

You should also be aware that the combat encounters in this adventure are likely to be a little tough, especially for novice characters. War often punishes soldiers for making the slightest mistakes (and sometimes for making no mistakes at all), but if this would create distress among your players then you should consider reducing the number of enemies in some or all of the encounters. If you see players about to make a blunder, there are a number of ways for a Storyteller to avert disaster. The most blatant way would be to inform them of something the characters would know that the players might not ("Lt. Washington would remember from basic training that he can't outrun a tank"). You might also have subordinates refuse orders and explain why such actions would be suicidal, or, for a more potent example, have a greenhorn private run out and get cut to pieces attempting exactly what the player characters were about to do. Of course, characters must be free to suffer the consequences of bad decisions, so if a player persists with a disastrous strategy or continually puts himself at risk, don't feel obligated to prevent his fate. If the worst does happen, allow players to re-enter the story as new Scions who just happen to be escaped POWs picked up along the way or delivered to join the Band by a divine messenger. You may also want to allow players to have extra Followers to serve as medics or even cannon fodder or Relics that boost the Band's ability heal or protect themselves.

A CHAPTER IN YOUR CHRONICLE

As written, this story takes place in France on June 10, 1944, four days after D-Day. Now and for the next several months, the Allies will be moving out from their hard-won beachheads to push the Germans back across the countryside. The Reich's armies, along with the Aesir, are now backpedaling, but they are far from defeated. The scenes of this story will locate the characters in France, where they will fight and maneuver through northern European forests, farmlands and population centers.

At the Storyteller's option, this tale could easily be transposed to another time and place to fit with a chronicle already in progress. Below are suggestions for how to change the details to fit into alternate theaters of operation.

Eastern Europe: If set on the Russian front, the Axis has snatched an Axis Mundi connection point no less significant than the preserved corpse of Vladimir Lenin. If set between the years 1941 and 1943, Soviet Scions and their allies would need to reclaim the artifact from a location in the west of their own country but still far behind enemy lines. In 1944 or 1945, the Nazis would have had to remove the artifact at least as far as Poland, and perhaps all the way to Germany.

North Africa: Here, the cold northern climes of France would be replaced by the hot, dry, sandy landscapes of European colonies in Africa. There is less cover in the desert, which changes military strategy significantly but population centers are spread farther apart so a Band of Scions able to survive among the dunes would find it easier to evade patrols. The captured Axis Mundi connection point would be a golden Sarcophagus and a set of ritual artifacts used in the mummification process. The leader of the antagonists could be the Scion of Vidar, or it could also be the Scion of Ares, Quirinus or even of the Axis sympathizer Set. The super-soldiers would be powered-up mummies born from the blasphemous union of Nazi science and Egyptian magic.

Germany: For a conclusive World War II campaign, this story could be set in April of 1945, at the very end of the war in Europe. In this case, Jeanne d'Arc's shield is being held at Hitler's "Eagle's Nest" military palace at Berchtesgaden among the German Alps. You may want to give the players the gratification of personally defeating Hitler himself. In this case, der Führer has faked his death and fallen back to prepare his new army of invincible supermen, and only the Band of Scions can stop him.

A STORY BY ITSELF

"Liberty Road" is designed to be run as a self-contained story. To season it for your particular taste and the tastes of your players, the best option is for everyone to create new protagonist characters with patrons from the Yankee or Allied pantheons. For a faster start, the pre-generated characters Lt. Washington (*Scion Companion* pp. 232-233) and Marie du Champs (*Scion Companion* pp. 248-249) are well suited to this story. The sample characters from **Scion: Hero** can also work, although they would need alterations to their backgrounds at the very least, and to their supernatural powers and divine patrons in the more extreme cases. Aaron Tigrillo, for example, might remain largely unchanged, save that he has enlisted as an Army field surgeon. Donnie Rhodes, on the other hand, is the Scion of an Axis God, but he might be a citizen of Greece who has rebelled against his divine mother to fight for his mother country. Yukiko Kuromizu may have been disinherited by Susano-o for being corrupted by foreign ways and subsequently been adopted by Uncle Sam and agreed to fight in Europe in order to get out of the internment camp. Eric Donner might also be in rebellion against his parents, or he might have been sired by a completely different God such as John Henry or Paul Bunyan. Wherever your group looks for character inspirations, you will find that the young men and women of the nineteen-forties were not much different from people today.

BACKGROUND AND SET-UP

In this adventure, the heroes get to foil two nefarious Nazi schemes for the price of one. The Nazis (and, by proxy, the Aesir) have possession of a shield once used by Jeanne d'Arc as she rallied her country to fight for independence. Ironically, this shield now opens France to enemy attack due to its portable nature and its connection to the French Axis Mundi. As long as the Axis has it, they have easy access to the French Godrealm.

Thanks to some very deft counter-intelligence, the Nazis were taken unawares by D-Day, but they already had standing orders to keep the shield safe. Commandant Klaus Schmitt, a Scion of Vidar and military commander, had his SS division remove the shield to Brissot, a town approximately 300 miles east of the front. This is a stop-gap measure, but if the Allies ever make it that far inland, the Nazis will have plenty of time to remove it farther, possibly all the way to Berlin.

Aside from the location's defensibility, Klaus Schmitt has another reason for transporting the shield to Brissot. This town serves as Schmitt's base of operations, where he has converted a captured castle into both a prison camp and a research laboratory. In the laboratory, the head scientist, a Scion of Hephaestus by the name of Dr. Antonio Legrottaglio, is approaching the perfection of a formula which derives a special serum from the blood and other body tissues of an imprisoned frost giant. Through extensive testing, Dr. Legrottaglio has managed to transform ordinary men into Eis-Soldaten (singular:

Eis-Soldat), super-soldiers with the physical strength and toughness of giants. The persistent flaw, however, is that after a short period of operation an Eis-Soldat loses his grip on reality and degenerates into a mindless killing machine. The first batch of prisoners to undergo the process have long since degenerated, so Commandant Schmitt has ordered that they be dumped amid the Allied forces to wreak as much havoc as possible before being put down. In Schmitt's estimation, the serum is functional enough, and he plans to begin mass-producing brainwashed super-soldiers from the prison population. He needs only a few more weeks to ramp up production. With his disposable army, Schmitt plans to personally turn the war back against the Allies and one day perhaps even challenge Hitler himself for control of the Third Reich.

