



Now Playing

Introductory Pack 1:

FPI

TV Genre: Occult Thriller



Introduction

Welcome to the demo kit for the Now Playing roleplaying game from Carnivore Games. Here you will find everything you need to begin playing the game that turns any TV show into a roleplaying game. This kit contains one complete playable episode of a TV “show” that was created specifically for Now Playing, and all of the rules that you need to play it. Just read through this kit, scrape up four Fudge dice or four six-sided dice, and you are ready to play.

This demo represents the Occult Thriller, which is only one of the many genres of television shows that you can play with Now Playing. Demos of other genres will soon be available for you to try.

We hope you enjoy this introduction to Now Playing. You can find more information about Now Playing at the Carnivore Games web site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.carnivoregames.com/>.

This is Television

Two police detectives track down a serial killer. The crew of a starship encounters a derelict ship adrift in space. A team of superheroes matches wits and brawn with a new villain. A reporter from a local tabloid investigates the story of people being bitten by vampires, only to find out that it may be true!

What do all these story ideas have in common? They all sound like episodes of some TV shows. The fact is that all television shows have a lot in common. They have to; it's the nature of television. They all must be shown on the same networks during a very rigid schedule. All shows must fit in either a half-hour or a full hour time slot. One episode must air every week. Each episode must take a certain number of commercial breaks. They must be episodic, which means that every episode must be a complete story in itself, but must also maintain continuity with every other episode that has aired. There are other standards that shows typically follow, but you get the idea.

This is Roleplaying

“Freeze! Police! I shout, then charge after the suspect, and try to tackle him.” Both the Director and the actor roll some dice, then the Director says, “You both run hard, and just as he starts to pull ahead, he trips on a tree root and stumbles. You grab his shirt and you both tumble onto the ground.”

A roleplaying game is much like the old “cops and robbers” game that we used to play as children. However, instead of running around outside with toy guns, we take the game inside and sit around a table. One person is chosen to describe the setting to everyone, and to act out all the roles that no one else is playing. I'll call this person the Director. Everyone else acts out the role of one of the leading characters. The acting is done verbally and with what body language can be used while sitting at a table. The actor simply tells the Director about any physical action that his character wants to make. The Director determines the outcomes. For this, a set system of rules is introduced to keep the game balanced and to provide continuity. These rules govern how a character can perform physical actions while his player is sitting at a table. This often involves rolling dice. All roleplaying games work in this way.

As you can see, roleplaying games have their own set of commonalities and standards, just like television shows have. The details may differ from game to game, but the basic structure always remains the same.

This is Now Playing

Now Playing is a game that blends the rules and structure of both television and roleplaying into a game that plays like a roleplaying game, but feels like a TV show. It has the same basic structure as all roleplaying games. It also follows the same formats and standards that all TV shows adhere to. With *Now Playing*, you will be able to take the setting of any television show that you already know a lot about, and create and run your own episodes of the show as a roleplaying game. As you play your games, you will feel as though you are in a TV show.

The TV show that you will be playing here is called FPI. This is not a real show that you can see on TV, but has been designed specifically for Now Playing, and is included in the Now Playing rulebook.

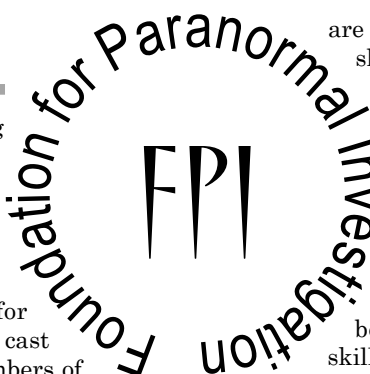
FPI stands for Foundation for Paranormal Investigation. The leading cast (the roles you all play) is made up of members of one chapter of this foundation. As members, you all have a stake in some aspect of the paranormal, whether it is ghosts, Bigfoot, UFOs, or psychic phenomena. Some of you are scientific people, trying to prove or disprove the events you investigate. Others have psychic powers, perform magic or in one way or another, exhibit paranormal behavior. Still others embrace the phenomena and simply try to learn as much about it as possible. The FPI is not a just a group of ghost busters. It is a large, international civilian organization dedicated to the study of these phenomena in an effort to uncover their mysteries.

FPI takes place in the world of today. However, whether the cast believes it or not, some elements of the paranormal do indeed exist. There may actually be an ancient aquatic reptile swimming about in the depths of Loch Ness. A bizarre creature may indeed be terrorizing people and animals in the woods of New Jersey, and the Sasquatch may be living and breeding in the wilds of North America.

It is up to you to find out what is truth and what is fantasy.

The Leading Cast

The next few pages include premade characters that



are ready to play. These are the stars of the show. Offer these characters to the players.

Let them choose the character they want to portray. Most of them are members of an FPI chapter. Two of them are guest stars that play an important role in this episode, but will most likely not appear in any subsequent episodes.

Each character has a number of traits that help to define who he is, and how he can be played. These traits include Attributes, skills, gifts and faults.

Attributes represent physical and mental abilities that help define who your character is. Attributes are generally not traits that you can increase quickly through practice, but instead increase gradually as you mature.

Skills are learned abilities that your character can improve through practice. Most require conscious effort to perform, such as Computer Use or Brawl. Others can be skills that the character has been trained to use almost by instinct, such as Notice.

Gifts are special qualities possessed by your character that can give him an advantage in the game. Some have a direct impact on the game system, and others simply add spice to the roleplaying. For instance, the Keen Eyesight gift will add a bonus to certain skill tests, where the Perfect Timing gift simply gives the Director the chance to add some theatrics to the scenes.

Faults are like negative gifts. They are traits that help describe the character, physically, mentally or socially. Some may have concrete effects on the game system, while others will make the role fun and challenging to play. All faults limit the character in one way or another. For instance, the Impulsive fault prevents the character from being cautious, and Handicap means that there is a physical problem that limits what he can do or how he can do it.

ABOUT FUDGE

Fudge is a role-playing game written by Steffan O'Sullivan, with extensive input from the Usenet community of rec.games.design. The basic rules of Fudge are available on the internet at <http://www.fudgerpg.com> and in book form from Grey Ghost Games, P.O. Box 838, Randolph, MA 02368. They may be used with any gaming genre. While an individual work derived from Fudge may specify certain attributes and skills, many more are possible with Fudge. Every Game Master using Fudge is encouraged to add or ignore any character traits. Anyone who wishes to distribute such material for free may do so - merely include this ABOUT FUDGE notice and disclaimer (complete with Fudge copyright notice). If you wish to charge a fee for such material, other than as an article in a magazine or other periodical, you must first obtain a royalty-free license from the author of Fudge, Steffan O'Sullivan, P.O. Box 465, Plymouth, NH 03264.

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Mike Malone, Private Eye

Brawn: Good **Reasoning:** Fair
Agility: Fair **Perception:** Great
Stamina: Fair **Will:** Good
Luck: 3 **Income:** Mediocre

Skills: Bluff (Mediocre), Brawl (Great), Criminology (Fair), Gun (Great), Stealth (Good), Gather Information (Great), Interrogate (Good), Intimidate (Good), Research (Fair), Run (Fair), Notice (Great), Sense Motive (Fair), Shadow (Good).

Gifts: Keen Eyesight (+1 to all sight-based Notice tests).

Faults: Bossy, Decreased Income.

Props: Flashlight, Revolver (Strength +2), Box of 50 rounds, cell phone, Swiss Army knife, pocket notebook & pen, investigation kit (fingerprinting kit, rubber gloves, etc.).

He was once a tough-as-nails police detective who worked in the homicide division of the New York Police Department. He was trying to catch a serial killer. He found the killer, but what he saw shook him to the core. The killer turned out to be some kind of bizarre creature. He shot the thing three times in the chest and back, but it ran away.

In the aftermath, Internal Affairs walked all over him. Although he was not fired, he was fed up with the process and quit. He went into business for himself as a private investigator, and soon found out about the FPI. He joined up right away. The more he could learn about this stuff, he reasoned, the better prepared he would be when he went up against another one!

Mike tends to try to take the lead in any situation, sometimes even when he does not have the right to do so. He'll just automatically assume the lead and start blurting out orders.

Christina Mariani: Mike likes Christina and has great respect for her talents. Like him, she's a person of action, ready and willing to jump in and get things done. She's also very smart, and very attractive. Although he tries to keep a professional relationship with her, he is quite taken with her. After all, an attractive woman who's personality fits his own is a hard woman to resist. But, since he has to work with her, he tries to keep things cool.

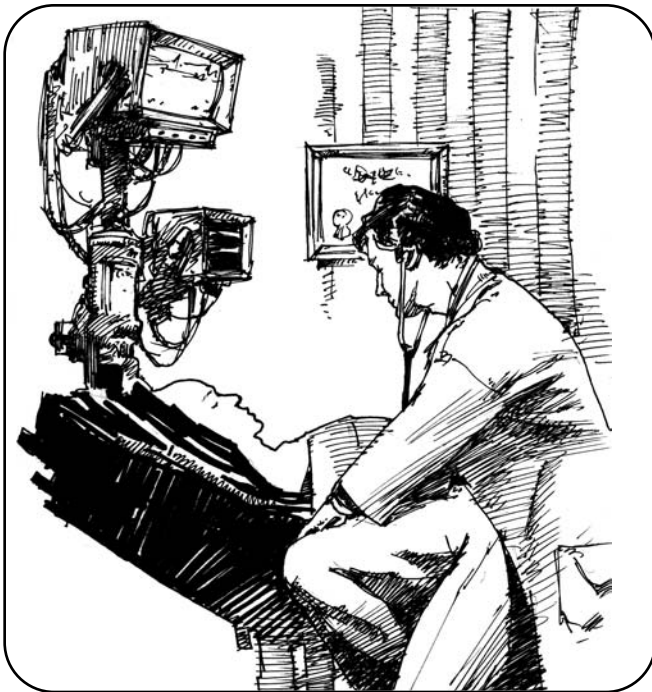
Mike feels he has to watch out for Christina. She is quite impulsive, and although she's intelligent, she has managed to get herself into deep trouble by taking unnecessary risks. He could not bear to see anything bad happen to her, and he can't prevent her from entering into dangerous situations, so he keeps close to her and acts as her protector.

