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In the Name of FINLAND

By Mark Galeotti

I never wanted to speak Finnish, you know. I had no great interest in a language with more k's than Renraku's petty cash account. Problem was, no one wanted to speak Finnish, but Coxcomb reckoned it'd be professional, and I had the megapulses to spare, so here I am, skull full of declensions and past participles.

Nor had I ever expected to be hired by any prof, let alone a professor of Finnish and Lapp linguistics. (Want to know what that is in Finnish? Course not, but that's the problem with skillsofts—once you plug the can into your head, it too easily becomes will.) Nature of the biz, really. You don't exactly put want ads out, but once people see you can run the shadows, they find their way to you, and you just play it the way the nuyen say.

We checked him down, and his credstick was sweet, so here we are, picking our way between puddles of drying cleaning fluid one gray, gloomy morning as the vidboard checks off the minutes before the 7:47 maglev from SanFran arrived. Me, I'm the charm man, so I had my best duds on—a microchip pinkie ring and even a Beretta slimline, not to mess with the hang of my suit. Cat names me dandy, but we can't all live in Kevlar.

Speaking of Cat, she was over in the corner, doing her impression of a bag lady. Damn good one, too, though if you know any bag ladies with Uzi smartguns under their coats, steer me away from your neighborhood, deal?

I couldn't see NoGo. He should be getting the wheels prepped. But I was reassured to see Maximillian in place, looking as inconspicuous as six-six of ork could be. I tried catching his eye, suddenly noticed the tension in his stance as he scanned hall and made a pretext of checking the clock. Casually, I turned to the vendomat and jacked my credstick as I tried to work out what he'd seen.

Nothing. I dragged out selecting my order as long as possible, but



fragged if I could see what was bothering him. A couple of kids saying a protracted goodbye before one of them levved back south. The Kleen Team crew lumbering their washing machines onto the concourse. Three tribal bizmen, all ceremonial furs and plaschrome briefcases.

Nothing—that was the point! Where was security? Ten minutes ago, three triggerboys on duty. Now? Just as the klaxon announced the bullet's arrival, my adrenaline-jazzed brain suddenly noticed something else: The concourse was still wet from the real cleaners.

As the hit men began to pull out their ironmongery, I heard the first cough from Max's Fichetti. This is gonna geek my suit, I just know it. Wizard.

The characters are hired to guard and assist a Finnish mage in retrieving a sacred stone removed to Seattle by an unscrupulous corporation. While being given the chance to observe advanced spellcasting, the shadowrunners will also get an insight into a style of magic rather different from those usually encountered.

The Grimoire details initiation, adepts and astral quests, but it is not necessary for play. *Sprawl/Sites* and *Seattle Sourcebook* are required for this adventure.

CONTACT

The first contact will be from a rather unlikely quarter, Urho Koikkalainen, professor of Finnish and Lapp linguistics at Seattle University. A brilliant academic, Koikkalainen is hardly the stuff Mr. Johnsons are made of, and he knows it. Somehow he heard about the shadowrunners (be inventive—a young cousin who's one of his students? A housekeeper whose sister hired them for a job some months back?), and he wants to meet.

In essence, what he wants is fairly simple. He says that a corporation has stolen a valuable cultural artifact from Finland, that

someone is coming over to retrieve it, and that all the shadowrunners must do is watch after him (he's not used to 'plexlife), protect him if necessary during the retrieval, and get him on a ship heading back to Finland. Koikkalainen stresses that the actual retrieval will not be "um, a fraught situation." The characters, "shall we say, shouldn't face any real, um, problems at that stage."

Of course, the adventurers will have more questions, and he'll try to answer them. Until they agree to take the job, he won't divulge the name of the corp or the "arrival," though. The artifact is, he will say, of great cultural and archaeological importance, but fortunately the man from Finland has a way to get it back with minimal complications. Well, there is one complication. Um, Koikkalainen is not very good at this. What was he saying? Oh yes, complications. The trouble is that, well, the corporation may have some, small, infinitesimal inkling that something's up. Probably not important but, well, you never know.

The professor will offer to pay 10,000¥ for five days of work, and it won't take much to push him up to 15,000¥. Easy bucks? Of course not—you get the trouble you're paid for. But surely worth plugging in to.

Once the shadowrunners have agreed to the job, Koikkalainen will reveal that magic is involved. The artifact is a *sejda*, a sacred stone that over the mundane years accumulated a charge of inert energy that can now be tapped with the return of magic.

To date it has been attracting willing fish into the nets of the Pietasaar fishing fleet. A minor use for such a powerful item? Not at all, sir, we are talking tradition! The Stone of Pietasaar has stood there for almost two millennia, and it is the duty of every true patriot to see it return.

And Arvo Kivistö is such a patriot. He will be arriving on the maglev from San Francisco and has arranged to be shipped back, with the stone, on a Finnish government ship docked at Seattle. The characters must meet him, shelter and protect him while he gets his bearings, then guard him while he uses magic to retrieve the stone. The characters will need to have a light truck ready to get the stone to the good ship *Mauno Koivisto*.

Kivistö arrives in two days time, and the ship sails four days later, having collected some exhibits from the Finnish Pavilion at the Seattle International Art and Culture Fest '50. What could be easier?

