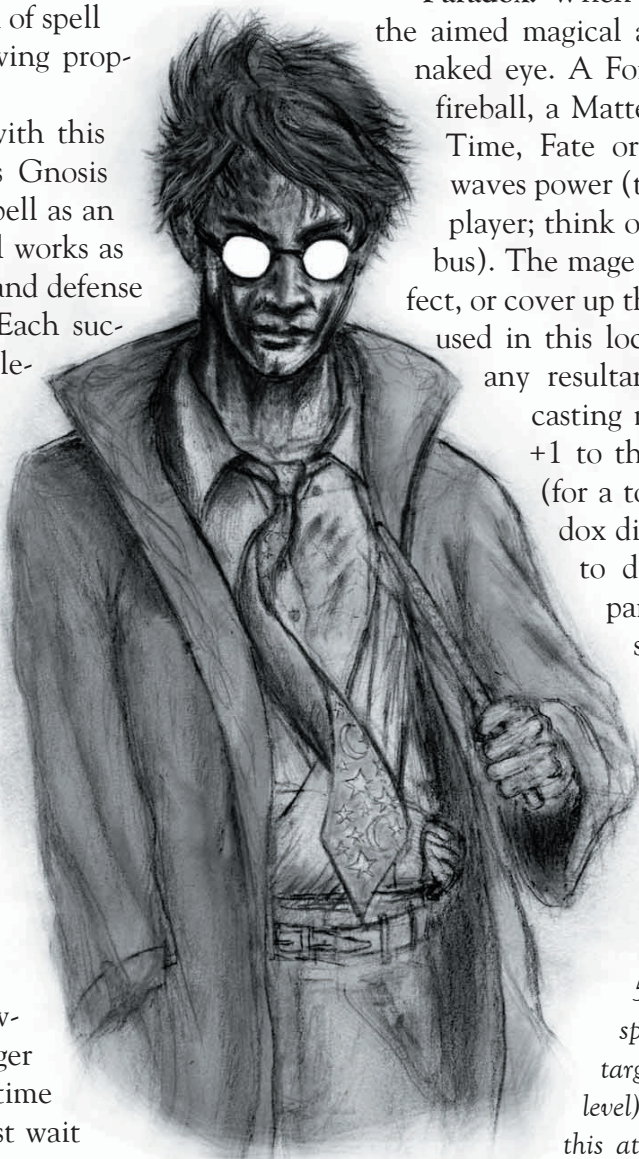
Recharge: Because of the explosive nature of these wands, each one takes time to build another burst of energy to be used again. The more powerful the attack, the longer the recharge rate; every time you use the wand, you must wait

one round before casting it again, two rounds if the attack did aggravated damage (see below). Additionally, wands respond to touch, and take time to warm up. This means that to use a wand again and again, your character must have it in his hand the entire time (rendering moot a strategy of using Quick Draw to swap one weapon for another as your wand recharges).

No Mana cost: Unlike Artifacts, which generate Mana inside themselves like a Hallow (Mana that can be taken and used in any way its owner sees fit), wands seem to generate their activation Mana themselves in real time. Think of it as each time a wand is used, it requires a point of Mana, but in that moment it generates its own point, as if it is a Hallow with a trigger. The result is that to cast the wand at lethal damage costs no Mana. Per day, the wand can only be used twice the number of times equaling its merit dots.

Paradox: When the wand's effect is triggered, the aimed magical attack must be visible to the naked eye. A Forces arkhos wand will shoot a fireball, a Matter wand will shoot acid, even Time, Fate or Mind will send out visible waves power (the effect of which is up to the player; think of it as the wand having a nimbus). The mage cannot cover up the visual effect, or cover up the Resonance that a wand was used in this location. When a wand is used, any resultant Paradox occurs upon the casting mage, not the item, and adds +1 to the die pool. An additional +1 (for a total of +2) is added to a Paradox die pool if the wand is triggered to do aggravated damage. These particular added dice cannot be subtracted by the expenditure of Mana or using a dedicated tool.

Example: Terrance, from the above example, also has a Death arkhos wand. Terrance was given a lot of experience points I guess. He purchased the Arkhos Wand merit at 5 dots, 2 for the wand and 3 for the spell. When he casts the wand at a target, he rolls 6 dice (Gnosis + spell level). He chooses to spend 3 Mana for this attack, and so each success inflicts



one point of aggravated damage. When he rolls *Paradox*, he rolls a die pool of 2 (from his *Gnosis*) + 2 (from the wand) + any additional considerations, in this case 1 for the second vulgar spell cast, for a total of 5 dice. Terrance would not be able to reduce this pool lower than 2.

Rote Specialties

Because of the lack of Orders in *The Stumptown Chronicles*, players are not given a chance to be assigned Rote Specialties. Although they are technically all Apostates, this is considered the standard, and as such players shouldn't suffer from it. Apostate characters in this reality pick one of the sets of three normally given to characters through Orders, but include no other properties of those affiliations.

Pick one of the following combinations of Rote Specialties:

- Athletics, Intimidation and Medicine
- Crafts, Persuasion and Science
- Investigation, Subterfuge and Stealth,
- Investigation, Occult and Survival
- Expression, Persuasion and Subterfuge

The storyteller could also conceivably create additional combinations for players to choose from, since these specialty sets are no longer the result of Orders. An alternative, simplified method is that each player receives two or three Rote Specialties, to be chosen for any two skills of the player's choice.

Resonance and Scrutiny

Magic is in some ways more subtle in this reality, and in many ways more mysterious. In a world where the might of any given mage is more uncertain, investigating the power of that mage is much more difficult.

Mage Sights work as normal, with one exception: any Sight will reveal a mage during casting, as well as reveal any active spells upon the mage (these rules are the same), but if isn't actively casting, it requires the Sight to be cast at a Potency 5 to detect that the person is indeed Awakened (this is before any possible attempts to reduce one's aura). This means that mages can slip through the net of mage Sight undetected, as long as they remain completely powered down. (Additional Resonance-detection works as normal). A mage's strength in his Arcana or *Gnosis* cannot be determined, short

of literally witnessing a spell that conclusively belongs to one Practice.

And even that will only reveal a little. It is also important to note that without scrutinizing with 20 successes or more, it is impossible to tell *for sure* where the power comes from when a mage uses an artifact, imbued item, grimoire or wand. While any of these objects can be identified as magical items (with scrutiny and resonance working as normal), when these objects are actually activated, the lines in resonance become blurred. Therefore, if any magical item is used to perform an instantaneous cast, other mages cannot be certain whether it was that magical item, or the Willworker himself, making the magic. For example, while a mage is holding open a grimoire and casting, that doesn't mean *for certain* he is casting an Arkhos rote—he may be casting a regular rote with the book to give a +1 bonus. This means that determining the true power of a mage is extremely difficult; by using a bit of trickery (delaying the spell's effect, making the grimoire invisible, etc.) a mage can appear vastly more powerful than he truly is. Many have been thought to be Masters, only later to find out they were using items and subterfuge the entire time.

Any item used in an extended cast can be scrutinized successfully to determine it is in fact that item and not the Willworker, but only if the observer obtains 20 successes on a scrutinizing roll before the spell is complete. The resonance and aftermath of spells work as normal, but it cannot be determined after the fact with complete accuracy where the power truly came from. (There is, of course, enough time to scrutinize an extended cast spell)

Duel Arcane

Mage society is more brutal, less forgiving, and very lethal in *The Stumptown Chronicles*. The Duel Arcane typifies this: although still used to resolve disputes, the Duel Arcane is vastly more dangerous, and nothing short of deadly.

While mages can use these duels as normal, to settle grievances and bet fate on Supernal superiority, most Duels are fought because two Awakened have finally grown so tired of each other that they engage in what is essentially the Supernal equivalent of pistols at dawn. Duel Arcane are not challenged lightly, and have a high rate of resulting in

death.

A Duel Arcane circle must be cast by a mage with Prime 2 or higher, but the resultant circle has some modifications. When inside this circle, the two mages chose their two Supernal weapons, and then do battle with each other as normal. However, instead of reducing Willpower, this damage goes directly to Health. This means that during a Duel Arcane, even a mage with an Arcana of 1 can do harm. The damage is lethal, and cannot be healed by any magical method.

The Duel Arcane does not have to be to the death; conditions as normal can be agreed upon, and duels to first blood, exhaustion or surrender are acceptable. The danger is that the hubris of a mage begins to take over during the battle, and it can be hard to disengage. Leaving the Duel Arcane for *any reason* (including a satisfactory conclusion to the duel based on the previously agreed upon rules) requires a successful Composure roll. It is common for a Duel Arcane to be resolved but continue anyway until the death of a mage.



Ultimate Hubris

The nature of magic is to betray reality; as such, using it for harm is a dangerous road to walk. Killing a sentient being through mundane means is a kaleidoscope of shades of gray; depending on situation, simply taking a life interacts with Wisdom differently. Magic, however, is a different story. While the rest of the Wisdom scale applies as normal, any sentient being killed (or in the case of spirits, completely destroyed) is a sin against a Wisdom of 5. Even in self-defense, killing a sentient being with magic is a shock to reality, and dangerous to play around with. Using magic to *cause* someone's death without actually delivering the final blow applies to this scale. Even a mage in the Duel Arcane must check his Wisdom if he kills his opponent, whether or not he meant to.

It is so easy to think of one's self as powerful. It doesn't matter if the killing is justified, in self-defense, a necessary evil or a plain and simple accident. Life is meant to be permanent, and altering reality to end it does things to a mage's mind. It makes a man feel powerful to take a life, in control and in charge; it is doubly so when magic is involved. Slowly, the attitude begins to change. It begins as a lack of regret mixed with the knowledge that anyone of power is expendable or anyone threatening is worth destroying, but it slowly devolves into a confident understanding that you are allowed to kill simply because you can so easily; ants on the sidewalk aren't worth troubling one's conscious over, and Sleepers begin to look like ants.

The rest of Wisdom is unchanged, but the result of this minor tweak is that the descent of Hubris occurs more quickly. Taking a life with magic is the *ultimate high*, and one never feels more powerful than they do in that moment. It can become addictive, even desirable, leading to far more heinous acts down the Wisdom scale as a mage becomes convinced of his own superiority, and that the ends justify the means.

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

The following locations are places of note in Portland. They are numbered to correspond to the map at the end of this book.

Sleeper Portland

1. Pearl District: Historical buildings have been refurbished and made into a unique quarter of storefronts. Some of the trendiest restaurants, galleries and lofts exist here, and it is considered one of Portland's premier shopping locations. Creative cuisine, home furnishings, art, one-of-a-kind boutiques, sidewalk cafes and the great fountains of Portland make this an ideal tourist attraction. Mages are aware that this is a frequent vampire haunt.

2. Rose Garden: Offering a spectacular view of the City of Roses, the international Rose Test Gardens in Washington Park is one of the largest and oldest in the country. There are over five hundred varieties blooming from April until October. Four and a half acres of tiers of roses facing down toward Portland, with many paths and benches for idle viewing. Its amphitheater is host to many events throughout the year, including classical music concerts and plays. The Rose Gardens are run completely by Sleepers, and the place is deeply respected by the mage community with its magnificence without the aid of magic. The entire area has been declared a safe haven, and no hostile actions (magic or mundane) are permitted there—Thyrus mages become practically rabid if they discover this cease fire is ever broken.

3. Pioneer Courtyard Square: Those few blocks in Portland that include the most upscale shops, clothing stores and restaurants in the city, but also holds quirky cafes and stores if one knows where to look. At the center is the Square itself, called Port-



land's living room. It is a public space that takes up an entire city block, made entirely of orange brick (as are many of the intersections around the area). It is arranged like a shallow amphitheater, and is a popular meeting location for anyone in the city. Chess players congregate, college students study, children play and dozens of times a year live events are held here, from concerts to a city staged pillow fight. Classical pillars, cascading waterfalls and an overlooking courthouse makes this location exotic, one of a kind and fun.

4. Portland Saturday Market: Portland Saturday Market is where unique artists await discovery. The Portland Saturday Market is the largest continuously operated open-air arts and crafts market in the nation. Talk directly to the artists and learn about their creative styles and products. Rain or shine, the market is open from March through Christmas Eve. The Portland Saturday Market is located in Portland's historic Old Town District under the west end of the Burnside Bridge.

5. Lloyd Center: The largest mall in Oregon, sitting on fifty acres, over 200 hundred stores, specialty shops and service providers, with a food court, and eighteen-screen cinema and an indoor ice-skating rink. Most mages avoid heavily commercialized places like this, and it is rumored to

be a vampire haunt, with undead like prowling predators amid the clueless herd of shoppers.

6. Oaks Amusement Park:

Crouched amid trees on the southeast bank of the Willamette, Oaks Park is a forty-five acre amusement center slightly out of the city. With the exception of company picnics, special events and holidays, the park can sometimes be quite empty. Includes a roller-skating rink and a little over twenty rides. With the exception of the skating rink it is prone to flooding, which sometimes shuts it down. Over the years attendance has been gradually decreasing, despite the park's best efforts, as if there is something else at work there, making visitors unhappy with their experience.

7. **OMSI:** The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry is a science museum that contains hands-on exhibits on the natural world. OMSI operates the largest science outreach program in the country, and is known for its adoring young fans, who love the experience to touch dinosaurs, solve puzzles and put their new knowledge to work immediately. Every year there are different key exhibits that explore new areas of science and discovery. Includes the OMNIMAX theater and the submarine *USS Blueback*. Wonderful for adults as well, OMSI draws in a crowd from all over the region.

8. Portland Classical Chinese Garden:

Lan Su Yuan (the Portland Classical Chinese Garden) is a harmonizing blend of water, architecture, stone, and poetry against a richly planted landscape. Overlooking the lake, the Tao of Tea teahouse features more than 35 teas and Chinese snacks. Encompassing an entire city block, it is difficult to image something so serene and beautiful in the middle of a major American city; you almost forget you're



in Portland once you're inside. Many of the plants are indigenous to China, and the garden is influenced by those in Suzhou. The elderly owners are Sleepwalkers from China, who moved here after the death of their mage friend back home.

Jansen Beach Supercenter:

An entire island of shopping, with dozens of huge retail jungles that creates its own little eco-system. Famous for its turn-of-the-century museum-quality carousel. Build atop what once was the Beach Amusement Park which shut down after fifty years in 1972.

For years it was a major attraction, but according to official word simply dropped in popularity as television and movies changed the entertainment landscape. In truth, a series of gruesome accidents occurred here, and were quickly covered up. The land may no longer bear the scars, and the people may have forgotten, but the spirits have not forgotten, and continue to prosper in the area. The area was completely razed in 1970, making it harder for spirits to establish a foothold here—but the First Cabal says that the site has always been a place of death and murder, and even turning it into a sterile shopping center can't change that fact.

Oregon Zoo: A huge, ever widening animal reserve laid out in a non-

linear pattern that's quickly becoming known as one of the best zoos in the States. There have recently been a slew of deaths in the park, janitors and rangers killed around midnight in various

locations; they appeared to be mauled, but no animals ever escaped. The mayor of Portland is keeping this fact tightly under wraps, but the mage community is fully aware of the danger.



9. Downtown Cultural District: In the middle of eastern downtown is the cultural district, stretching for miles in and around Portland State University. There is the Downtown Art Gallery, the Portland Art Museum, the Center for the Performing Arts, the Oregon Historical Society and the Northwest Film Center are all within walking distance of each other, and a block-wide strip runs through the middle, with grass and trees and statues. This area contains some of the oldest buildings in Portland, and while it is slightly haunted there is something else there, too, that moves in the shadows at night when the Sleepers are having their fun. Mages cannot visit without feeling a slight sense of dread, but the beauty and culture keeps them coming back again and again, albeit well prepared.

Awakened Portland

10. Portland Japanese Gardens: Above the International Test Gardens is an enclosed property that has the mood and feel of ancient Japan, recaptured in a scenic garden, authentic pavilion and teahouse. It is proclaimed the most authentic Japanese garden outside of Japan, with five and a half acres and a magnificent view of the city. Within are five separate gardens, named for their features: Flat, Strolling Pond, Tea, Natural and Sand & Stone Gardens. Designed with subtle hide-and-reveal themes, so that new views are forever appearing and changing before visitor's eyes. A glade in Twilight. Caretaker Izanami Ru is a Thyrus from Okinawa.