Dr. David Walker: Walker's a doctor; a man of medicine and research. He has a mellow attitude, and is not quite the active person that he and Christina are. This has sometimes slowed down their investigations, but his skills have nevertheless proven quite useful.

Robert Dunn: He is familiar with Detective Dunn through his work as a private investigator. He's a down-to-earth man, which makes him a good detective. Although he tends to a bit a bit gruff, he's a good man. Actually, Mike would always prefer to work with him than with any other cop in Boston.

The Big Dig: Mike knows only what he has seen on the news and read in the paper. The Central Artery/Tunnel Project, or the Big Dig, as it is usually called, is a big project that is meant to relieve much of the traffic on the current highways that run through the city. The project includes the construction of large bridges, and the digging of several highway tunnels. A couple of these tunnels extend partly under Boston Harbor. The project has been in progress for many years, and is still years from completion. According to the news, the project is far behind schedule, and has greatly exceeded its budget. There have been people who have lobbied to have the project terminated, but at this point, it just doesn't make sense to stop.

Back plot: Mike has had no cases for weeks now when an old client, a fisherman, called Mike out to the wharf to see something he had found. It turned out to be a fish. The old fisherman claimed that he had never seen anything like it, thought that it was a prehistoric fish that somehow escaped extinction. He knew that Mike is involved with the FPI, so he gave him a call. The fish was big and pale and ugly, and did have a prehistoric look to it. But it was dead and half eaten, and Mike didn't think there was much he could do. However, it made him think of Christina, and the thought of seeing her again lifted his spirits. He agreed to have it looked at, and brought the fish to Christina's lab at the Aquarium.



Dr. David Walker, Medical Doctor

Brawn: Fair **Reasoning:** Great

Agility: Good **Perception:** Fair

Stamina: Fair **Will:** Fair

Luck: 3 **Income:** Fair

Skills: Autopsy (Great), Computer Use (Fair), Diagnosis (Good), First Aid (Great), Notice (Good), Parapsychology (Mediocre), Research (Good), Treat Injury (Great).

Gifts: Always keep your cool.

Faults: Obligation to help the injured.

Props: Medical kit, palmtop computer, cell phone, pager.

He is a doctor of medicine at a local hospital. He is very rational and clear thinking. However, he has seen things in his years as a doctor that cannot be explained by science. He became passionate about understanding these bizarre phenomena, and when he learned of the FPI he joined right away.

His primary interest in the FPI lies in medical phenomena. However, he is interested in just about any case that his chapter investigates. The more he learns about the paranormal in general, the more knowledge he will have to apply to the cases that directly concern him.

David feels a moral obligation to help those who are injured. This has caused him to miss out on important aspects of a case simply because he had chosen to stay behind to look after an injured person. However, he consid-

ers the field practice he has gotten in the FPI to be a good experience. His training has been strictly in hospitals, and performing field medicine like a paramedic is rather invigorating.

Christina Mariani: As a capable scientist, David respects her. She is also quite pleasant and helpful. However, she has a tendency to being bold and daring, and in his opinion, she spends too much time in the field, and not enough in the lab. A good scientist is grounded in research and experimentation, not in gallivanting around the globe to play with fish! Science, however intriguing, is not an adventure. David has lost count of the times that he has treated her as a result of some brave, but foolhardy adventure that she had undertaken. He just hopes that some day she'll learn to tone down the excitement, and focus on what's important.

Mike Malone: He's a cop, and there's no mistaking that. Sure, he's a private investigator now, but he used to be a cop, and he still acts it. Whenever they get into a tight situation, he always takes charge. Not that there's anything wrong with it. This team needs leadership, and so far, he's been quite good at it. Mike's a tough man, and not one to cross. David has had to treat several poor souls who got in his way; of course, each one had gotten on the wrong side of the law, and the violence was justified.

Mike seems to have special feelings for Christina, although David doesn't think that she realizes it. But David doesn't mind. In fact, it means that Mike is always there to keep her out of trouble when things get bad.

Robert Dunn: David has met him once or twice while investigating cases for the FPI, but does not know him well. He's very gruff and serious, but seems to be a fair man, even though he has opposed them on occasion, he usually had good reason.

The Big Dig: David knows only what he has seen on the news and read in the paper. The Central Artery/Tunnel Project, or the Big Dig, as it is usually called, is a big project that is meant to relieve much of the traffic on the current highways that run through the city. The project includes the construction of large bridges, and the digging of several highway tunnels. A couple of these tunnels extend partly under Boston Harbor. The project has been in progress for many years, and is still years from completion. According to the news, the project is far behind schedule, and has greatly exceeded its budget. There have been people who have lobbied to have the project terminated, but at this point, it just doesn't make sense to stop.

Back plot: Just this morning, David had gotten a call from Christina. Mike had brought a specimen to her and she said that there was something about it that she needed his opinion on. Since it was his day off, he agreed. She was in a biology lab in the Aquarium, so he drove there to see what she had for him. She and Mike were already there, looking at the specimen, which turned out to be rather interesting indeed...



Christina Mariani, Marine Biologist

Brawn: Fair **Reasoning:** Great
Agility: Fair **Perception:** Good
Stamina: Good **Will:** Good
Luck: 3 **Income:** Fair

Skills: Balance (Fair), Computer Use (Good), Concentration (Fair), Cryptozoology (Good), Drive Motorboat (Good), First Aid (Mediocre), Nature Lore (Great), Mythology (Mediocre), Notice (Fair), Photography (Good), Research (Great), Sail (Fair), Swim (Good).

Gifts: Passionate about Marine Life.

Faults: Blunt & Tactless, Impulsive.

Props: Palmtop computer, cell phone, sample jars, tweezers, small plastic bags, rubber gloves.

She is a marine biologist fresh out of college. She is very energetic and athletic, and takes a very active approach to her studies. Instead of spending most of her time in a lab, she likes to go out and study marine life in its natural habitat. Because of this, she has taken her studies to a variety of places around the world. She is an accomplished diver and feels almost more at home underwater than on land.

During her explorations, she has seen animals that she could not identify. Of course, in all cases, she never got any

proof, and therefore never went public about them. She joined the FPI so that she can attempt to learn more about these creatures and to have access to the resources she needs to gather proof.

If anyone can find adventure in the field of marine biology, it is Christina. She is bold and daring, and is not squeemish in the least. This mix tends to make her impulsive, and she will often walk right into dangerous situations without thinking about the consequences.

Whenever she feels there is something that needs to be said, she will just come right out and say it. She pays little heed to etiquette, and will come straight to the point, no matter how rude. This is not intentional, and in fact, she will never think that she said anything wrong.

Mike Malone: He's an ex-cop that still thinks he is one. He now works as a private eye, and does a good job of it. Christina mainly sees him through work with the FPI. He is every bit a man of action, and so they're always the ones to go first into danger, which happens all too often with the FPI. She knows that he likes her, but in what way, she's not sure. He obviously respects her for her skills and her active nature, but she's not certain if there's anything more to it.

Dr. David Walker: Walker's a doctor; a man of medicine and research. He has a mellow attitude. This has sometimes slowed down their investigations, but his skills have nevertheless proven quite useful.

Detective Robert Dunn: Detective Dunn has called on her several times to get more information regarding shark attacks and other such cases. He's got a gruff personality, but is a good man, and treats her with respect.

The Big Dig: Christina knows only what he has seen on the news and read in the paper. The Central Artery/Tunnel Project, or the Big Dig, as it is usually called, is a big project that is meant to relieve much of the traffic on the current highways that run through the city. The project includes the construction of large bridges, and the digging of several highway tunnels. A couple of these tunnels extend partly under Boston Harbor. The project has been in progress for many years, and is still years from completion. According to the news, the project is far behind schedule, and has greatly exceeded its budget. There have been people who have lobbied to have the project terminated, but at this point, it just doesn't make sense to stop.

Back plot: Early this morning, Mike had brought a specimen to her that an acquaintance had given him. It was a large, dead fish that was half eaten. The man who gave it to Mike said it might be prehistoric, and so he brought it to her. It might be, but she'll have to check. What caught her attention, though, was that the bite marks did not look like any sea creature she had ever seen. She thought Dr. Walker might be able to find out what made the bite marks. She called him, and he has just arrived.



Detective Robert Dunn

Brawn: Good **Reasoning:** Fair
Agility: Fair **Perception:** Great
Stamina: Fair **Will:** Fair
Luck: 3 **Income:** Fair

Skills: Area Knowledge (Good), Brawl (Good), Criminology (Fair), Dodge (Fair), Drive Car (Fair), Gather Information (Fair), Gun (Good), Interrogate (Fair), Notice (Good), Research (Good), Run (Good), Sense Motive (Fair), Shadow (Good), Stealth (Good), Surveillance (Fair).