Schmitt has been so busy with his preparations that he has not been attending the population of his prison as closely as he might. A group of British and American prisoners, with the help of British Secret Service, have amassed an arsenal of escape equipment. They have been burrowing under the walls of the castle and even disguising themselves as guards. Although they are unaware of the Eis-Soldat process, they are ready to attempt a mass escape in the hopes of warning the allies that something is rotten in the castle of Brissot. Considering the forces arrayed against them, they are unlikely to succeed, but they may provide valuable information and support to a Band of Scions come to put a stop to Schmitt.



THE CAST

COMMANDANT KLAUS SCHMITT

Quote: *You are not heading in the direction of the prison bunks, and I see the wire cutters you are attempting to hide in your socks. Your lies are becoming quite tiresome.*

Nature: Autocrat. Above all else, the Commandant believes that superiority is founded on organization and discipline. Through his iron will he has driven himself to climb the echelons of the elite military force of the SS, and now he expects to teach everyone under his command the value of maintaining pristine order. He will swiftly and severely punish any deviation from his direction. To him, there are only two kinds of people in the world: those who march in lock-step and those who must be destroyed.

Background: Schmitt has been juggling orders from several different authorities, which has created conflict within his otherwise perfectly ordered world. He sees his duty as defeating the enemies of his homeland and it is with some difficulty that he, an accomplished war hero, refrains from striking out for the front. The last commandant of the Brissot prison camp was assassinated by the French resistance and now Schmitt, who happened to be in the area, was given orders directly from Berlin to fill in until a suitable replacement could be found. Then the orders to secure the Shield of Jeanne d'Arc came through from his commander in the SS, and his duties at the prison prevented him from personally retrieving the artifact.

The one benefit of being stuck with this somewhat ignoble duty is that Schmitt is more easily able to carry out his final set of orders from Vidar himself to safeguard Doctor Legrottaglie's experiments. Schmitt doesn't enjoy sitting out the war for even a short period of time, but he recognizes the tremendous potential of the Eis-Soldat program and is willing to see it through just for the opportunity of leading these new supersoldiers into battle. Still, he longs for action and secretly hopes for a prison-break or commando attack to thwart.

Description: Commandant Schmitt looks like he has been sculpted from steel and granite. He is a powerful, imposing man in his physical prime. His movements, like the orders he gives to his subordinates, are quick, precise and without hesitation. When not in combat, he maintains impeccable attire with razor sharp creases in his sleeves and boots polished so perfectly he could use them as a shaving mirror. When outside, he wears a black leather overcoat even when it is a little too warm for comfort, all just to strike the right image with it sweeping out behind him as he walks. His men both idolize and dread him for his rigid discipline, high expectations and ruthless capability.

Storytelling Hints: Schmitt is the primary antagonist, and as such he must come across as absolutely formidable. Build him up as not only a physical threat but also as the mastermind behind all the operations centered in Brissot. The townsfolk, POWs and captured German soldiers can contribute to his mystique by sharing rumors such as "I heard his tank got incinerated and he walked away alive"

or "he executed a hundred men, women and children in a market square because he knew one of them was a spy."

Making Schmitt out to be frightening is the easy part; the tough job is making him live up to his reputation. A full band of Scions will make short work of him in a face-to-face fight, but his real strength comes from his command. The heroes will need to earn the right to finally defeat him by first going through his tanks and his troops. When Schmitt is finally cornered, he will remain defiant to his last breath and will readily take his own life before allowing himself to fall into enemy hands.

DOCTOR LEGROTTAGLIE, UNETHICAL SCIENTIST

Quote: *This research could end all disease. Do you understand the significance of that? Any regrettable short-term military application is irrelevant to the ultimate potential of this experiment.*

Nature: Visionary. The doctor is the picture of an ethically-impaired genius. To him, all that matters is his research. He is not willfully evil and does not have any particular love for the Nazi agenda, but works for them simply because they provide the funding. He is ignorant of what life is like outside his lab and will argue that any damage caused by his creatures will ultimately prove a small price to pay for reaching his goals. He honestly believes that this research could lead to the cure for all diseases, an end to world hunger and any number of other pie-in-the-sky pseudo-scientific futurisms.

Background: Legrottaglie is the Italian-born Scion of Hephaestus and was an itinerant professor prior to the war. In another era, Legrottaglie would likely never have received a Visitation, but Loki convinced Hephaestus that every Scion would be needed for the war effort. The doctor does not know this, of course, but he still feels more loyalty to "the advancement of science" than he does to the Axis. If the Band seeks to take him captive or simply invites him to switch sides, he will readily cooperate because he knows that other countries are now in better positions to fund his continued research.

Dr. Legrottaglie was granted Dernwroth, his frost-giant test subject, by his father, who simply instructed him to see what could be learned. Since then, Legrottaglie's studies have progressed down avenues Hephaestus never expected, but which the Aesir soon decided was promising enough to keep secret. Legrottaglie is now essentially as much a prisoner of Brissot as the POWs. He leaves his lab only to eat and sleep in a small rectory connected to its rear. This arrangement suits him well, as he desires nothing more than the test subjects necessary for progressing towards his vision.

Description: The doctor is impatient with everything but his research. He does his best to ignore the daily commotion of the prison, and he wishes he could banish his need for trifling interruptions such as food and sleep. Beneath his wrinkled lab coat, his body is gaunt and shrunken, giving him an angular look augmented by a sharply hooked, aquiline nose and long, narrow fingers. His unkempt salt-and-pepper hair and perpetual dark circles under his eyes suggest he is accustomed to long hours of isolated scientific inquiry.



Storytelling Hints: Doctor Legrottaglie is not a likeable man, but men as brilliant as he do not need to be likeable. Although he is a Scion, he is really not much better equipped to defend himself than a generic mortal. If attacked, his response will be to run for the alarm or cower and beg. His presence may also raise a moral quandary: should he be punished for his experimentations or should he be given amnesty so that his science can be put to use by the Allies?