Government Island: Everything about this place seems wrong. It's called Government Island, but there's nothing on it. I-205 travels directly over it, and there are even signs on the bridge that point out the island by name, but there are no exits to it,

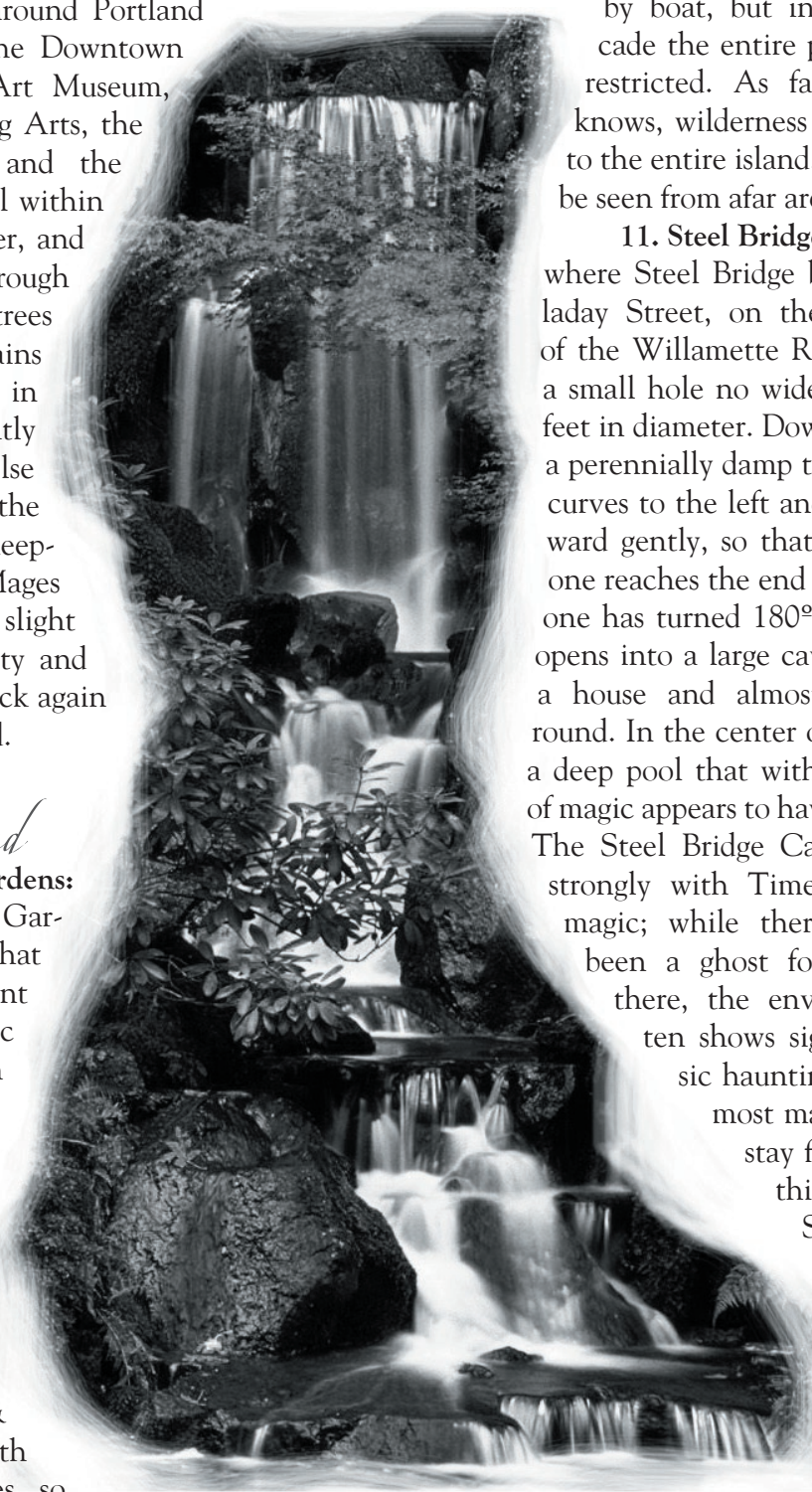
no access by road. Native Portlanders recall a time when the island was a campground accessible only by boat, but in the last decade the entire place became restricted. As far as anyone knows, wilderness has returned to the entire island. All that can be seen from afar are trees.

11. Steel Bridge Cave: Right where Steel Bridge becomes Holiday Street, on the west shore of the Willamette River, there is a small hole no wider than three feet in diameter. Down the hole is a perennially damp tunnel, which curves to the left and slopes downward gently, so that by the time one reaches the end of the tunnel one has turned 180°. The tunnel opens into a large cave the size of a house and almost completely round. In the center of the floor is a deep pool that without the aid of magic appears to have no bottom. The Steel Bridge Cave resonates strongly with Time and Death magic; while there has never been a ghost found residing there, the environment often shows signs of a classic haunting. Although most mages prefer to stay far away from this place, the Steel Bridge

Cave is a H a l l o w e d
r a t e d
4. T a s s
p h y s i -
c a l l y a c -
c r u e s i n

the form of smooth, copper-colored pebbles at the shallow edge that borders the pool, which if left to accumulate begins to resemble a wishing well.

12. The Chamber of Amber: Deep, deep beneath the earth rests an enormous amphitheater that bears a startling resemblance to the Coliseum. Made from soap- and sandstone so flawlessly created one can hardly see the lines between the bricks,





the entire structure is lined with gold, including delicate calligraphy of mage symbols. The only other decoration are ovals of amber set into the stone; the entire hall looks like it has had its hue adjusted unnaturally. The seven meter entrance, ornately carved and boasting gold-stenciled depictions of imago, looks small in comparison to the domed ceiling measures 35 meters. The only other doorway leads under the coliseum, to a hallway of doors that will not open. In Twilight, the amphitheater is structurally the same, but appears to be comprised of obsidian, chrome and onyx, and spir-its gather here in court. No one knows where this came from, or what its purpose was.

13. Powell's Books: A three-story bookstore so massive they give away free maps of its layout. The dusty, well-lit store is larger than most libraries,

with 70,000 square feet (a full city block) of new and used books. Founded in 1971 by a Mastigos named Michael Powell and his Sleepwalker father Walter Powell. They are the most neutral and mage-friendly people in the city. While they do have back rooms for dealing in artifacts and the like, they try never to take sides in any conflicts or get involved in shady deals. Respected for their clean-cut, non-aligned stance.

14. Liberty Center: Near Lloyd Shopping Center east of downtown, Liberty Center is just two stories of stores and eighteen stories of apartments, at least by mundane standards. But the top two stories are actually the Penthouse of Andron Baldaer, Consilium member. As one of the most powerful, dangerous and volatile mages in Portland, Baldaer's home is seen almost as the citadel of some great warrior. Most mages don't want to go anywhere near it. Baldaer hosts mortal parties in his home, however, and sometimes invites mages as well, so it's known that the place is one of the most spectacular in the city, with top-level gardens, running waterfalls, glass rooms and floating walkways. There is rumor, however, of secret torture chambers and oubliettes for those who cross him. There is an armed detail of Sleepwalkers around the building at all times.

15. Congress Center: An oddly shaped glass building that seems too sleek and cold to be up to any good. Also, strangely, is 23 stories tall—the ultimate floor being the sanctum of Menos Tarcun, an Indonesian Moros businessman, who is a member of the Consilium and rival of Andron Baldaer. The two cannot stand to be in the same room as one another, and in their separate buildings they sit on opposite sides of the Willamette, glaring at each other from across the water. Like Liberty Center, Congress Center is avoided by most mages.

16. Cool Moon Ice Cream: One of the stranger mage locations in Portland. Yes, it's an ice cream store, with a billion flavors and little kids. But it's also a damn cool place. Art on the walls, exotic ice cream treats, a completely insane but delightfully friendly Acanthus who claims to have opened

up his shop as a psychological experiment, but he won't reveal its nature. Also, for whatever reason, a Demense.

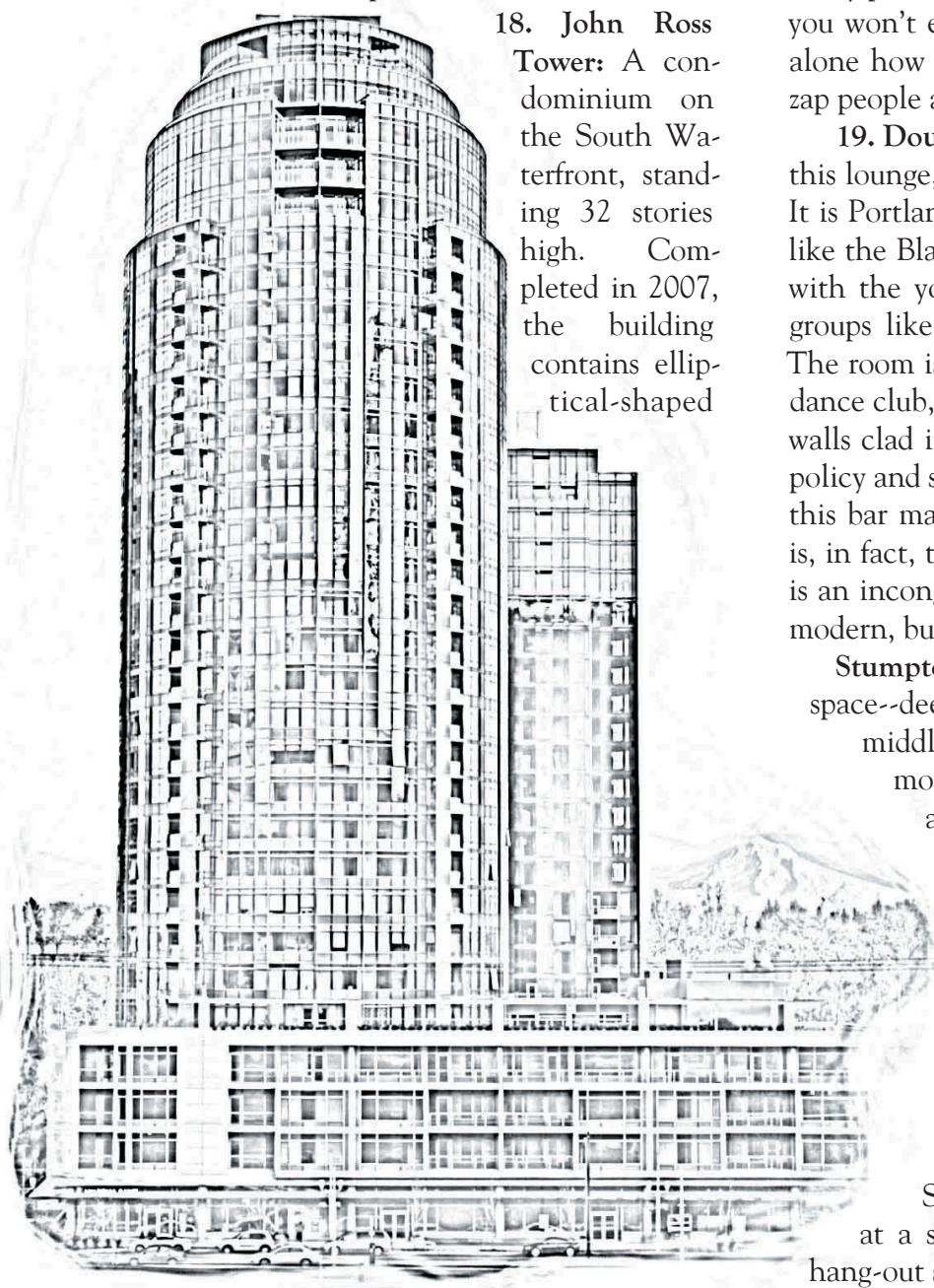
17. Babylon's Ruins: A Moros-owned club, filled with hipsters, emo, goth and the like. Incredibly popular nightlife scene—all the heavy metal, emo, punk and goth bands come through Portland just to play here. There's a rumor of a drink for sale that can make you talk to ghosts—a rumor among *Sleepers*. Never proven to be true. Nothing in the place is breakable, so raves here are ridiculous. Once the sight of a Paradox Manifestation that caused a ruckus in the city; it was a Ooglian Spirit, which among other things enjoys making anything with gasoline explode. The place has a bit of a reputation.

18. John Ross Tower: A condominium on the South Waterfront, standing 32 stories high. Completed in 2007, the building contains elliptical-shaped

floors with a penthouse that spans the entire top two floors with a panoramic, 360° view of the city. Raymond Hood, builder of the Tribune Tower in Chicago, oversaw construction of this tower along with John Ross (this fact is largely unknown). Like the Tower in Chicago, Hood laced the construction with hundreds of stones from around the world. The sympathetic ties in the building run deep, and it is build directly over the intersection of two Lay Lines. It is maintained by Desmond Doyle, a Scottish Mastigos who earns his living by zapping other Awakened across the world. John Ross Tower is seen as something of a bus depot for mages in a hurry, but the ticket cost is steep. Short of a millionaire, a tass-laden motherfucker, someone with really powerful information or an artifact for trade, you won't even see the inside of the building, let alone how Desmond uses the sympathetic ties to zap people across oceans.

19. Doug Fir Lounge: The latest indie bands at this lounge, connected to the trendy Jupiter hotel. It is Portland's primo spot to hang out, drink beer like the Black Butte porter on draft, rub shoulders with the young and pierced and catch emerging groups like the Decembrists and Columbia Falls. The room is surprisingly modern and woodsy for a dance club, with gold-toned lighting, a fire pit and walls clad in Douglas fir logs. With a no-smoking policy and shows that are usually over by midnight, this bar may not sound like too much fun, but it is, in fact, the hottest club in Portland. The decor is an incongruous blend of log cabin and Swedish modern, but somehow it all works.

Stumptown Coffee Roasters: The doublewide space--deep industrial bays connected in the middle--makes this coffeehouse hipper than most. The walls showcase the work of local artists in a revolving display and, while there's usually a line, it moves briskly and the staff enjoys a disarmingly pleasant repartee with customers old and new. Meticulous, daily in-house roasting ensures consistent, fresh beans with character and rest assured that coffee in the self-serve pump is French press, made frequently. Owned and operated by a Sleepwalker couple, who cater to mages at a steep discount. A frequent Awakened hang-out spot.



20. Portland Music Company: A massive store on MLK Blvd, the size of a Costco or larger. The main floor has a selection of over 1,000 guitars (as well as an equally impressive selection of other instruments). The basement is a recording studio for local and indie music. PMC also does recording of live shows, etc. Upstairs is the hang-out space and living quarters of the two gay punk rocker Arcanthus that own the store. Friday night parties are often thrown here, and there's usually a spare mage or two hanging out upstairs.

21. Gold Leaf: Just a whole in the wall jewelry store that sells really unusual, quirky and funky pieces. Beloved in Portland. There are always—*always*—two mages, a Mastigos and an Arcanthus, playing chess or cribbage and arguing philosophy in the corner. The owner is a Sleepwalker who puts up with them (whenever the mages can be bothered, they make sales go *way* better than they would have without magic). Used as a way to sift jewelry to roust out magical items.

New Stonehenge: In 1910 Sam Hill began construction of a replica of Stonehenge on the Columbia River three hours east of Portland. He gave no indication why he was doing this—no statements to the press, no publicity, never even an interview after he finished the project. Sleepers and mages alike considered him an eccentric recluse. Even after the site became a national monument and tourism abounded, mages dismissed the location as nothing more than a pleasant oddity. It is well known that the original site of Stonehenge has great Supernal power, which made this one practically an insult. But recent research has shown that Sam Hill was Awakened, and so in 1999 a traveling Mastigos came to New Stonehenge and sat for twelve days and twelve nights, performing a powerful ritual spell that eventually broke through the Potency 30 Prime spell Hill had masked it with. Since then, New Stonehenge reverberates with a potent resonance. No one is sure exactly what the place is about, or what its true properties are—except one. The Mastigos discovered that there is a spatial doorway that can be activated by anyone with a Space 3 or higher. The door takes the mage instantly to the real Stonehenge. Remarkably, this act never impacts in a vulgar way—mages have left and appeared in the midst of Sleepers, and has never incurred Paradox.



22. Forest Park: Forest Park is an undeveloped natural park that has over 74 miles of trails for bikers, hikers and horseback riders. It has the distinct honor of being the largest forested park within city limits in the U.S. Because of its unique properties, it serves a place where mages can safely travel in the wilderness...for the most part. Usually deep nature is death to all but the most stalwart Thyrsus, but in Forest Park you're only taking a fifty-fifty chance.

The Grotto: A peaceful oasis in the midst of the city, The Grotto is set among 62 acres of botanical gardens. As an internationally renowned Catholic sanctuary, the Grotto offers a place of peace and quiet reflection for all people. More than 100 beautifully sculpted statues and shrines are nestled among flower-lined pathways winding under towering firs. Peaceful reflection ponds, spectacular cliffside vistas and award winning architecture offer inspiration for all who visit this natural gallery in the woods. Thomas Arillis, Obrimos and priest of St. Paul's, the adjacent church, is the caretaker.

Multnomah Falls: Legend holds that the chief of a dying tribe went to the top of a cliff and prayed to a great spirit to cure her people. She was told to stop the epidemic she would have to throw herself off the cliff; she did, and died, and when her father found her body he wept and demanded the spirit prove her sacrifice was not in vain. Immediately water leapt from the spot she had jumped, and fell onto the spot she had died, and the people were healed. Twenty minutes east of Portland, on the Oregon side of the Columbia River, the massive waterfall spills from a two-tiered cliff. It is the sec-

ond tallest waterfall in the nation, second only to Yosemite, which doesn't flow all year. In the winter, water can freeze the falls into a majestic, massive icicle. The gorge that contain the falls contain some of the most scenic vistas in the region, and the breathtaking beauty of the location makes it a prime tourist attraction. But during its off hours, Multnomah Falls is a gathering site for mages. Awakened legend posits the chieftain's daughter a mage, who made a deal with a powerful water spirit that inhabits the area. And indeed, in the reflection of those falls in the Shadow Realm, a terribly powerful spirit still resides, possibly the same that helped the Native-Americans by demanding a human sacrifice. Both a Loci and a massive Hallow (rated 10), the entire park is tended to by Sleepwalker public servants, who answer directly to the Consilium. The falls are publicly open to any mage, and he is allowed even to take Mana from the water—however the Sleepwalkers in the area pay close attention to any Awakened activity, and will

report anyone abusing the generosity (going every day and taking massive Mana drinks, or scouring the Hallow in any way, are serious crimes in the Portland Lex Magica). Tass accumulates as pebbles in the pool below the waterfall, most of which is collected by the Sleepwalkers and delivered to the Consilium, who split it among themselves as payment for their upkeep of the location. Also a favored Duel Arcane spot.