Gifts: Keen Sense of Hearing (+1 to all hearing-based Notice tests).

Faults: Stubborn.

Props: Investigation kit (rubber gloves, fingerprinting tools, etc.), revolver, box of 50 rounds, speed loader, cell phone, notebook & pen, mini flashlight.

Robert Dunn is a tough cop. He grew up in the Boston area, and knows his way around town better than most people. He's also as stubborn as he is tough. When he makes a decision, there is no arguing with him, no matter how strong the opposing argument.

He has been with the department for 12 years, and has seen just about everything. He loves Boston, and loves

being a cop there. He is a down-to-earth man who does not believe in the paranormal or anything weird like that. However, when faced with overwhelming evidence, he may be persuaded. In most cases, though, the most you could hope for is an admission that he has no idea what it is, but that it is probably explainable.

Dunn has had run-ins with the local chapter of the FPI, and is not overly fond of them. It's not that he dislikes them, it's that he distrusts them. Several times, he has caught them trespassing and nosing about crime scenes under the pretense of investigating ghosts or some such nonsense. They have never made more than the least of infractions, but it is enough to make Dunn cautious.

Christina Mariani: She is a marine biologist who does work for the Aquarium. He has consulted with her on several occasions regarding shark attacks and other cases involving sea life. She's young, beautiful and smart, which always makes it interesting dealing with her. But she really knows her stuff, and her enthusiasm can't be beat. She has gone with him on several occasions to inspect shark bites and the corpses of sharks to see if they were the culprits of attacks. She has no qualms about cutting open a shark and sifting through its stomach contents, which had just spilled out on the dock by her feet. Dunn always found that impressive about her. He knows that she works for the FPI, but that hasn't hurt their working relationship any.

Mike Malone: He's an ex-cop from New York that is now working as a private eye. He's tough and smart, and has got great cop instincts. If it weren't for his connection with that FPI group, Dunn would be more trusting of him. As it is, Malone has come damn close to crossing the line of the law while acting as a member of FPI. That has made Dunn cautious in his dealings with the man.

Dr. David Walker: Walker's a doctor at one of the hospitals here in Boston. He's run into him once or twice, and he seems to be a decent man.

The Big Dig: Mike knows only what he has seen on the news and read in the paper. The Central Artery/Tunnel Project, or the Big Dig, as it is usually called, is a big project that is meant to relieve much of the traffic on the current highways that run through the city. The project includes the construction of large bridges, and the digging of several highway tunnels. A couple of these tunnels extend partly under Boston Harbor. The project has been in progress for many years, and is still years from completion. According to the news, the project is far behind schedule, and has greatly exceeded its budget. There have been people who have lobbied to have the project terminated, but at this point, it just doesn't make sense to stop.

Back plot: For the past two nights, workers have been disappearing from the unfinished William Turner Tunnel during the overnight shift. So far, none of them have been found and there are few clues. Dunn has been assigned to the case, and must spend tonight in the tunnel watching to see if anything happens.



Matt Hawkins, Investigative Reporter

Brawn: Fair **Reasoning:** Fair
Agility: Good **Perception:** Great
Stamina: Fair **Will:** Good
Luck: 3 **Income:** Fair

Skills: Area Knowledge (Good), Brawl (Mediocre), Climb (Fair), Direction Sense (Fair), Disguise (Fair), Dodge (Fair), Folklore (Mediocre), Forgery (Fair), Gather Information (Great), Notice (Great), Photography (Good), Pick Lock (Fair), Read Lips (Fair), Research (Good), Run (Fair), Shadow (Fair), Stealth (Good), Swim (Fair).

Gifts: Perfect Timing (the Director can make sure you're at the right place at the right time, whenever it makes good theatrical sense).

Faults: Ambitious, Curious.

Props: Handheld tape recorder, 2 blank tapes, cell phone, notebook & pen, camera, 4 rolls of film, fake ID.

He has always wanted to be an investigative reporter ever since he was a kid. He would rat on his friends all the time just to be the one to "get the story." This has not made him very popular with his peers, but he never really cared much about that.

He graduated from Boston University with a double degree in Broadcasting and Journalism. He got a job in the Channel 12 news department, first as a journalist, writing the stories that the anchors read. That was not enough, though. One day, he snuck onto a crime scene and got the inside scoop on a very controversial police case. He recorded it himself and showed it to his boss. He's been an investigative reporter ever since.

Matt commonly uses unethical methods to get his sto-

ries. He has disguised himself and posed as various officials to get onto a crime scene, and has taken advantage of people to further his own ends. Nothing gets in the way of his ambitions. In short, he's a jerk—a very successful one!

Matt has become almost obsessed with the FPI. He has bumped into them on a few occasions, and found that they draw good stories to them like magnets. He keeps tabs on them, spying on them every now and then to see what they're up to. They're a big organization, with money and resources in other countries. Matt suspects that there's more to them than just a bunch of ghost hunters...something more sinister!

Detective Robert Dunn: He's a Boston cop. That's all there is to him, really. He's tough and rough, and doesn't like the paparazzi. Matt always has to be careful when Dunn's on the job.

Christina Mariani: She is a marine biologist who does work for the Aquarium, and a member of the Foundation for Paranormal Investigation. She's gorgeous and spunky. Someday, Matt will make a more pro-active investigation of this group, and Christina will be his way in...through her pants, if he gets his way!

Mike Malone: He's an ex-cop from New York that is now working as a private eye. He's tough and smart, and is Matt's biggest stumbling block in his investigation of the FPI. Malone is tough and doesn't take kind to people poking around. However, he's also a great person to watch, as he's always stirring up trouble with the group.

Dr. David Walker: Walker's a doctor at one of the hospitals here in Boston. You've seen him working with Malone and Mariani, so you assume he's a member of the FPI, but you don't know what his involvement really is.

The Big Dig: Matt knows only what he has seen on the news and read in the paper. The Central Artery/Tunnel Project, or the Big Dig, as it is usually called, is a big project that is meant to relieve much of the traffic on the current highways that run through the city. The project includes the construction of large bridges, and the digging of several highway tunnels. A couple of these tunnels extend partly under Boston Harbor. The project has been in progress for many years, and is still years from completion. According to the news, the project is far behind schedule, and has greatly exceeded its budget. There have been people who have lobbied to have the project terminated, but at this point, it just doesn't make sense to stop.

Back plot: Matt was hanging around the wharfs of Boston Harbor this morning, looking for something interesting to happen, when he spotted Malone talking with a fisherman. The fisherman handed him a large package and Malone went off, looking serious. Knowing Malone's tendency to generate good stories, Matt followed him. Malone drove to the Aquarium and went in a side entrance. It's about an hour before the Aquarium opens, but the private eye was let in. Matt could not get in yet, so he sat in his car within sight of the door, and watched and waited.

The Rules

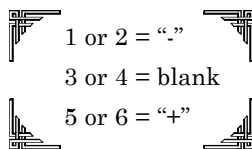
Most of the time during the game, you will just be playing your roles. You will act out the situations as your character, while remaining seated at the table. However, there will be times when game rules are needed to resolve situations. For instance, any time you take an action that has a chance of failure, a game rule must be used to determine the outcome. After all, your skill in handling the task is only one factor in the outcome. Random chance plays a big role. That's where the game rules come in.

Whether you are using a skill, an attribute, or are attacking someone, you are performing a task. All tasks involve rolling dice to generate a number, then increasing the level of the appropriate trait by the number of the dice roll. This section describes the details of how to perform a task, as well as how to deal with the results.

Fudge Dice and Alternatives

Fudge Dice are special six-sided dice that have symbols on them instead of numbers. On each die, two sides are blank, two have a plus sign "+" and two have a minus sign "-". Fudge dice are available at any gaming store, as well as online at <http://www.fudgerpg.com/>.

If you cannot find Fudge dice, you can use normal six-sided dice, but you would need to do a simple conversion on each roll. Simply apply the following conversion:



Making a Test

Whenever you attempt to do something that has a chance of failure, you make a test.

To make a test, roll four Fudge Dice. Add all of the pluses "+" together, and then subtract all of the minuses "-". Ignore the blanks. The result is your test modifier. Then, raise or lower your trait level by the amount of your test modifier. The formula for determining the level of the test is as follows:


$$\text{Result} = \text{Trait Level} + \text{Test Mod}$$

The levels, and the order that they are in, are listed below:

Example: John is using his Paleontology skill to identify the dinosaur that he sees grazing in a nearby field. He

Trait Levels and Modifiers	
Level	Modifier
Legendary	+4
Superb	+3
Great	+2
Good	+1
Fair	0
Mediocre	-1
Poor	-2
Terrible	-3

rolls four Fudge dice, resulting in two pluses, one minus and one blank. He subtracts the one minus from the two pluses, which equals a +1 modifier. His Paleontology skill is Good. Adding +1 to Good makes the roll a Great, so he has made a Great Paleontology skill test. The Director had already decided that it is an obscure dinosaur and had set the Difficulty Level at Great. John barely managed to identify the dinosaur.

Difficulty Level

The Difficulty Level is the level that your test must match or exceed in order to be successful. For instance, if the Difficulty Level of your Drive Car skill test is Great, then your test must equal Great or Superb (or even higher) in order to succeed.

Opposed vs. Unopposed Tests

A task can be either opposed or unopposed. An opposed task is one where someone else has the opportunity to stop or counter your attempt. With an unopposed task, there is no one who can try to stop you. In an opposed test, the defending character makes a skill test to determine the Difficulty Level. The Director decides on a Difficulty Level for an unopposed test.