Abilities

Surgery (dice pool 6, 1 automatic success): Although Dr. Legrottaglie never took the Hippocratic oath, his pursuit of biology led him to acquire a medical degree and a deft hand with a scalpel. His bedside manner leaves more than a little to be desired, but he will readily volunteer his services if doing so will make him seem less expendable in times of crisis.

Bargaining for His Life (dice pool 5): Legrottaglie's first priority is to stay alive, and his second priority is to continue his research. After that, nothing really matters to him. He will attempt to negotiate his survival by offering anything in his power to provide, and, if that doesn't work, he will delve into impossible claims and irresponsible promises.

CAPTAIN ROBINS, RAF

Quote: *Up, now, men—we may be behind fences, but we still have a duty to support the war effort. For king and country!*

Nature: Gallant. Robins has assumed personal responsibility for each and every POW in camp, and he intends to see them safely off. He knows that escape is a risky business, but he believes that it is the prisoner's duty to escape, or at least to attempt escape so that the enemy will need to divert resources from the front lines to the prisons. He volunteers for the riskiest tasks and is fully prepared to face the firing squad if it will protect his men.

Background: Captain Robins is a Royal Airforce Pilot whose Spitfire was shot down over North Africa before the Americans even joined the war. He was transferred to several prisons and attempted escape numerous times, once coming within five miles of Switzerland's border. Here, in Brissot, he formed an "Escape Committee" and has managed to unite the prisoners behind his plan—or at least the English speaking prisoners, as he mistrusts the Russians and Polish also held here. For more than two years, Robins and his men have been receiving equipment from MI9, a British Secret Service branch founded to assist escaping prisoners. These deliveries, smuggled in among Red Cross packages, have provided his men with maps hidden in playing cards, money hidden in records, cord-saws hidden in shoe laces and compasses hidden in pencil clips. Robins has even created a false wall which hides an attic room containing a radio, forged papers, several German Army uniforms and tins of boot-black to serve as hair dye. His main project is a tunnel extending far past the outer fences, which he hopes to have completed soon.

Description: Captain Robins is a bulldog of a man, with a squat frame, thick fingers and pronounced jowls. His speech usually resembles a succession of quick barks, but his seeming bluntness belies great skill at foiling enemy interrogation. He

never laughs out loud, but his eyes sparkle with glee whenever his plans take another step towards fruition.

Storytelling Hints: Captain Robins is the go-to man in the Brissot prison camp. He can tell newcomers just about anything they need to know about the grounds, the guards or the surrounding area. Although he does not know anything about Dr. Legrottaglie's experiment, he has heard the ghastly screams coming from that wing of the castle, and he suspects the Nazis are conducting an atrocity of some kind. Given a little time, he can procure or improvise nearly any disguise or piece of equipment necessary. The only thing he requires is that he be informed of all escape attempts—not because he wishes to stop anyone, but because he wishes to coordinate all escapees to provide the maximum chance that each will succeed.

Abilities

Procuring Equipment (dice pool 6): Captain Robins does not actually produce any of this equipment, but rather organizes the network of POWs with skills in scrounging, forging and disguising. His ability to provide will be enhanced if he is given something to use as raw materials or to bribe the guards, but his stash of contraband is fairly complete already. He is always on the lookout for prisoners with special talents, although he views this as volunteer work and so will not coerce anyone to work for him.

Sneaking (dice pool 6): Robins is good at not getting caught. These were skills he first developed as a child hunting rabbits, but his imprisonment served as a crash course in evasive maneuvering.

RESISTANCE OPERATIVE

Quote: *Be quiet—they're coming!*

Background: Most French citizens hate the Nazis, and a few are even brave enough to continue the struggle against them. In some cases, they are motivated by vengeance for a loved one killed by the occupying force, but most are in it because they believe it is their patriotic duty. They run underground railroads to help Allied soldiers get back to the front, and they conduct light sabotage. Since the occupation began, they have not managed any overwhelming victories, but that was never their plan; rather, they intend to slowly chip away at the Reich, forcing it to expend precious resources.

Description: Resistance operatives can be found anywhere from the biggest cities to the smallest hamlets and come from every level of society. The fact that they could be anyone is what makes them so difficult to root out.

Storytelling Hints: These are the ready-made Allies already awaiting the arrival of the Scions. Some are tied in to the underground resistance already and could be considered part of a player character's Allies Birthright. Others may have never sought to join, but if presented with an Allied soldier in need, they would do the right thing. They are willing to take some risks to defend their country, but they risk much in doing so, and there is a limit to their courage. In many cases, it might be best not to trust them with too much important information, because any given operative isn't likely to last long under interrogation.

Abilities

Misleading the Germans (dice pool 6): While most Frenchmen aren't trained for this kind of espionage, they are motivated and well-meaning. Once in a while, they might even offer up an ingenious ruse that saves the day.

DERNWROTH, MUTILATED TEST SUBJECT

Quote: *I... kill you. Kill... you... all!*

Background: Dernworth is a frost giant who had been living in Tartarus until he was offered a chance at freedom in exchange for fighting against the Allied pantheons. He agreed readily enough, but deserted at the first opportunity. Unfortunately for him, he didn't

make it far before he was tracked down and clapped in chains. He passed from one jailor to another until Hephaestus requested him for research purposes and officially handed him off to Dr. Legrottaglie. For the past year, he has been strapped to a table, unable to move as the good doctor vivisected him over and over.

Description: Dernworth has seen better days. Large sections of his alabaster skin have been surgically peeled back to expose still-quivering organs. Rubber tubes loop in and out of these wounds and more tubes run into his arms, thighs, chest, neck and head. The right quadrant of his skull has been removed and placed on a nearby silver dish, while his skull was re-capped by a metal patch.



Storytelling Hints: Dernwroth's mind was long ago fractured by Legrotttaglie's experiments. If Dernwroth ever escapes, he will rampage mindlessly until he is destroyed, just like a degenerated Eis-Soldat. The only coherent thought he is capable of forming is that he wants to crush those responsible for his torments—and as far as he's concerned *everyone* is responsible.