The target? The despoilers of Finnish national tradition, sir? Ingersoll Aquaculture, those purblind fools who would misuse the stone's powers, ignoring the natural balance of predator and supply to use it for plundering the seas.

PROPER PRIOR PREPARATION

Should the PCs decide to do some homework beforehand, they may discover all or some of the following facts. Use relevant skills (Corp Etiquette for biz contacts, Street Etiquette for the whisper in the gutter, Intelligence for checking corp directories and business papers), with one nugget of data per success against a target number of 6. Extra information is given in parentheses where the rumor could be investigated at greater depth. Business sources will also note that Ingersoll is a 77%-owned subsidiary of NorthWest Nutrition and has a handsome tower in Downtown (map reference G12 on pages 166-167 of the *Seattle Sourcebook*).

Rumors/Information

1. Ingersoll is in trouble. Its archaic methods just aren't producing in sufficient bulk, and now it's even planning on going out and fishing!

2. Wow, no wonder Ingersoll is in trouble. Hear the latest? It opened a subsid in *Finland* of all places, then geeked it a month later! Dreckwits!

3. Watch out for the Asp—she's Ingersoll's chief torpedo, and fast as ice.

4. If Ingersoll goes down, its parent company, NorthWest Nutrition, spirals down the plug with it.

(NWN is essentially a holding company, largely working with franchise holders. Ingersoll and Ingersoll & Berkeley Soy Processing are the only two subsids owned outright. NorthWest's offices are in Tacoma's lower-class Fife neighborhood—map reference G22 on page 171 of the *Seattle Sourcebook*—security rating C.)

5. Ingersoll certainly is in trouble. Only last week it had to let go of its chief wagemage.

6. Didn't I see Ingersoll veep Val Sassinian over at Brother Anatole's in the Snohomish? Of course, she didn't need to be hiring muscle. She might just like the industrial-strength homebrew. (Brother Anatole's—page 114 in the *Seattle Sourcebook*—is a low dive, big on human supremacy and cheap muscle, low on morals and decor.)

7. Ingersoll's splendid tower in Downtown is going to be sold off soon to try to stave off the group's financial collapse.

8. There was some sort of crash drill at Ingersoll's the other night. All the securigrunts were out on the double, and a panel truck zoomed out and off without lights. Wonder what's up? (Find an Ingersoll gateman or the like to bribe, and the characters may discover it was a NorthWest Nutritions van.)

9. Anne St. Paul—they call her the Asp—isn't just an ugly face. Either she's got the lowest profile wetware I've ever seen, or that's magic jazzing her reflexes.

10. Ingersoll's Val Sassinian and Ingersoll & Berkeley's Gonley Vanderson are both getting edgy: Each knows one or the other will soon be pushed.



PROFESSOR URHO KOIKKALAINEN

"I am Professor of Finnish Linguistics, but am not just academic. You may think it surprising, but within this little body beats big heart of my people. Sir, I am a Finn!"

Quotes

"I'm sorry, what was I saying?"

"Geek? Frag? I am sorry, sir, what are you talking about?"

"Would this be enough? I suppose I could go as high as half as much again, if it's not."

Commentary

It would be easy to see the little professor as a figure of fun, from his thick glasses (hasn't he heard of corrective surgery?) to his irritating tendency to forget what he's saying every other sentence. But this would be a mistake. Though hardly street-smart, he's intelligent, sophisticated, and not without courage (what do you think, coming to meet as disreputable a bunch as the shadowrunners?). Besides, his credstick speaks as fluently and persuasively as any.

Attributes:

Body: 2
Quickness: 2
Charisma: 3
Intelligence: 7
Willpower: 4
Essence: 6
Reaction: 4

Skills:

English: 5
Etiquette (Academic): 5
Lapp: 6
Linguistics: 7
Forget What He Was Saying: 5

WARM WELCOME

An ambush will be in place for Kivistö's arrival: Four hit men are masquerading as a cleaning crew. Security has been bribed beforehand ("coincidentally, we all needed to go to the sec-office restroom at the same time"), and the razorguys are briefed on how to recognize their target. (Anyway, there are very few passengers that time of the morning.) Treat the assassins as Mercs (page 40 of *Shadowrun*), wearing armor clothing under their plastic coveralls and armed with three silenced Ingram smartguns and a short-barreled Defiance T-250. See the Maglev Station Concourse Map.

The characters may make the assassins in advance or may have to react to circumstances. Play the fight well, but make sure the gunsels don't do too well. Although slow to anger, Kivistö can be handy in a fight, and you can always throw in some fellow passengers who don't fancy getting caught in crossfire to even the odds. Access to and from the platforms is through turnstiles under the arrival/departure display board, and at the first sign of trouble (shooting, etc.), the turnstiles lock shut. (Anyone would think the maglev station is used to this sort of thing.) Since Kivistö is one of the first passengers out, this "lockout" minimizes the number of

crossfire victims around.

Bystanders fall roughly into two types. The typical U²C (upright, uptight citizen) will scream, run or lie down on the floor, hands over his head (Pedestrian NPC archetype on page 116 of *Sprawl Sites*). Streetwise "ownbizminders" may have a light weapon and will retreat to some safe position (or get out by a convenient exit) but will return fire if shot at.

