

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

A quick glance down at the screeching link. An emergency from security command at 0415. Drek, this will not turn out well.

He answered the call. “Dr. Tate here. What can I do for you?”

The modulated voice on the other end was a flat monotone. “Facility Delta 4 went off line at 0400 hours. A response team arrived on site at 0407 to find it empty of all staff, with no obvious signs of breach. The Director wants to know if you’re capable of handling this yourself, or do you need him to bail you out once more?” The voice paused briefly. “His words, not mine.”

Tate sighed quietly. You tell one exec he should rethink his diet of booze and parties, and he spends a life time trying to knock you down. “Inform the director I’ll take care of the issue with local assets.”

“He thought you might say that. He wanted to me remind you that your annual budget review is coming up, and you already have more than a few unnecessary expenses. Something about supplies for savages?” The monotone at the other end of the call was risking a slip into archness.

“Thank him for his concern. Keep a small security team to secure the facility until my team is on site. Tate out.”

So he was going to have to operate with a little extra scrutiny from above on this one. He’d have to be efficient. Luckily, he happened to know the right man to help him find a team of civic-minded individuals willing to work for a sensible rate. At this time of the morning, Detective Nick Ryder was probably half in a bottle in one of the more colorful establishments near the zone. He probably wouldn’t be answering calls—Tate was going to need to do some legwork.

Five hours and twelve sporadically cleaned bars later, Tate was convinced he would need to burn his clothes, since he was certain the stench of synth tobacco and stale soy vodka would never come out. He was quickly losing patience with his search, but then he was there, holding court with a loyal confidant next to a half-empty bottle of whiskey.

He approached the cop with little preamble. “Detective

Ryder. I want to know what you are doing about these rash of disappearances around the zone. One of my facilities was targeted just hours ago!”

“Well, good morning to you, too, Dr. Tate. Join me won’t you.” Ryder pushed a chair away from the table with his foot. “Sorry you and your corp lost some shit, but you’re in the zone. Shit happens, right? You know we don’t operate within the walls of the CZ. Maybe you should call in some of your corporate overlords resources to get the bottom of your little glitch. So pull up a glass or shove off. I’m not in the mood to be lectured about how your people mean more than the countless other lost souls that no one out there is looking for.”

“Now, now, Nick, you seem to have this all wrong, I think we can help out one another.” Tate sat down smoothly. “I know you’re not happy with the current trends, and I also know there’s only so much you can do about it. You’re in a unique position—you have the contacts to know what freelance agents may be open to this type of work, but unless I miss my guess you tapped yourself out finding that poor girl a few months ago. Well, that’s where I can help. If you can assemble a team, I can bankroll the salaries, and we can have them get to the bottom of these disappearances once and for all. I don’t believe in coincidence—merely hard facts. I believe that whatever happened to my facility is what has been happening to some of the homesteads around the zone. I can put together my own team to focus on the facility, but that would be short sighted. We both want to help the locals, and without access to your case files it may take too long to complete. So what do you say to a joint task force, so to speak, sponsored by Truman Technologies? Unofficially, of course. Maybe we can get to the bottom of this, or at least get some closure.”

Ryder swished his drink in his mouth a few times. “All right, Tate, you’re making some sense. I’ll make some calls. I think I know just the team. I’ll have them here at noon, but let’s get one thing straight—I’ll be their contact. You’re just the money man. If you show them any sign of confusion or weakness, you’ll just end up increasing the price they want for the job.”

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INTRODUCTION

SRM 06-01: Ten Fifty-Seven is a *Shadowrun Missions* living campaign adventure. Full information on the *Shadowrun Missions* living campaign is available at <http://www.shadowruntabletop.com/Missions> and includes a guide to creating Missions characters and a regularly updated FAQ. All maps, player handouts, and other playing aids are found at the end of this document.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

SRM 06-01: Ten Fifty-Seven is intended for use with *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*, and all character and rules information refers to the fifth edition of the *Shadowrun* rules.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

SRM 06-01: Ten Fifty-Seven consists 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 quick 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 characters 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, gam-

emasters 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 other 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. *Shadowrun Missions* adventures are designed to run in a standard four-hour convention time slot.

Please keep this in mind when running the adventure. 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 *SRM 06-01: Ten Fifty-Seven* (or 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.

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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.