Using Attributes

Most tasks can be accomplished with the use of a skill. Now Playing comes with a very large list of available skills. Most skills default to a certain level. This means that even if you do not have the skill, you can still make tests against it. For the sake of this demo, you can assume that any skill that you don't already have defaults to Poor.

If you have an Attribute whose level is Good or better, all skills that are related to that Attribute will default to one level better than its normal default.

Sometimes an Attribute is the most appropriate trait to use for a particular task. In these cases, you may make your test directly against it. For instance, if you wanted to lift a very heavy object, you would make a Brawn test since

there are no skills associated with lifting. Make these tests the same way that you make skill tests.

Combat

Combat in Now Playing works very much like any other skill test. The attacker makes a skill test with the weapon he is using and the defender opposes that test with an appropriate defensive skill. For instance, if Jack is shooting a revolver at Joe, Jack would make an opposed Handgun skill test against Joe's Dodge test.

Combat is necessarily more complex than a simple skill test, though, as it must handle offensive and defensive maneuvers, wounds, and even death. Because each character's life is on the line, a certain set procedure must be defined in order to ensure that combat is handled fairly. The rest of this section explains the rules for handling combat.

Initiative

This determines the order in which the characters may act. To determine the initiative order, everyone who is actively ready to enter combat must make an Agility test. The person with the highest roll goes first, followed by the next highest, and so on. This includes the Supporting Cast (the Director may choose to roll once for all Supporting Characters for simplicity). If there are any ties, those characters will act simultaneously. Once all the Agility tests have been made, the Director makes a list of each character, starting with the one who rolled highest, and going down from there.

The Attack Roll

When making an attack, the two combatants make opposed tests. The attacker makes a test using the most appropriate skill for the weapon, such as Gun. The defender makes a defensive test with whatever trait seems most appropriate. If the attacker's test wins, then the attack was successful.

The Director may give each combatant a situation modifier, based on the difficulty of the attack or defense, and any other factors that may apply to the situation.

A simple attack roll can be illustrated as follows:

$$\text{Attack Test} + \text{Modifiers vs. Defense Test} + \text{Modifiers}$$

Determining Damage

Once an attack has succeeded, the Director must determine how badly hurt the victims are. The amount of dam-

age dealt is determined by the following formula:

$$\text{Damage} = \text{RD} + \text{OF} - \text{DF}$$

Relative Degree (RD)

This is the difference between the two opposed tests (the attack and defense rolls). This determines just how good a hit the attack was.

Offensive Factor (OF)

This is the sum of all damage modifiers. The most common Offensive Factors are described below:

Brawn: When the attack was made with a strength-based weapon (fist, sword, club, etc.), your Brawn is added as an Offensive Factor (see the table "Trait Levels and Modifiers").

Weapon Strength: Most weapons have a strength modifier that represents the damage it causes beyond the Brawn of the wielder. For instance, guns will do great damage without the aid of the wielder's Brawn, and a sword's sharpness will also increase the amount of damage caused.

Defensive Factor (DF)

This is the sum of all defensive modifiers. For instance, armor does not prevent you from being hit in combat. Instead, it merely absorbs some of the damage of the blow. The bonuses for any armor that the blow struck will be applied as Defensive Factors.

Recording Your Wounds

The final result of the damage formula is the number of wounds taken by the victim. To determine the level and severity of the wound, consult the table "Wounds" below. Simply find where the amount of damage taken (the result of the above formula) fits in the table in the Damage row. That would indicate the level of injury. Place a letter that represents the injury level in one of the circles of that column ("S" for Scratch, "L" for Light Wound, etc.).

Wound Overflow

Let's say that in the above example, Mike had already received one Light Wound, and has now been dealt one more Light Wound. On his character sheet, the circle for Light Wound is already filled. Therefore, he must put his mark in the next available circle upward, which would be a Severe Wound. He would write an "L" in a circle under Severe Wound. He still puts the "L" in there because the injury is technically still a Light Wound, and since Light Wounds heal more easily than Severe Wounds, it is impor-

tant to keep track. This is how your wounds can add up. After all, if you're already badly hurt, a simple light wound could be all it takes to kill you!

Wound Levels and Their Effects

There are five different levels of wounds: Scratch, Light Wound, Severe Wound, Incapacitated, and Near Death. Each one has its own meaning and effects. These wound levels are described below:

Scratch

A Scratch is a wound that is so small that it is not much concern. A graze from a gunshot, or some other minor injury would constitute a Scratch. You can survive a few of these injuries without effort, but they do add up.

All scratches heal automatically after the scene in which you receive them.

Light Wound

This is a serious wound, serious enough to have an impact on the performance of your tasks. The Director must decide on the type of injury and add a -1 penalty to all traits that would be affected by the injury. For instance, a sprained ankle or knee would result in penalties toward Agility and any skill that requires the use of your legs, such as Jump and Climb.

Alternatively, if the Director does not want to deal with that level of complexity, a -1 penalty can be applied to all tests.

Light wounds require a successful First Aid or Treat Injury skill test to heal. If the Director chooses, proper medical equipment could be required, but this isn't necessary, since television is rarely that detailed.

A Good skill result will heal all wounds of this type by one level. This means a Light Wound is healed completely or a Severe Wound becomes only a Light Wound. A Great result will heal two levels and a Superb will heal three.

Healing light wounds takes some time. About an hour or two of rest and care will be needed to heal these wounds.

Severe Wound

This is a nasty wound, and will have a drastic effect on you. The Director must decide on the type of injury and apply a -2 penalty to all traits that would logically be affected.

Alternatively, if the Director does not want to deal with that level of complexity, a -2 penalty can be applied to all tests.

Severe wounds heal the same as Light wounds.

Incapacitated

The injury is so severe that you are unable to act. You may still be conscious, and be able to think, but even speaking will be tough and reduced to gasps and hoarse croaks.

Any attempt to do even simple tasks, such as crawling, opening a door, or grabbing an item will require a Stamina test. The Difficulty Level will be at least Good, but could be higher depending on the task being taken and the circumstances around it. A failed Stamina test means that you fall and possibly pass out for 1 to 3 rounds (roll a Fudge die and treat a minus as 1, blank as 2 and plus as 3).

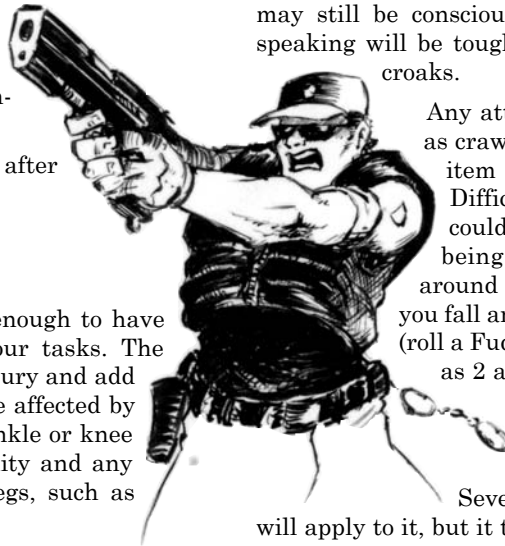
This type of injury requires more care. The same rules apply for Incapacitated as for Light and Severe wounds, and the same skill test will apply to it, but it takes more time. A minimum of four hours is required to heal an Incapacitated wound, and the patient will remain incapacitated for at least half that time.

Near Death

Not only are you unconscious, but you will die within one hour (and possibly less) without medical help. No one recovers from Near Death without aid.

This requires hospitalization. A Fair First Aid or Treat Injury skill test will stabilize the injury so that you will not die, but the wound will remain as Near Death until you receive full hospital care.

A stabilized wound that does not receive proper treatment will need stabilization again in four hours. Each time, the Difficulty Level will increase by one.



Damage:	1, 2	3, 4	5, 6	7, 8	9+
Wound:	Scratch	Light Wound	Severe Wound	Incapacitated	Near Death
# Taken:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

"The Big Dig"

An Episode of FPI

CONFIDENTIAL: FOR THE DIRECTOR'S EYES ONLY

The Setting

The Big Dig

The Central Artery/Tunnel Project has been hotly disputed ever since construction began. Schedules have slipped and the project has exceeded its budget, not to mention the havoc the construction has caused the traffic in Boston, Massachusetts. However, the project, when completed, will greatly reduce the congestion of traffic in the city, which is why it is still underway today. The project has been nicknamed "The Big Dig" because of the sheer scale of the project, and the amount of time, money and effort that it requires.

This episode of FPI takes place in Boston when one of the tunnels is still under construction. Although the Big Dig itself is real, the particular tunnel used in this episode is not. The tunnel extends under Boston Harbor, and is currently unfinished. The mining is still underway approximately one half mile under the harbor.

Back Plot

It is October 26, 2003. Each of the past two nights now, a construction worker on the Big Dig tunnel project in Boston has disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Detective Robert Dunn has been assigned the case, and he is under a lot of pressure to get this matter resolved quickly so that the dig can continue. The project has been behind schedule for some time now, and the delay has caused quite a controversy. Those in power in the city government are anxious to get the project back on schedule, and this new development can severely mess with that schedule.