Of course, if the PCs are having it too easy, throw in a corporate fail-safe (a Bounty Hunter from page 163 of *Shadowrun*, armed with a Black Skorpion smartgun and two Flash-Paks), an independently operating assassin (that nun cowering in the corner? the "cop" who "happens" onto the scene?) ready to finish the job should it be necessary.

Of course, you could even throw in a car chase, if you like that sort of thing—screeching corners, crash checks, people leaning out of windows with big guns, cars crashing through street vendors' stalls and going the wrong way down one-way streets. All in all, just everyday, high-speed bad citizenship.

GOING TO GROUND

Unless the shadowrunners are stupid or unlucky, they will get away and must safehouse Kivistö. Once at a safe location, Kivistö will outline his plans in precise, over-formal English.

He has prepared a very specialized spell, one attuned precisely to the stone. In fact, he just finished it with the help of a colleague in San Francisco, and that's where the security leak probably came from. All he has to do is perform an astral quest to discover the true name of the stone's *haltija*, its inner spirit. Then he must get quite close to where the stone is being kept (apparently the Ingersoll complex), cast his spell, which will draw the stone to him in a mondo blast of telekinesis, load it onto a truck, and get it to the *Mauno Koivisto*. Simple, *ei?*

All the characters have to do to earn their nugeld is watch him while he's questing (when his body will be in coma), drive him to the Ingersoll site, guard him while he does his stuff, and finally get him and the stone through to the docks.

KIVISTÖ'S QUEST

When the characters are sure they are secure, Kivistö will prepare for his quest. He explains that he will be comatose for up to the best part of a day. He may appear to be hurt, or in trouble, but the characters should ignore that. There is nothing they can do. Nor can he be woken, so the PCs should just pray for him, *kyllä?*

He will remove an elk's skin from his suitcase, place it on the ground, anoint his kantele with some pungent herbal concoction, then take a deep breath. After one quick slug of vodka from his hip flask, he'll begin a repetitive, guttural chant of the *runot*, picking out on the kantele a tune that begins simple and becomes increasingly complex. Characters listening will probably be caught up, carried along on the flow of his voice, and almost see the sparkle of winter sun on ice or hear the chiming of ice crystals on pine trees. Kivistö's voice and the tune rise in pitch and hang for a moment suspended on a high note, then both sounds end suddenly as he slumps in an astral coma.

This is a quest with a rating of 3 and will thus take 3D6 hours of real time. Just to make this a bit interesting for the characters, every third hour or so, roll on the Quest Table.

AFTER THE HORSE HAS BOLTED

Still confident? Almost over now, isn't it? Hose those hopes, chummers—it ain't over till the gutlady warbles.

Ingersoll's aquaculture operation is based in sparsely populated Snohomish (page 116-118 in the *Seattle Sourcebook*, map reference 6M on page 165), along the Snohomish River. It consists of two complexes of fish pens, a refrigerated warehouse and processing plant, and the office center. The surrounding land is largely scrub-

ARVO KIVISTÖ

"I feel a long way from home. Your help, my friends, will be invaluable to me and to Finland. *Kiitos*. All of Pietasaar will toast your souls, and there will always be a spare fish for you."

Quotes

"Problems? No matter, I am a Finn."

"As a *tjetajat*, to hunt the *sejda's hatlija* will be no problem. Agreed?"

"Stuffers? Have you any fish?"

Commentary

Kivistö is an impressive man, tall and strong, a vigorous 45-year-old dressed in conservative good taste. Again, to look down on him for his alien unsophistication would be a mistake. He is dedicated and is a level 1 Initiate magician (*tjetajat*, in Finnish). He is also proud, conscious both of his personal dignity and his responsibility to restore the honor of his little part of his beloved Finland.

He carries just one suitcase and wears an armored coat. He has a small Valmet P-93 autopistol under his jacket (a light pistol comparable to the Ceska vz/120). He labors under one geas: He may only cast magic while centering (see Finnish Magic).

Attributes:

Body: 4
Quickness: 3
Strength: 4
Charisma: 6
Willpower: 6
Essence: 6
Magic: 7
Reaction: 4

Skills:

Boats: 4
Conjuring: 6
Finnish History: 7
Firearms: 3
Leadership: 2
Magical Theory: 6
Play *Kantele*: 4
Sing *Runot*: 4
Sorcery: 6

Magic:

Detect Object: 4
Clout: 6
Heal Light Wounds: 6
"Special Spell": 6
Stabilize: 3
Falcon Form: 6
Heal Medium Wounds: 5

land, dotted with rusted auto shell, fly-tipped heaps of rubbish and a few leaking barrels of chemical waste. See the Ingersoll Aquaculture Map.

From scouting the place out, the PCs can discover that security is adequate, but hardly extensive: The operation is guarded by razorwire fencing strung with capacitance wires, some buried motion sensors inside the perimeter, and guards at fixed stations and in two open-topped lectrojeeps on random patrol. One GMC Beachcraft Patroller with an assault cannon is parked over the island-based guard station. More importantly, Kivistö—or any character using astral perception—will notice that since losing its wagemage, Ingersoll's magic security has been assigned to some very bush-league deputies. With satisfaction, Kivistö says he will be able to cast his spell from well outside the perimeter—up to 100 meters from the office block.