In every other way, Dernwroth is a frost giant with a legend score of 5 (see **Scion: Hero** pp.316)

EIS-SOLDAT

An Eis-Soldat ("Ice Soldier") is the product of a serum derived from frost giant blood, brain tissue and spinal fluid. After undergoing the process, Eis-Soldaten are not enthralled by the giant as they would be if they drank its eitr, but they do spend the first week of their new existence in a highly impressionable stupor, during which time they may be brainwashed into fanatic obedience to their creator. After the stupor passes, they display many characteristics of the frost giant, including improved physical prowess as well as appearance characteristics such as icicle teeth, pale skin and frosty breath.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 2, Rapacity 1, Zealotry 4

Abilities: Academics 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Command 3, Control 3, Fortitude 3, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 2, Melee 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Battle Cry

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Holy Rampage, Hurl to the Horizon), Epic Stamina 2 (Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude)

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 5B, Parry DV -, Speed 6, P

Grenade: Accuracy 6, Damage 10L, Range 20, Speed 5

MP40: Accuracy 8, Damage 4L, Range 30, Clip 30, Speed 4, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 7B, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 4B, Parry DV 7, Speed 4

Sturmgewehr — Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Range 100, Clip 30, Speed 6, P

Soak: 2A/5L/7B (Helmet and Fatigues, +1L/+1B)

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-2/-2/-4/incap

Dodge DV: 4

Willpower: 6

Legend: 3

Legend Points: 9

Trophy: None

Other Notes: Approximately three months after the Eis-Soldat has undergone the transformation, he will degenerate into a ravening madman, ready to attack anyone and anything in his vicinity. Degenerated Eis-Soldaten lose all Abilities except for Athletics, Awareness, Brawl, Fortitude and Melee. This change is preceded by a mounting fever and profuse sweating, but it is unpreventable and irreversible.

SCENE FLOWCHART

Scenes 5

[Mental

Physical

Social]

XP Level 0–34

**BRING ME
THAT HILL!**

[M•• P••• S—]

**BEHIND
ENEMY LINES**

[M••• P— S••]

FUBARED

[M— P•• S—/••]

**THE ESCAPE
COMMITTEE**

[M•• P• S••]

SHOWDOWN

[M• P••• S•]

Scene

BRING ME THAT HILL!

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL –

OVERVIEW

Uncle Sam himself (or another God with high authority over the Scions) has issued urgent orders to the Band of Heroes. He needs them to capture a key “AMCon” (Axis Mundi Connection point) in the form of an ash tree atop a hill located in the middle of one of the hottest fighting zones. This AMCon is about to serve as the escape route for a Yankee God on his way back from Asgard, but the Nazis recaptured the hill a half hour ago. It must be taken back and kept intact at least until the God’s retreat is complete; if it remains in Nazi hands, they could ambush the weakened divinity as he emerges.

DESCRIPTION

The Nazis have set up two machinegun nests, one on top of the hill with the tree and one on even higher ground fifty feet farther back. They also have an armored half-track truck, a couple of artillery rockets and twenty German soldiers, all under the command of an Eis-Soldat lieutenant. The good news is that the Scions get support in the form of American G.I.s. The bad news is that the supporting platoon got hit on its way in and now there are only ten of them left.

Corporal Smith leans back to peer over the mound of earth. The second he does, a torrent of bullets rips into the ground all around him. Smith tumbles back into cover amid a shower of dirt. By some miracle, his head is still in one piece. “This ain’t going to be easy,” he mutters, pressing his back into the trench wall. “Tell you what: you go first.”

Note: The G.I.s are armed with M1 Garands and plenty of grenades, and are considered to be experienced soldiers (Scion: Hero pp. 283). If using the Mass Combat rules, treat them as an experienced G.I. squad (Scion Companion p. 260).

SCALING THE STORY

With a little reworking, the challenge level of this adventure could be elevated for play with demigod or even God-level characters. Because more powerful characters are likely to waltz through any number of mortal soldiers, the Nazi troops would all need to be replaced with Eis-soldat. Even then, they should have a few extra machineguns and maybe a tank to even things out a bit. Gods would need to face even more powerful opponents, such as an enemy God leading an army similar to Hrungrir’s forces in “Titanomachy” (Scion: God, pp. 199).

STORYTELLER GOALS

Establish the feeling of being in a warzone by presenting the events as fast-paced and chaotic. As the action progresses, introduce the Eis-Soldat in a way that will make the players wonder what they are facing. If the Eis-Soldat directly confronts the Scions, describe his strange appearance and supernatural powers in a way that will clearly indicate he is not human. If the Eis-Soldat first encounters the G.I.s, let him demonstrate his superhuman strength and toughness by slaughtering the hapless soldiers.

CHARACTER GOALS

The Scions will need to either destroy or circumvent the enemy forces and retrieve Br’er Rabbit’s unconscious body, which will appear at the base of the tree five rounds after the start of combat. Capturing the hill is preferable but unnecessary so long as the Scions can get in and get out.

ACTIONS

The best way to start a war story is in the thick of the action, so lay out the battlefield and give the players exactly five minutes to plan their assault. If you can, display a stopwatch counting down to communicate the feeling of urgency and to remind players that careful planning is a luxury they won’t always have.

CHARGE THE GUNS

There is no good way to take out a machine gun nest. One option is for the heroes to charge it in hopes that at least one person lives long enough to leap over the gunners’ cover or land a grenade in their laps. A better option would be to flank the gun crews—they have 60% cover from the sides and none from the rear, though they receive DV bonuses for being prone. Against a frontal assault, each of the 3-man machinegun crews enjoys 90% cover thanks to periscope attachments—they are able to aim and fire their tripod-mounted MG42s without even sticking their heads above their foxholes, although they suffer -2 accuracy while aiming through these attachments. They have plenty of ammo, but if their machineguns are fired for ten consecutive actions, the barrel will overheat and need to be replaced. A barrel change can be accomplished in a single action, but the lucky crewman performing the operation gets only 30% cover while he is at it.

The Nazis half-track, an Sd Kfz 251 “Hanomag,” will move to intercept any force coming to flank the machineguns. This particular Hanomag variant is designed to carry Stuka Zu Fuss (the “Infantry’s Stuka”), which are artillery rockets designed to be fired right out of the crate. These rockets are not really accurate

BRING ME THAT HILL

enough for use against anything other than large, fixed targets, and they are certainly not designed as anti-infantry weapons. Furthermore, the crew has only two of them left. But in the urgency of war, even the disciplined German soldiers will level the rockets at any cluster of enemy soldiers (or single enemy soldier, if he displays superhuman powers), hoping to at least scare their foes away if not blast them to smithereens. Under these circumstances, the rockets have an automatic deviation of 50 feet, so even if the rocket operator scores a direct hit, roll a die and multiply the result by five feet to determine how far it actually lands from the target. Aside from the rockets, the Hanomag serves as rolling cover for its crew and any Nazi infantryman who wants to join them.