The Ape Caves: The Ape Caves do not contain apes nor, technically speaking, are they caves. Instead they are a two mile long lava tube formed when Mt. St. Helens erupted about 2000 years ago; they are also a local place where a person can get their fill of under-the-ground, Indiana-Jones-style adventure. The lava tube is divided into two parts: The upper and lower Ape Caves. The lower cave is a very easy "there and back" stroll that allows the visitor to view the unique geology of a lava tube. The upper caves are about a mile and a half long one-way hike. There are several areas where large boulders and rubble (where parts of the roof collapsed in ancient times) must be climbed over. The tubes happen to run parallel to lay lines in the area.

23. Hawthorne Blvd: Starting from the Hawthorne Bridge and heading east, Hawthorne Boulevard has over twenty coffee shops, twelve bars, eight restaurants, a dozen music scenes (both live and album stores), ten second-hands, and two dozen small storefronts of all kinds. It is not considered the social epicenter of Portland, but does serve as sort of a counter culture alley. What makes it even more unique is that as busy and touristy as the street is, a block to the left or right finds spacious, yard-carrying homes with curb parking and large trees. Hawthorne is the most likely place you'd find hipsters or indie bands hanging out.

The End of the Oregon Trail: The 2,000 mile journey to the frontier and beyond was long, grueling, and bloody. Not only did many of the pilgrims die during the excursion, but their arrival brought further suffering and death to the native peoples of America. A lay line stretches the length of the Oregon trail, across the entire continent. This line was assumed





to once be a source of healthy, vibrant life energy, but the Oregon Trail and the Trail of Tears polluted the prime river into a dark, though not evil, font. The end of the trail is celebrated in Oregon City, where another ley line crosses the Oregon Trail's path. Here is a massive Hallow, but the Mana that is found there is tainted and difficult to use; it has also been known to be addicting. There are all sorts of forces at work here; some are good or neutral, many are enigmatic, but a large portion are strong, festering, angry and decay-ridden. This magical spring is also a Verge, and so there are spirits of all shapes and sizes here, and Oregon City is considered one of the strangest places in the state.

Haunted Portland

Portland may be a younger city than New York or Chicago, but it has a past equally as rich, and just as dark. Like any place with history, Portland has its share of ghosts, both metaphorical and metaphysical. The following are just the most famous examples of supernatural activity, but there are dozens more, some being kept quiet, some simply yet unknown.

24. Pittock Mansion: The historic Pittock Mansion was completed in 1914, incorporating Turkish, French and English design. The final estate was over 16,000 square feet, with a greenhouse, three-car garage and an Italianate gate lodge that

served as servants' residence, all built on over forty acres and overlooking downtown Portland.

Pittock was 80 when he finally moved in, his wife 68. They died within months of each other four years later. The house opened to the public in 1965, and there began a series of strange events. A boyhood picture of Henry Pittock seems to move from place to place. It is usually kept on a bedroom mantle, but will move to different locations only minutes after it was last seen. The tour guides can be reticent about these happenings. Some visitors have reported the strong smell of roses, when there were none in the house. Other people have reported the sound of heavy boots walking in or out of the rear entrance, and a few sightings of an elderly woman have been seen. A group of native Hawaiians had taken the tour and as they left one of the youths remarked; "My uncle is a shaman in Hawaii and he says that he can feel the spirits of the Pittocks here."

In truth, there are many ghosts here, and the Pittocks are the least of anyone's troubles. The family sold the house, and it was in the hands of private owners for a time before it was suddenly sold to the people who made it an historical sight. Those private owners were the Haydens, a young rich couple from back east who moved to Portland to start a family. What they nor the Pittocks realized was that the home was built atop the meeting of two ley lines, and the power helped to shape

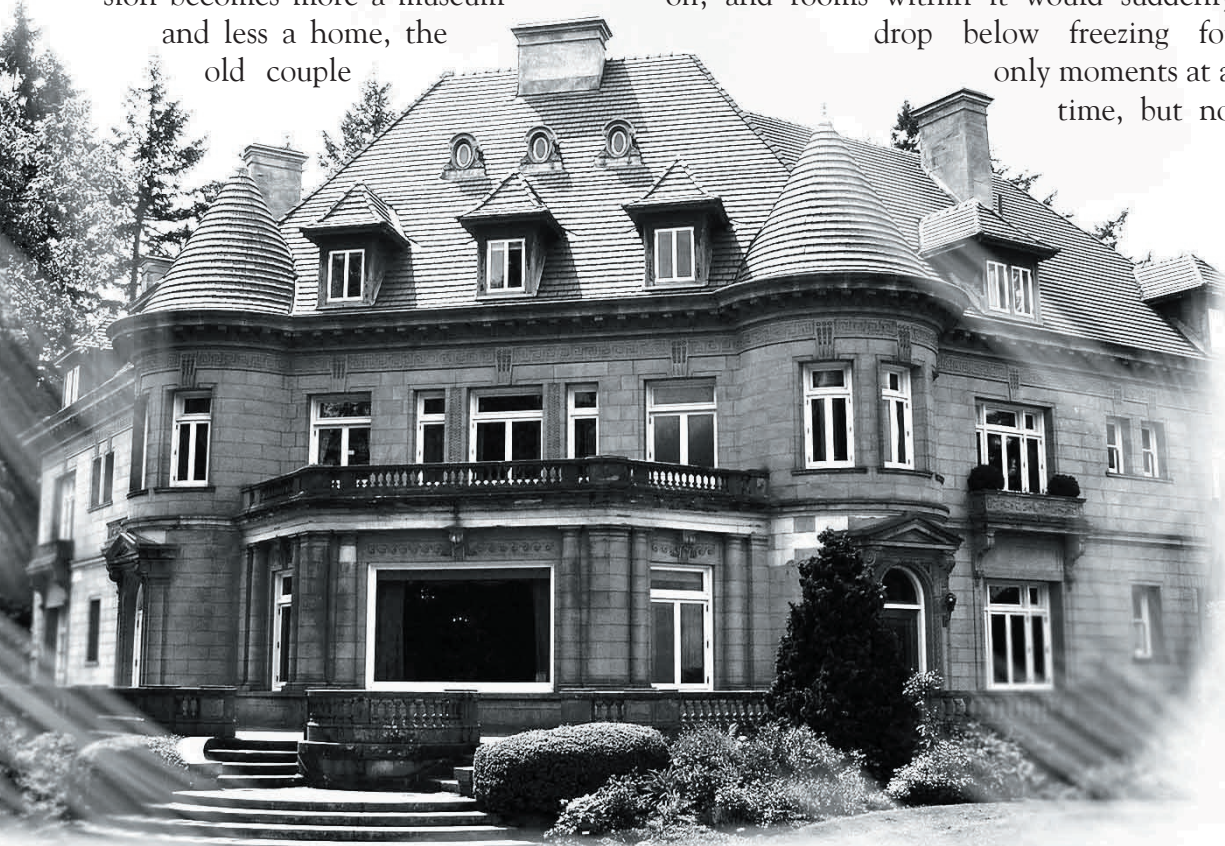
the surrounding environment. And that power attracts its share of not only monsters, but the deranged as well. A barely functioning serial killer stumbled across the home, and spent weeks raping and torturing the Haydens until he finally took his own life with a shotgun in the kitchen. Across the walls he wrote seemingly random lines of Edgar Allen Poe's *The Raven* with the blood of his victims shortly before taking his life.

All three now linger as ghosts, warring with each other eternally. The ghosts of the Haydens hate the killer and do their best to extract revenge, but the killer's ghost seems to want nothing more than to continue his antics in the afterlife. What's more, the essence of this place has grown dark, and begun to attract more violent ghosts and spirits to the area. Moros use the Mansion as a training ground for their Death powers, for all sorts of variety of ghost can be found here, and the place reverberates with decay.

As for the Pittocks themselves, their ghosts do linger, and they seem to be holding on to this world, and to the house they wanted to be their own, for they never had the chance to live in it long. These ghosts are sometimes helpful, and try to keep visitors from incurring the wrath of the others. However in recent years, as Pittock Mansion becomes more a museum and less a home, the old couple

has become bitter. China began to hurl themselves of the display shelves; dressers and furniture were knocked over as if Henry was in a rage. Geogiana's presence is more subtle. Water evaporates quickly as she weeps for her loss, and those in her presence dehydrate quickly--when angered, she can greatly accelerate this process. And though the staff at Pittock claim the smell of roses comes from the imagination, the truth is five groundkeepers are employed nightly to hack away the roses that seem to spring up magically, Gergiana's favorite flower. The Awakened know that the couple has some control over the power of the other ghosts here, for it is their home, but their strength is beginning to fade. Two months ago, a supervising tour guide was found murdered in the basement, with rose petals strewn across her body. The staff have begun to get nervous; many have left altogether.

25. Bagdad Theater: One of the many theaters built in the late 1920s, the theater will hold over 700 patrons in its auditorium and large balcony. Several rows of seats have been removed to make way for the permanent tables, set up in front of many seats for patrons to place their snacks while watching movies. The place was dormant of supernatural activity until the 90s when a renovation began. After that, lights seemed to refuse to remain off, and rooms within it would suddenly drop below freezing for only moments at a time, but no



instrumentation ever record spikes of electricity or malfunctioning in the HVAC units.

The ghosts that haunt the theater operated it when it first

opened. Their love affair became a torrent, and when her father found out a confrontation happened on the balcony. The papers say only the man was killed, but the

truth is his lover took her own life only days later. The ghost of the man is aggressive toward most men and whimsical around those women who fit the girl's description--brown eyes, brown hair, slender with glasses. She tends to be shy, but will play with young children if left alone. Recently, they have done more than just putter around the theater. The night janitor has seen a physical man wandering the halls, who will disappear around a corner or even in plain sight of addressed. Instead of moving on, they have allowed their grief to grow; now the theater plays mostly silent films and depressing dramas. It is renowned for its excellent selection of arthouse cinema, but there aren't many comedies played here any longer.

26. White Eagle Tavern: The White Eagle Tavern is an out-of-the-way but popular nightspot in southeast Portland that first began to show signs of ghosts at the turn of the millennium, when employees began witnessing strange events: the smell of smoke with the bar is empty, sometimes instead



an overpowering cheap perfume. Shouts and noises come from the basement where they store their wine and beer, and at times those same smells seem to waft up from down there. In recent days, things have escalated to flying menu boards that don't ever harm, but simply terrify after hours.

The tavern once had six apartments above it. In 1976 a fire nearly destroyed the building; the tavern was rebuilt but these apartments were hollowed out, now only used for storage. But before the fire, a young anarchist worked as a cook in the back room of the bar. The boy was plagued by troubles and voices, and kept to himself out of a deep paranoia. He lit fires to burn out the voices, and died in the flames.

Although the boy haunted the place for many years, it wasn't until another death occurred that the trouble started. Another rebellious youth, this time an emo teenager who worked as a janitor, was stabbed in the parking lot while getting off work. Immediately, activity increased. The two ghosts are feeding off one another; they hate themselves, they hate the world, and they hate each other. When they aren't fighting directly, they scare and disturb people in the White Eagle, because more than anything they hate the tavern. Their activity continues to grow, and things will only become more violent as the years pass.



POPULATION

The preceding is meant to be a comprehensive list of all the mages in Portland. You will of course need to add additional NPCs, as well as they player characters. Any additions can easily be made to the cast, but make sure everybody has at least a paragraph's worth of basic information on the person.

Otherwise, the characters you create are outsiders, and will be treated accordingly. They can be used as a new an unexpected threat, a kink in the system, dues ex machine, whatever you wish, all with good reason for not starting in Portland. But if they do, make sure everybody knows a little bit about their business.

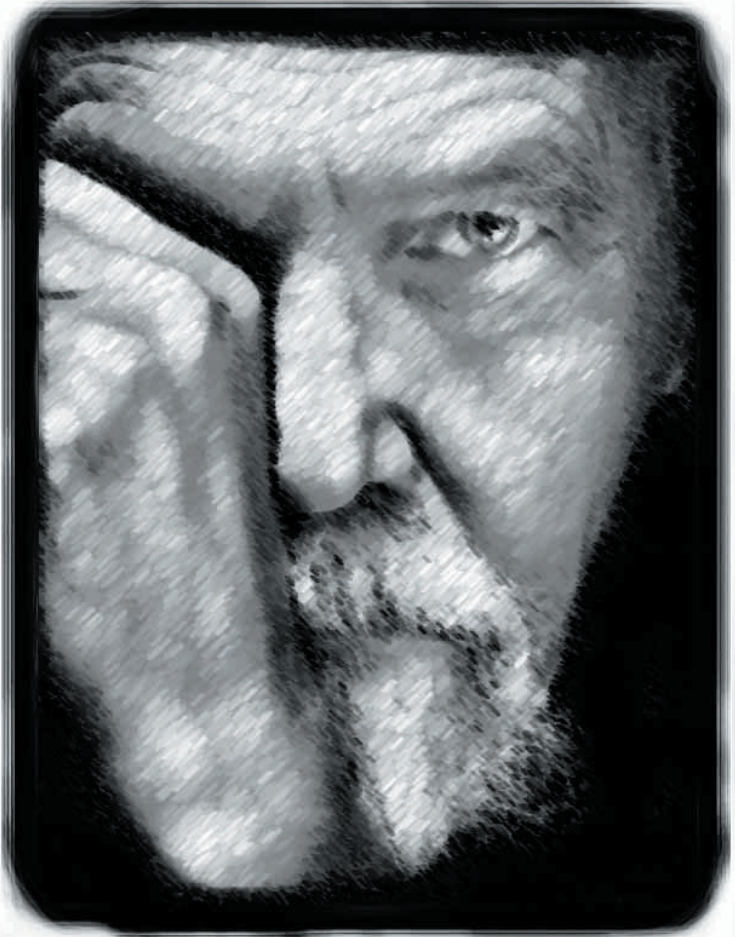
Any Portland resident that isn't currently known about has to be a massively scary individual. In this society, it would take nothing short of a Master to remain completely hidden, and any motivation to do so would have to be mired in ill intent.

Awakened Dramatis Personae

Thomas Arillis (*Bostonian Thyrsus*): Thomas was a priest for nearly a decade when he became Awakened, when his continuous meditation on God led him not to his lord, but to Twilight, and eventually to Shadow. He realized how faith is a part of the Lie, and how as long as it exists in its current form few will Awaken. Instead of turning away from the cloth he embraced it more tightly. Now he lives the life of a priest, but as a mole within the Church, slowly weaning those he thinks are intelligent enough away from Christendom and toward enlightenment. One of the most loved priests in Portland.

Andron Baldaer (*Belarusian Mastigos*): An orphan raised by the Russian Orthodox Church in Belarus, Andron always had a chip on his shoulder. He rebelled against the religion that saved him and turned to a life of crime, running drugs for local crimelords before he was fifteen. His Awakening came after a particularly bad experience with methamphetamines, and after that Baldaer swore

off hard drugs. He came to America and soon found himself in Portland, where he used his magical influence to force his way into the city's mainframe. Now a wealthy businessman with deep roots in the community and a healthy role in Sleeper politics, Andron keeps his grip on his Consilium seat and will try to thwart any potential enemy before he becomes a problem. Baldaer attempted to prevent Desmond Doyle and Menos Tarcun from establishing footholds in Portland, causing a bitter and dangerous rivalry. Potentially a Master.



Regina Blodwyn (*New Englander Thyrsus*): Regina is an alley cat, a feral prowler of the night. She has no publicly known address, no social ties of any kind. She lives her life on the edge of humanity, barely conforming to city life. She has the accent of a New Yorker, but that is the only clue to her past, as she never talks about anything before 1990,



when she moved to Portland. Her nights are spent hunting things that threaten humanity—anything supernatural that isn't a mage comes under her claws. She is rumored to have once killed a werewolf with her bare hands—without the aid of magic. Regina might have a complex agenda, but if she does no one knows about it, and she certainly makes everybody think she is just a simple creature.

Artemis Blue (*American Acanthus*): Nobody knows exactly what Artemis Blue is up to. It has been confirmed that he has some influence in the art of Mind, but for the most part the mage is rarely seen performing magic, even in the exclusive company of his peers. His store, however Cool Moon Ice Cream, is a Demense, for reasons Artemis won't elaborate upon. He claims the place in a great experiment, but refuses to explain what he is testing—he claims that any advanced knowledge, even his, could ruin the outcome. Add to that his strange appearance (6'5" tall, 240 lbs, a body builder in an ice cream apron) and despite his happy-go-lucky personality and love of children, and most mages in the city are downright afraid of him, even if they can't tell you why.

Penelope Brash (*Virginian Obrimos*): A stunningly gorgeous singer/songwriter. Penelope

maintains a low-key persona, and despite popularity in Portland and Seattle has never pursued a recording contract with anyone. Her independently produced albums are little more than burned CDs with ink-jet-printed labels sold out of the back of her rusty Ford Ranger. Many of her songs appear to be Dylan-style gibberish, but any Awakened can tell she is singing about the supernal realms and the mage community. Despite her beauty and wilting-flower persona on stage, Penelope is something of a modern-day gunslinger, toting around a pair of .45 Magnums she keeps in slow-slung holsters invisible to the naked eye. Many of her Sleeper-oriented work are protest songs, and she has been known to get involved in many Awakened causes, always fighting on the side she feels is right, and usually deadly-aggressive defending her newfound friends. She has often been mistaken for Acanthus,

however, because her fervor-driven support often wanes unexpectedly, and however long she fights along side those with a cause her loyalty never seems to transfer over to other agendas they might have. Rumored to be an Adept.



Alliandro Chimel (*Mexican Obrimos*): Born in La Paz on the Baja Peninsula, Alliandro Chimel lived a life of luxury until he reached University. There he began to see through his privileged upbringing when faced with Mexico City's hardship during the late 1970s. He became a civil right's activist, and in 1985 moved to the USA to begin helping immigrants there. To this day he is an active member of the ALCU and consults immigration laws and rights with all three west-coast states. As a mage, he uses his abilities to occasionally help large groups of immigrants into the United States, and hires them at above the minimum wage to work in the businesses he owns. Friends with both Portland's mayor and the governor of Oregon.