Still, there may be some trouble if the characters just wander onto the scene. For example, some chipped-out meathead who thinks he's Robin Hood (a Pedestrian—see page 116 of *Sprawl Sites*—with Projectile Weapons: 2 and a Ranger X Compound Bow) or a Wiz Kid Mage (NPC archetype on page 121 of *Sprawl Sites*) out on the jazz. Nothing nasty, just incidents which are hardly worth mentioning—except that shooting or causing a commotion might arouse the interest of the Ingersoll guards. (These are Corporate Security Guards from page 165 of *Shadowrun*, with Fichetti 500s and one FN HAR between the three of them; they arrive on ground by jeep or hovercraft.)

But the shadowrunners are too bright to fall into such an obvious trap, neh? No problem. The wheels are readied; everyone's safety is uncashed; and Kivistö gets down to his wizwork.

Suddenly, problem. Halfway through his routine, Kivistö dries up. "Eil! Missa on *sejda*! It's not there. The stone isn't there!"

SHELL GAME

It's time to bug out and have a think. The truth of the matter is that once tipped off about Kivistö's mission, Ingersoll's veep handed the problem over to her bosses at NorthWest Nutritions, who promptly commandeered the *sejda* (the midnight truck, if the characters got to hear about it). It's now sitting pretty in NorthWest's wagemage's office, while he tries to work out how to tap it (he should try singing).

Exactly what they do next is up to the characters, their strengths and sources. Here are a few options with possible outcomes.

Corp Connections: Does a suit owe a PC a favor? Have the characters met a Mr. Johnson who could almost be human? Someone with his finger on the pulse or the right numbers in his datafax could tip the characters off to Ingersoll's link with NorthWest and the fact that Ingersoll may be being run down by its parent prior to some make-or-break venture. Unless you want to be merciful, either bury this information in random and useless data on fish through-yields and leverage stock buyouts being torpedoed by poison pills, or check to see if the aforementioned contact has the info: The contact finds the information on a Target Number 6 Corp Etiquette or Intelligence test, with one roll allowed per hour's active searching.

Local Scum: No place in Seattle is empty. Even in this god forsaken corner of Snohomish there are drunken and drugged down-and-outs sheltering in the rusty auto shells and streetwise SINless people scavenging for spare parts and recyclable metal. Maybe someone saw that truck leave that night. Ask him right, and he might even tell you. Ask him real nice, and he might have seen whose truck it was.

Insider: Ingersoll has kept this under a security blanket, but the rumor mill is ever triumphant. There are guards who covered the loading of the stone, gatekeepers who let the truck in and out, warehousemen warned off "that crate from Finland" and so on. Maybe one feels like earning a few extra nuyen, just in case Ingersoll goes down.

Ingersoll & Berkeley Tower: This beautiful tower in Downtown Seattle (map reference G12 on pages 166-167 of *Seattle Sourcebook*) is part of Val Sas-



sinnian's empire but would be the first thing to be sold off in the attempt to shore up NorthWest's slipping share price. At the moment, it's crawling with real estate assessors and prospective buyers. It would be a simple matter to slip in with such a group. Once inside the wards, either Kivistö or anyone with astral perception can tell that the *sejda* isn't there. Any doorman or office flunky will also freely pass on the fact that Sassinian hasn't been at the tower for weeks, but seems to be living in the NorthWest offices.

Ingersoll & Berkeley Soy Processing: The other NorthWest subsid in the area may seem an obvious option, but as financial collapse threatens, the two companies' respective vice presidents are engaged in furious corporate in-fighting. I & B's Gonley Vanderson knows Sassinian is up to something and has sold the idea to the head office. He doesn't know what is up, but makes no secret of his impotent fury. Any I & B insider will pass this on, and Vanderson might even be roped in as support if the characters have the time, wits and contacts.

Deckrunning: At last, a real opportunity for some up close and personal matrix work. As noted elsewhere, NorthWest has been quietly stripping Ingersoll in case it folds. Not only is physical security lax, but in the matrix Ingersoll's net seems uncannily dim and empty. Nevertheless, the information is here to be found, and

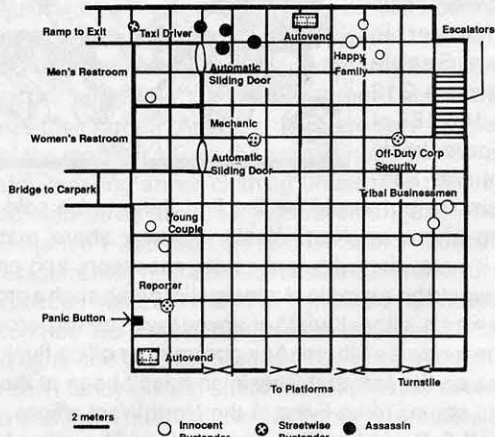
FINNISH MAGIC

Even if the mathematicians can boil it all down to the same theorems and concepts, local idioms and practices mean the actual forms magic takes in different parts of the world can be very different. After all, belief is itself an important influence on matters arcane.