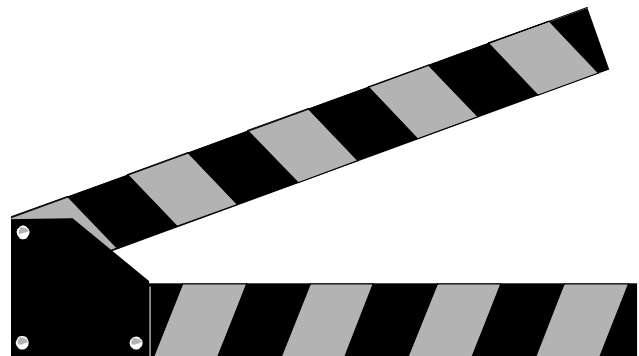
A bizarre creature has been trapped in an ancient cave that is currently buried under Boston Harbor. Once, the cave was accessible to the mainland, but the centuries have caused it to become submerged. An ancient tribe of primitive people who worshipped strange deities once used the cave. Evidence of their presence is scattered throughout it. The creature, the very creature that these ancient people had worshipped, is trapped in a network of underwater caves below the first cave. A well in the upper cave gives access to the caves below. During high tide, the well overflows and floods the cave, allowing the creature to come out to feed.

The tunneling of the Big Dig has disturbed this creature's home. The drilling of the hydraulic mining rigs causes enough vibrations to shake the walls and loosen dirt. The noise this causes is almost deafening to the creature. The creature wants the drilling stopped.

When the drainage tunnels were made for the highway tunnel, they came very close to breaking through to the cave. The vibrations of the drilling have recently broken a hole in the wall, allowing access to the old cave from one of these drainage tunnels.

In addition to wanting the drilling stopped, the creature also wants to feed and now has the opportunity to hunt prey that is much larger and more satisfying than the fish and small sea life that has been its diet.

For the past two nights, it has slipped into the highway tunnel and taken one worker as its prey. It always focuses on the drill operators, since they are the ones responsible for most of the noise and vibration. It will strike again tonight, but will not be quite as successful as usual.



A Word to the Wise

This is the demo of a game, and is therefore a work of fiction. Although the places in which the episode takes place are real, the characters, creatures and events are purely fictional. Any resemblance to real people and events are purely coincidental. No one who will be likely to take this game seriously should play it! This is a game of acting for entertainment, and that is all.

Future Events

Almost every event that takes place during the course of this episode will be completely based on the actions and decisions of the cast and the actors playing them, including the Director. However, there is the creature, and there are the workers. You may need to change their behavior somewhat to account for the events that the cast causes, but they both have specific plans, and will try to make them happen if possible.

The Creature: The creature is going to continue trying to take victims as long as it thinks it can get away with it. It will also try to stop the drilling. Eventually, it will realize that it cannot stop it, and will try to escape into the harbor. It likes to single out its prey, and it will flee if faced with a hard fight. Its forte is in stealth and ambush, and it will not risk a situation where it cannot use those tactics.

The Workers: They are under pressure to get back on schedule, and stay on schedule. The foreman on duty will always try to keep as much work going as possible. He can always find new workers to operate the drilling rigs, and any attempt to shut them down, even for a day, will meet with resistance. Detective Dunn can tape off the crime scenes and halt the use of any equipment involved in the case, but the foreman will protest and will report the problem to his superiors. Dunn may get overruled, but it would take a bit of time. In the meantime, work will continue around the crime scenes if at all possible.

The Scenes

Each scene is when each section of the story is acted out. In most cases, there will be one scene for each of the sets that are described in the demo.

The only scenes that can be described in this demo are the opening scenes. That is because the actors cannot affect what happens before these scenes begin. You have complete control over how the episode begins. However, once a scene begins, and the cast starts interacting in it, you lose full control over the story. The only way you can influence the story is by manipulating the supporting cast, the events, and the environment.

You must make up the rest of the scenes as you go along. To help you out, all of the sets, or locations, that are likely to be used in the scenes are described. These descriptions will help you run the scenes and keep the flow going.

Where to Start?

The first scene that you should run is the Teaser. This will introduce the setting, plot and the character of Detective Dunn. He should be strongly encouraged to visit with Christina Mariani. If he chooses not to, you should find another way to get them involved, such as by having the foreman contact her. You can say that Christina is a close friend of Frank Barrows' family (see Supporting Cast

at the end of this demo), and so he thinks of her right away.

The second scene should be Scene 1, where Christina and Mike Malone are introduced. From there, they may choose to perform or watch the autopsy, or go to the tunnel itself. There is a possibility that they will think of something unexpected, and you will have to roll with it.

The third scene should be Scene 2, where Hawkins is introduced. What he does and where he goes from there is completely up to him, but this will get him started.

The Facts of the Case

The following is a summary of the facts of the case. Detective Dunn has done an initial investigation into the disappearances, but has not come up with much. The first list summarizes all of the facts that Dunn has determined by the start of the episode. The rest have yet to be discovered.

What Detective Dunn Has Discovered

Two workers have disappeared. The first was two nights ago, and the other happened last night.

The only thing that the victims have in common is that they both operated the hydraulic miners, although each had operated a different one.

Both workers left items behind, which implies that either they meant to return shortly, or they were abducted.

The Opening Scenes

Teaser: Excitement at the Big Dig

William Turner Tunnel

Boston, MA

October 26, 2003

2:16 AM

Detective Robert Dunn, you are standing outside, breathing in the brisk October air. The crisp sea air is refreshing after the stuffiness of the tunnels below. You've wasted the last two hours in the unfinished highway tunnel whose entrance you now stand by. Two construction workers have disappeared from the tunnel, and you have been assigned the job of finding out what happened to them. In one hand you hold a cigarette, and in the other a cup of coffee. You had taken a break from the claustrophobic chaos of the tunnel construction site to have a butt and a drink in the relative quiet of the tunnel entrance. The noise inside is deafening, and you are glad to take the heavy-duty ear muffers off your head.

Suddenly, an electric car drives up, the throbbing hum betraying its approach. A worker climbs out of the driver's seat and runs to greet you. He looks anxious.

"Detective, Barrows needs you. He said it's an emergency."

Frank Barrows is the foreman on duty tonight, and is Dunn's primary contact.

The worker knows very little about the emergency. He had just driven up with a mining loader, when he saw workers leaving their rigs to rush toward one of the miners. When he left his own rig to see what the problem was, Barrows spotted him and sent him to get Dunn. The worker will insist that he come right away.

The unfinished tunnel is dank, musty, and dirty. Large floodlights illuminated the place, casting eerie shadows all around. The further they drive into the tunnel, the rougher and dirtier their surroundings become. Here, the walls are bare of tiles and are made up of dirt and concrete. Machines are busy digging, as they are round the clock. The mad rush for completion is hard felt in the bowels of the tunnel, and everyone is on edge. You feel you could cut the tension with a knife.

As you approach the end of the tunnel where the mining is underway, you can tell something is wrong. Although the noise of construction in this tight space is almost deafening, it is not nearly as loud as it had been only fifteen minutes ago when you left the tunnel. Several of the large construction vehicles are not running, and a crowd of people is huddled around one spot near one of the hydraulic miners.

As you approach, Barrows tells his men to make room. You can see the body of a worker lying in a heap on the ground. His hardhat is missing, and his face is twisted in an expression of pain and terror. The lifeless look in his eyes show that he is dead, and the strange circular marks on his neck tell you that this is no ordinary mining accident!

[CUT TO OPENING CREDITS]

End the scene here. This scene must be kept short and end on a climax for it to work. This is for two reasons:

1. This is the teaser, and as such, it always must be short and climactic. Also, the climax must properly introduce the plot.

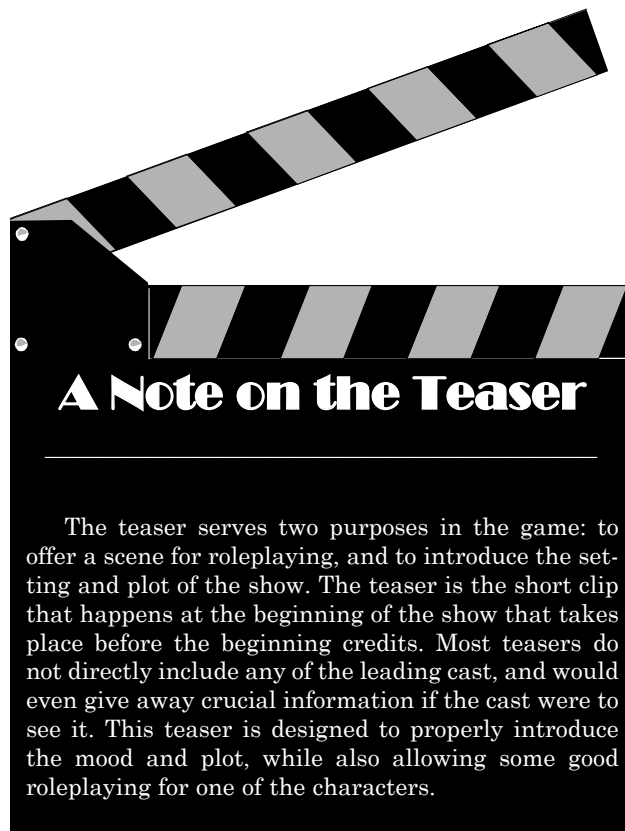
2. This scene involves only one actor. By the time you reach this point, the other actors will be starting to get bored. You must switch scenes frequently when the cast is split up to keep them all focused and having fun.

Before switching scenes, have Dunn make one Notice skill test. This will serve as his initial investigation of the crime scene. Tell him that he has had the area around the body cordoned off, along with the miner that the victim had

been operating.

The results of his Notice test will determine what clues he finds. The following table lists the clues that are found for each level that the test made. For instance, if he rolled a Good, then he will have found all the clues from Good down to Terrible.