Isabella Colantoni (*Portuguese Mastigos*): One of the most secular and neutral mages in the city, Isabella is a full-time psychiatric counselor, and offers her services to other Awakened. Most, of course, are suspicious of this to say the least, assuming that all she really wants is to probe them for secrets when their guard is down. Despite the word-of-mouth assurances from a few that she is genuinely helpful and completely magically non-invasive, few utilize her services. It was recently discovered that Isabella had been treating several Sleepwalkers from both Menos Tarcun and Andron Baldaer's employ, all of whom denied knowing Calantoni was even a mage. This knowledge enraged both Consilium members, who pressed her hard to determine if she had tried to unlock their secrets. Eventually the whole thing blew over, and

Isabella seemed to have escape unscathed, but this has made others even more suspicious of her true motives.



Galen de la Vega (*Latino-American Mastigos*): A vicious and unfeeling man, Galen de la Vega is the perfect Provost, and will use any opportunity to mettle in the affairs of others. He seems

unquenchable in his appetite for secrets, and he is so active in acquiring artifacts as well as intelligence that some thing he is using his position to more dire ends. The only official Provost in Portland, Galen seems closest to Daishiro Shimura and is known for doing the Consilium member's unofficial dirty work. Known to have killed at least ten mages in his career, Galen is seen as something of a dirty cop among the Awakened. He often uses his title as a means to relieve mages of their possessions, making it legal later—and most are too frightened to fight him on it, because the possibility of an entire Consilium behind him is too threatening to ignore.

Einstein (*American Mastigos*): A truly technology-oriented mage. Einstein spends most of his time “inventing.” Before his Awakening, Einstein had dedicated his life to invention and theoretical science. Now, he creates both strictly mundane things, as well as imbued items, often with a blending of old magic and new technology; but whatever he invents is solely to serve other mages—no Sleeper benefits from even his completely mundane creations. Oftentimes his process involves merely slamming objects together until something with an interesting set of properties results. He keeps odd hours and is often seen all around the city, experimenting. While friendly, his interests tend toward the mischievous, and he asks an incredibly high price for any favors. Involved in a dangerous rivalry with Prometheus. Probably an Adept.

Desmond Doyle (*Scottish Mastigos*): Doyle moved to America when he was just a child, on the heels of his mother's funeral. His father was

a laborer, and taught him a sense of integrity and honor. Once Doyle Awakened, however, that spirit festered into its current form. Desmond is arrogant, impatient, and lives by an obscure code of engagement that makes him hard to scrutinize and easy to offend. A raging drunk and a consummate womanizer, Doyle owns the construction company his father once worked for, and several others. Most of his money comes from investment capital, but he keeps the construction for an excuse to probe into the city's records and layout. Contracted his men to help Raymond Hood in the construction of John Ross Tower, and during its completion purchased the penthouse for himself. In control of the tower's ability to transport mages across the world, but he hoards this ability carefully, and charges others for



its use. Doyle became a Consilium member after the hasty departure of someone who had been posing as a Master. Rumored to be a second-degree Adept.

Ender Hasad (*Turkish Obrimos*): Once his rival had hired a Sentinel, Menos Tarcun decided to do the same. It isn't certain whether or not the trend will continue to the other Consilium members, but it certainly has further flared the tensions between Tarcun and Tarasov. Hasad was hired because of

his military and intelligence background. Keeps a lieutenant beside him at all times, a Sleepwalker called John Terrance, who runs errands for the Sentinel and spots for him during conflict. Hasad is well known to have been an expert assassin before Tarcun recruited him, but so far no evidence has lead anyone to believe these talents have been employed in Portland.



Aniche Hill (*American Acanthus*): A child of true Fate, Aniche has dedicated her life to helping people who were once wronged. She employs the Gift of Fortune on a regular basis, causing the wrongdoer to unwittingly

aid the wronged in some way. She says she is karma, or at least a conscious part of it, working to restore the balance within single lifetimes rather than waiting for death and rebirth. New Agey, girlish and chic, Aniche is hated by Regina Bloodwyn. The feeling is mutual, although neither will elaborate why. Aniche doesn't seem to have many hidden agendas, but that could be what makes her so dangerous.

Aldrian Kimmel (*Filipino-American Moros*): If anybody could be said to a child prodigy of crime, it would be Aldrian Kimmel. His father was a ruthless and efficient larcenist, and by the time he was seven years old Aldrian was running drugs for people





his dad knew. Eventually his life of crime turned him toward smuggling, and he quickly became wealthy importing goods into the country illegally. Eventually moved his smuggling business to Portland—he owns a legitimate company called Roaring Imports, through which he conducts all variety of illicit affairs. Gradually Aldrian's business has become more and more about being the final leg in the long journey of some mage's acquisition, and he is known for getting magical items brought into the United States all over the country. He deals primarily with extremely wealthy Sleeper and Awakened clients, but can be persuaded to help locally for a "good cause" (although what that means is unclear) or a favor. Friends with Alexander Mason, and works closely with the Syndicate.

Charlie Lei (*Asian-American Mastigos*): A writer famous in academia, if not much passed it, Charlie Lei is known for his contemporary fiction in which he explores philosophical puzzles. Born in Seattle to freshly immigrated parents, Charlie was fascinated by the divide in his family's culture and his country's. This led him to the study of philosophy, a doctorate and eventually a fellowship at Washington State University. He began writing fiction to explore the ideas presented theoretically in study, and quickly became a well-utilized tool by the very teachers that inspired him. A few of his

novels have been modest successes in recent years, but nothing has yet put him in the national spotlight. Mages know him for his deep intellect and love of exploration; not only has he found several artifacts in his day, he is also rumored to have written at least four grimoires himself. His is reclusive toward Sleepers but one of the more inviting mages in the city, and a valuable resource for research and translation of grimoires if one can befriend him.

Anwen Llewellyn (*Washingtonian Acanthus*): A woman with her eye on the Consilium, Anwen's major accomplishment in recent years was being elected Herald. It is rumored that she is at least an Adept in power. She actively pursues an aggressive agenda of her own as well as fulfilling her duties to the Consilium. Works at the Multnomah County Library downtown and in charge of new content acquisitions. Said to have an intense and mutual dislike for Madison Thorne. As Herald, frequently entertains mages in small socialite parties, and is often in Seattle, Boise and Vancouver BC for extended periods (it's said that she has made powerful and influential friends during her travels). The pet of Willow Osgood, and if the rumors are true, her lover as well.

Connor Manny (*Chicagoan Moros*): A former detective from Chicago that abruptly retired to Portland and set up shop as a P.I. Manny won't specify the trouble that brought him here, and no one has ever been able to discover from Chicago what happened. As an investigator Manny works tacitly with the Portland PD, where he is called in as a forensics expert. Will take a mage's case for



five hundred a day plus expenses, but that price involves a detective suddenly willing to risk his life. A fan of crossword puzzles and games like *Myst*, Manny is a clever thinker and a dangerous foe once he gets wind of something. Despite being a Moros has an irritatingly unflinching view of right and wrong, and although not officially a Provost will report any errant Awakened behavior to the Consilium; has also been known to tip Sleeper police to the activities of mages, something which has shocked and angered some in the community.

Lillian Midasen (*Italian-American Acanthus*): Ambitious to a fault, Lillian Midasen is determined to become a famous journalist worthy of Walter



Cronkite or Edward R. Murrow. As well as report for the Portland Tribute, Lillian works as a correspondent for the local NPR outlet. She uses her abilities to sniff out stories she wouldn't otherwise be able to find. Three times now her investigations have led to massive arrests, and her faithful reporting of Portland's green-friendly status prompted the mayor to give her a key to the city. Most mages distrust her; some whisper behind her back that she'd sell out the story of the Awakened if she could. Six years ago she ran a mage-circulated monthly new

rag, but this lasted for only two months; a series of anonymous assaults on her home convinced her to stop. Everyone is convinced she is still keeping tabs on everyone, however, and at every turn a mage worries Midasen could be there, taking notes and ruining plans.

Alexander Mason (*American Moros*): The local crime syndicate in Portland had unrivaled prosperity for decades, although they never exploded into a huge organization. The Syndicate is known primarily for its cannabis and tobacco smuggling (the latter being surprisingly lucrative), as well as the standard racketeering tactics. The vice market is booming, and the Syndicate is making millions. Alexander Mason, third-in-command to the whole thing, is in essence running the show, as the true lords of crime are now old and doddering and trust their organization to him. Mason is the benevolent dictator as long as everything runs smoothly, but is known among his men to be particularly harsh with punishments when things go awry. Nobody is sure exactly what he does, but whispers about being temporarily dead and seeing a gruesome and terrible afterlife are among the penalties. Is still a relatively average powered mage, but has his eyes on a Council seat for sure. Particularly hates Con-



silium member Daishiro Shimura, the other mage in Portland with ties to organized crime. Considers the Japanese businessman's arrival to be an intrusion and an insult, and considers every dollar Shimura makes to be a dollar he has lost.

Darren Nox (*African-American Obrimos*): A former Navy Seal with a law degree from Harvard, Darren Nox arrived in Portland at twenty-six and began a notable career in the District Attorney's office. Quickly showing he had a penchant for courtroom dramatics and a brilliant legal mind, Nox became chief Assistant District Attorney at thirty, the youngest in the city's history. When he's not mugging for the camera or throwing down in court, he is active in other social arenas. Friends with the mayor and the governor and well respected publicly, Nox could likely get away with murder—and with his seemingly infinite supply



of resources, contacts and allies, there's no doubt he would easily cover any such crime up easily. His friendship with Daishiro Shimura has made him an enemy of the Syndicate; Nox has begun putting hard legal pressure on Alexander Mason, convinced that he's the one really running the criminal organization.

Fidelma Orr (*Irish-American Acanthus*): For over thirty years she has been the record keeper, historian and main lawyer in Portland. Despite shifts in the Consilium and changes to the city, Fidelma has been a constant. She is tall and thin, with white hair always in a bun, and a long and unsightly nose that makes her look hawkish, and like everyone's evil nanny. She has the thunder and poise of a master courtroom dramatist that would make her

a perfect addition to the *Law & Order* cast, and is someone both above reproach and bullying, for she lives her life as a model example for other Awakened. There are few that know mage history and lore the way she does, and any dispute with a legal basis is usually settled by her and only signed off on by the Consilium. Her sanctum is the sort of modest one story affair expected of a single elder woman, complete with a few cats and a refusal to participate in Halloween, but her property is bordered by brambles and there is rumored to be an impressive library underground, mostly filled with her record keeping of Portland events. She is the only mage that Mystery Train allows to live across the Columbia in Washington.

Willow Osgood (*Marylander Acanthus*): Not much is known about this white-haired beauty, who looks somewhere in age between twenty and forty-five. No one doubts she is at least one of the most powerful Consilium members in Portland, if not the Hierarch outright. What is known is that among the council she is the one who takes the most interest in the Awakened community as a whole. She has no Sleeper-oriented side to her life; no profession, no friends, and even for a mage she could be said to keep to herself. Yet for all this mystery Willow is a warm and inviting person; many times has she taken someone into her confidence with just her charms. But she is as temperamental as the sea, ever shifting in her opinions and some say the ultimate expression of the spines underneath the flowers of the Acanthus. Although it hasn't often happened,

those who become her enemy very quickly find themselves the victim of gruesome accidents. Even the other Consilium members give her wide berth, and yet she has done nothing to provoke such fear. If judged solely by her actions, one might come to the conclusion that she doesn't have an agenda of her own, but the fact that if the one were to subject her to such scrutiny always finds himself horribly killed is reason enough to know she's hiding something big.

Michael Powell (*American Arcanthus*): Along with his Sleepwalker father, Walter, Michael opened Powell's bookstore in 1971 and has been furiously busy ever since. More books pass under his fingertips than anyone in the country short of

the Library of Congress custodian. While ostensibly he is little more than a lucky bibliophile who accidentally built an empire, Powell is really a treasure-sifter, using his store to comb out books of power. Although he has a friendly and welcoming demeanor, right under those kind eyes lurks the thorns of his Path. Early 50s, portly, usually wears flannel and a bushy gray beard.

Prometheus (*Greek Obrimos*): The underdog in a rivalry with Einstein, Prometheus is Portland's other madcap inventor. Some say he took his pseudonym because Einstein had one as well. Prometheus takes a slightly different approach than his rival, preferring to perfect a mundane invention and develop his magical imbue-ment ability separately, only combining them at the end to get the perfect blend of the supernatural and the technological. Earns his living by selling his mundane inventions to various development companies, and will try to undercut Einstein by offering his services for less—but everyone knows that Einstein's magical inventions are more powerful, and in a pinch will come through with a product faster. Still, his willingness to bid against Einstein and his own not-so-modest proficiency has made this mage an effective competitor, and also an enemy.



Teagan Hood

(*American Thyrsus*):

Unlike most little girls who grow up, Teagan's love for animals never waned into a general fondness for cute and fluffy things. While other girls were

become social butterflies, Teagan was getting her knees dirty and red hair caked with mud, crawling around in the dirt talking to the things she found there. After a particularly harrowing incident with a rattler (who miraculously began to talk back to her), Teagan began a Mystery Play that led her deep into a Wonderland-like jungle of spirits. She returned a mage dedicated to the natural world. Teagan is only twenty-five but has been Awakened for half of that. She owns her own veterinary clinic and spends her off hours replenishing life wherever she can. She owns property south of the city, and maintains sprawling gardens where her backyard

and lawn used to be. Although flighty, girlish and friendly, Teagan Hood is rumored to spend an awful lot of time in the Shadow Realm; a few mages are even afraid to deal with her at all, telling their peers that she is a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Micah Reins (*African-American Moros*): One of the rare Moros who get along famously with Thyrsus, Micah Reins is fascinated with science as well as the supernal. A geologist by profession, he is also a student of biology and zoology, although he holds no dominion over the Life Arcanum. Something of an eccentric, Micah claims that the land around



Portland has heretofore undiscovered properties, and can be seen all over the area digging into the earth, analyzing samples and casting rituals. Also a

treasure hunter, usually on the lookout for what that will help him in his own experiments, but enjoys finding other trinkets and selling them for money or favors. Friends with the mages of Hawthorne, and often employs their help individually with his research. Also the owner of a respectable survey and development firm.

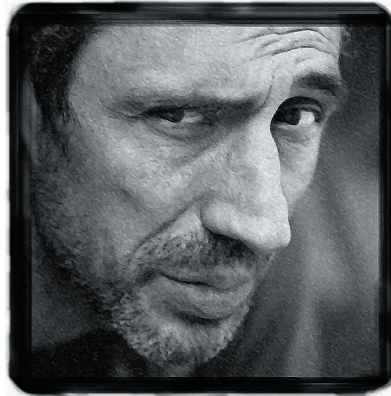
Ricky Revelation (*Columbian-American Obrimos*): Columbia Falls is a local indie-scene favorite, and Ricky Revelation is their front man. With sultry bad-boy looks, the perfect skin-tone-to-muscle ratio and a haunted expression, Ricky belts out sexually charged or nihilistic lyrics over an alternative sound with bolero influence. Also the owner of a fairly successful chain of strip clubs and a porn studio all under the name of Revelation Entertainment. Dated Penelope Brash for a little over three years, but the relationship ended recently. Now seen with a different Sleeper on his arm every night. Columbia Falls plays often at the Douglas Fir Lodge, and Ricky is close to its Sleepwalker owner.

Izanami Ru (*Okinawan Thyrsus*): Although not officially a Herald of Portland, Ru is seen as an ambassador of sorts, not only because nearly every out-of-town mage finds their way to the gardens and are always impressed by her hospitality, but because she is a conduit through which word can reach official Awakened channels in Tokyo. The consilium keeps her apprised of current events as a courtesy. 60 years old with still mostly-black hair, with a timeless beauty that doesn't reflect her age. Ru also does her part to help control any wayward spirits that cause havoc around the city. Seems deeply mistrustful of Daishiro Shimura and refuses to attend events he is at.

Daishiro Shimura (*Japanese Mastigos*): An honored and respected man in his home country, Daishiro Shimura arrived on American soil only a decade ago—but since that time has amassed substantial power and influence in this country. It is rumored, but has never been proven, that Shimura was deeply involved in Yakuza, but whatever the truth he sure seems to run his organization like that type of syndicate. With satellite offices in most of the major cities on the west coast, Shimura has a frightening force of information gathering. While he owns several different businesses of various industries, Shimura's real efforts seem to be in off-the-book deals. Rumored to be a second-level Adept. Obtained a seat at the Consilium the same year he arrived in Portland, after he destroyed a once respected local mage in an out-of-control Duel Arcane. Recently has been rumored to be attempting to recruit Ender Hasad as his own Sentinel, which is causing further friction between himself and Menos Tarcun.

Tysol Sloan (*Texan Thyrsus*): Tysol Sloan was born in Texas to a rich family and used that money to travel the world, but when his plane crashed in the jungles of Brazil he Awakened, only to use his newfound powers to navigate his way to safety. Seriously, this guy's life reads like a friggin' adventure novel, to the point where other mages scoff that he's either shamelessly embellishing or he's the literal incarnation of Crocodile Dundee. Now lives in Portland because of its green lifestyle and abundance of natural parks. Works as a National Ranger in Forest Park, and is good friends with Dancing Horse. Rumors persist that he has made friends with werewolves or something of that nature, but Tysol is keeping his mouth shut

about anything besides his Sleeper duties. Seen as something of a lone wolf, most mages can't figure him out and figure it's best to avoid him altogether. An intense dislike has arisen between Sloan and Roland Tembo.