Twenty German soldiers support the Machinegun and Hanomag crews. All the Nazis are grunt soldiers (see **Scion: Hero** pp. 282), and they know enough not to stand around in the open waiting to be shot. They will find cover whenever it is available or lay prone when it isn't and will move with their armored vehicle to respond to incoming soldiers. Each carries two grenades. The infantrymen have rifles, and the vehicle and gun crews carry MP40s. They are dedicated, but not suicidal and will retreat or surrender if their *Eis-Soldat* commander is killed, if half their number are slain or if it looks like they are facing an overwhelming force. If using the mass combat rules, treat them as a platoon of German regulars (**Scion Companion** p. 260).

Hanomag: Armor 12, Mass 6, Maneuverability -2, Health Levels 40

Stuka Zu Fuss: Accuracy 4, Damage 20L, Range 1,000 (indirect only), Clip 6, Speed 6

MG42 (with periscope): Accuracy 6, Damage 12L, Range 400, Speed 4, P

Infantry Rifle: Accuracy 9, Damage 8L, Range 100, Clip 8, Speed 6, P

MP40: Accuracy 6, Damage 4L, Range 50, Clip 30, Speed 5, P

The heroes probably don't have time to shoot it out from behind cover or to circle around at a distance to attack from behind. One solution might be to charge right up the middle, with the tougher Scions leading the way like human tanks. As long as the Scions target the machineguns first, they will probably attain victory, albeit at a price. Another solution could involve creating a distraction or executing a pincer maneuver. Until the Nazis know who they're dealing with, the G.I. squad would appear to be the greatest threat due to numbers. If the G.I.s take a covered position on one side of the battlefield, they could draw the enemy's fire long enough for the Scions to race in to flank the guns. Whatever solution the players come up with will need to include maneuvering, judicious use of Boons and Knacks, and, perhaps, a good measure of luck.

CONSEQUENCES

If the Scions capture the hill and keep most or all of the G.I.s intact, they should be up for medals. If they don't get to the tree in time, on the sixth round of combat they will see a body mystically fall from its branches to thud limply at its base. The Nazis will also see this, and on their next action they will attempt to load the body into the Hanomag and speed off with it. If the Nazis are overwhelmed from the start, one of their number will break cover and attempt to set the tree on fire with a signal flare—if they can't have it, no one will. It will take him two actions to ignite the tree's lower branches. Even if he manages to live long enough to succeed, the tree won't burn fast enough to cut off the God's retreat, although it will prevent the AMCon from being used in the future.

The God coming down the tree is Br'er Rabbit, who will be unconscious when he lands (even a God is affected by a fall from Yggdrasil). If the Nazis get him, he will be handed over to the Aesir before the sun sets. If this happens, the Scions may need to pursue the Nazis and reclaim the prisoner. Uncle Sam has a few light aircraft held in reserve for these kinds of emergencies, and the players may have mechanized transportation of their own.

Most likely, the characters will capture the hill at least long enough to grab Br'er Rabbit. Reviving the God is not difficult—his eyes will flutter open if he so much as smells booze or food being consumed within twenty feet of him, and he will recover quickly after that. He will explain that through his trickery he was able to slip into Asgard, where he collected several critical pieces of information—including the location of the shield of Jeanne d'Arc. But on his way out, Heimdall recognized him. Fortunately, Br'er was able to taunt and enrage Heimdall enough to cloud his judgment, and then trick the Aesir into throwing Br'er over the side of the Rainbow Bridge. It takes a long time to fall down the World Tree, so Heimdall sent orders for the German squad to capture the connection point in the World and reclaim the body once it emerged.

When he finds out what happens, he will thank the Scions profusely and promise to reward them as soon as he can. Before that, however, he has some urgent news he needs to report to Uncle Sam. Some of it pertains to battle plans for the war in the Overworld, but he will share the fact that the shield of Jeanne d'Arc is being held in Brissot, 300 miles to the East. He will explain its importance and the need to get it back right away.

If this isn't enough for the players to act on, then within the hour they get orders from one or more of their divine Patrons: get to Brissot and get that shield.

Scene

BEHIND ENEMY LINES

MENTAL ... PHYSICAL – SOCIAL ..

OVERVIEW

As soon as the Scions receive their mission to get to Brissot, all they have to do is travel deep into enemy territory with no supply lines and without anyone knowing they're there. These kinds of missions are why G.I.s invented the acronym SNAFU— Situation Normal: All Fucked Up.

DESCRIPTION

The heroes will need to develop some way of traveling 300 miles through Nazi territory. They might avoid the established roads and camp in the fields in hopes of not being seen, or they might disguise themselves and trick their way in.

The thin, gray-haired soldier waves the truck forward to stop just in front of the line in the road. Two other guards finger their sub-machineguns as they stand by in a little booth on the side of the road. They watch as the gray-haired soldier extends his open palm towards the driver. "Papers, please," he says. "And please state your name and business."

STORYTELLER GOALS

Help the characters understand the need for secrecy and establish that they are entering hostile territory without backup.

CHARACTER GOALS

The characters will need to concoct a plan which will get them to Brissot without alerting the enemy to their presence.

ACTIONS

The Scions haven't got a chance if they just try to shoot their way through. The Germans will initially respond by sending a squad of three Stuka dive-bombers to drop 500-pound bombs in their path, and if that doesn't work, they will send in progressively larger forces until they are assured that the Band has been repelled. Even if they take a whole armored division with them, they will just be surrounded and crushed by the awaiting German army. Air travel is also problematic; this shield of Jeanne d'Arc is only one of many objectives the Yankee and Allied Gods are balancing in the greater context of the war, and they simply can't supply a big fleet fast enough for this mission, while a small number of planes would never make it past all the flack and Messerschmitts between here and there. So what options remain? As Sun Tzu wrote: the essence of combat is deception.