STEP 5: CHALLENGE THE PLAYERS

Gamemasters should challenge the players, but should not generally overwhelm them. This is not to say that games cannot be deadly. If the characters die through their own actions and repercussions of those actions, then so be it. But the idea is to challenge the players and their characters, not to overwhelm them. If the enemies and challenges are too light for the characters present, then increase them. On the other hand, if the characters are badly outmatched by the enemies, then tone them down. Make things difficult but not impossible.

GENERAL ADVENTURE RULES

Shadowrun Missions adventures use the rules presented in *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition (SR5)*. Standard rules such as success tests, glitches, critical successes, 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 how you lead 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 that they appear in, and generally have a brief write up, noting only their important skills and the gear they are carrying.

Major NPCs can be found in the **Cast of Shadows** at the end of the adventure, and have more detailed write ups, and include most of the skills and the 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 **Helps and Hindrances** (p. 378, *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 to adjust the difficulty of the 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 difficult and something of a challenge, but should not be insurmountable.

A simple method for adjusting difficulty is to simply increase the dice pools and Professional Ratings of the enemies. A simple +1 or +2 to all combat and defense tests gives enemies a minor boost in power, while a +3 or 4 will make them truly formidable. Adding to their Professional Rating will give them a larger group Edge pool to draw from, and gamemasters are encouraged to use this Edge when logical.

When a combat scene will tell you if it's supposed to be challenging or is simply there to serve as filler or a minor obstacle that the players should steamroll through. When possible, use this as a guide to know when to tweak the enemies and encounters. If it doesn't say, assume the scene should present a challenge to the power levels of the players.

A NOTE ON LOOT AND LOOTING

Gamemasters should be careful what they allow players access to, because they can and will try to steal everything not nailed down (and even then, they often have pry bars and claw hammers to deal with those nails). *Shadowrun Missions* operate under the assumption that two players who have run the same missions will have roughly the same amount of resources available to them (give or take some negotiation and a little bit of minor loot fenced), so when players are able to steal and fence a lot of gear or are able to get their hands on high-priced vehicles, cyberdecks, or foci, it can unbalance the game and make it unfair to players who didn't have the opportunity to get those items. Gamemasters should avoid letting the players get into a position to do high value looting whenever possible.

CHICAGO, THE CZ, NOISE, AND BACKGROUND COUNTS

While for many the Chicago and the Bug City Containment Zone are synonymous, the CZ comprises less

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than one-third of the total landmass of the city of Chicago proper, not counting suburban areas and farmlands connected to the city. But the CZ is still big, and it is the rotted, gutted, feral heart of the Windy City. It starts at 115th Street to the south and runs nearly 30 kilometers north to Belmont Avenue, and reaches from the Lake Michigan to an average of 15 kilometers—generally to Harlem Avenue—to the west. A mass of torn-down buildings and hastily erected barricades were added to and reinforced over the three-year period that the Containment Zone was in effect, and even now, nearly twenty years later, this barrier stands as an imposing divide between the Zone and the outside world. Anyone can supposedly freely travel between the zone and Chicago proper, but Lone Star watches those coming out, and the gangs and warlords watch those going in very closely.

Between the Cermak Blast, the bugs, the debilitating effects of FAB III, and years of death and metahuman misery, astral space in and around the Zone is horrible. Unless otherwise noted in the scene, assume a default background count of 2 anytime characters are within the Containment Zone. The count will fluctuate wildly at times, so players should expect to encounter everything from high background counts and mana voids to various aspected backgrounds and mana warps (see p. 30, *Street Grimoire*, for full rules). Areas of Chicago outside the CZ may also suffer background count bleed from the Zone.

Besides the background count, the CZ is a virtual nightmare for deckers and technomancers. The persistent low-level background radiation coupled with the distinct lack of modern matrix broadcasting equipment through the area results in a high level of constant background Noise that makes even basic matrix communication difficult. Noise levels will vary from area to area, but unless otherwise specified in the scene, assume a default Noise level of 2 anytime the characters are within the Containment Zone.

PAPERWORK

After running a *Shadowrun Missions* adventure, 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

BACKGROUND COUNTS

Background counts impose a negative dice pool penalty equal to their rating for all tests that are linked to or utilize magic in any way (i.e., spellcasting, summoning, assensing, any test made while astrally projecting, and any active skill that benefits from active adept powers such as killing hands, critical strike, great leap, or improved skills, etc). Dual-natured creatures and spirits suffer this penalty to all actions.