Theo Stoller (*Peruvian Moros*): A handsome man that could pass for English, Theo is everything one would expect from a model American citizen: he pays his taxes, he is active in his community, he gives to charity and

even sponsors a little league soccer team. No one thinks twice about the fact that he lives in a mansion that overlooks the Burnside Cemetery, west of Washington Park. Mages, of course, know the truth—even as a Moros, calling him a necromancer is a distinction. His estate is overrun with undead bodyguards and servants, carefully disguised to appear human, and he spends most of his time communicating with ghosts and attempting to learn the secrets of the Underworld. Although it has never been proven, rumor persists that more sinister activities surround Stoller, that he has been committing heinous acts with his power over Death. Plays golf with the mayor.

Menos Tarcun (*Indonesian Moros*): Born in Jakarta, Menos had always been a little off. He got good grades in school, proved to be a mathematical prodigy, and enrolled in advanced physics courses when he was a teenager. But from an early age he talked to things that weren't there, seemed overly infatuated with death, and studied the history of alchemy, despite its relative obsolescence; his parents died in his extreme youth, but he never seemed to miss them. He awoke during his final exam for his doctrine; the test was so hard that he pushed his mind past where it could go, and something about the experience broke the floodgates. He left Indonesia and came to America, where for a time he lived in New York City. Something happened there, however—something dark and terrible, for Menos fled the east coast, and some whisper that his arrival to the west was more exile than choice. Rumored to be an Adept at least.

Roland Tembo (*British Acanthus*): Roland's par-



ents were holdovers from the transition of India from English rule. He grew up in Bagasra, and then moved to Africa instead of attending university. In both areas he spent the majority of his time hunting, and became an expert in the field. From there he joined the British SIS, where he served a distinguished and bloody career. After his Awakening, he quit the service and went back to hunting, which he has done ever since. He gradually moved up the scale in the game he pursued, and finally ran out of mundane options. Now based out of Portland, Tembo dedicates his time to investigating and hunting down supernatural creatures. Possibly an Adept.

Alexis Tarasov (*Russian-American Obrimos*): Sentinel to Andron Baldaer. A former bodybuilder and devote Russian Orthodox Catholic, Tarasov is really only concerned with prayer and his job. He is the best bodyguard money can buy, and Baldaer hired the mage from overseas seven years ago, the first Consilium member in a long time to go on record as obtaining a Sentinel. In part due to the rival of their masters, in part due to their own natures, Tarasov has an intense rivalry with Hasad, Tarcun's Sentinel. The fact that Hasad is Muslim seems to make Tarasov dislike him even more, and as an Obrimos isn't afraid to admit it; Hasad, devout himself and also Obrimos, is equally as critical of Tarasov's faith.

Madison Thorne (*British-American Acanthus*): A handsome woman of fifty (who looks forty at most),

Madison is the most notable treasure hunter in Portland. Owner of All Roads Antiques, which has an adjacent pawnshop called Third Hand. Thorne uses the two of them to sift through objects that float in and out of Portland, ensnaring a fair few; her business is also online, and she has contacts in nearly every major city in America. Is rumored to have a Library, but no one has yet found its location; some have tried to find her secrets and even coerce them out of her, but she always managed to get out of any situation that comes her way. Madison isn't overly friendly with other mages, but will barter with and for magical items if everything is on the level. Considered reclusive even for a community of solitary mages, Madison Thorne is presumed to be a powerful Willworker, for it takes someone of skill to stay so well hidden.



Dayton Vaughn and Lance Locke (*American Acanthus*): A romantic couple with longstanding ties to the Portland community, Dayton and Lance run Portland Music Company together, and live above it. They met as roadies for the Dave Matthews Band in the mid-90s, and moved to Portland after falling in love. They mostly devote themselves to music, but they are also treasure collectors, and have amassed a healthy collection of magically imbued or enhanced musical instruments. They are even rumored to possess a couple of Artifact lutes from the Middle Ages. A nice couple to call on for a place to crash or lie low, if you know them, but just because they are gay musicians doesn't mean they can't start some shit—the pair still have a reputation for getting into a fight with a Moros three years ago, and eradicating him brutally. Word is the Moros ended up the desiccated corpse of a 90 year old man.

Emperor of Waterfront Park (*American Obrimos*): To be honest, no one is completely certain about whether or not the Emperor is a low-powered mage or an extremely perceptive Sleepwalker, but whatever the case he knows more than he should. The mile-long downtown park that bor-



ders the west bank of the Willamette River is more or less his home, and for the most part he lives like a homeless person: ratty clothes, stringy white beard, cardboard boxes and even a shopping cart filled with junk. And yet he is never tired, or cold, or hungry. He never begs or is seen drinking; his activities are more benign, like feeding the birds or straightening up the park while clucking like a chicken. He is keenly aware of any Awakened in the park, and often comes to pester them—he has also been known, however, to help mages seemingly at random. When he takes such a hand, he always knows far more than even a perceptive mage should know, since he never leaves the park.

Eddie Grant and Harrison Linkletter (*Midwesterner Mastigos and Acanthus*):

No one knows where these two mages came from, or who they are. Julie Fuller, the owner of the jewelry and rare item store Gold Leaf claims that they just appeared one day, imposing on her status as a Sleepwalker, already playing chess in the corner. The set they use is incredibly beautiful, opal and onyx stone inlaid in or adorned with silver and gold, so intricately carved it had to have been done by laser yet obviously hundreds of years old, and probably the




most expensive set Julie has ever seen pass through her store. The two men just sit there all day playing game after game, the Mastigos compact and hunched with starchy-white hair in a military cut, the Acanthus tall and willowy with a full red beard that belies his age. They are quick with a joke and love company, but their interests have never wandered from their board. Eddie and Harry claim that they are experimenting to see who will eventually dominate such a game: a Mastigos with his control over his opponent's mind, or an Acanthus with influence over the other's fate. They seem to know each other from back in the day, although they rarely talk about their history.

However, both are rather knowledgeable about the myths surrounding the Supernal Realms, and they frequently make inside jokes to each other that seem to convey that they have discovered the art of extra-dimensional travel. Such a thing is impossible, of course, and the two men love to pull someone's leg, so surely it's just a joke...right?

Coye Burnham and Maurice Dugan (*American and Canadian Moros*): Maurice and Coye claim to have both Awakened due to the same gothic grimoire in college, where they met and became intense lovers, only made stronger by their combined Mystery Play. Both were functioning goth kids, and after they Awakened began to indulge that lifestyle in a way that wasn't possible before. Eventually they opened their own club with

the pretentious moniker Babylon's Ruins, and it quickly became one of the most popular goth/metal/emo clubs on the west coast. Coye and Maurice have mellowed somewhat in recent years, adopting a style and attitude more similar to the White Stripes than Marilyn Manson. Coye is a pretty waif of

a woman, with raven-black hair and hollow eyes



that give her a haunted beauty, and Maurice is a slender boy always wearing jeans designed for girls and more eyeliner than his wife. Both are intensely interested in death, and are said to be good friends of Theo Stoller. They are so wrapped up in their image and lifestyle that they have little impact on the Awakened city, and most mages consider them to be harmless if not downright silly. But their intense love and keen business entertainment minds make for a compelling combination, and there are a few that realize these two are not to be underestimated.

Chili Curtis (*American Mastigos*) and the **Westcoast Blazers**: There are still open roads in Oregon, and too few patrolmen to enforce the law. Several biker gangs run from Washington to Oregon, but none so infamous among mages as Chili Curtis. His gang is only ten strong, but to the man they are Sleepwalkers, and Chili is regarded as a powerful Mastigos, an Adept at least. Bulging with muscles and Dedicated Tool tattoos, Chili Curtis rules the wild back highways of Oregon like the last warlord. Even other biker gangs give his wide berth. Although Chili lives by the open road, he has permanent ties to Portland, the only major city he stops in. Friends with Aldrian Kimmel, who uses Chili to occasionally smuggle in goods from either Canada or Mexico, when his sea-oriented operation can't pull a deal. Also friends with Alexander Mason, and that allegiance has kept Daishiro Shimura from being able to travel anywhere outside Portland in a car. Short tempered, violent and mean-spirited, Chili is nevertheless a valuable resource for knowledge about the area's wilderness, not only the activity of other supernatural forces but whom in Awakened society has been sneaking around the back roads trying to avoid detection. Oddly respectful of Lakopat, and the two of them have been seen together on numerous occasions, prompting rumor that Lakopat is more than just Dancing Horse's successor.

Cabals and Their Members

There are few legitimate Cabals currently functioning in Portland—four public ones, to be precise. One is relatively politically ineffectual, one is mysterious and isolationist, and a third is little more than a like-minded gathering of Native Americans. Out of four official Cabals, only one has any impact on the society as a whole. There are more

would-be alliances in the city, but they have either already fallen apart or never strengthened enough to congeal into true organization (there is always the possibility of secret Cabals, but really that's just one step away from a club, albeit one where true schemes are drawn). If your players create an official Cabal, they will be entering this stage, looked at with suspicion, but also apprehension; there aren't a large number of effective Cabals, but that doesn't mean there can never be.

Mages of Hawthorne

Although they never refer to themselves as a Cabal other than in passing, the mages of Hawthorne are the most tight-knit group in Portland. Oddly enough, what brings them together is that they all live along Hawthorne Blvd., yet somehow this has fostered into a deep friendship. Hawthorne is considered their territory, and they are somewhat territorial of their domain; it is inadvisable to spend any amount of time in that community without first befriending at least one of the Cabal. With very little interest in politics, the mages of Hawthorne seem primarily concerned with keeping each other's company and ensuring Hawthorne Blvd. remains theirs. Daishiro Shimura has publicly remarked of them, "Such a waste."

Bryan Finn (*Portlander Thyrsus*): Short, handsome, plays the harmonica well. One of the few mages born and raised in Portland, Finn knows both the city and the surrounds better than anyone alive. Collects objects with high Resonance and makes jewelry and trinkets out of them, often selling them to other mages as the perfect item for imbuing. Also known for his woodworking ability, Bryan makes most of his money by carving intricate walking sticks (and wands for mages).

Scarlett Birch (*Oregonian Thyrsus*): Making her living by tending the gardens of upscale homes, Scarlett is rarely indoors. She is usually in the company of Bryan Finn, although the two aren't lovers as gossip insists. Mostly she spends her free time writing poetry and reciting her work at open mic nights. She isn't technically proficient, but her imagery is amazing, colored by her experience with spirits. Said to be an excellent guide in the Shadow Realm, but makes it clear she won't go there for nothing.

Olivia Gault (*Californian Obrimos*): Owns and operates Sacred Grounds coffee shop, which is

where the Cabal usually gathers. It's an impressive place, with massive sprawling couches in front of a huge television with a collection of movies, mismatched tables, wonderful flora arrangements courtesy of Scarlett, and a blessing from Monique to make curious customers keep wandering in. Sacred Grounds is highly reviewed by local food critics and a popular mage hangout. Olivia is also lovers with Monique, and the two of them own a house a block from Hawthorne between their two stores.

Monique Bell (*African-American Acanthus*): Owns Madam Monique's Citadel, a hole-in-the-wall fortune telling shop. Monique uses her abilities to give frighteningly accurate readings, but uses dramatic and clichéd flair (including crystal balls, incense, tarot cards and lighting effects) to ensure Sleepers never start to suspect she has any real magic. Will read any mage's fortune for a price. Also uses astrology to accurately predict upcoming events, and is rumored to be employed by the mayor.

Groundchangers Inc

Groundchangers Inc is one of the premiere environmental agencies in the world. Not only are they a green technology and lifestyle consulting firm, they also advise the EPA and foster scholarship and grant programs to up-and-coming green students. While over thirty employees staff the firm, the three in charge are all mages, and completely dedicated to their cause. Their abilities each led them to the cause of eco-activism, presumably because they all possess the Spirit Arcana and couldn't bear the thought of the harm humans are doing to things of sentience. Upon meeting they matured each other and eventually took their activism and shaped it into the powerhouse agency known today. In mage society, their money and their commitment make them powerful players. Even the Consilium takes its cues from the Groundchangers when it comes to environmental issues.

Asher Erwich (*American Thyrsus*): A former "eco-terrorist" (or as he would say, "liberator") and longtime militant activist. Asher changed his song when he met the other two members of his Cabal, and began to mellow. Still radical in his political views and zealous in his religious devotion, Asher's main focus is Groundchangers Inc. Friends with Bryan Finn. The most outwardly involved in the

Awakened community, although most of his actions in that arena involve gathering mages for environmental clean-up parties and the like.

Saran Botha (*South African Mastigos*): Of all the



mages in Portland, Saran seems the least interested in the Awakened community. She actively shuns relationships with mages other than her Cabal mates. Still, for all her aloof behavior she is an excellent orator, and has on several occasions spoken to gatherings of Willworkers, and has left an indelible impression on many minds. When she does seek out or offer help, it is either in her best interest to do so or she stands to make an outrageous sum. The one mage she is known to associate with is Prometheus, and even then only inasmuch as they are working together to develop alternative green technologies.

Kioko Kuriyama (*Japanese-American Tyrsus*): The member of Groundchangers with the most independent agenda, Kioko Kuriyama has her fingers in a lot of pies, from open dealings with Aldrian Kimmel, to alleged secret meetings with Mystery

Train and rumors of (perhaps literally) being in bed with Daishiro Shimura. Born in a traditional Japanese household that she quickly rebelled from, Kioko is young, vibrant, ambitious and gorgeous. Very good friends with Penelope Brash and the two have been seen partying together since Brash's break with Ricky Revelation.



Mystery Train

Few conversations suddenly turn to whispers as quickly as when the words "Mystery Train" are spoken. This Cabal of four reside in Vancouver, Washington, just on the other side of the Columbia River. In Sleeper society, the two sister cities are more like one continuous urban environment, but not so among Awakened. Vancouver is seen as "off limits" in a very real sense. While Mystery Train won't pester anyone visiting for a day, there has been to date only one mage they have allowed to live in their town. First appearing in Portland during the beginning of the dot com boom, Mys-

tery Train has kept mostly to themselves, staying in Vancouver and rarely straying into Portland proper. They honor the laws set down by the Consilium, and show the proper respect to the council, but beyond that seem to be living in their own universe. Their agenda is completely inscrutable. They occasionally employ the help of other Portland mages, but when they do their tasks seem random and sometimes downright pedantic, and Mystery Train always pays out exorbitantly. Mages have gathered and attempted to figure out a pattern to their favors and trades, but nothing has come up. Eddie Grant and Harrison Linkletter were given a list of all known Mystery Train activity since the first sighting of the Cabal; the two mages debated for six days before finally Eddie declared, "There is nothing but madness here. No pattern, nothing that connects. If I had to guess, I'd say that they're messing with us. Maybe we're so interested in their activities they do all this crap to throw us off the real trail. Because if these things are among their true objectives, they must be clinically insane." Mystery Train has never harmed anyone or caused any ruckus in the city, at least as far as anyone knows. And yet most people regard Mystery Train as if they are a mad-scientist-level threat. Not only that, but the Cabal members' demeanor only makes it worse: they eye everyone shiftily, seem uneasy standing in one place for too long, and always leave everyone they meet with a general sense of dread.

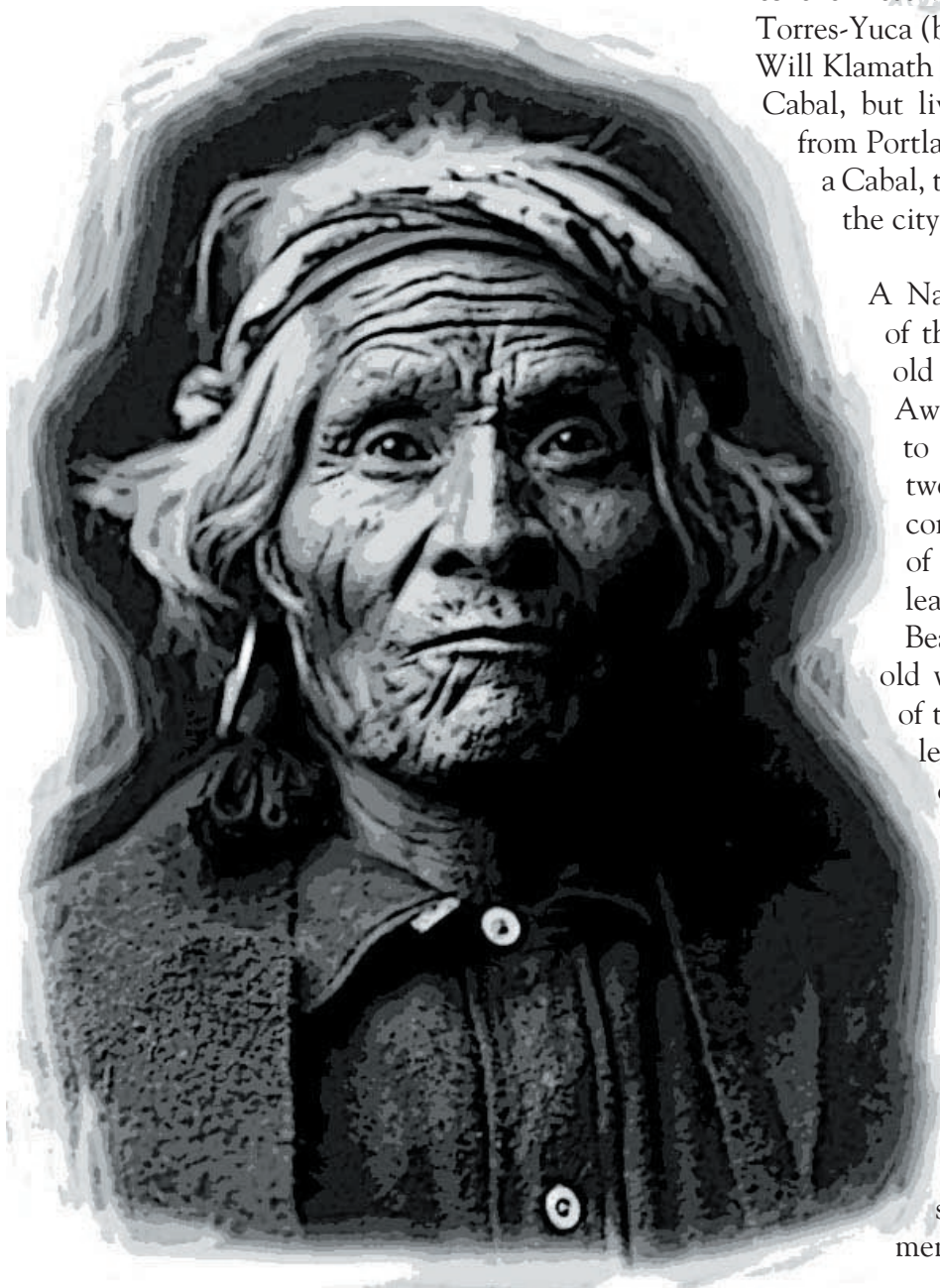
Theodorus (*American Mastigos*): Ostensibly the leader of Mystery Train, Theodorus is the mage most likely to speak publicly to anyone. Whenever the Cabal is represented before the Consilium, it is done so by Theodorus. Any requests to any other Awakened bear his signature. An imposing man with streaks of silver in his otherwise darkly peppered hair and thunderous eyes. Both of his hands reveal intense scarring from either fire or chemical or electrical burns.