TRAVEL INCOGNITO

Enterprising players may develop plans to hide in plain sight. Captured German army uniforms can be found aplenty, and the characters may even have access to an only slightly battered Hanomag. Travelling in disguise, they should expect to be stopped at checkpoints frequently along the way

so they ought to have at least one character who can speak fluent German. The big challenge will be the use of correct passwords and the forging of rubber-stamped paperwork—the Nazis love nothing more than intricate rubber stamps to authenticate a person's identity. Using yesterday's code or having the wrong color papers will instantly arouse suspicion, but Scions may be able to compensate with various Knacks and Boons. Travelling in this way, the Scions will be able to cover an average of 30 miles per hour towards their goal, and they will encounter checkpoints every few hours.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence vs. Perception + Empathy (in the case of a generic guard, the pool is 4)

Action: Instant and contested

Hindrances: No documents (-3); Poorly forged documents (-2); Checkpoint on alert (-3)

Help: Well forged documents (+3); Good disguises (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: The guards will alert a nearby platoon, leaving the Scions with a major fight on their hands. If they escape, all future checkpoints will be on alert.

Failure: Two or three guards will attempt to take the Scions prisoner. Even if they are silenced, within a few hours their absence will be noticed, and all future checkpoints will be on alert.

Success: The Scions are allowed to pass.

TRAVELING OVERLAND

It is possible to travel through the back country most of the way, though even with the right vehicles the characters would be lucky to average 15 miles an hour towards their goal (or 3 miles an hour if on foot). If the Scions restrict their travel to the nighttime, they would make it much easier to avoid both spotters and pursuers, although they increase their own chances of accidentally stumbling into an enemy position. Every 60 to 100 miles, they will cross an area where a pilot or a lookout could spot them

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Stealth vs. Perception + Awareness (in most cases, the pool is 4)

Action: Instant and contested

Hindrances: Traveling with vehicles (-3); More than 10 people (-1); Previously spotted in the area (-3)

Help: Traveling only at night (+3); Fewer than 6 people (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: The Scions will soon be attacked by several fighter planes or by a large ground force such as that in "Bring Me That Hill."

Failure: The Scions will soon be intercepted by a small ground force that will demand surrender before attacking.

Success: The Scions will cover this segment of their journey unseen.

CONSEQUENCES

Even if they have the entire German army on their tail, the Scions will arrive at the small town of Brissot just in time for the events of the next scene. If they have been spotted several times along the way and took no steps to

disguise their trajectory, the German troops throughout the countryside and in the castle will be on high alert, which could make things more complicated for the Scions in the fourth and fifth scenes. If they raised no alarms along the way—or, at least, no alarms near Brissot—the castle guards in will not be on the lookout for anything unusual, and the Nazi command will not be in a position to send heavy support to the castle for at least one or two days.

Scene

FUBARED

MENTAL — PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL —/••

OVERVIEW

However the Scions manage to cross through the enemy territory, they will eventually arrive in the small town of Brissot. Here, they may find allies among the French Resistance and gather information about the castle and its prisoners. They will also encounter three degenerated Eis-Soldaten, who pose a threat to the civilians and a mystery to the heroes.

The characters must stop here. If the players are travelling on the open road, then this is an inevitable stop and the only place for miles around—aside from the castle—where they can get food, gas or information on what they're heading into. If the characters aren't going to stop of their own will, then Fate will make them. They will run out of gas, lose a tire or accidentally collide with a hay cart belonging to Jacques, the local Underground director. In the worst-case scenario, the characters will overhear the sounds of calamity from the town as the degenerated Eis-Soldaten commence their rampage.

DESCRIPTION

The rural city of Brissot sits a scant few miles from the castle-turned-prison. It provides an excellent view of how the Nazis have stationed themselves around the castle, and plays host to many of the guards when they come down on leave. The residents of Brissot are generally ill-disposed towards the Nazis, and can be trusted to keep the Scion's identities confidential.

Before the players get time to plan their next move, the Scions and any assembled townsfolk overhear a thunderous crash followed by howls of semi-human rage. The crash came from the single crossroads in town, where an army truck collided with the general store. Both the store and the truck are smashed beyond recognition, but from the cloud of dust and debris emerge three massive, gorilla-like figures. These monsters proceed to rampage through town, attacking anything that moves or looks like it might move. These are degenerated Eis-Soldaten, and they are truly FUBARed—Fucked Up Beyond All Recognition.

Worse than its icy, cone-shaped teeth, worse even than the horse-sized muscles roiling beneath its white skin as it moved, was the depraved look of rage and hatred in its eyes. These horrid eyes searched the streets until they alighted on the cobbler who was half buried beneath the shoes from his toppled cart. It lunged at him with a demonic howl, a chunk of stone from the broken wall raised high overhead.

STORYTELLER GOALS

Reward players for good role-playing and investigating by giving them information that will help shed light on what they can expect in Castle Brissot.

CHARACTER GOALS

This scene offers the opportunity for the Scions to prepare themselves for infiltrating the castle by making contacts, as well as discovering clues to the origin of the Eis-Soldaten.

ACTIONS

NETWORK WITH THE FRENCH RESISTANCE

Any character with extensive connections to the French Resistance (such as Marie du Champs) may have a local contact here, or characters may be able to find a contact through tactful social maneuvering and Investigation rolls. Once the Scions are taken in, the Underground can inform them that an SS-led German force is using Brissot Castle as a prison camp for captured soldiers and political prisoners from all across Europe. The town's mayor will be happy to share a map of the general layout of the castle, and can point out the locations of the machineguns in the towers. A washerwoman hired by the castle guards can say that the Nazis have two tanks, one of which is *le Géant* ("the Giant," by which she means the Tiger), and where those tanks are stationed. One local farmer also thinks that there must be some kind of sanatorium or medical facility inside; on some nights he can hear agonized wailing emanating from within the walls. One young townsman and former French soldier has also been in contact with several of the British prisoners. He knows that they have formed an "Escape

Committee" which is secretly supplied by British Secret Service, and that they are planning a mass escape soon.

Dice Pool: Charisma + Investigation

Action: Extended. Each roll represents ten minutes of socializing. This task has a difficulty of 1 and requires 6 successes.

