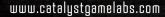# SMOKE & SHADOWS

London—where the thick fog (sounds nicer than smog, doesn't it) makes for some truly deep shadows. Every crooked street, every cramped building holds a secret or two, as well as a person or two who will go to great lengths to ensure those secrets are kept. There is, for instance, the dark secret of a minor noble who has not been seen in Parliament in months. And the researcher who has a startlingly large amount of people interested in his work. The courier who carries one secret in his head and another in his gut. And an explosive secret that has been festering in the West End Underplex for years or even decades.

Skilled runners have the chance to uncover these secrets and more, but they'd better be ready for the forces of the world that would prefer to keep things covered up. They are tenacious, dangerous, and, perhaps most surprising for England, not at all polite.

London Falling features four adventures for *Shadowrun* set in London. Initially designed especially for gaming conventions, these adventures are now available to all players who want to dive in and see if they can survive the challenges of the Big Smoke.

London Falling has stats that allow it to be compatible for both *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* and *Shadowrun, Twentieth Anniversary Edition.*

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LONDON FALLING

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CREDITS

INTRODUCTION

The following adventures were originally part of the *Shadowrun* Convention Missions campaign and were run at various conventions and tournaments. Since they share a setting, they can be linked together to form a campaign, or they can be run separately. Full information on the Shadowrun Missions campaign is available at shadowruntabletop.com/missions and includes a guide to creating Missions characters, along with a regularly updated FAQ. All maps, player handouts, and other playing aids are found at the end of this book.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

The adventures are intended for use with *Shadowrun Fifth Edition*, and all character and rules information refers to the Fifth Edition of the *Shadowrun* rules.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

The adventures consist of several scenes. These scenes form the basis of the adventure, which should be completed in approximately four hours. If you are running short on time, you should streamline each and be a little more generous with clues, target numbers, and other requirements to aid in guiding the players through the adventure.

Each scene outlines the most likely sequence of events, as well as how to handle unexpected twists and turns that inevitably crop up. Each one contains the following subsections, providing gamemasters with all the information necessary to run it.

- **Scan This** provides a synopsis of the scene's action, allowing you to get a feel for the encounter at a glance.
- **Tell It to Them Straight** is written to be read aloud to the players, describing what their characters experience upon entering the scene. You should feel free to modify the narrative as much as desired to suit the group and the situation, since the characters may arrive at the scene by different means or under different circumstances than the text assumes.
- **Behind the Scenes** covers the bulk of the scene, describing what's happening, what the non-player char-

acters are doing, how they will react to the player characters' actions and so forth. It also covers the setting of the encounter, going over environmental conditions and other properties of the location as well as providing any descriptions of important items.

- **Pushing the Envelope** looks at ways to make the encounter more challenging for experienced or powerful characters and other ways you can add some extra spice to the scene. This subsection should usually only be used for home games or games where time is not a factor. At most convention and Open Play events, gamemasters should omit this information. It adds to the scene but does not contain important information.
- **Debugging** offers solutions to potential problems that may crop up during the encounter. While it's impossible to foresee everything that a group of player characters might do, this section tries to anticipate common problems and offer suggestions for dealing with them.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Gamemastering is more of an art than a science, and every gamemaster does things a bit differently. Use your own style when it comes to preparing and running the adventure and do whatever you feel is best to provide the best *Shadowrun* game you can for your players. These adventures were originally designed to run in a standard four-hour convention time slot.

Please keep this in mind when running the adventure. When running at a convention, you should leave at least 15–20 minutes at the end of the time slot to complete any necessary paperwork and pass out the players' Debriefing Logs. (Make sure that you have enough copies of the Debriefing Log for this adventure to give one copy to each player after running the adventure.) This section offers some guidelines you may find useful in preparing to run any *Shadowrun* Missions adventure.

STEP 1: READ THE ADVENTURE

Carefully read the adventure from beginning to end. Get a feel for the overall plot and what happens in each scene.

That way, if something different happens, you won't be caught off guard and you can adapt things smoothly.

STEP 2: TAKE NOTES

Take notes for yourself while reading through the adventure that you can refer to later on. Possible things to note include: major plot points (so you can see them all at a glance), the names of various non-player characters, possible problems you notice, situations where you think a particular character can shine, and other things you'll want to keep in mind while running the adventure.

STEP 3: KNOW THE CHARACTERS

Prior to the start of the adventure, examine the PCs' record sheets and Debriefing Logs for your reference and have basic information about their important abilities handy so you can refer to it during play. Also go over the characters and keep their previous events listed on the Debriefing Logs in mind when determining non-player character actions in various scenes if such a dynamic has been included.