You should remind Detective Dunn about how high profile the Big Dig is, and about the amount of pressure he's getting to resolve the case quickly and quietly.



A Note on the Teaser

The teaser serves two purposes in the game: to offer a scene for roleplaying, and to introduce the setting and plot of the show. The teaser is the short clip that happens at the beginning of the show that takes place before the beginning credits. Most teasers do not directly include any of the leading cast, and would even give away crucial information if the cast were to see it. This teaser is designed to properly introduce the mood and plot, while also allowing some good roleplaying for one of the characters.

Scene 2: A New Case

New England Aquarium

Marine Biology Lab

Boston, MA

October 26, 2003

9:00 AM

The specialized lab at New England Aquarium is where Christina Mariani does most of her work when she is not on location. It has long, heavy wooden tables with a variety of biology equipment. Two tables along one wall house computers. The printers are along an adjacent wall. The computers are connected to the university's network, and have Internet access.

Christina, Mike Malone, and Dr. David Walker are now huddled around one of the tables. A large dead fish is lying unceremoniously on it. Malone and Walker are both staring at fish with looks of both interest and disgust. The fish is pale and ugly, and it smells bad. A friend of Malone's had brought the fish to him, thinking it was a prehistoric specimen that had somehow escaped extinction. Malone had brought it to Christina to identify. Walker happened to be with her, so they are all now waiting for Christina.

Have Christina make a Nature Lore skill test. A result of Fair or better identifies the fish as a Coffinfish, a rare, bottom-dwelling fish. It is neither prehistoric nor thought to be extinct. In other words, it's nothing special. A result below Fair makes her find out that it is a bottom-dwelling fish, and makes her suspicious, but not positive, that it is not anything extraordinary.

At that moment, the door opens and a man enters. He's wearing a trench coat, is unshaven and looks quite tired. However, his manner is one that commands attention. He is driven, and is obviously here on an important matter. Christina and Malone recognize him immediately as Detective Robert Dunn, of Boston PD's Robbery/Homicide division.

Scene 3: A Curious Stalker

New England Aquarium

Marine Biology Lab

Boston, MA

October 26, 2003

9:00 AM

Matt Hawkins, this morning, you have followed the Private Eye Mike Malone all around Boston. You weren't certain at the time, but you thought he was working on another of those FPI cases. So, you followed him to a wharf, where he spoke with a fisherman. The seaman gave him a large package and then Malone left, and went straight to the Aquarium. You're there now, hanging out by the side entrance, where employees enter, and where you saw Malone go in less than an hour ago. You feel sure now that he's on a case of the paranormal, since he went to one of Christina Mariani's haunts. Mariani is another member of that strange group of ghost hunters, and the fact that they're together cinches it.

You suddenly notice a car pull up and a familiar man in a tan trench coat gets out and enters the building through the side door. It is Detective Robert Dunn, from Robbery/Homicide. Things just got a bit more interesting!

Hawkins does not have access to the employee's sections of the Aquarium, and would have to pay to enter

through the main entrance. Also, the Aquarium does not open for business until 10:00AM.

If he hangs out, he'll see the others leave when they complete their business at the Aquarium. It should be made obvious to Hawkins that he will need to get "in" with them and work closely with them. You can let Hawkins figure out how, or you can give him some hints to make sure he does. The game might not flow well if Hawkins remains separated.

The Sets

These are the locations where the scenes described in this demo take place. Once beyond the opening scenes, you cannot fully control the flow of the show. The actors have as much influence on the story as you do. Because of this, we cannot describe the scenes here in the demo. The best we can do is to describe the various sets that the scenes are liable to take place in, and to describe how the supporting cast is going to behave.

Set 1: Foreman's office

This is really just a trailer sitting above ground on the tunnel construction site. It has a desk, some filing cabinets, a drafting table, a small refrigerator, a couch and some chairs. All tabletops are covered in papers. On his desk is a newspaper that has a front-page article about the Big Dig's schedule issues.

Set 2: City Morgue

The body of Bob Harris, one of the workers who died, was sent to one of the many morgues located in Boston, where an autopsy is planned for that day. If the cast decides to watch or participate in the autopsy, you can adjust the time of the autopsy so that they will not miss it.

The examination room looks like any medical examination room. There are counters along the walls, all loaded with medical equipment. Near the center of the room sits a large metal examination table. A metal tray sits beside it, which is loaded with scalpels, clamps and other tools required for the autopsy. Mr. Harris' body is lying on the table, its vacant eyes staring at the lighted ceiling.

The doctor assigned to do the autopsy will agree to step down if Dr. Walker wants to do it.

The doctor must make an Autopsy skill test to complete the procedure. The result of the test will determine what he learns from it. Consult the table below to decide what is learned. The table below tells how many clues to hand out.

Autopsy Results

Clue	Autopsy Result
Toxicology found a thin, clear chemical substance in the bloodstream. A sample has been sent to the lab for analysis.*	Good
Signs of stress on the skin and muscles of the neck and head indicate that the thing that was wrapped around the deceased's neck had held the subject tightly, and that it had supported the weight of his body.	Fair
The bite mark appears to have been caused by a human jaw.	Poor
Circular marks on the neck are consistent with the application of suction to the skin.	Always
There is a bite mark on the subject's left shoulder. It has taken a chunk of flesh from the victim's shoulder.	Always
The cause of death was a broken neck.	Always
There are many bruises on the body, indicating a fall from a high place.	Always

* The results should be given about an hour later, or during an appropriately theatrical moment. The neurotoxin maculotoxin was found in the deceased's bloodstream. Christina can identify that the Blue Ring Octopus uses that venom to capture its prey. A Good Nature Lore skill test will be enough to make that identification.

Unfinished tunnel

This is the site where the disappearances occurred. The tunnel is extremely wide, and will eventually house three lanes of traffic. Large floodlights on tall stands bathe the tunnel in an artificial glow. Several large construction trucks sit in position. One is designed to attach large slabs of tile on the tunnel walls. Another has a spiked ball device for digging and mining.

The workers are active in this tunnel twenty-four hours a day. The place is bustling and loud, very loud. Dozens of men and women wearing hard hats and heavy work clothes are busy operating the variety of machinery in the place.

Anyone entering the tunnel is required to wear a hard hat and goggles, and a member of the construction crew must accompany anyone who does not work here.

Crime Scene

This area is at the very end of the tunnel, where two large mining machines have been digging constantly since the project was started. Front loaders are waiting behind them to carry the dirt away.

One of the miners, the one on the left-hand side, is not running, while the other is. Police tape extends from the wall being mined to the right of the miner, and encircles the machine. The tape extends thirty feet to the left of the miner before connecting itself once again to the end of the tunnel. Two police officers in hardhats guard the area just outside of the tape. On the ground inside the tape, approximately thirteen feet to the left of the miner, the white outline of a human body has been marked on the ground.

Bob Callahan, the day shift foreman, is upset about the situation. He wants the area cleared and the miner working. They're behind schedule as it is, and this is only mak-

ing matters worse. His superiors have already chewed him out, and he intends to dish out the same to the detective. However, as much as he will want to blow off steam, he wants the case solved and his men safe, so he will help.

Access Tunnel

Along the left hand wall of the tunnel, there are doors spaced evenly apart every quarter mile. These doors open onto a five-foot-wide passageway. This passageway was designed as an access passage for maintenance people. There are several storage rooms off the passage, their doors currently left unlocked. Each room is sparsely filled with various tools used by the tunnel workers.

One room in particular, the last one before reaching the unfinished end of the tunnel, has very little in it. There is a drainage manhole in the center of the floor. It is through this that the creature comes out into the tunnel. Anyone who is searching the room for clues will find traces of the creature's transparent goo on and near the manhole cover with a Notice skill test of Good or better. If the actor says he is specifically searching the manhole cover, he will notice the goo automatically.

Drainage Tunnel

This tunnel has no light and is short and narrow. It is only five feet high, so anyone in it must bend over. The manholes in the maintenance rooms above give access to this tunnel via a metal ladder down a circular chute. The tunnel is currently about knee deep in water.

This is not a sewer, but is simply drainage for any seawater that may get into the tunnel. Therefore, it is filled with very dirty seawater. The tunnel is new, as is everything here at the dig, but is still quite dirty. It runs

Crime Scene Clues

Clue	Notice Result
The deceased was found on the ground 13' to the left of his miner, which was still running.	Always
The deceased was not found until the other miner operator noticed that the victim's miner was running, but not digging.	Always
A clear, viscous goo is on the deceased's neck, shoulders and head.	Always
Marks like hickeys, about the size and shape of a quarter, exist at regular intervals around the neck.	Always
A clipboard with the deceased's work schedule is on a shelf to the right of the chair of his miner. A bag lunch is there as well.	Always
There are many footprints of workers around the body and his miner, but none appear out of the ordinary.	Poor
There is a bite mark on the deceased's left shoulder. A chunk of flesh has been bitten out.	Poor
The deceased's body was still warm, so the time of death was very recent.	Fair
The position of the body and the stress marks on the neck and shoulders make you think that the deceased was hanged by the neck above the ground, and then dropped some distance.	Good
Traces of the goo can be found on the arm of the miner rig, going like a trail all the way up its length.	Superb
Traces of the goo can be found on the floor of the miner's cockpit to the right of the chair.	Legendary*
Drops of goo extend in a line from the tip of the miner's arm to the door to the access tunnel.	Great**

* Reduced to Great after initial investigation

** This should not be found during the initial investigation. It is a clue to bring out much later on. The person investigating must be in a position that can expose this clue.

straight in both directions. One way, toward the unfinished end of the tunnel, is cut short. The other goes quite a long way and eventually empties into Boston Harbor outside. It curves to the right about a quarter of a mile down from the entrance closest to the crime scene.