Aesara (*American Mastigos*): A very tiny woman who keeps her face well hidden in scarves whenever out in public, not to conceal her identify but more because she seems to be shy. Those who have dealt with her recognize her mathematic brilliance, but are put off by her eccentric demeanor and what can only be described as impatient petulance. Looks to have had her nose broken on more than one occasion, and has a terribly lazy eye.

Zeno (*American Orimos*): Has only ever been seen

twice in public. Appears to be missing an arm. One of the times he was recognized in Portland he had in his possession of a magical artifact of incredible power, so much so that its Resonance was nearly blinding even though it was inactive. Is rumored to be the cause of a blackout that lasted for three days across the entire Portland area in 2003.

Axiothea (American Moros): A stocky woman with short gray hair who walks with a limp. When spotted, always seen heavily armed. Carries herself like ex-military, and is short and direct to the point of rudeness during any interaction. Rumored to have been spotted on more than one occasion with Theo Stoller, and is most regularly seen in public at the Babylon's Ruins club.



The First Cabal

A loose affiliation between the six Native American mages in Oregon nearby Portland. Long before Europeans discovered this land, the People resided here, living in tandem with all things. Similarly, Awakened Indians preceded white mages. The First Cabal, they claim, is what remains of a long-standing Native American Awakened tradition to safeguard the land around Portland. They are well respected among mages, and are known to the Sleeper world through their organization First People's Agency, which deals with aboriginal rights and living conditions, as well as fosters awareness for Indian lifestyle and history. Their programs are often instrumental in government outreach to the Reservations. Rachael Tumulth, Michael Torres-Yuca (both Thyrsus), Clarence Meanus and Will Klamath (both Moros) all belong to the First Cabal, but live outside of easy driving distance from Portland, and though they gather there as a Cabal, these four have minimal impact upon the city.

Dancing Horse (Tillamook Thyrsus): A Native American shaman and leader of the First Cabal, Dancing Horse is as old as dirt and tough as trees. Among Awakened company he will admit to being alive before the turn of the twentieth century, and has stood as a constant amidst an ever chancing tide of European domination. Inherited leadership of the cabal from Sleeping Bear, who also claimed to be impossibly old when he succumbed to the ravages of time. Since then Dancing Horse has led his Awakened people as best he could. Now in a world overwhelmed by whites, Dancing Horse fights no battles, champions no causes. The war was lost before he even came into power. For the last twenty years he has led the cabal in name only, preferring to exist alone in Forest Park, where he build a hard to reach cabin as far away from the city as he could. Acts as a counselor for any who seek out his wisdom. Would be a member of the Consilium without ques-

tion, but refuses to participate.

Lakopat Abrams (*Chinook Obrimos*): The lieutenant to Dancing Horse in the First Cabal, Lakopat essentially runs the show. While Dancing Horse remains reclusive, Lakopat is forced to handle the week-to-week necessities of his cabal. Strong, proud and gentle, Lakopat is a trim man of fifty with long black hair that hasn't even begun to gray. In all ways he seems the warrior, and most find him intimidating. Most of his days are spent in the cabal's offices, working on that organization's activist endeavors, but Lakopat isn't limited to a Native-American stereotype. He is also active in city politics, and is personal friends with the mayor. While it isn't clear exactly what he's doing, it's obvious Lakopat has his own agenda, and schemes that run peripheral to the First Cabal. No one is entirely sure if Dancing Horse is aware of these activities.

Player Characters

Portland's cast of characters might be spelled out, but there is plenty of room in the cracks. Finding a place to tell a compelling character story should be easy, but the world is set up mostly for a specific idea for characters, and is recommended here. The vacuum most noticeable in Portland currently is an abundance of mages who deal in secrets and treasure. The concept for this chronicle is something akin to a detective agency.

The player characters are in a Cabal, being among the few in the world who can actively grow to trust each other. They wish to make a mark for themselves in Portland, and so they bring their talents together the best way they know how. By starting up an investigation firm, the players set themselves in the middle of the flow of Awakened knowledge.

To pay the bills, the players create their firm in Sleeper society as well, renting out offices, setting up hours, even attaining Sleeper clients. Remember, in a world where the supernatural is so close to the surface, regular folk face their share of hardship.

The first task you characters would have to go through is getting the Consilium to authorize such a firm to exist. Eventually, the Consilium might agree to the following conditions: in return for assisting the Consilium with any investigations it

might have, the players' firm can serve both the mage and Sleeper community. The players can meet the Sleepers at whatever knowledge level they already have, but cannot confirm anything new—that is, whatever a Sleeper has already discovered about the true World of Darkness can be openly discussed, but anything they are ignorant about remains a secret. But getting the Consilium to even agree to that should be difficult.

After that, your characters are equipped and positioned to deal with a series of episodic stories, revolved around treasure hunting, investigation, mystery into the unknown and mage politics. They will have to learn to trust each other, and that trust should be constantly tested.

Suggested character concepts: Ex-detective or P.I. who knows the streets and Sleeper law, but devotes his energy to crimes involving the supernatural; occult researcher who makes money by providing others with information; an actual treasure hunter with Indiana-Jones-caliber gumption; a forensics expert that works as a part-time consultant for the local police bureau.

Walking Among

It is an easily overlooked concept when dealing with high powered mages in an elaborate Awakened society, and in some ways is easy to understand why it gets so overlooked. But in *The Stumptown Chronicles* the daily life of Sleeper society impedes upon the lives of player characters, and one of the most delightful uses of super powers is to be more special than the rest of world that lives in the middle of the din. Because the characters in this reality are likely to be more underpowered, make up for that by having them go up against people with no powers. Not all the time, of course, and not in every circumstance, but by occasionally making characters outsmart Sleepers (which they will) ensures a positive attitude and a feeling of accomplishment in what otherwise could be a dangerous and tense game.

Let characters get involved in relationships with non-Awakened and fight to keep them. Have Sleeper cops always up in their business, but aren't smart or aware enough to truly pose a threat. Allow for unpredictable situations by bringing in a reporter or inspector to intrude on the private space of your players' Cabal, and let them talk and covert-magic their way out of it. It doesn't matter if these mortal

forces are brought on by other mages screwing with your group or entirely by coincidence; your characters will be in their element. It will compel them to think of new and subtle ways to use their magic, because often no method of concealment works again and again, and Sleepers are just enough of a threat to take seriously without derailing the game or taking it in a whole new direction. In traditional roleplaying games of the past, random encounters were usually with dragons or trolls or something *dangerous*. In a *Stumptown* game, make the random encounters filled with Sleepers, so that your characters will be interrupted in their nobler efforts by nothing more complicated than life at their door.

Other Ideas

If supernatural investigation agency isn't your thing, here are a few story hooks to consider:

- **Base of Power:** Sentinels, provosts and other official positions are distinctly lacking. A call has been issued by the Consilium to see who among the populace can fill these roles. Player characters would get a chance to earn access to front-row seats to the cold war brewing between the Consilium, and the normal day-to-day of those in power. It also puts characters into an ideal position to start itching for more power, and in Portland, there's only one move up from there.
- **Treasure Hunters:** There are, after all, rumors of temples and locations still waiting to be found beneath Portland. Without every leaving the city, player characters could be team Indiana Jones, researching Portland and trying to discover the next Ark.
- **Truth and Consequences:** Player characters have very little to do with mage society, instead helping Sleepers with their problems. Introduce Portland from a Sleeper perspective, and how easily players could manipulate their situation, with Awakened society only there for when they screw up. It places Portland as an excellent backdrop

for a game of other supernatural antagonists plaguing regular citizens.

- **Terrible Day:** This year for the Saturn Day festival, something terrible has happened inside the Demense-for-a-day area. Player characters are from out of town, and are forced to deal with the situation before it gets out of hand, permanently shutting down the holiday and possibly starting a war between cities.

Methods of Advancement

This book's reality is designed for play with low-powered mages. But of course, players want to progress and evolve during the arch of a game. The following two options for advancement are suggested for use with this method of play:

- Start your characters with their Primary Arcana at 2 and 2 only. Assign Experience and Arcane Experience separately, but restrict its use: Arcane Experience can *only* be used on Arcana and Gnosis (rotes can be purchased with both kinds of experience). By only giving out a point or two of Arcane Experience a night makes the characters' magical progression much slower.
- Dictate the evolution of character power. Begin your first chronicle with player character's powers beginning at 2 and 2 only. Give them experience, but do not allow that experience to be spent on Arcana or Gnosis. At the end of your next chronicle, as you transition to the next story, increase each character's power to 3, 2 and 1, and increase their Gnosis by one. If a third campaign is run, increase each character's Gnosis by 1 and allow each player to place one free dot anywhere they wish, but cap powers at 3. Assign Experience Points only (with no Arcane Experience) that can't be used to purchase additional Arcana or Gnosis points. This method is ideal for players who have trouble spending points in anything other than magical powers.

STUMPTOWN STORYLINES

What follows are storylines or truths about events and mages in Portland, to be used as separate stories to follow in a chronicle, or as a general backdrop of the city—after all, the world turns without players, and the landscape of a place like Portland is constantly changing. If you wish, you can use these elements in your game as information only, events peripheral to the storylines of your chronicle that the characters don't necessarily need to follow. These are not meant to be comprehensive; they are fleshed out enough for easy reference in game that doesn't concern them, and good skeletons on which to put more story if you decide to use them in your chronicle.

There are also dozens of potential storylines possible by examining the Dramatis Personae and studying the listed connections between mages. Additional storylines might be introduced in future versions of this book, but by following the below examples of taking stated connections and drafting a story, one has an endless supply of short, episodic mini-chronicles for use in a larger game full of them.

The Shadowsong Coup

It is no secret that Mayor Jonathan Perez is a Sleepwalker. He is known associates with Theo Stoller, has a working relationship with Assistant District Attorney Nox, has given Lillian Midasen the key to the city and even has his fortune read by Monique Bell. And his generosity toward Daishiro Shimura is one of the reasons the Japanese businessman was able to get a foothold into this country at all. Most of the Awakened community is glad of this; a Mayor friendly to the Awakened makes life a little easier.

But recently, rumors have begun that perhaps it goes deeper than that. Some are beginning to

think that the Mayor is being *controlled*. His actions this term have been somewhat strange, although most of Sleeper society hasn't noticed. But the way he has just gobbled up resources and handed them over to Shimura makes any observant mage suspicious. But then again, if Shimura is controlling the Mayor, so what? In many ways Sleepers are disposable resources, especially to hardened Awakened. Having a Mayor as a pet can only do the overall city good, and if Shimura is doing it, it hasn't harmed anyone so far. With no evidence or proof, but also no concern, no one is looking into it too closely, and many are even becoming comfortable with the Sleeper city controlled by the Consilium.

The Truth

No one knows that in really, the Mayor is not only being controlled but being dominated, and by five mages instead of one. Shimura, Bell, Nox, Stoler and Midasen are all using their influence over Perez, who at one time might have been a decent man but is now little more than a pawn. None of these mages are his friend, but all appear to be, and in so doing stay close to the Mayor.

There are of course easy reasons for such an arrangement. Given unprecedented access to Portland, the five mages have begun to seriously prosper in recent months. Shimura's business has nearly doubled, and Nox is in line for an early, "unexpected" promotion to DA. Midasen, besides being given the key to the city, is kept up to date with breaking events, and allowed to be the first on the scene, often going inside areas normally forbidden to the press (she has also done a series of ten in-depth articles on the Mayor himself, responsible for a surge in his popularity). But these benefits are ancillary. The endgame of the league of five is far more sinister.

These mages, in truth, are in a Cabal, which they would call *Shadowson* if they ever referred to it by name. They have been working together for nearly ten years, and much of their efforts over that time have been culminating toward events very close to being set in motion. One of the hardest and most difficult steps in their plan was control of the Mayor, and with that accomplished, the Cabal thinks itself unstoppable. The final step in the preparation is completed by Dashiro Shimura finally locking in the help of Ender Hasad, Menos Tarcun's Sentinel. Before taking that job, Hasad was a professional assassin, one of the best in the world, and the five plan to use his talents immediately. By using the city's resources and their own magic to obfuscate their actions, *Shadowson* is about to initiate a series of events over a 48 hour period that will result in their control over all of Portland, *Sleeper* and *Awakened* alike.

Shadowson has made a pact with a large band of *Banishers* currently hiding out near Bend, Oregon, and with their combined efforts are managing to keep a leash on them. The *Banishers* are now chomping at the bit, tired of waiting for the plan to execute, and if things don't start moving soon the Cabal might lose control of them. With the city's resources at their disposal, *Shadowson* can easily smuggle them into the city.

Nox, who not only deals with the most unsavory aspects of necromancy but is also an *Abyssal* mage, has found a grimoire entitled *Shadowson*, after which the Cabal named themselves. The book allows for a hideous summoning of intentional *Paradox*, which result in massive, terrifying manifestations.

Nox, meanwhile, has been arranging things with the local jail. Six *Sleepwalkers* recently invoked the wrath of the Consilium by using powerful imbued items to pull strong-armed robberies. It wasn't hard to send them to jail, but now Nox has arranged for their release. Shimura, meanwhile, has secretly stolen the very same items and returned them to the hands of the *Sleepwalkers*. He has also given them an additional weapon; a *lacrimo*

found in the Australian outback, what looks like the petrified skull of some small rodent. Normally contained in a lead box, when exposed the skull will reflect any aggressive magic cast directly onto the caster (it will, however, not affect other magic items).

The plan begins with another *Sleepwalker* strong-armed robbery, and in such a way that be in obvious open defiance of the Consilium.


Menos Tarcun has a special hatred for this *Sleepwalker* gang, and with Bell's magic should try to handle the situation himself. If he uses any powerful magic to kill or punish the *Sleepwalkers*, he will fall, and the criminals have orders to kill him.

Hot on the heels of the robbery, manifestations will occur in South Portland, and *Banishers* will attack a concert that Penelope Brash is headlining. The Consilium will be stretched thin, with only one Sentinel to help them (Hasad conveniently took a holiday the week before the incidents begin, claiming family problems back home). The *Banishers* know the weakness of each of the members, and the Manifestations have been chosen specifically to challenge the different Councilors. The lethality rate for the Consilium is expected to be high.

Finally, Hasad is the ace in the hole, and has plans to assassinate any Consilium member who manages to escape with his life. Within a two-day window, everyone but Shimura will be dead.

In the ensuing aftermath, the plan is for Shimura to take control of the city. With many years still left before another round of Consilium testing begins, Shimura takes the unprecedented tactic of elevating mages to the Council on his own authority—and not surprisingly, chooses Bell, Nox, Stoller and Midasen. The previous Consilium will have just suffered embarrassing failure (havoc by *Banishers*, trouble with random Manifestations, even an inability to control and dominate fucking *Sleepwalkers*), and the mage community will be only too happy to relinquish control to *Shadowson*.

With control over the Mayor, containment and clean-up will be an easy feat, and so without mass



panic in the streets, the coup will render Shadowsong in charge of Portland. They will let a year or so pass before announcing that the new method for selecting Consilium members will be by vote of the Consilium, ensuring them total power until their deaths or someone emerges powerful enough to oppose them.

Those Involved

Without a doubt, the alliance of Shadowsong has begun to crumble. Tired of waiting for true power, Nox wants little more than the Consilium seat and to be District Attorney, just a step away for the Mayor's office—but recently he has become resentful of Shimura's absolute control over the Cabal. Shimura is the mastermind behind the plot, and in essence is playing everybody, with the exception perhaps of Stoller. Without a doubt will work to replace the other Shadowsong members once he has control of the city, and perhaps the others sense it. Bell and Midasen have both begun to have doubts that their plan will succeed, and it is up to Stoller to browbeat them to continue. Stoller is friends with Shimura from the Japanese man's first month in the States, and an agent of chaos in his own right. Wants to be on the Consilium so no one can oppose his future dark plans involving the Underworld and the Abyss.