Aspected background counts grant a boost to any limit that utilizes magic in any way (see above) to any metahuman, spirit, or dual-natured creature that matches the aspected domain. This includes spellcasting Force limits, so spellcasters need to be careful as it can be hard to control the additional surge of mana. Any magically active being that does not match the aspected domain should treat this as a normal background count and suffer penalties.

Background counts above 12 are called either a flux (for aspected domains) or a void (for magically dead zones), and are very dangerous. Any being that is magically or astrally active in any way (dual natured, astrally perceiving, casting a spell, has an active adept power, has an active foci, etc.) takes background count – 12 unresisted Stun Damage each turn that they are active and exposed to the flux or void.

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 **Mission 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.

Finally, once an adventure is completed gamemasters should head over to the official Shadowrun forums at <http://forums.shadowruntabletop.com> and look in the *Shadowrun Missions* section. There will be a section to post the outcome of the Missions adventure. Future adventures will be affected by these results. Without gamemaster feedback, the PCs' exploits will be unable to affect the campaign.

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MISSION SYNOPSIS

Detective Nick Ryder is losing his patience with his fellow officers when they refuse to investigate the streak of missing people around the Containment Zone. Dr. Martin Tate is having his own bad luck, as one of his clinic recovery houses has been hit and a sizable investment in bioware is now missing. Dr. Tate tracks down Detective Nick Ryder and makes a proposition: With Nick's access to the missing person's files and Tate's pockets, they should be able to hire a runner team to get to the bottom of the disappearances. The team is assembled and given dossiers on several missing people from around the zone, along with a sweetheart of an offer from Dr. Tate.

As the team gathers the information and sets out, they must decide where to look first: the residential disappearances (two within the last two nights), or the abduction from the recovery facility last night. No matter where they head in search of clues, they eventually run into the Desolation Angles, either due to good legwork and contacting the local gangs or from snooping around too much. The Desolation Angels are also looking for answers, as someone hit one of their chapterhouses in the early hours of the morning, killing a bunch of Angels and abducting Tasha, who is their sort-of mascot.

All clues point back to a rather benign-looking flower shop named Mushnik's. Questioning the locals brings up the story of the nice couple who run the facility and how they always seem to have the most aromatic odors wafting from the facility. Upon searching, the runners find a hidden trap door in the back cooler that leads down into an undocumented basement. Once in the basement, they need to figure out what has been using some of the residents as their main course so they can get paid.

The leads turn up empty, save a horror shop of mutilated body parts and a hungry vampire drawn to the blood. The runners are paid for their efforts as their Johnsons begin to look further into the situation.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Sunday 0800: The Stanish and Baretson families failed to show up at a neighborhood watch meeting.

Monday 0400: Tom Cosek, his nurse, and a security guard from a post-operation recovery center disappear.

Monday 0407: A Horizon security team arrives to secure the clinic.

Monday 0600: Desolation Angels clubhouse destroyed.

Monday 1000: Nick Ryder contacts the runners.

Monday 1200: The team meets Nick.

Scene 1:

THE DAY MOON, IT BURNS

SCAN THIS

The team receives a call from Detective Nick Rider, who says he has an off-the-books job for them with hefty pay. They are to meet him at the Red Door bar off Damen Avenue in one hour.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

What fragger in their right mind would be ringing you at this ungodly hour? Don't they know shadowrunners work at night, not at 10 a.m. on a Monday morning? The incoming commcode shows a Lone Star prefix. Great. The day just keeps getting better and better. Answering your trunk, you see on the other end a grizzled man whose five o'clock shadow could pass for a Brillo pad and eyes so bloodshot you swear you saw less blood at the last street fighting match.

"Sorry to disturb your beauty sleep, but I need your services. Some of you may know me. For those who don't, I'm Detective Nick Ryder. I have an off-the-books job that should be right up your alley. Meet me at the Red Door bar off of Damen Avenue in two hours."

BEHIND THE SCENES

Dr. Tate and Nick Ryder are already at the bar, waiting for the team to arrive. There have been a rash of abductions and missing persons around the Containment Zone. Lone Star has made no progress, because cases inside the Containment Zone are barely investigated, if at all. One of Dr. Tate's post-surgery recovery centers was the most recent target at 2 a.m. this morning. Dr. Tate turned to Nick Ryder, knowing that his penchant for helping the common man, along with his access to the Lone Star case files, may help find the missing patient.

