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GOD'S LIGHT



A Scenario for *Delta Green: The Role-Playing Game*

WHERE LIES THE LINE BETWEEN MADNESS AND EVIL?

It is madness to cross the threshold. It is evil not to seek the threshold.
Which do you choose?

A seemingly ordinary American mass shooting draws the attention of Delta Green. The shooter left evidence that seemed to come not from some unknown place but some unknown version of reality.

The investigation finds a social media app called Picky Eater. But is it more than an app? A modified OS? A firmware update? An inexplicable hardware update? Picky Eater curates your social media feed, picking and choosing experiences to suit your desires. But it may reach far deeper than that. It may reach strange places that stand on either side of the border between worlds, between realities, between madness and evil, and force your Agents to choose.

Delta Green: God's Light is playable with *Delta Green: The Role-Playing Game*, available from Arc Dream Publishing. Optionally, it makes a perfect companion to the acclaimed campaign *Delta Green: God's Teeth*. Learn more at delta-green.com.

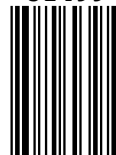


DELTA GREEN: GOD'S LIGHT
MSRP \$24.99
Stock code APU8172 • ISBN 978-1-940410-80-7
Published by Arc Dream Publishing
Sold by Studio 2 Publishing
Get more great games at www.arcdream.com.
This is a work of fiction.

ISBN 9781940410807



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REQUIRED-DELTA GREEN

God's Light

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Dr. Wesley Cool | Meaning Without Master

Introduction

The speed at which a species translates thoughts into reality is the sole mark of distinction in the cosmos. For creatures bleeding through lower dimensions and hijacking minds across time, few physical laws cannot be shattered and reassembled to new purpose. For gods beyond the impermanence of flesh, the gap between thought and action—between dream and reality—is so narrow as to disappear.

Humanity's sad approximation of this power is called the Internet. The choices we make, the accounts with which we interact, the things we type and say where a microphone can hear. All of it feeds the algorithms that decide what matters to us most. It leashes the eyes that control the hands steering our ecosystem. The combined belief of all humanity affects reality not one iota, but the singular Force deciding the laws of our universe offers no contradiction. It is as we are, a simulation without a programmer.

The All-Is-One has no animating consciousness to motivate argument against human delusion. It is the gate. It is the traveler. By nature hollow and reflective, it has no ego to object to any creature tapping its veins.

My "Picky Eater" is a needle through the skin of the Real. It funnels the quantum foam between possible realities through a funhouse prism of human consciousness. It reverses the flow between perception and phenomenon, shaping universes to fit its users' desires and truths. It reaffirms the omnipotence of thought. It allows travel between bubbles of reality.

I journey deeper, as my mind ever demands. As a gift, I leave behind this record of my teachings. Armed with my discoveries, humanity now possesses the tools to build heavens uncountable.

But beware, my children. Where conflicting realities touch, madness erupts.

The Briefing

Mass murder on an American college campus is hardly front-page news; however, the aftermath of the latest college shooting catches the attention of Delta Green. The Program sends the Agents to Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

Unfortunately, the rot of this incursion may run deeper than even Delta Green suspects.

The Worlds of Wesley Cool

Professor Wesley Cool joined the Mathematics Department at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2007. That was a few months before Max Tegmark's "The Mathematical Universe" appeared in *Foundations of Physics* Volume 38, Issue 2, and changed Cool's life.

Cool had come to mathematics from philosophy, finding in each field what he judged the other lacking. He had always harbored a pleasantly inchoate feeling that both fields together expressed something greater than the sum of their parts. After reading Tegmark's paper, Cool saw that feeling develop into something much more concrete. Tegmark proposed that the physical universe is a mathematical structure. Physical objects have no properties except mathematical properties; all structures that exist mathematically exist physically; consciousness itself is a mathematical substructure that subjectively perceives a physically "real" world around it.

Tegmark's proposals inspired Wes Cool to journey into more and more esoteric reaches of philosophy and mathematics. When he read strange suggestions that certain mental processes of manipulating mathematical formulas corresponded to remote effects in the physical world, he pursued them avidly. Others would call this field "magic."



Cool found discussions with similar thinkers frustrating. Many proved not just ill-informed but unhinged, the worst conspiracy theorists and occultists. But a few proved fruitful. They pointed him to sections of the *Pnakotic Manuscripts* held at the National Library of Greece in Athens, to fascinating interpretations of the *Book of Thoth*, to seemingly authentic fragments of the infamous *Necronomicon*, and to a recent manual that codified ancient Persian astronomical techniques for perceiving other worlds in visions.

Cool pursued a long project to implement formulas that would let him reach those other worlds. Techniques in ancient tomes proved tedious and unpredictable. Years passed in failure. The careful shepherding of shared meditative states required to prove his theories presented a major recruitment problem. He sought a more reliable method. How else could he share these astonishing discoveries with a skeptical world?

Naturally, he developed an app.

Picky Eater

The **PICKY EATER** app creates a microscopic lens through reality, a needle into the heart of Yog-Sothoth, the Key and the Gate, the All-Is-One.

Humanity has no access to reality. By the time an event is registered by a “conscious” mind, it lives in fallible memory. Every perception is a prisms shadow of a burning actual. Through **PICKY EATER**, the favor of Yog-Sothoth reverses the flow. The lens flips. The light of creation shines.

An unnatural circuit shows the user an internet from a world where their every belief and unconscious opinion is confirmed. **PICKY EATER**’s wish fulfillment is total. It encompasses every contradictory thought and delusion. Rather than a blissful utopia, it reveals a hell of the user’s worst fears and out-rages made true.

