

Reverberations

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

A Nineties rave drug called Reverb is back on the streets, better and stronger than ever. Now, its users and dealers have started vanishing. The Agents must identify and stop the source of the unnatural drug.

This scenario is meant to introduce new players and new Agents to Delta Green. It focuses on concepts that may be familiar to old hands: the Tcho-Tchos, the Liao drug, and the diluted version of Liao called Reverb. It takes place nominally in Chicago but could be played in another big city.

Rumors

The DEA is investigating a network of otherwise unrelated gangs engaged in smuggling and drugs. DEA auditors reconstructed some of the network's financial books out of interviews and uncovered financial records. The audit found a disturbing pattern of mid-level "employees"—dealers—vanishing without a trace. A common factor seems to be involvement with a new hallucinogen called Reverb, a drug that does not seem to be part of the network's activities. Are these dealers all in hiding, or is the organization cleaning house?

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Delta Green

The Program's interest was triggered by mentions of the drug Reverb, in watch lists from the days before there was a Program. In the 1990s, Reverb was connected with Chicago Tcho-Tcho street gangs that were disrupted during mafia crackdowns in the 2000s. The drug doesn't just get people high. It exposes them to unnatural forces. The Agents are to confirm whether this new Reverb has unnatural effects, find the source of the drug, and cut off the supply. The Program also sends a disturbing warning: *The Tcho-Tchos are a corrupted people. Do not trust them.*

Assets

The Agents have access to non-Delta Green characters of the Handler's choosing. These could be player characters not yet recruited into the Program. Examples include:

- » A DEA or DOJ accountant who stumbled across the apparent trouble. The Agents must keep her close for help with research, and to keep the details from spreading.
- » An undercover DEA agent in a gang that's trying to muscle into the Reverb market and has insider expertise of the local underworld. The Agents must make contact without blowing his cover.
- » An FBI agent officially running the Agents' task force but who needs to be kept out of the loop because she's not in the Program.

About the Tcho-Tchos

Well-educated Agents may know something about the Tcho-Tchos. Add together an Agent's **Anthropology** and **History** skills to determine how much the Agent knows or can quickly find out. The rest can be learned with research or by interviewing experts. That takes a day for each new level of information. See **WHAT EXPERTS KNOW** on page 3.

The truth is much more dangerous. The Tcho-Tchos are not human and never were. They are an utterly unnatural, predatory species. Like the Deep Ones of Innsmouth, the ghouls of the underworld, and the spawn of Yog-Sothoth, they take human shapes in order to consume

human victims. They foster confusion. They adapt and pretend with keen intelligence. And they feed.

About Reverb

The Agents can investigate Reverb's effects by talking to users, analyzing the drug itself, and interviewing Tcho-Tchos familiar with it.

Users

The Agents can get users to talk about taking Reverb. They can easily find a couple at Studio Overground, a popular but shady nightclub. Agents who are clearly police have a harder time than civilians. Reverb isn't illegal—it's too rare to have caught political attention—but nobody wants trouble.

One user—Ella Smith, 30-year-old waitress, occasional bookkeeping student, and party girl—says it gets you high, but it's more than that. It makes time stretch, and feels like you repeat the same instant again and again. It makes dancing and especially sex better than they've ever been. It feels like the high can never end.

Damien Lucas—a 22-year-old high-school dropout who make ends meet with odd jobs and occasional dope sales—has more to tell, but he doesn't say it out loud. Not at first. He gets nervous and fearful. Getting him to open up requires careful handling: empathetic but not condescending or pitying. If in doubt, have an Agent roll for **Psychotherapy** at +20%, **Persuade**, or **Charisma** at -20%. Lucas reports time not just stretched but missing entirely. Memories of days that happened entirely differently than anyone else recalls. Visions of weird places and people. He seems to drift into a distressing reverie as he speaks. **SAN** loss: 0/1. An especially sensitive Agent (one with a mix of low **SAN** and high **INT**, **POW**, and/or skills like **Art**, **HUMINT**, and **Psychotherapy**) may suffer the "edges" of a flashback along with him. **SAN** loss: 0/1D4.