If you feel you need some action to keep things exciting, you can have the creature attack the lead person while in this tunnel. It will grab him by his legs and drag him away. It will remain in the water, and no one will get a good look at it. It will not kill the victim right away, but will bite him (see the creature's description to see how its venom works). Any attempt to shoot it will be at a -3 due to the darkness and water. If it was successfully dragging away a victim, the shooter will suffer an additional -1 to the attack roll. If the shot failed by 1, then the shot hit the creature's victim. The creature will take the captive back to the cave system. It will leave the victim paralyzed in the main cave and will then hide in ambush.

Cave System

In ancient days, these caves used to be on the surface, but they are now submerged. By luck, it had suffered a cave-in before it sank beneath the waves, and has managed to survive the centuries. It is still wet and musty, as the tide rises out of the well in the center of one cave chamber. A tribe of natives who appear to have worshipped beings

very similar to the creature that is attacking the workers used to occupy these caves. Evidence of this is in crude paintings on the walls of the cave. Other artifacts can be found scattered throughout the cave system, mainly including stone tools and bones.

The tide has begun to come in and there is now about two feet of water on the floor. This will rise to about four feet within the next fifteen minutes. The well is nothing more than a circular hole in the ground that has a raised lip, and can only be seen if someone walks near it with a flashlight lighting the way.

If a cast member is attacked and dragged off, his body is left here in the main cave near the well, then dumped unceremoniously on a large rock, safe from the rising water. Such victims are alive, but although conscious, are so badly affected by the poison, that they can barely move their head or hands, and cannot utter more than a gurgle.

A Great First Aid skill test or Fair Diagnosis skill test will determine that the victim needs serious medical attention right away, and probably has about an hour to live.

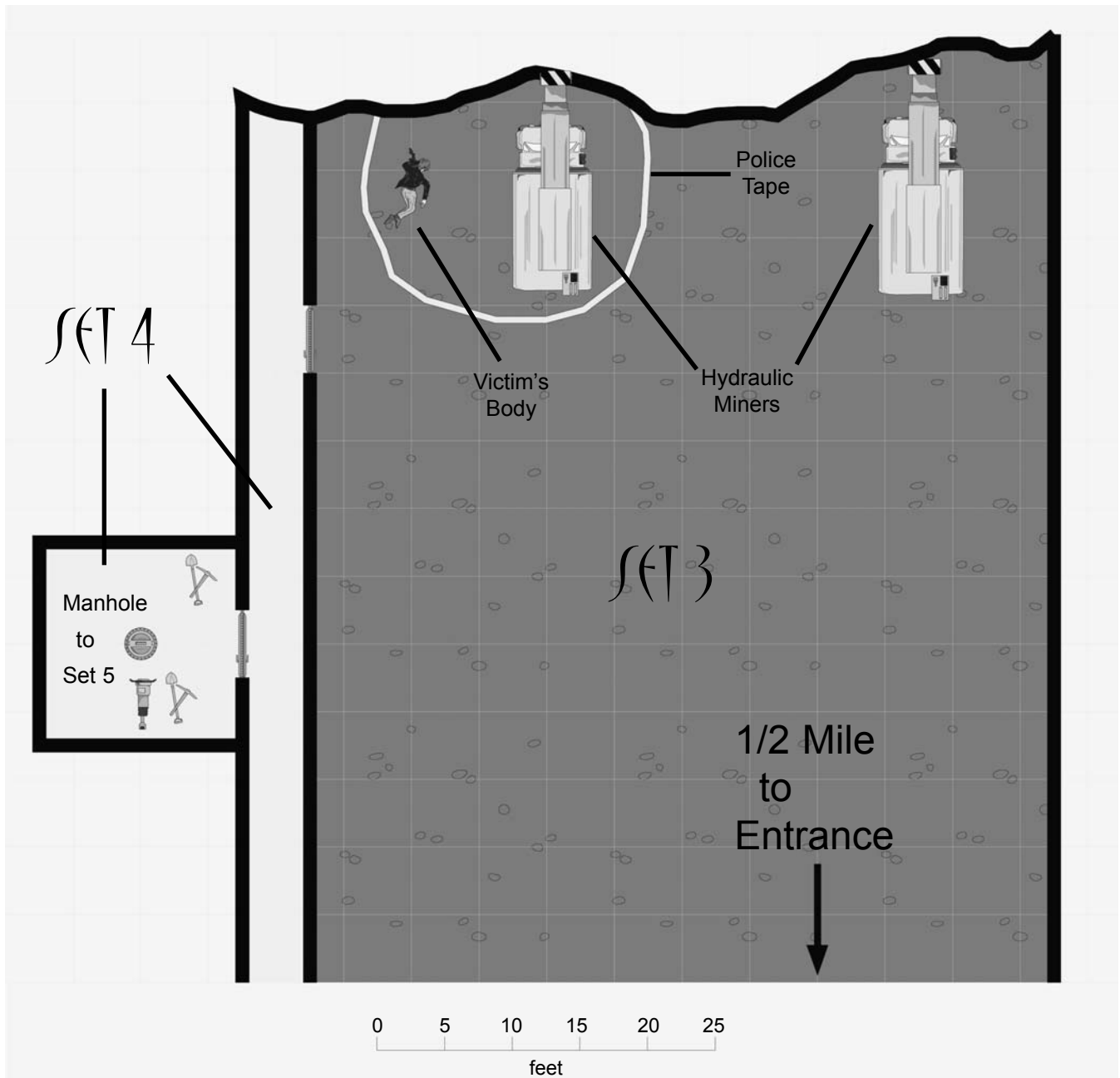
The creature does not intend to leave its victim behind. It will try to single the cast out, so that it can attack one at a time. It is completely unaware of the existence of guns, and so is not concerned about anyone who is not in close range. It is intelligent, though, and will learn quickly once it has been wounded by a gunshot. At that point, it will take the defensive, and will probably try to retreat down

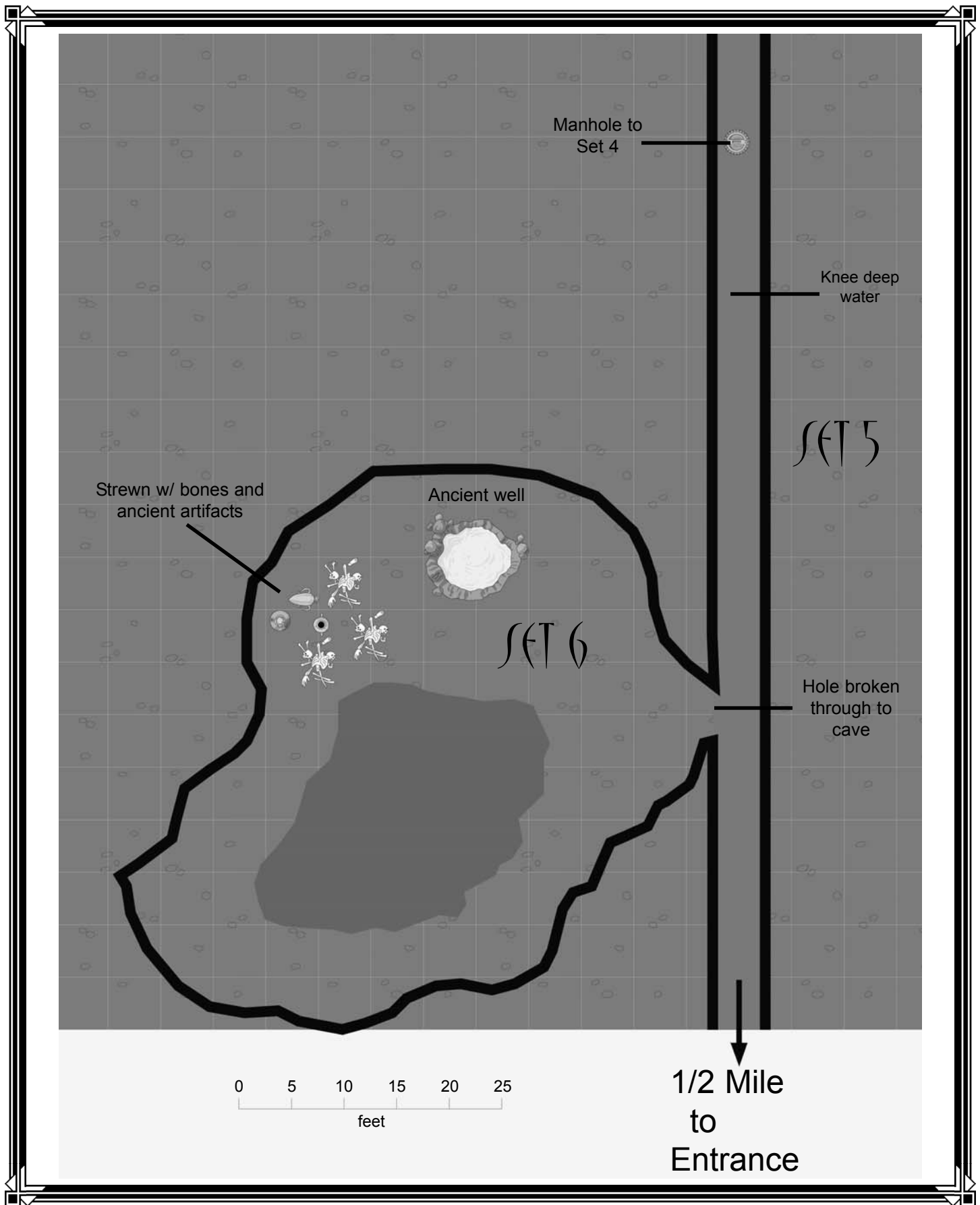
Detail Maps

of Sets

3 - 6

NOTE: The map of Set 3 can be photocopied and handed out to the actors. However, you may wish to block out Set 4 until they reach that point.