Shadowsong is a perfect example of why Cabals so often fall apart in this World of Darkness. Working against the city and each other has made for an unstable alliance that could be torn apart by any small ripples.

One big ripple might just be the other major player in these events. Allandro Chimel is truly friends with the mayor, and not just using him like Shadowsong. In recent months he has begun to be suspicious of the five, who he sees going to and from the Mayor often. Chimel has begun to keep tabs on all of them, and has hidden files on all five, including his suspicions about their plot, which while aren't completely accurate would definitely steer someone on the right path to finding out. In all likelihood the Shadowsong coup would begin with Chimel's death by Hasad's hand.

Discovery

Chimel's death is an obvious place to begin the story, and tracking his notes and activities could lead to many discoveries about Shadowsong's plans.

However learning of a Cabal of Banishers in Oregon, or that a book called *Shadowsong* has come to Portland, are also interesting ways to learn of a plot. If a character has contacts in the justice system, he could learn that the Sleepwalker gang was released; anyone with a clever way of gaining access to Consilium records might discover that their imbued items have all disappeared.

Actions

There are all sorts of ways this plan could go wrong. Bell and Midasen's hesitations can be exploited, and Banishers are such a volatile group anything could send that alliance into disarray. If cast wrong, the Manifestations could attack members of Shadowsong, and there's no telling the Sleepwalker criminals won't be caught after killing Tarcun and possibly confessing. And of course, Hasad's skill as an assassin might not be enough to take down all four Consilium members, if they manage to survive, and if one does the entire game is over. This plan must be executed within 48 hours, all cogs must work smoothly, and all Consilium members must die.

Of course, this is not to say that if your characters become involved they have to oppose it. In fact, approaching Shadowsong with what they've learned and offering to help might ensure victory, and the rewards would be incredibly sweet—perhaps not Consilium seats, but other official positions would be instantly available, and the collective favors of five Consilium members would set one up for life. And of course, a game in which your players join the coup and it still fails could be a very interesting game indeed.

Similarly, there's nothing to say that opposing Shadowsong will be a sure bet, and if that Cabal succeeds despite your characters' best efforts, the repercussions of that would be an interesting exploration as well.

If Shadowsong is stopped, all but Shimura's lives are immediately forfeit. Shimura, however, might be able to survive the backlash, being a political genius and expert liar. If Shadowsong is halted, but Shimura survives, your players have made an enemy for life.

The Labyrinth

There is so little known about this rumored Master, and that mystery only adds to her power.

To say she is feared is an understatement: her moods are wild and unpredictable, she is known to be petty, and her grudges last a lifetime. Her goals are completely inscrutable, and by all accounts she doesn't seem to have clear self-serving motives. Often times her actions appear random, even flighty, and though she may be an Acanthus by now people thought they would at least begin to be figuring her out.

She is the longest standing Consilium member in Portland, now over twenty years, and she hasn't seemed to age a day. What is known about her is this: sometime over thirty years ago she Awoke, and lived for a time in her home state of Maryland. And then suddenly, with no warning, she suddenly pulled up stakes and showed up in Portland. Upon her arrival she quickly made a reputation for herself both Dueling and committing acts of public service. Word quickly spread of her power and ability. She must be a Master! And her actions seemed to confirm this. No one has ever seen her casting Making or Unmaking spells with an open grimoire or artifact in hand, and now she has been around for so long no one thinks to question her.

About a year after her arrival in Portland, Anwen Llewellyn appeared in the city as well, and the two were seen everywhere together. It was assumed that they were lovers, ostensibly confirmed when Willow's first act as Consilium was to make her Herald. Anwen is seen as pursuing her own agenda, and no one is sure if those plans fall in line with Willow's. Anwen can usually be seen with Willow

whenever she is in public, and while the former isn't literally hanging off the other's arm, they have an air of closeness about them that furthers the suspicion than Anwen is her pet.

In reality, the opposite is true. Anwen Llewellyn is not what she seems, and Willow Osgood is a fraud.

The Truth

Llewellyn's real name is Charisma Harris, and she is a Master from New England. She was exiled from the region decades ago for a number of reasons: she stole magical artifacts and grimoires from mages, sometimes forcibly; she destroyed a temple in south-eastern Canada that was just being excavated; and she tried to have a Consilium member killed. She barely escaped with her own life, and is thought by most to have died back then. Really, she masked her magic and laid low for a time, moving around the country in search of a place to continue her selfish ways.

She came across Portland during a relatively dead period in the city's history, but was fascinated by what had already happened there. She ate up everything she could find about the Rose City's past, and stole even more. For over a year she investigated the subterranean world on her own, and finally made a remarkable discovery—in western Portland, on the other side of Washington Park, there is a false stump that can be opened with the proper ritual. The stump reveals a staircase which heads down into a deep tunnel, and at the end

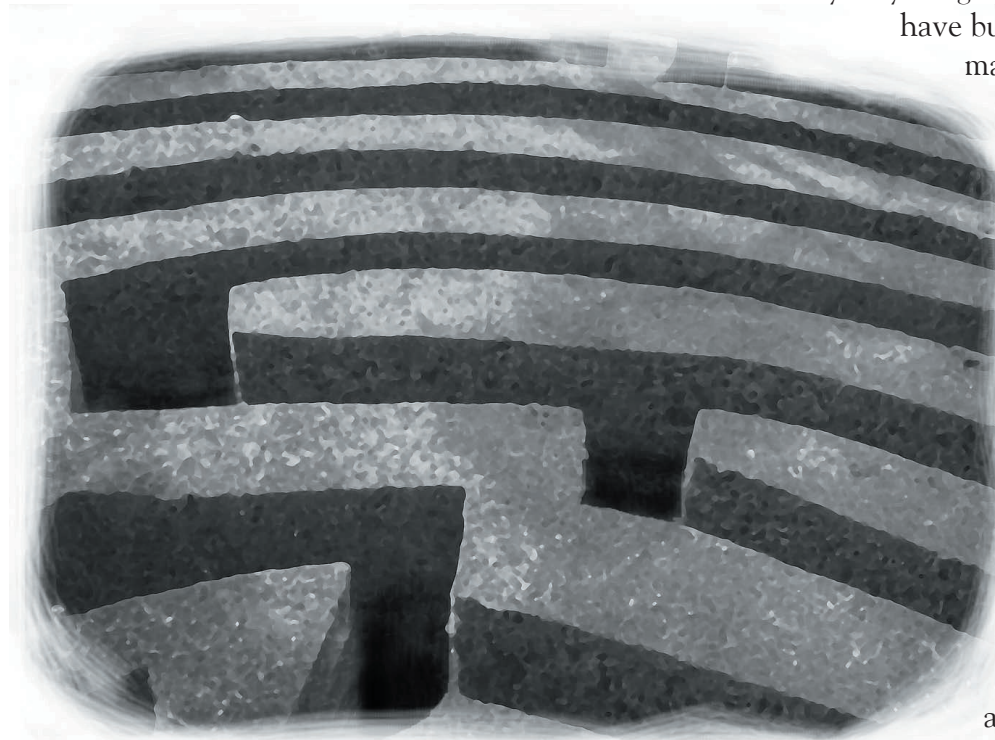
of the tunnel is a massive structure like the kind of thing only read about in legend; the Leandros Labyrinth (see below). It was the discovery she had been yearning to make her entire life, and once she found it dug her claws in deep.

She snuck back to the east coast long enough to ensnare a newly Awakened Acanthus named Willow Osgood, and seduced her with lust and power alike. For a year she remained in hiding as she



helped Willow become a Consilium member, and then finally emerged under her assumed identity. She puts much of her public effort into appearing underpowered and subservient to Willow.

Willow appears to be a Master only through careful planning and methodic follow through. Llewellyn's life of crime has given her several



arkhos grimoires and artifacts, and in combination with her own time-released magic can make Willow appear to be insanely powerful. Although Osgood doesn't carry around the objects all the time, she will pull them out according to plan (it takes time to prepare, but eventually all items are made invisible, so that only Willow can see them). The rouse has worked for years, and with a grimoire gifting that reduces the aging process, the two plan to stay in power for a very long time indeed.

Willow herself was a flighty, spoiled girl from Maryland that never knew any hardship, and in many ways still hasn't. Her own magical power grows at a very slow rate, because all the work is done for her. As long as Llewellyn is around to protect her, she'll want for nothing. This has caused her to become the arrogant, almost bratty Consilium member known today. Most attribute this attitude to someone in power acting however they want, but the truth is Willow is a scared girl, far out of her depths and pretending to know how to swim.

The Leandros Labyrinth

Like the Chamber of Amber (and perhaps other ruins yet to be discovered), it is still unclear what lead to the Leandros Labyrinth's existence. It is a massive, sprawling place, incredibly deep underground and so well supported that it would seem unlikely anything but modern technology could have built it. The labyrinth is a literal maze that obscures Space magic (which becomes hard to use but not impossible; all Space-based rolls suffer a -5 penalty to roll; mundane navigation requires an extended roll of Wits + Academics requiring 20 successes), and stretches for nearly a square mile. The walls are perhaps fifty feet high, gray slate-looking stone but impossibly strong. The walls of the actual maze don't reach the ceiling, so at any time one can look up and be overwhelmed by a sense of vertigo. While there are many things yet to be discovered about the labyrinth, here is

what Llewellyn has discovered so far (these things would not be difficult for players to find on their own):

- One of the dead ends in the maze is a verge. Several bull-spirits roam these halls, and when they manifest they even appear to be Minotaur. They allow other spirits to pass this way with a toll, and consider the entire maze to be their domain. It took months of battling before they finally stopped assaulting Llewellyn, who proved to be a match for them.
- There are several disturbing places throughout the maze where the walls suddenly pull back to twice the width apart, creating rectangular "rooms" with several enterances. In each, there is a beautiful marble table in the exact center, with high-backed black oak chairs with gold inlay surrounding it. On the table is a long thin runner cloth of bright crimson red, which matches the simple tapestries on the walls (which have

only a single gold marking on every one, just a series of golden circles with an arrow running through them). Also on the table is a full place setting, one for every chair. On each plate sit the bones of a bird, as if they had sat there until their flesh decayed. Sometimes a chair is knocked over or a tapestry is torn, but besides small changes the scene always seems the same. There are at least five of these rooms.

- The entire labyrinth is in the shape of a pentagram, with paths that take you not only to the center, but to each corner as well. In each corner is something different of interest. One has a hallway of doors that will not open for any reason, and nothing appears to be behind them. In another there is a statue of a beautiful woman with four arms which seems to be a strong Loci of dark lust and aggressive need. Llewellyn has yet to find the other corners, for she has no Space magic to speak of, and the maze itself is hard.
- Lastly, and the reason why Anwen guards this place so jealously, is that in the center of the maze there is another pentagram, this time leaving an open space with a pool in the center. This pool is actually an incredibly potent Hallow, releasing ten Mana a day. But that Mana is infused with the Abyss. Whatever good might have once been inside Anwen has been depleted by decades of feasting from this Hallow; all that is left now is the cold, hubris-laden witch.

Discovery

Llewellyn has been so careful in her plans that so far no one suspects a thing. In fact, at first, characters will have no idea of Llewellyn or the labyrinth, and will think they are merely investigating Willow by herself.

The first crack can be seen when Willow's attitude gets her into trouble, either with another Consilium member or other powerful mage. That person will demand a Duel Arcane right then and there; Willow will staunchly refuse, and it's a move that will seem odd to the community at large. But the very next day, Willow will take up the challenging, practically forcing her opponent to agree

if she has to. Doing this Duel Willow will clearly outstrip him in power, but any suspicious player might be able to gleam that her clear victory came from a place of fraud.

From that point on, players will have to wait until Willow is in a position to Duel Arcane again, or at least to cast powerful magic in public. It is hard to tell exactly how a mage is creating a spell, but if your characters are crafty and resourceful (or if they roll well), they may be able to determine that Willow isn't the mage she claims to be.

This storyline might end here. Armed with this knowledge, characters could easily blackmail Willow, as it won't be readily obvious someone else is helping her (it will appear as though she uses books and artifacts on her own). Willow holds a grudge, but knows there is little to be done about the situation, and so will acquiesce to most demands players might make. However, if they are playing carefully, they will continue to investigate this mystery.

Enough research and investigation could reveal Llewellyn behind the plot. Again, the story could end here—the characters could blackmail the real Master and benefit the better for it, although having someone that powerful as an enemy is like holding a tiger by the tail. So, too, could they simply expose either one of them to the community at large, and their power would crumble. Willow will protect Anwen to her death as long as the Master remains undiscovered, but if both of them are exposed she might crumple under the pressure and in her immaturity admit everything to get out of trouble.

Llewellyn, of course, can also lead the players back to the labyrinth. It is also possible that the characters could find the labyrinth on their own, with similar research as what she had done so many years ago, and this would allow characters to make all of these discoveries in reverse order. Regardless, the Leandros Labyrinth threatened will truly reveal Anwen's true colors. Even Willow does not know of the existence of the place, so jealously does she guard the secret. She has become addicted to the Mana that she draws from the place, and like a magical heroin junkie will become extremely violent if her fix is taken away. With her foggy mind and panic from losing her precious possession, Llewellyn might go full-tilt mad, tearing down the walls of labyrinth with her (and the players) still inside. By pumping the dark Hallow full of Prime

energy she would be able to start a chain reaction that would bring the whole place down. Of course, is this is discovered but then prevented, it brings up all manner of question as to the intent of the labyrinth, and its true potential.

Little Red Ridden Hood

There have always been stories of little girls getting lost in some dark place, and struggling to learn the rules to survive and escape—*Alice in Wonderland*, *The Wizard of Oz*, even *Little Red Riding Hood*. But those are just stories. Real little girls do not venture into the evil forest or the land of dreams; and if they do, they don't return unscathed. A jaunt into the Shadow Realm certainly ends in death, not strange adventure.

Teagan Hood's Awakening is an odd one, that swept her up from this reality into the Primal Wild, but then strangely deposited her in the exact same spot, only in the Shadow Realm. It is unclear why this happened—perhaps she was a potential prodigy and even then was casting high-level magics, or perhaps a great spirit saw an opportunity and did what he could. Whatever the truth, there she was, freshly Awakened, still a young girl, and in the Shadow Realm.

It is too unsightly to speak on what was done to her there; whatever her potential power level, she was helpless without training and knowledge. When she returned, she seemed the same person she always was, and her history has proceeded since as if she is a young and vibrant Thyrsus.

The Truth

Teagan Hood is not Teagan Hood. Her body is the same one she was born with, but her mind is gone—or joined with the body's new host, the distinction is almost irrelevant. A great lord spirit saw an opportunity and took it, possessing Teagan either while she was in the process of Awakening or soon thereafter. The melding was more complete than such invasions usually are, perhaps because of Hood's power in Spirit. Whatever the cause, the spirit itself completely overrode Teagan Hood's body, and now exists in the material realm easily. Teagan

lives at a Hallow, and uses the Mana it provides to sustain herself. Most Ridden eventually destroy their host or need so much Essence to survive that they are forced to retreat into the Shadow Realm, but not so with Teagan. Presumably she is capable of remaining in this state of existence on a permanent basis.

Teagan can always see into Twilight, and with relative effortlessness can peer into Shadow. The spirit part of her, combined with the innate Spirit magic she possesses, somehow melded into a single potent equation—essentially she is a Master of the Arcana, although she keeps this knowledge a closely guarded secret.

Motives

The spirit that has melded with Teagan was a power spirit before the change, and one that was always intensely aware of the nature of things. The spirit's goals had always been to cross into the material realm in a permanent sense—but that was not the only ambition. Teagan wishes to create a permanent, mind-bogglingly huge Verge in Portland that will essentially begin the process of joining the material and spiritual planes of existence. Even if she were to succeed, such a thing isn't actually likely to happen—but the attempt will unleash many waiting wrathful spirits into this world, and cause much damage, perhaps obliterating Portland altogether and changing the Sleeper landscape forever.

Teagan has been searching for a grimoire called *The Seal of Tannan*, which along with several arkhos

rotes includes the ability to weaken the gauntlet over a massive area—with enough successes on a ritualized cast, conceivably the Verge could grow to be the size of a major city. The ritual requires many other components, but the grimoire is the only one she has yet to obtain.

Discovery

There are several entry points to this story. One is through the grimoire, and word that someone in Portland is seeking it. *The Seal of*



Tannan's properties aren't fully known (it has been Teagan's own research combined with her extraordinary knowledge of Shadow), but is considered to be a dangerous book even if no one knows of the capability of a mega Verge. The grimoire itself has moved around over the years, and until recently was in the hands of a very powerful Mastigos in India, who locked the book away to prevent what he claimed would be great evil. But less than a year ago he died, and the book has disappeared. Teagan is now searching for it with all of her efforts, so an investigation into the grimoire would lead to her.

Dancing Horse, the leader of the First Cabal and a powerful Thyrsus in his own right (although not a Master) has had a sense of things going wrong in Portland for quite some time. In fact, his decision to withdraw from public life and leave the running of the Cabal to Lakopat was in part due to the great disturbance he felt in the spiritual resonance of reality. He has been meditating and traveling the spirit realm, trying to ascertain the truth of what is going on. While Dancing Horse doesn't have full knowledge of the events, but could be a valuable resource for players in this story, and could even introduce this plot himself.