Missing Persons

Cross-referencing missing person reports (typically filed a few days after the disappearance) with a history of experimental drug use in areas frequented by Reverb dealers finds a clear correlation.

Interviews with missing users' friends can confirm Reverb use if the interviewer succeeds with **Persuade**, or has a convincing approach and **Charisma**.

If the Agents investigate more than one missing user, they learn that the user vanished from a room that was unaccountably wrecked: furniture and walls and floor damaged like someone took a sledgehammer to them. There was no hammer. **Forensics** finds no traces of tool use—no paint, wood splinters, or metal shards, and the damage does not match the shape of any tool. There was no blood or other sign of harm.

Such a weird disappearance is distressing and heart-breaking to family and close friends. Play that up to drive home the stakes of the Agents' actions.

Analysis

Cops and DEA have no samples of Reverb to study—it's not on any narcotics registries; there are no laws against it to enforce—but the Agents could acquire doses on the street and analyze it in a lab with an appropriate **Science** skill

or **Pharmacy**. Each capsule is mostly sugar, with a small amount of MDMA—which certainly is restricted—and a miniscule, nearly trace, amount of something else. The “something else” seems to be the primary hallucinogen. It's a naturally-occurring alkaloid, probably derived from a plant. A mild psychotrope and narcotic, it affects the hypothalamus and central nervous system. But there's nothing to indicate the profound hallucinogenic effects that users report. Even a deep specialty like **Science (Neurology)** cannot discern what signals it communicates within the brain, or how. Examining it closely enough to reach that weird limitation of science costs 0/1 **SAN**.

Neurological examination of the brains of three or more frequent users—using **Medicine**—reveals that this mysterious active ingredient accumulates in the brain. It does not dissolve.

The DEA's files purport to include chemical examinations of Reverb from the Nineties, but those examinations went missing over the years.

>> What Experts Know

Skills	Knowledge
Anthropology and History add up to 20%–39%	Tcho-Tchos are most often found in Malaysia and mainland Southeast Asia. Vietnamese Tcho-Tchos were U.S. allies in the Vietnam War, and many emigrated to the U.S. after suffering terribly as a consequence. They are also known as the Tochoa, Yueh-Chi, Chauchuas, and Tachoans.
Anthropology and History add up to 40%–59%	Tcho-Tchos have been subject to deep prejudice and persecution among other Southeast Asian emigré communities, thanks in part to an odd religion that involves ritual sacrifice and self-mutilation. A well-funded advocacy group, the Chauchua-American Advocacy Alliance, struggles to protect Tcho-Tchos' reputation and improve their social, political, and economic standing. (See AMITY AND NORMS IN THE CHAUCHUA DIASPORA on page 4 and CULTURE WATCH: CHICAGO NEWS AT NINE on page 5.)
Anthropology and History add up to 60%–79%	Tcho-Tcho names follow Malay, Vietnamese, Cambodian, or Chinese linguistic traditions. The Tcho-Tcho language is very little known outside insular communities.
Anthropology and History add up to 80%–99%	French missionaries in Indonesia described the Tcho-Tchos as a withdrawn tribespeople who at first seemed friendly, but who showed a propensity for sudden ambush and violence. To the Chinese, they were the Yueh-Chi, “those with the knife smile,” and were shunned as cannibals.
Anthropology and History add up to 100%+	To the Greeks, the Tcho-Tchos were the Tochoa, and they swept in and violently ruled much of what is today Afghanistan before being pushed back to the Asian wilds in the third century BCE by the Sassanid Persians. No one truly knows where the “Tcho-Tcho” people hail from or what the phrase “Tcho-Tcho” means.
Anthropology and History add up to 100%+ and the Agent has Occult 50%+	One disreputable text says the Tcho-Tchos are from Leng, a fabled mountain in the depths of China. Another says they are from a hidden city called Dho-Hna, beneath the Earth. They supposedly travel between our world and those mystical realms.
Unnatural 15%+	The Tcho-Tchos are not fully human, perhaps not human at all. Ill-famed sources say they were created by the Great Old Ones and secretly serve the Great Old Ones to this day.