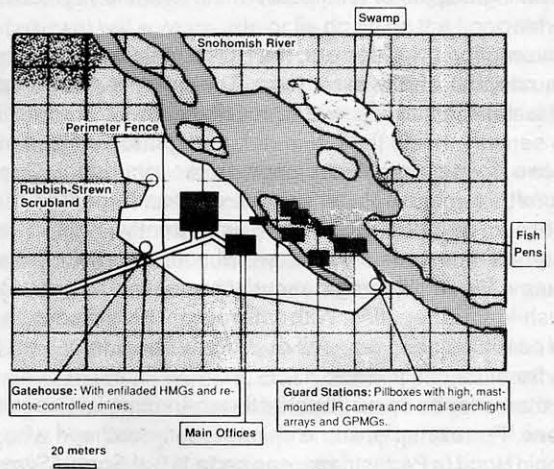
The Finnish-cycle *tjetajat* is a namer of names. In his world, everything and everyone has its own spirit, its *haltija*, and power is about knowing and manipulating the names and identities of the *haltija*. In most circumstances this is not of critical relevance: If, say, the mage doesn't know the name of the razorgoon about to deliver some 9mm perforation, he'll have been taught various symbolic formulae and provisionally tag the target with some working name like "soldier" or "footpad." For the relatively crude manipulations of most street magic, this is enough, and just means that the drain check is one harder. If the mage knows a name—or has spoken to, touched or otherwise interacted with the target—there is no drain check penalty. If, on the other hand, the mage knows the target well or is acquainted with its genealogy, the drain tests are one easier and the spell is one harder to resist.

But the nature of this magic system does mean that the most sophisticated magics require a knowledge of names and family trees. In the case of the most powerful magics, this knowledge also involves the true name, which takes an astral quest to discover.

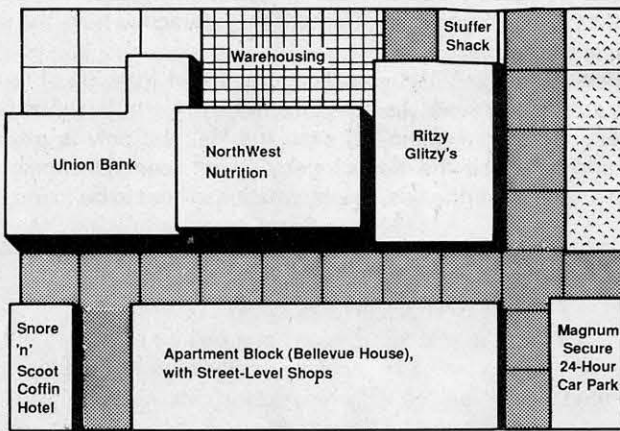
Finnish magic is also both oral and musical, and usually involves either speaking the *runots* (runes) or playing on a traditional musical instrument—usually either the *quodbas* (drums) or *kantele* (harp). Initiates who are centering will do so by using one of these methods.



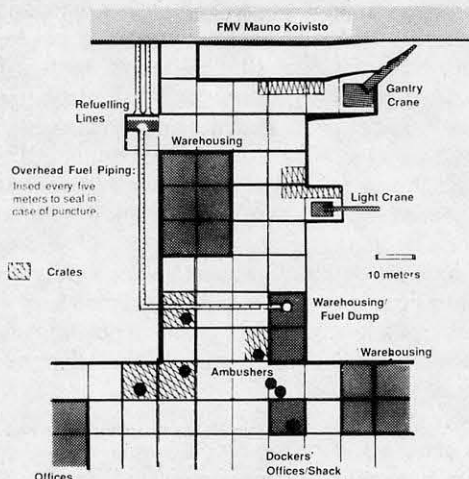
Maglev Station Concourse



Ingersoll Aquaculture



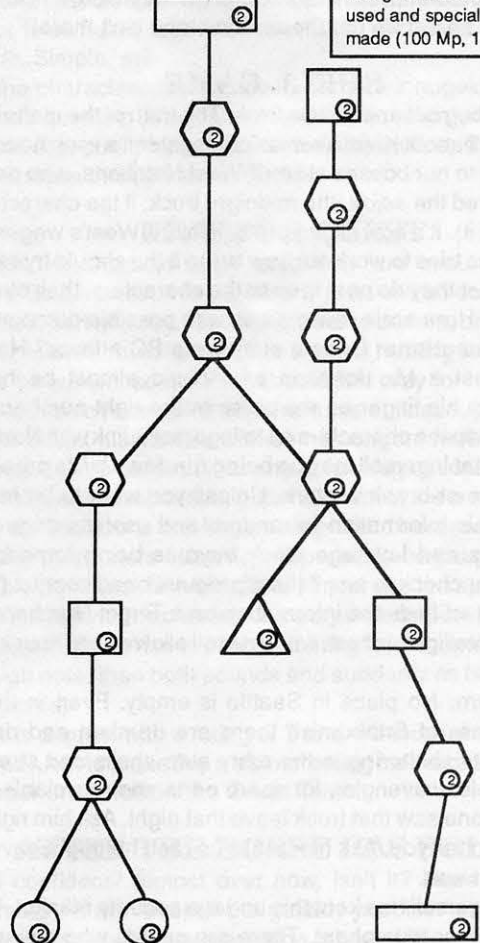
Northwest Nutrition



Jetty

Main Phone Line: 17206 (28-5380)

Corporate Data Store
Largely empty, but does contain a file confirming release of special cargo, routed from finland to the Nutritions head office, as well as one with share data (20 MP, 20,000) and one with a full listing of the technical equipment used and special modifications made (100 Mp, 10,000).



Ingersoll Matrix System

there's even some paydata lying about. See the Ingersoll Matrix System Map.