Hindrances: Disguised as Nazis (-3)

Help: Speak fluent French (+1); French Resistance contacts (+2); Defeated degenerated Eis-Soldaten (+3)

Roll Results

Botch: The citizens believe the Scions are actually German spies and report them to the Nazis in order to maintain the appearance of loyalty.

Failure: The citizens are reasonably sure the Scions are actually German spies and do not share anything with them.

Success: The citizens are convinced that the Scions are Allied operatives and will offer to support them.

BATTLING THE ABOMINATIONS

After the transport truck crashes in the town square and releases the three degenerated Eis-Soldaten, the heroes will no doubt wish to join battle. Because the Eis-Soldaten have only their own fists and improvised clubs, the Scions will likely make short work of them.

INVESTIGATING THE CRASH

When the heroes have cleaned up the Eis-Soldaten, they are likely to want to do a little investigation as to who these monsters were and where they came from.

Dice Pool: Perception + Investigation

Action: Extended. Each roll represents one minute of searching. This task has a difficulty of 1 and requires 8 successes.

Hindrances: Truck or Eis-Soldaten obliterated during the fight (-2)

Help: Assisted by French Resistance (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: The investigator cannot even be sure that the Eis-Soldaten arrived in the truck.

Failure: The investigator knows only that the Eis-Soldaten were on the truck when it crashed.

Success: The investigator can determine the reason for the truck crashing: the Eis-Soldaten were strapped into the back of the truck, but one broke free, reached into the cab, and broke the driver's neck. Additionally, one of the Eis-Soldaten bears the tattoo of an American flag on his left arm, indicating that he may have been a POW.

CONSEQUENCES

If the Eis-Soldaten are not stopped, they will raze the town and kill half its residents. In a day or two, Commandant Schmitt will hunt them down and then order the execution of all the survivors of Brissot, just to make sure the secret doesn't get out. Hopefully, the Scions won't let things go that far. If the characters achieve good relations with the townspeople, they should be able to formulate a well-informed plan of action before moving on to Castle Brissot.

If the Scions are particularly tough, they might decide to seize the castle in an open assault. After all, it is a prison camp, so the guards might not be prepared for people trying to break in rather than out. If the Scions attempt such an attack, skip to the final scene, "Showdown." Bear in mind that a siege will almost certainly give Schmitt enough time to send one of his men away with the shield, and it could be halfway to Berlin before the characters realize it is no longer in the castle.



OVERVIEW

The Band's next challenge is to get into Castle Brissot. At the very least, they will want to retrieve the shield that they came for, but more than likely the players will now also be looking to discover where the Eis-Soldaten are coming from and will probably also seek to help the prisoners with their escape.

DESCRIPTION

The castle was built nearly a millennium ago, but it was extensively renovated in the late sixteenth century. The lowest walls are thirty feet high and ten feet thick, and the tower battlements rise almost seventy-five feet into the air. To its original defenses, the Nazis have added machineguns in the battlements, double barbed-wire fences, spotlights and canine patrol units. The castle itself

consists of several sections, with the prisoners concentrated in the main courtyard and the inner buildings. The east wing houses the guards and their vehicles, including several military trucks and two panzers (one is a generic tank, the other a Tiger). In the north wing, housed in a long room that was once the refectory, Dr. Legrotttaglie has set up his lab. It is here that he keeps the imprisoned giant and the latest batch of Eis-Soldaten.

More than likely, the characters will seek to keep their initiative as long as possible by sneaking in as close as they can. Sabotaging the tanks could be a good idea, as might be dynamiting the walls. If the heroes time it right, they will be able to easily enter the castle during the confusion, although they will still have several thousand square feet to search for the shield. The characters can also infiltrate the ranks of the guards by presenting themselves as "new recruits" for the



garrison. If they can maintain the charade, they would be able to network with the prisoners and the soldiers to find someone who can tell them what they need to know.

Of course, the simplest way for the Scions to get into the prison camp is to allow some or all of their number to be captured. They might need to spend a few Willpower points and roll a few Integrity Ability checks to hold up under interrogation, but the Germans probably wouldn't recognize the characters and therefore wouldn't have any reason to believe that the Scions were anything other than a group of army scouts who lost their supply line and couldn't keep going. Many characters would be hesitant to put themselves into enemy hands, but with a little forethought they could arrange to smuggle in most of their Birthrights and hide the rest nearby. Knowing from the townsfolk that there is an organization called the Escape Committee already awaiting inside may also help put their minds at ease.

THE CASTLE LAYOUT

The Prison Courtyard

The prison population consists of approximately one hundred inmates (primarily of British stock, but also including American, Russian, Polish and even Italian prisoners) and is concentrated within the courtyard and the rooms immediately adjacent to it. This is the area where the Scions may contact Captain Robins and the Escape Committee, who will offer whatever assistance they can. In one of the basement rooms the prisoners have also started a tunnel which now extends all the way under the wall. They still have several dozen feet to go before it will reach beyond the outer fences, and the excavation is a slow process since it must be conducted without shovels, and the excess dirt must be carefully removed in order to avoid suspicion. Alas—they could complete the rest of the tunnel in a single night if only they knew a Scion with a high Fortitude and the Work Smarter Boon!

The Escape Committee is playing a dangerous game because the recent mass escape attempt from Stalag Luft III prompted Hitler to declare that all fleeing prisoners are to be shot. But the men of Castle Brissot know that this may be their last chance to cash in on all their hard work, because if the Allies get any closer then all the prisoners will be transported to Germany.

The East Wing

Aside from providing egress, the Escape Committee can help the Band by supplying them with information about the east wing. Robins knows the guards' schedules and he knows the likely locations of the vehicles, which consist of two tanks (one a Tiger), two trucks and several motorcycles. He can also draw a map to the armory, which is where any of the characters' captured gear would be kept. Most importantly, Captain Robins knows exactly where the shield is. He overheard Schmitt order a soldier to take it to his personal bed-chambers in the east wing.

Getting into the east wing is not an easy task, owing to the fact that it is largely sealed off from the prison area, not to mention the fact that this is where the guards sleep, eat and live. The Escape Committee will provide the Band with

anything they have, and if the Scions manage to sneak into Schmitt's room to steal the shield, they will find it mounted over his bed, just as Robins indicated. However, there is an alarm wired to the shield's mounting, so removing it from the wall without checking will trigger an alarm, which will immediately thrust the Band into the final scene.