HOST: RED DOOR

Rating	Attack	Sleaze	Data Proc.	Firewall
3	3	4	5	6

Installed IC: Blaster, Patrol, Probe

Slaved Devices: Ambiance 2062 entertainment system, cameras

Sculpting: A well-lit bar with a red velvet carpet and rope in front; inside the walls and floors are covered in red velvet, making them look soft and inviting.

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PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

Sensing desperation, which is an invitation to extorting more pay, a small-time runner team nicknamed the Muckrakers turned down Dr. Tate and Nick Ryder. Knowing the longer it goes unsolved the more money there is to be made, this four-man team sets up an ambush outside the Red Door bar to stop any other team for taking the job.

MUCKRAKERS (4) (PROFESSION RATING 3)

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	4 (6)	3	4	3	5	4	5.1

Initiative: 9 (11) + 1D6

Condition Monitor: 10

Limits: Physical 5 (6), Mental 5, Social 6

Armor: 12

Skills: Automatics (Assault Rifle) 4 (+2), Close Combat skill group 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Perception 5, Pistols 3, Small Unit Tactics 3, Sneaking 6,

Augmentations: Cybereyes 2 (w/ flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision), reaction enhancers 2

Gear: Armor jacket, Erika Elite commlink

Combat Maneuvers: Crossfire

Weapons:

Ultimax Rain Forest Carbine [Assault Rifle, Acc 5, DV 11, AP -6, SA, RC 1, 18(c), w/ APDS, retractable stock, smartgun system (external)]

DEBUGGING

If the runners argue with Nick, he reminds them, “I may just be a lowly Lone Star detective, but the job still comes with a few perks. For my friends, I can help make pesky paperwork and reports disappear. Of course, for those who aren’t my friends, I can most certainly make sure even the most minor indiscretion lands up on the top of the HTR’s to-do list. So friend, why don’t you come on down to the bar, have a drink and make some cred.” If the runners refuse to answer the call, about thirty minutes later their fixer contacts them and informs them they are named as persons of interest in a drug-trafficking ring operating out of Midway. Detective Nick Ryder has the lead and is looking to talk to the runners. He can be reached on this comm number 385441.

Scene 2:

THE OLD CROW

SCAN THIS

The team meets with their Johnsons in a bar even bug spirits would avoid. Dr. Martin Tate and Detective Nick Ryder each have their own reasons, but the goal is the same: Find out what is going on with people disappearing around the zone.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The pungent odor of cheap tobacco and stale synthahol accosts your senses, even before you open the cracked door faded to the color of rust. Adjusting your vision to the fog of smoke, you can’t help but notice a patchwork bar that looks like a good sneeze could send it tumbling. Still you appraise the value of the bar as being only slightly higher than that of the cheap liquor stocked behind it. There you see your Mr. Johnson, Detective Nick Ryder, and a dark skinned individual.

[Note: If the runners have Dr. Martin Tate as a contact they recognize him.]

Nick looks up and motions for you to follow him to the back room. The room looks like it once housed a pool table, but now all that remains is a cracked and crumbling slate surface. “Look, I’ll make this simple. We have a problem, and since that problem is in the zone the brass don’t care much. We want to hire you to investigate the rash of missing persons and report your findings back to us. We are prepared to offer you 6,000 nuyen each for a little old-fashioned detective work. Let’s face it—the streets are going to be more open to you asking questions than me and the boys. What do you say?”

Before you can reply, the other man speaks up. “While you ponder that, let me sweeten the deal. My colleague here, in his zeal to get to the heart of this issue, lost his manners. For those of you who do not know me, I am Dr. Martin Tate. I run several clinics backed by Truman Technologies in the zone. One of my post-op recovery houses was recently the target of these random acts. It was hit about eight hours ago. If you can recover my patient, I can arrange for some of my stock to become available at a drastically discounted price. What say you to a little nip and tuck in the form of a single item, delta-grade ware, sold at standard ware prices and installed by me personally?”

ONCE THE RUNNERS AGREE:

“Now that that’s settled, the most recent disappearance came from a multi-family unit located at the corner of West Diversey and North Milwaukee. The two

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