Kivistö: The characters may be unlucky and not come up with any information. If necessary, Kivistö will use the stone's true name to cast a special location spell. The problem is that time is running out, and he needs some weird and wonderful ingredients. If you have to help the PCs out with this sort of deus ex machina, at least make them work for it. Send them in every direction, gathering a griffon's beak here, a powdered reindeer's hoof there, and a hand-thrown pottery bowl to mix it all in. Kivistö will do his bit, read out some bearings (to the NorthWest head offices) and then fall, exhausted, for at least 12 hours of sleep. Watch that clock!

GETTING IT RIGHT

One way or another the characters have worked out that the stone is over at NorthWest Nutrition. Time to repeat the routine, only this time it's not so smooth. For one thing, NorthWest's astral wards are more effective, so Kivistö will have to get a bit closer. Like within 20 meters. This raises some interesting tactical questions.

NorthWest's offices fill a rather anonymous mirrorglass and plascrete block in Tacoma's Fife district (map reference G22 on page 171 of *Seattle Sourcebook*), which is backed by extensive warehousing. (See the Northwest Nutrition Map.) The characters could try to break into the rear, but first they would have to deal with a five-meter wall topped with charged capacitance wires and studded with IR alarms. Behind this, the warehouses are watched by computer-controlled cameras and patrolled by armed guards. The final clincher is the fact that Kivistö will have to sing and play to cast his spell, so the PC group will have to be near the truck, which would involve getting through a double-guarded entrance. This is *not* the way to go.

On one side of NorthWest is a branch of the Union Athabaskan Bank of Commerce, the sort of shady outfit that spends disproportionate time processing large sums in credsticks whose SIN circuits have "malfunctioned" and dealing with faceless voices across secure phonelinks. Characters may have heard of it (a Corp or Street Etiquette check against a Target Number of 6). In any case, they would soon notice those subtle telltales every experienced shadowrunner looks for, like large numbers of heavily armed men in the lobby and on the rooftop, an armored van parked opposite the building, and armored iris doors ready to seal the building off in an emergency. Treat Union Athabaskan as a large bank with double the staff, half the customers, and a system coated in black ICE.

More promising is the building on the other side of NorthWest, a rather ramshackle nightclub called Ritzzy Glitzzy's. Distinctly down-market, it has a rear garage entrance leading onto a small alley out back—easy parking for, say, a light truck, just to pick one random example out of the air. At night the club becomes fairly busy, as drifters and mundanes of every shape, size and subspecies come to dance or prop up the bar (and then, as greater quantities of cheap synthbeer pour down their throats, to be propped up by it). At 1 a.m. the raucous stomp 'n' thrash band of the day or the week packs up, and from then to 2 a.m. there is a mass throwing out. By 2:30 a.m., the club has been sluiced down and shut up, and is ready to open again at 9 a.m. for the early morning drinkers. Use the Nightclub archetype in *Sprawl Sites* (page 29), with an enclosed garage/storage area behind.

The club is owned by a chiphead millionaire inheritor who leaves management to a determinedly gloomy ork everyone calls "Sunshine." She, like most people, is approximately law abiding. She won't be party to anything which is obviously and gratuitously illegal or immoral—or, more to the point, which she thinks will get her in trouble. On the other hand, she is poor, and any plausible excuse to let the characters "hire" her garage will probably prove acceptable (in case of bargaining, treat this as an opposed negotiation test, with a 1000¥ base price).

Alternatively, the PCs could either sneak or bull their way into using the garage during the day (Kivistö's spell takes about 10 minutes to cast) or try to break in at night.

The club has a simple alarm system, controlled by its equally simple computer (a Green-4 system, protected by Scramble 3). It also has physical locks and shutters requiring an axe or a check against Electronics with a Target Number of 7. More seriously, a Troll Bouncer (page 173 of *Shadowrun*) called Rumble lives in. Since he



CHRYSLER-NISSAN QUARTERBACK

The Quarterback is a light pickup truck typical of the breed and of the less-glamorous vehicles given scarce mention in the *Shadowrun* rulebook. A blocky high-rider, it is functional rather than pretty, but tough and rugged. The flatbed behind the cab can be left open or covered with a tarpaulin, and can readily take up to 16 cubic yards of cargo. 27,000¥ (though one could be rented for 100¥ a day).

Handling: 5 *Speed:* 40/120 *Body:* 3 *A armor:* 0 *Signature:* 2 *Pilot:* 1+ 2

QUEST TABLE

1. Kivistö suddenly gasps and moans as horrible wounds begin to open across his body, as if he were being raked by a huge cat. These wounds are equivalent to light wounding, bringing his state to medium, if he's already hurt. (Don't let him die!) If Kivistö is too badly hurt when he awakes, he may have to be taken to a hospital or streetdoc. But the word is out on the streets that Ingersoll will pay for a fingering. The characters would need to see someone discreet.

2. An unmarked helicopter flies overhead, then hovers for a full minute. Is Ingersoll onto the characters? No, the helicopter is not concerned with them, but *they* don't know that.

3. Kivistö begins to speak the *runot* under his breath and twitch.

4. Wherever the team is, it receives an appropriate (and wholly innocent) visitor: a census taker, new neighbor, sales representative, whatever. Is that a belt-looped personal hi-fi or a gun?