The North Wing (Dr. Legrottaglie's Lab)

No one in the prison knows for sure what goes on in the north wing, since it is completely isolated from the rest of the castle. The inmates can see from their windows that soldiers only occasionally go to and from those buildings, and they can hear the screams which sometimes come from the lab, but don't know that the source of those screams are their fellow POWs. To maintain order in the compound, Commandant Schmitt is careful to create the illusion that the selected prisoners are transferred to another camp, but then he has the truck circle back after dark to deliver the victims to Dr. Legrottaglie's laboratory. The only way to access the laboratory from the prison area is to drop down twenty feet from a window, scale the sheer thirty foot courtyard wall and enter the north wing via its roof. None of the prisoners have been willing or able to go to such great lengths to satisfy their curiosity. The only people permitted in the building are the Commandant, the Doctor and the prospective Eis-Soldaten. The windows are blacked out to prevent even the German guards from snooping, leaving the interior lit only by a series of naked light bulbs dangling from long cords retro-fitted into the ceiling.

Dr. Legrottaglie's lab is a classic mad scientist affair, with bubbling blue and green liquids in beakers, electric arcs snapping their way up a Jacob's Ladder and arrays of gleaming silver surgical implements laid out neatly on darkly-stained wooden tables. At the front of the long, cold room are six "patients" strapped to chairs. They wear soiled smocks and stained bandages and have a profusion of tubes and needles jammed into various points of their bodies, with bags of slimy, viscous looking fluids dripping into them through these tubes. All six in this batch are former prisoners recently "transferred" out of the camp but they are already almost unrecognizable due to their developing frost-white skin, muscle bulk and icy teeth.

The six patients sit, drooling, with their heads strapped into place to ensure their gaze is aimed at a movie screen bolted into the wall ahead of them. On the screen flickers non-stop images from Nazi propaganda movies, including Hitler orations, SS marching in formation, a Swastika flag rippling in the wind and so forth. Behind the row of seats are a series of movie projectors ingeniously rigged to loop their film over and over without stopping. There is no sound to the movies, just the ghostly black and silver flicker of pure evil. These Eis-Soldaten are in their developmental phase, undergoing the brainwashing that will instill perfect obedience to the Nazi party. They have no capacity for conscious thought at this point, so if the movies are interrupted they will continue to stare ahead, their expressions as blank as the screen in front of them. If anyone tries to communicate with them, they

will follow that person lazily with their eyes but will evince no sign of understanding any gestures or spoken words and cannot be induced to take any action.

Pressing farther back into the laboratory, the heroes will discover one more semi-conscious figure, this one strapped flat to a table. This is Dernwroth, the frost giant who has served as the unwilling progenitor of the Eis-Soldaten. The giant's eyes flicker under his lids and his muscles occasionally twitch, but he will remain unconscious unless attacked. He is obviously the subject of ongoing surgeries, and that he has been kept this way for some time. Anyone with the Science or Medicine skill will recognize that that about half the tubes are pumping fluids into the giant, while the other half are harvesting the fluids that serve as the components for the serum being put into the Eis-Soldaten. If the Scions try to free the giant or put him out of his misery, he will wake up and attack anyone around him, beginning combat with his Battle Cry Boon that will also alert every guard in the castle and trigger the Showdown scene.

STORYTELLER GOALS

Your goal in this scene is to provide an interactive environment for the Scions to explore. Present the castle as a smoothly running military establishment and make its residents respond to the players' ideas for exploiting the system's weaknesses.

CHARACTER GOALS

The characters will need to test the defenses of the castle and find a way to infiltrate it, either by force or guile. They will likely need to explore and experiment before they attempt to retrieve the shield, free the prisoners, or put a stop to Legrotttaglie's experiments.

ACTIONS

CLIMBING THE WALL

The outer walls of the castle are 30 feet high and the inner walls aren't much lower. For the most part, the walls are sheer, but this is an old castle and an enterprising climber can find areas with fingerholds in the weather-worn mortar. If climbing an exterior wall, a character will need to deal with the barbed wire lining the top.

Dice Pool: Strength + Athletics

Action: Instant, with a difficulty of 3

Hindrances: Smooth patch of wall (-2)

Help: Rope and grappling hook (+3)

Roll Results

Botch: The character falls from a height of 20 feet, making a din that attracts the attention of the guards.

Failure: The character can't get over the wall in this location.

Success: The character gets over the wall.

IMPERSONATING A GUARD

Deceptive characters may find that they can move around the castle a little more easily if they pose as a guard, either by using one of Robinson's disguise kits or something of their own invention. It is relatively easy to carry out this charade from a distance, as long as the impersonator isn't seen entering any highly restricted areas such as Legrotttaglie's lab or Schmitt's bedchambers. If an impersonator is questioned up close by one of the guards, the illusion will be much more difficult to retain.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence vs. Perception + Awareness (for most guards, the pool is 6)

Action: Instant and contested

Hindrances: Cannot speak German (-3); Flawed disguise (-2); Doesn't know guards' names or schedules (-1)

Help: High quality disguise (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: The suspicious guard plays along but then raises the alarm as soon as he is out of sight.

Failure: The suspicious guard attempts to hold the impersonator at gunpoint while calling for backup.

Success: The suspicious guard is reasonably convinced that the Scion must actually be "a new guy."

CONSEQUENCES

When Commandant Schmitt becomes aware that there is a threat to his operation, he will immediately move to destroy that threat, which automatically ends this scene and moves to "Showdown." He may become aware of the Scions' actions through several means: the mass escape of prisoners, an attempt to steal the shield, a disturbance in Dr. Legrotttaglie's lab or even a display of supernatural powers by one of the prisoners.

Scene

SHOWDOWN

MENTAL • PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL •

OVERVIEW

The final scene may be triggered in several ways, but the result is always the same: Commandant Schmitt discovers who the Scions are or what they're after and attacks them with everything he's got.

DESCRIPTION

Any disturbance in or around the castle will initiate this scene. The Commandant is cunning and battle-experienced, so he won't fall into Scion traps easily, preferring to first send in his men to see what he's