STEP 4: DON'T PANIC!

Gamemastering involves juggling a lot of different things. Sometimes you drop the ball and forget something, or you just make a mistake. It happens, don't worry about it. Nobody is perfect all of the time and everybody makes mistakes. Just pick up from there and move on. Your players will understand and forget about it once you get back into the action.

GENERAL ADVENTURE RULES

Shadowrun Missions adventures use the rules presented in *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* (*SR5*). Standard rules such as success tests, the Rules of One and Six, and other common mechanics are described in *SR5* and are not repeated in this adventure.

Please keep in mind when preparing for the adventure that the PCs will not necessarily compose a balanced party. It's entirely possible that the party will be made up entirely of technomancers or back-to-nature shamans. If the characters run into a brick wall because of such complications, show flexibility and use your best judgment in leading them back to the plot.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-player characters (NPCs) are essential to any adventure. They are the allies, antagonists, and background characters in the adventure that interact with the player characters. NPCs in this adventure have already been created and can be found throughout the adventure.

Minor NPCs are found in the individual scene in which they appear, and they generally have a brief write up, noting only their important skills and the gear they are carrying. Note that their dice pools are pre-calculated to save the gamemaster time.

Major NPCs can be found in the **Cast of Shadows** at the end of the adventure and have more detailed write ups, including most of the skills and gear they have access to.

The NPCs in this adventure should generally stand up to the average player character but may need some adjustment to suit a particular group of characters, especially a more experienced and powerful group. The scenes and NPC descriptions offer tips on adjusting the NPCs to suit the abilities of the characters in your group. To adjust the power level of an NPC, refer to the **Prime Runners** section (p. 385, *SR5*). Take the player characters' abilities into consideration when assessing the NPCs in this adventure and modify them accordingly.

MISSION DIFFICULTY

Gamemasters are encouraged to use their own judgment and adjust the difficulty of each encounter to take into account the abilities of the players. If the players have no magical support, replace magical defenses with mundane ones. If the players are weak on combat, reduce the number of enemies by one or two. Conversely, if they're steam-rolling the opposition, add one or two enemies to the fight. Missions should be a challenge to the party but should never be insurmountable for a team playing it smart.

A NOTE ON COMMLINKS

By 2075, commlinks have become a universal appliance. Because just about every NPC is going to have one, they won't always be statted out in the adventure text. For NPCs who do not have a statted commlink, assume it has all necessary ratings at 3. These commlinks will not contain any valuable paydata.

PAPERWORK

If a *Shadowrun* Missions adventure is run at a convention, there are several important pieces of paperwork that need to be filled out.

The first is to make certain to distribute a copy of the adventure's Debriefing Log to each player. As the gamemaster, please make certain to fill this out and sign off on it for each character. In the interests of time, you may have each player fill out the sections, with appropriate values that you give them. Please consider the PCs' actions in the scenario when providing Reputation modifiers, per those rules (p. 372, *SR5*).

The second is to make sure that all players have updated their character's calendar. PCs are allowed to go on one run per week. The calendar is used to track the character's monthly lifestyle expenses, adventures, and their downtime exploits.

SCENE 0: NEW KIDS IN TOWN

SCAN THIS

This scene is designed to transport runners from any campaign into the setting for these convention missions.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Here are a few ways to get your team to the area if they aren't already there.

OPTION A

Wanting to get back to your roots you arranged a trip to England. Not your roots? Okay, an opportunity to see what all the hype was over Stonehenge and the Druids. Not caring? Okay, an opportunity to flex your running skills on a global scale and make plenty of nuyen has been presented by your fixer.

OPTION B

Your last run was a resounding success/failure, with the heat from the corps picking up evidence pointing in your direction as they investigate. Your fixer thinks this might be a good time to lay low out of town—way out of town. England should be nice this time of year, and he promises to get you some work while you're there.

OPTION C

Not wanting to pass up on a chance to see your favorite football club in action live, plus the promise of jobs, you talk your mates into a little extra-territorial shadowrunning. Glory glory!

OPTION D

Get to London, get the goods. It sounded easy, you should have known better. Arriving at the airport you are informed that the job is a scrub for now. Mr. Johnson called it off. The bad news is no work. But the good news is that you're in London with all your toys, and your fixer promises that he'll find you some work that'll make it worth your time.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This is just a transition for players bringing their characters in from other campaigns. Modify it to fit your party, particularly if the runners are already in London following a different mission or tourist activity.