5. The mage begins to pant and shiver, and subliminal shadows flicker across his face. For one minute it looks like a dog's muzzle, then a skull.

6. One of the characters sees Ricky the Nose through a window, then the PCs know they're in trouble. Even in the plex, Ricky's amorality is a matter for wonder, rivalling only his ability to find people for the right price. He's lurking in the shadows opposite the PCs' safe house, and unless stopped (Snitch NPC archetype on page 118 of *Sprawl Sites*), he will leave in 10 minutes to call Ingersoll. If Kivistö is just about to awake, the team will be able to bug out just as the heavies arrive; otherwise, the team is gonna have to burn some more ammo on the two carloads of cheap muscle (three Nachtmachen Policlub members in each—see page 109 of *Sprawl Sites*—with Firearms 2 and Ruger Super Warhawks) that come screeching up.

doesn't need light, hasty shadowrunners could quite literally walk into him. One night a week or so (1 on 1D6 chance) he invites 1-6 other trolls for a few games of poker. If he has any warning, he'll be armed with a Colt America L36; otherwise, he'll just make do with a chair (treat as a staff) or bottles from the bar (nonaerodynamic weapons doing (Str+2)L1 Stun damage).

A final option would be to cast the spell in the road. Given that the ritual involves once again rolling out the elk's skin (two meters by three meters) and 10 minutes of playing and *runot* speaking, along with the odd atmospheric side-effect, like a corona of blue lightning and a mysterious vortex of icy Scandinavian air, it's not really the sort of thing to do under a tarp on the back of a light truck. Perhaps a furniture removal van would be more appropriate? Or a faked street repairs shack? This plan lacks subtlety—any vehicle on the street may arouse the interest of NorthWest's security or, more likely, the bank's. If Union Athabaskan has a major consignment due in or out any minute, its security may be inclined to send a panzer out to blow away any potential ambushers, no questions asked. The streets around here are also parking-prohibited, so there is always the danger of an overzealous Lone Star rolling up.

THE ASP (ANNE ST. PAUL)

"No one frags with me, chummer. You got smarts, no question; you got wire, sure, but you ain't got the edge. So long, meat."

Quotes

"Geek 'em!"

"He's mine!"

"I tell you how to fill in a form, sarariman? You're in my world now, drekhead, and we'll play by my rules."

Commentary

The Asp is a mean samurai, no question; she is a bundle of sharp edges and quick temper. She works the corp circuit now, but her roots are in the street, and her contempt for corp niceties is a trademark. She's also a para-magical physical adept (see *The Grimoire*), one of those people on the borders of the arcane world whose potentials are channelled into superhuman physical feats rather than spellcasting.

She has the equivalent of level 2 increased reactions (+2 Reaction, +2D6 Initiative) and some *automatic* successes to use just like normal pool rolls: two Athletic and three Unarmed Combat successes. In combat she is cocky, obscene, energetic and almost ridiculously fast. She tends to use her Athletics skill (and autosuccesses) for a lot of swinging from gantries, etc., and her other autosuccesses as Dodges.

At all times she wears Kevlar clothes and carries a Colt Manhunter. In the ambush, she will also be carrying a Beretta 70 SMG (just an old-fashioned gal, she's a sucker for a gun with an integral suppressor).

Attributes

Body: 4
Quickness: 6
Strength: 4
Charisma: 2
Intelligence: 5
Willpower: 6
Essence: 6
Magic: 6
Reaction: 5 (7)

Skills

Athletics: 6 (+2 successes)
Drive: 3
Etiquette (street): 4
Firearms: 6
Interrogation: 3
Stealth: 2
Unarmed Combat: 6 (+3 successes)

PULLING THE STONE

The PCs have lined up their plan—all that remains is for Kivistö to yank the stone from NorthWest's clutches and onto the waiting wheels. This time the initiate's much more hyped up. "It is there, so near, I can feel it." If the ship is due to sail soon, Kivistö will also be feeling a sense of urgency. As soon as the stone is hijacked, the shadowrunners will have to set off directly for the Pohjois-Karjala Shipping Line berth on Pier 62 (Downtown, map reference H12 on page 166-167 of *Seattle Sourcebook*).

So Kivistö gets down to his magic. The notes from his *kantele* hang in the air like shards of crystal, and for a moment it seems as though the crisp, chill air of Finland cuts through the muggy Seattle smog. As he slips deeper into an astral trance, the tone of his *runot* begins to rise. Six or seven minutes after he starts, alarm klaxons start going off all over the NorthWest offices. If the characters have already attracted some hostile interest from, say, Union Athabaskan guards, this might, as it were, "trigger" a more active response.

Then there's a creaking and a groaning, and the nearest wall of the building begins to bulge and crack. NorthWest security guards (Corporate Security Guards—page 165 of *Shadowrun*—in partial armor with Ares Predators) spill out and look incredulously up as the wall gives way. The stone, a meter-sided cube of dark rock which is carved on every side with *runot* lettering, whirls out, wrapped in a flickering blue corona of its own, and silently sweeps down onto the (presumably waiting) wheels. At the same time, NorthWest's wagemage, a usually rather slick-looking number called Zee Mercury, who now looks rather battered and flustered (Street Mage archetype—page 45 of *Shadowrun*—Detector orientation, but also with Mana Bolt 3), sticks his head out of the hole in the wall and screams at the triggerboys to "stop the fragging stone!"