Now Playing

18

Introductory Pack 1

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into the well, dragging its victim in with it, if possible.

The creature uses its stealth and knowledge of the caves to its advantage. It singles out one victim at a time, and attacks, attempting to bite and then retreat. It figures that if it can paralyze everyone, it can always return to the corpses later.

The sound of drilling can be heard, and every now and then, it causes a rumbling that looses dirt and sometimes a few rocks. Anyone who makes at least a Fair Reasoning test will be worried that the place might cave in soon. In fact, it will. The cave will eventually begin to collapse. Use this as a means of increasing the theatrical suspense of the scene. If they try to escape before then, the cave should begin to collapse as they do, to maintain the climax.

The mostly eaten corpses of two missing workers can be found on the floor of the cave.

The artifacts of the ancient tribe have little use here, except to give some clues as to what the thing might be and why it's there. Mostly, though, the artifacts are there to provide a seed for a future episode.

It is obvious that the drilling of the tunnel will destroy the creature's home. It will eventually realize this during the battle with the cast, and if the battle goes badly, it will flee. It will go down the well, and enter the harbor through the maze of passages down there.

If the battle is going badly for the cast, the collapse of the caves should become more imminent, and then the creature will break off and flee before its escape route can be blocked. This will allow the cast (or at least most of it) to survive.

If the battle is going badly for the creature, it will flee.

Anyone who jumps down the well will surely die. They will drop into a deep pool of seawater, but will have no means of escape. The exits would take a long time to find and are all completely under water. There are semi-dry tunnels down there, and survival would be possible for a time. However, with winter coming, death from hyperthermia would be inevitable. In addition, if the creature is there, it will hunt any survivors and it is not likely that any would last for long.

The Tag

Like the teaser, the tag is a short scene that has a special use. However, if the teaser is used to introduce the episode, the tag is used to end it. It provides a short, succinct wrap up of the events and allows closure.

You cannot really predict what will be in the tag, as it will be summarizing events that have not happened yet. So, once the climax has ended and you are ready to wrap things up, you can arrange a scene that brings the cast all



together where they can discuss what has happened and perhaps to raise some questions that need to be answered in a future episode.

The following example is one way that the tag could have been roleplayed out. It should not be played out exactly like this, as the game should never be scripted, but it should give you a good idea of how the tag could go. In this example, the creature had not been killed, but had escaped into the well. However, they had managed to cut off part of a tentacle, which they had sent to the lab. The Director chose to have the results revealed during the tag.

The leading cast members are all sitting or standing around a park bench on a hill overlooking Boston Harbor. The harbor looks serene in the chill air, with the morning fog just starting to lift. To one side, the entrance to the tunnel site can be seen; the sound of drills and other equipment provides a muffled background.

Hawkins: So, the thing got away. {the others nod}. I suppose we'll never find it now.

Malone: Unless it strikes again. {Turns to Mariani}. Do you think it's trapped down there now?

Mariani: I doubt it. It's lived in there for a long time, and that means there must be a way for food to get in and out. It probably has a way out far down toward the bottom, but good luck trying to find it!

Dunn: {Shudders}. I don't think I'd want anyone to mess with it in its own habitat.

Mariani: I don't think there's any worry of that. I doubt it liked all the attention it got. It's a solitary creature that prefers privacy. I think it will sneak away to a quieter haunt and leave us noisy humans alone.

Walker: You mean, "it's noisy relatives." {Waves a manila folder in the air}. I got the lab results back from the sample. It has both octopus and human DNA. There are no clues as to how it happened, but it's unmistakable. And what's more: it's very old; at least two hundred years old, and possibly older.

Mariani: I've never heard of any sea creature living nearly that long. Are you sure?

Walker: That's what the lab says.

Dunn: What about those artifacts?

Mariani: {shrugs} I think they're lost for good now, but I have no idea who they were from.

Malone: Well, at least it'll make a great report for the FPI.

Hawkins: Somehow, I don't think this case is closed...

Supporting Cast

Frank Barrows

(Big Dig Foreman)

Brawn: Good

Agility: Fair

Stamina: Good

Luck: 3

Reasoning: Great

Perception: Good

Will: Fair

Income: Fair

Skills: Appraise (Fair), Area Knowledge (Good), Brawl (Fair), Climb (Good), Concentration (Good), Construction (Good), Demolitions (Good), Diplomacy (Good), Direction Sense (Good), First Aid (Fair), Notice (Fair), Sense Motive (Fair).

Gifts: Trustworthy.

Faults: Bossy.

Props: Hardhat with flashlight, work clothes, radio, cell phone, any normal mining gear.

Frank is a gruff and very down-to-earth man. He is accustomed to yelling, as he works with loud machinery on a daily basis. He is confident in his abilities and in those of his crew. He is a good leader, although rough in his manner. He'll have no qualms about calling someone an idiot if a mistake is made, but will also be as quick to deliver compliments and support. As gruff as he is, he still shows his men respect and expects the same from them.

He is under tremendous pressure to keep the work going and to get back on schedule. He knows all too well that the schedule is unrealistic, and that there is no way that the project will be completed in the time that the suits want, but he also knows there is no convincing them of it. He must keep everyone working around the clock and get the job done as quickly as he can. This case of the missing workers has really fouled things up. He cannot afford to keep one of his miners idle for even a few hours, much less a couple days! He'll see Hell for it for sure, and he's of a mind to share a little of that Hell with the detective that's causing the delay.

Frank takes his job seriously. Whenever he makes a promise regarding his work, he will do everything in his power to keep it.

He also feels the need to be in control of every situation. This is one reason why the intrusion of Dunn frustrates him so. He feels he is not in control of the situation, and it drives him mad.

Construction Worker

Brawn: Good **Reasoning:** Fair
Agility: Fair **Perception:** Good
Stamina: Good **Will:** Fair
Luck: 3 **Income:** Fair

Skills: Area Knowledge (Fair), Brawl (Fair), Climb (Good), Concentration (Fair), Construction (Good), Demolitions (Fair), Direction Sense (Fair), First Aid (Mediocre), Notice (Fair), Repair Device* (Good).

* Since this is for a generic worker, you can pick any one type of device, such as mechanical, electrical, etc.

Gifts: Obligation to do his job. (He will not willingly disobey the rules of his job or the instructions of his foreman. If someone tries to bribe or otherwise coerce him, the worker must make a Mediocre Will test to resist taking the bribe.)

This is really a template for all workers at the Big Dig. You can use this character for every worker you introduce in the episode. All the workers are tough and hard working. They all have great respect for the foreman, and will do anything he says. Anyone who publicly makes an enemy of the foreman will make an enemy of the workers, whether the foreman wants it or not.

The Creature

Brawn: Great **Reasoning:** Great
Agility: Good **Perception:** Good
Stamina: Good **Will:** Fair
Luck: 3

Skills: Bite (Fair), Climb (Great), Dodge (Fair), Grapple (Great), Intimidate (Great), Notice (Good), Stealth (Superb), Sting (Great), Swim (Superb).

Gifts: Venom (see below), Amphibious.

Faults: Needs water.

This creature is very old. For time out of mind, it has lived in the subterranean tunnels below Boston Harbor. Occasionally, it comes out into the harbor, feeding off the bottom and never coming near the surface. It is wary of humans, and has always avoided them. There was a time when a tribe of humans worshipped it, and dropped members of their kind down into the well as sacrifices for their continued well-being. It ate the morsels that they threw down, but cared nothing for the welfare of the tribe, or of anything but itself for that matter.

Suddenly, the peaceful silence of its life was disrupted. Loud noises and shaking roused it, and it was not happy. Eventually, a hole opened in the old tribe's cave, and the creature came out to see what was disturbing its world. It was humans. They were cutting a big hole in the ground,

and this was causing the roof of its home to shake and rattle. It had to stop them. And it was hungry.

The creature attacks much like an octopus, by grappling its prey with its tentacles, and then poisoning it with its venom. When it bites its prey, the venom in its saliva enters the victim's bloodstream. The venom causes paralysis. The creature can then devour the victim not only while alive, but conscious as well! Because the venom affects the brain, it will try to bite the victim in the neck so that the venom does not have as far to travel.

The creature cannot remain away from seawater for more than an hour or it will begin to suffocate.

Anyone bitten must make a Stamina test. The result determines how many seconds it takes for the venom to paralyze its victim, as shown in this table:

Venom Effects Delay	
Test Result	Delay (secs)
Superb	45
Great	35
Good	25
Fair	15
Mediocre	10
Poor	5
Terrible	Immediate

It will drag its victim back to the cave, and will either devour it in the cave, or pull it down the well if necessary.

It is obvious that the drilling of the tunnel will destroy the creature's home. It will eventually realize this during the battle with the cast, and if the battle goes badly, it will flee. It will go down the well, and enter the harbor through the maze of passages.



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2. Optional rules to support the setting.
3. Premade leading and supporting cast of characters.
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