Finally, the part of Teagan that is still very much the power spirit leaves a definitive trail, if one knows where to look. A sexual appetite and a penchant for murder have arisen over recent years, almost uncontrollable urges akin to that of a serial killer. Teagan will periodically (averaging once every six months) suddenly lose control of her carefully maintained poise—for she is frightened of being discovered when her plans are so nearing fruition. But when the mood takes her, she will become a wildly passionate woman, and will seduce a man and sleep with him usually in his own home. She will be energetic and almost aggressive in her lovemaking, but apart from that still acts relatively normal, with her usual personality—until she viciously murders the poor soul who was doomed to sleep with her. And the murder isn't casual or quick—the room is left a blood-soaked mess, the man usually in several pieces, and Teagan on the floor panting, rolling around in ecstasy and finally attaining some cross between a physical and spiritual orgasm. Once the deed is done her composure returns, but in that moment she cannot help but indulge in the *power* of it. Occasionally she will do other acts that seem radical to her nature, that in-

volve exploring the nature of power. These events are like breadcrumbs that despite her care in erasing her tracks will eventually lead back to her.

The Escapee

In Corvallis, Oregon, there has been built a prison that can hold any Awakened. Power lacrimo line the property and render the entire location magically inert: no amount of Mana or will can cause reality to shift there. Not even Spirits and ghosts can enter the area. The prison is called Saint Roth's Psychiatric Ward, and situated away from the rest of civilization. Locals call it the nut house and simply avoid it, with the exception of young boys who occasionally sneak onto the grounds to smoke and egg each other on to knock on the door.

In most circumstances, the best way to deal with an evil mage is to kill him. But not all wayward Awakened are Banishers or Abyssal mages or Mad. Some have simply slipped into derangement or grown too dark for their own good. Sometimes, mages who have not yet warranted their own death are spared the fate of their actions by being placed at Saint Roth's. They are kept their under lock and key, without the aid of magic, and medication isn't optional—but they are alive, kept comfortable. In fact, if one were to enter the hospital one wouldn't think it was an insane asylum but a state-of-the-art millionaire's retirement home. Mages here want for nothing—except, of course, magic. For a time they struggle and act very much the part of a committed inmate, but eventually their spirits break, and they finally accept a life of quiet reflection, learning and entertainment, in effect mere Sleepers again.

Not all can forget so quickly, of course, but in all the years of attempts, there has only ever been one escape. Tony T. Torison, a mid-westerner Mastigos, broke out of Saint Roth's a decade ago, and promptly vanished. No one looked for him because he didn't return to Portland or any of the other cities that utilize Saint Roth's (Seattle, Vancouver, San Francisco, Boise). Now so much time has passed few think on what was at the time a major scandal.

Everything changed a month ago, however, when a rumor began that Tony T. Torison hadn't disappeared after all; that he was living right here in Portland, under an assumed identity. Mage society was atwitter at this possibility, and some even

began to look for him, but so far to no avail.

And then, without warning, Penelope Brash shocks the city. At a small venue with no Sleepers allowed, Brash finished a set by declaring in smoky sing-song verse, “*Tripple T is in the city, yes is he, yes is he. Came to be among his family, it was told to me, it was told to me.*”

Brash claims to have word that Torison is indeed in the city, but refuses to provide any proof, or where she heard such a claim. She says that it’s all she can say, that she’s done her part and can say no more, but it is *imperative* that somebody find the escapee quick. There is one thing more thing she can say for certain, however: Torison isn’t just hiding in Sleeper society, but posing as a mage, someone everyone knows. And not just any mage. Someone on the Consilium.

The city exploded. People began to clamor for a full inquiry, and everyone looks at the Consilium with even more mistrust than before. If the player group is not playing the major investigation Cabal, one will be formed to discover the truth behind all this, spurred on not by official channels but by demand of the Awakened population.

Consilium Reaction

The Consilium cannot deny a strong will of the entire city, and are already losing power and standing; so in the end, they have no choice but to allow an inquiry into the collective members. However, each initially reacts very differently, and when suddenly everything matters, their attitudes would be carefully scrutinized.

Menos Tarcun would be most likely to appear guilty, because he would do everything he could to prevent any investigation into the matter. His Vice is Pride, and he rankles at the idea of being scrutinized—he is, after all, a Consilium member, and above such reproach. His righteous indignation is made very public, and he fuses “to be McCarthy’s first appeaser.” Eventually he will acquiesce with the other Consilium members agree to the investigation.

Andron Baldaer is an envious and bitter man, and relishes the opportunity

the see one of his most powerful rivals fall to the mob. Cooperative to the point of being an instigator, Baldaer will point a ready finger at anyone under suspicion, most especially Tarcun. During the investigation, the two go head-to-head as never before, using their opposing political stances over the issue fuel an intense debate that threatens to break out into violence. Baldaer will eventually be screaming for an Arcane Duel so he can just *prove* it was Tarcun.

Desmond Doyle refuses to support or oppose such action. He agrees to make himself fully available for questioning, and opens his home for inspection, but apart from that demands to be left out of it. The most reserved and removed from the event, Doyle’s actions make him seem a potential guilty party.

Willow Osgood at first joins Menos Tarcun in attempting to shut it down, going so far as to actually prohibit any such action. Whoever it is, she claims, isn’t causing trouble; even if it is true, they are most likely reformed, for it would take a person of great sanity to deceive so many. In reality, Willow has her own secrets and is terrified of an investigation, but relents before Tarcun once Baldaer becomes a pitbull.

Dashiro Shimura immediately offers any resources he can bring to bear on the inquiry. Seems incredibly enthusiastic about the ordeal, and acts as a shield against any who try to interfere with the investigators. Directly opposes both Osgood and Tarcun during their attempts to waylay the process, but publicly forgives each as soon as they relent. Seems to have no suspicions of who the perpetrator might be, but is almost cheerful about finding out the truth.

The Truth

Few Awakened truly check someone’s references. If a man arrives by plane from Tokyo claiming to be a businessman of good repute, who would bother to truly make sure it’s true? Sure, the man has no family, but his paperwork is letter-perfect, and his history stretches back in detail all the way to his childhood. Who could possibly suspect that the Japanese potential Yakuza boss is really a skinny white boy from Nebraska?

Torison escaped Saint Routh’s and fled the



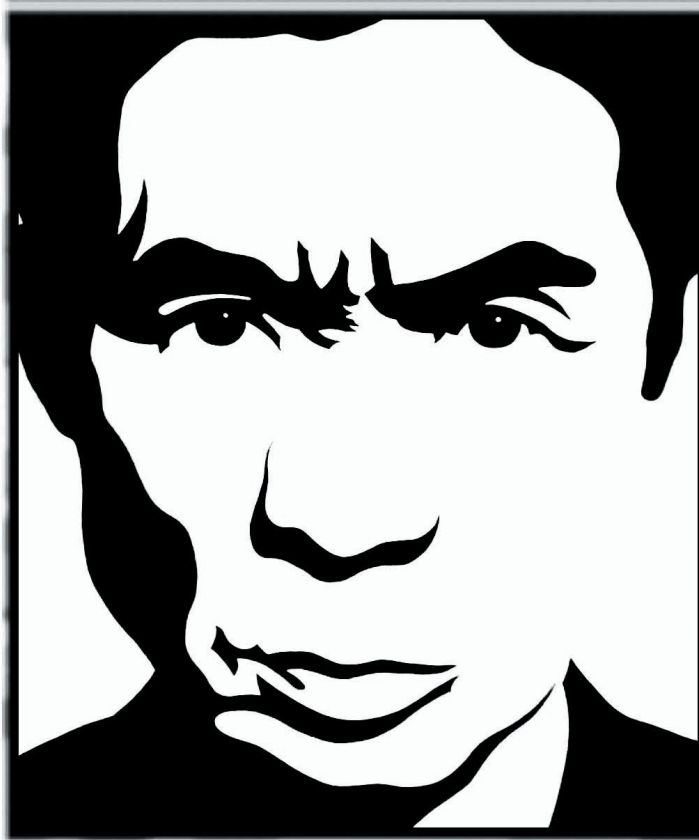
country before anyone realized he was gone. He ended up in Japan, where he spent time learning the language and culture as he laid low. He wasn't there long, though, before he came across a miraculous item: the *Flowing Form* grimoire, which among other things allowed him to permanently alter his physical appearance. He found a man named Daishiro Shimura, a wealthy businessman with no family or ties besides his work. Torison kidnapped the man, spent days scouring his brain for every scrap of knowledge and memory that was to be had, and finally killed him. Once he used the book's magic to change his appearance, Torison used his abilities in Mind to completely become Shimura. He grabbed all of his resources and moved back to Portland, where he began his new life as Shimura the mage.

What happened to Shimura when he was still Triple T is frightening to say the least. Driven mad by power and the loss of his one great love, Tony slipped ever downward into the nightmare that plague the Mastigos. Something about him, however, allowed for a little magic to slip into Saint Roth's—for whatever reason, a small portion over his influence of Mind remained, and without realizing it he began to soak up the thoughts of those around him. Dozens of other insane Awakened plagued his brain, and for a time he was tortured by the thoughts. But soon, with so much knowledge of sanity, something happened. He didn't become *sane* again, per se, but as in Chaos Theory there is a logic to the mind's madness, and suddenly Tony was able to see the structure inherent in disorder. He immediately became a worshiper of chaos, and is now so insane that the loop has nowhere to go but back to rationally.

He returned to Portland and immediately Du-
eled the one man who could recognize him. The man was a Consilium member, and once dead the

vacuum of power needed to be filled. Shimura was a more powerful wizard than Torison ever was, and won the seat easily.

As Shimura, what he wants most of all is just to keep things chaotic. He purposefully keeps rivalries going, especially among Consilium members. Often times his actions will appear benign, and are sometimes quite helpful—but it will always result in more disorder. His visible actions are rarely serving his private agendas, which include much more than just the Shadowsong conspiracy. His long term goals are for complete anarchy, but in honest moments to himself Shimura admits he has no actual *plan* for getting their. Baby steps, baby steps.




The two main reasons Shimura seems so eager to allow an investigation that might expose him is threefold. First, it weakens the Consilium and sets them against each other, furthering general disorder and other goals. Secondly, he is confident that he is so skilled and knowledgeable and talented and superior that no one will ever catch him. But perhaps most importantly, Shimura is *proud* of what he is doing, and a part of him relishes the community finding out. He images the deep respect and awe that will be

in their astonished faces as they realize who the true culprit is.

Others Involved

There are five people, not including Brash, who know of Shimura's secret. One is Theo Stoller, who is an agent of chaos in his own right—the two mages actually have one of the closest friendships in the city. Stoller will never betray Shimura and will actively help however he can, and a necromancer is a dangerous enemy.

Lillian Midasen discovered the truth while digging into an unrelated story. Midasen blackmailed



Shimura, and as a result was brought on board the Shadowsong Cabal. Lillian has never wholly believed in Shadowsong and is only using it to gain power for herself; if pushed, she is likely to turn on Shimura, but has covered her tracks so well it will be difficult to realize she knows anything.

Isabella Colantoni also knows, because of a Sleepwalker agent of Shimura's that she snaked into counseling. Isabella is a snake, but she has not yet decided on how to use this information. She is also terrified to come forward both before and after the revelation by Penelope Brash; not only is she rightly fearful in Shimura's ability to snuff her out, but is now scared that coming forward only after an investigation would implement her as a conspirator. She has no idea Shimura already knows that she knows, and is watching her closely.

Kioko Kuriyama is Shimura's lover, as strange a match as they make despite both being Japanese (in reality, Torison had always been infatuated with the women as well as the culture, and was terribly excited to have an asian mistress). But Kioko has never been in love, only using Shimura to get ahead. She discovered the truth behind him and for a time was almost like a deer in headlights; months passed before the realization of what she had found truly set in. Scared of coming forward, Kioko turned to the closest thing she had to a trusted friend. She told Penelope everything but Shimura's identity, and made the singer swear never to reveal who told her.

And perhaps most strangely, the Emperor of Waterfront Park knows. And he knows for a simple and inscrutable truth that can only be learned by his mouth: that he is a fellow inmate of Saint Roth's as well. His escape was so flawless he managed to erase any knowledge that he was *ever* there, and he has been hiding in Waterfront Park ever since. The Emperor is truly insane, but does his best to keep it in check, and is rarely violent. He also has a heart of gold, and is aching to tell someone the truth about Shimura—but he knows of his reputation, and doubts anyone would listen if he just sprang on them in the park, spittle flying

from his mouth as he raved about a white Japanese businessman escapee who worships chaos. A valuable asset, but likely to go untapped.

Possible Events

The outcome of this storyline is unclear, and the way to the truth and fall of Shimura (if that is to happen at all) is a mystery, but below are some potential story points that could occur.

- Shimura will likely discover that Kioko betrayed him, and when he does will engineer her murder. This is one of the threads most likely to lead back to him.
- Penelope will not willingly give up the information about Kioko, but is susceptible to Mind magics and can be forced to disclose her source.
- Of course, Shimura might attempt to end Brash's life before such a thing could happen. When Penelope is threatened, Ricky Revelation can be convinced to join the fight, for despite their sordid past he would die for her.
- Investigating any members other members of the Council will create additional storylines, and possibly bleed into "The Truth of Willow Osgood" storyline above.
- Research into Shimura could lead players to Lillian by way of news stories that have been covered up to protect Shimura's business interests, or by revealing that Shimura and Lillian are in close contact with each other.
- If someone researches Shimura's origination, it could be learned that one of his Sleepwalkers has been seeing Colantoni.

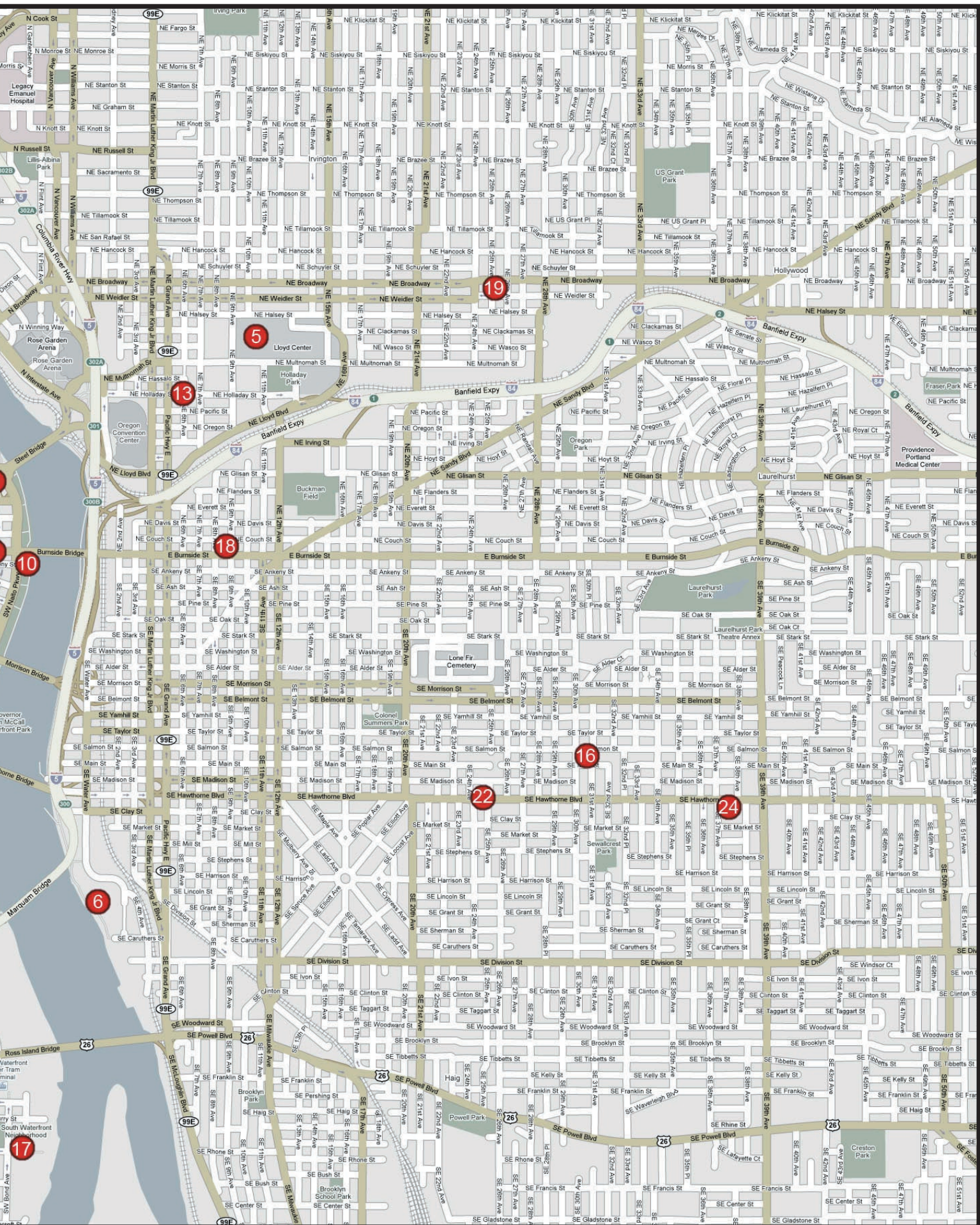
But in the end, it is Shimura himself that will likely be his downfall. At a time when two Consilium members opposed investigation and one abstained, his vote would have killed any chance of discovery. But the twisted combination of hubris and lust for fame keeps him playing the game. He enjoys as it grows more deadly, and in his madness as he gets closer and closer to defeat becomes ever surer of victory.

To Columbia River ↑

STUMPTOWN

City Core







The End



STUMP TOWN

Chronicles

Forthcoming...

- More of Portland, including the landscape of the city's Shadow
- Details of Oregon, Southern Washington and Northern California (landscape, locations, history)
- Information on the Awakened community for that region
- Cast of characters throughout the area, including centralized mage populations, Cabals, isolated and withdrawn wizards and nomadic magicians
- Interaction with werewolves and hunters
- Additional storylines, system changes, new merits and more



...2009

Thanks for Reading