Security's reaction depends on the perceived situation. If the stone disappears into the club's garage, the guards will probably cautiously investigate, while if it lands on the back of a truck which screams off, a couple will open fire while the others rush for a car (an Americar). There may be a car chase of sorts, or Mercury might have the chance to fire off a Mana Bolt. Slot and run, chummers.

MAUNO KOIVISTO

Assuming that getting away from NorthWest isn't too much trouble, the last stage is to get Kivistö and the stone to the *Mauno Koivisto*. You could, I suppose, let the characters fulfill this without any hassle. But, hey, why go easy just when everyone's having

"SUNSHINE" (DAWN PFEIFFER)

"So what if it's a nice day. It's all this greenhouse effect. Of course I know what you meant, I'm not senile. Yet. Anyway, what do you want? Time's money—or rather, it's less loss."

Quotes

"I'm an honest businesswoman. I'll always be poor."

"This is gonna mean trouble—I know it."

"Frank, introduce this bum to the sidewalk."

Commentary

Sunshine—this nickname represents the height of satire at Glitz's, so be ready to have sniggering locals explain it to the shadowrunners three or four times—may not be fun company, a hotshot administrator, witty or cultured. But she's competent, has a rough-and-ready charisma and is relatively honest. She may preside over a gloomy and decaying club where alcoholic paralysis is the order of the day, but at least she's kept it clear of drugs, chips and the encroachments of the local Yak.

Use the Bartender archetype (page 163 of *Shadowrun*), with no Sympathetic Listening skill, but Body, Willpower and Strength 5.

such fun? The fact is, it's not too difficult to guess who might have snatched the stone given that Ingersoll knew Kivistö was in town. To put two and two together and suspect that a Finnish ship about to leave might have something to do with it isn't beyond the corporate mind—suits got smarts, too.

Ingersoll's chief gunsels, Anne St. Paul (The Asp, remember?), scrambles a team and gets herself over to the docks ASAP in NorthWest's president's exec chopper. Putting down in Denny Park and double-timing it the rest of the way, The Asp and company should arrive just before the good guys, unless the team has got something special lined up in the way of transport.

The Asp and her group prepare a rough and ready ambush, and hunker down in wait. What follows depends on how you want to play it and what the characters do. The Asp has mustered six of her best (Street Samurais from page 46 of *Shadowrun* with partial body armor, carrying Ares Predators and Uzi III smartguns), and together they are a pretty tough combination. But the characters are no angels, and they may be suspicious or see one of the ambushers (a Target Number 5 Intelligence test). Or one of the samurai might jump the gun and open fire before the trap is fully sprung.

The jetty is a crowded place for a firefight, full of crates of cargo, liquid transfer pipes and gantries. In addition, dockers and Finnish sailors at the other end of the jetty might get involved if they find out what the firefight's about. (Did I call this a referee's instant equalizer? No, surely not.) There are a dozen Pohjois-Karjala dock workers of Scandinavian extraction with makeshift weapons and another dozen sailors. (Dock Workers are from page 109 of *Sprawl Sites* with makeshift weapons. Two, on guard detail, have vz88V assault rifles, Firearms: 2 and armored jackets.) Perhaps one of the characters could get through to them or radio them. Or Kivistö could cast Falcon Form and fly over to them.

Play this final confrontation as a confused, hard-fought slugmatch, making full use of the "terrain." The gantry crane, for example, would make an excellent weapon, of sorts, to extract gunsels from behind barricades. Similarly, punctured feedpipes might be empty

or might contain combustible fuels.

It might be a good idea to keep The Asp alive. She's an interesting character and could crop up in a later adventure, whether as a vengeful nemesis or a grudgingly respectful fellow-drinker in Fenris Nacht. (Perhaps a burst of autofire smashing into her back, pitching her jerking body into the scumslicked water—no more sign of her. "No one could have survived that.")

Too late, the cops roll up in force. Knowing that the *Mauno* is removing valuable artwork, they're expecting to find an attempted snatch and hence can be fed a story about the Finns and their "freelance security specialists" foiling an evil plot. For this reason they will also not see anything suspicious in the loading of a cube of carved rock. They'll just growl around, sniffing at the characters to see if there's anything they could book them for. Then they'll leave.

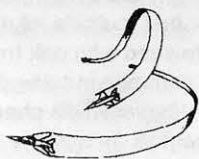
And so, in due course, will the stone, the ship and Kivistö. Kivistö will thank the PCs emotionally, with repeated invitations for them to stop in at Pietasaar next time they're in northern Europe. Stories of this run will circulate in Seattle's Scandinavian community and may be parlayed into contacts or lead to more opportunities.

The financial papers are full of news of Ingersoll's financial crisis for a week. Then out comes a new share issue, which is snapped up by an anonymous buyer. Sassinian announces that Ingersoll is moving into the coastal fishing market, under its new "director of coastal operations," Jiro Yabuki. People looking at the specs for the new inshore fishing vessels Ingersoll begins ordering note their extravagantly high speeds and the suspicion of stealth design. "Almost like smugglers' speedboats," says the respected editor of *Seattle Marine Gazette*, the day before his auto crash. Speculation that the Yakuza may have been the new silent partner who stepped in suddenly tails off. But that's another story, *neh?* Ω



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