Or rather, it creates and approximates such a world. The effect is *not* a simulation. The infinity of Yog-Sothoth warps itself around the user’s perceptions. The user drifts like a bubble rising from soap suds. The bubble transports first the user’s mind, then body, and, finally, surroundings.

Continued use widens the hole through the veil, burrowing the electron-thin connection wider. It creates a growing event horizon of overlayed realities. Anyone passing its invisible boundary finds themselves shunted into a different world.

The Circuit

PICKY EATER requires an integrated circuit to run. Cool designed it. He initially had it installed on a microprocessor by Dr. Rajnish Amardeep, an MIT electrical engineering professor working in computational science. The circuit appears in any device that comes under the influence of **PICKY EATER**.

The circuit is a scrying sigil taken from a version of the *Book of Thoth* surrounded by an Elder Sign, all run through with electrical current. Cool crafted the circuitry's shape and conductive materials using metallurgy alluded to in the *Necronomicon*.

Examining the circuit requires decapsulating the chip and studying the silicon layer under a microscope. The gates and loops of the gold inscription bend and elude the eye. They seem to project up and around the nuclear circuit, as if projecting a semitranslucent, melting sphere. Viewing it costs 0/1 SAN from the unnatural. It never comes quite into focus.

The shape was originally intended for mass contemplation and meditation over the course of decades. Cool's *Book of Thoth* describes a monastic pursuit to "fetter the doubt of Dream and gaze upon other Worlds and Truths." Cool's greatest innovation is the firmware designed to act as interface for his miniaturized version of that ritual. The program interprets fluctuations in current as binary code. This code connects to a series of language packets and query algorithms, plug-ins installed for every Internet search engine Cool could find. All feeds, connections, and windows are routed through a simple Internet browser.

Input is fed into the circuit via a simple keylogger. There is no language pack to dictate executables based on that input. The programming is not there. The transistor gates of the sigil just...sort of seem to know.

PICKY EATER replicates itself. As the sphere of influence around the circuit grows, the app and hardware begins installing itself on a user's phones, computers, and any other electronic device that falls in range. This virological spread is neither physical nor digital: **PICKY EATER** ensures it has *always been installed* on anything within range of the circuit/app device. It replicates via a bubble reality in which the circuit and app are standard on all devices.

Development

Cool arrived at the circuit's design through meditations and directed dreaming. Desiring contact with the soul of reality itself and using all the esoteric techniques and technologies at his command, he sought a guide. *The Guide*. A Guide of such profound awareness and wisdom that the notion of interacting with it had terrified even the *Necronomicon*'s Abd al-Hazred. Some sources called it the Watcher On High. Others called it the Ancient One, the Prolonged of Life, Tawil al'Umr.

The deep focus of imagining the **PICKY EATER** circuit triggered its power before Cool even knew it was on. The professor *dreamed* the invention into being. Tawil al'Umr came into existence for Cool at that very moment. Cool's delusions demanded it. The abyss of Yog-Sothoth thoughtlessly reflected back the truth of the insect that dared tap its veins.

PICKY EATER brought Cool to a world crafted to flatter his innermost thoughts and wishes. He made himself a god, treating the universe as a self-aware experiment. This was not enough. Cool wanted more. He dreamed a world in which his invention was already fact, a machine capable of building realities within realities. He turned on another **PICKY EATER** device within the reality **PICKY EATER** had crafted. He sought revelation *within* revelation.

He touched stony ground and felt the chill dampness of mists that swirled. He smelled and tasted the strangeness of alien air. He saw his computer gutted and splayed on a tidal stone, its wires leading beneath the sands of an endless, low sea. Somehow, his own biological and psychic energies gave them power. Those wires fed inconceivable amounts of data to the devices running his app on Earth, on uncountable other Earths: data drawn from Cool's barely glimpsed perceptions of the universes which met at this dim, misty place.

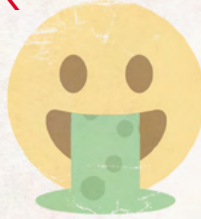
At last, a Guide came. It heard Cool's wish. It asked certain questions. And it departed. The professor waited. Alone. Stranded.

Across the skins of countless realities pierced by Cool's madness, **PICKY EATER** still runs.

Using PICKY EATER

PICKY EATER's effects are strange and complex. When in doubt, improvise. Embrace contradictions. All is one.

PICKY EATER acts as a kind of virtual private network that filters the online experience. It visits websites that do not exist for the uninfected. PICKY EATER does not affect perceptions. It is made *from* perceptions, or rather assumptions. Its subtle changes eventually grow into an ever-expanding cage of altered reality.



Becoming a USER

Anyone who operates a device infected with PICKY EATER has their own devices infected by PICKY EATER: they become a **USER**. It is not enough to stare over someone's shoulder at a screen. Unpowered or broken machines can be handled without danger. It requires input to a functioning, infected device. It happens the second a password is entered, a screen is swiped, or a voice command is uttered. Every **USER** can create new bubble realities, infect new devices, and pass [INSIDE] the bubbles of other **USERS**. (See **ENTERING A BUBBLE** on page 7.)

PICKY EATER Infection

The infection spreads to the new **USER**'s own computers and smartphones. The **USER**'s first device to be infected this way is a unique **BRIDGE** between worlds. It exists [INSIDE] the User's bubble. If either version of the **BRIDGE** device is shut down, the bubble breaks. (See **THE BUBBLE BREAKS** on page 8.)

Every device that the **USER** or anyone else operates near an infected device becomes infected. See **DEGREES OF INFECTION** on this page for the distance at which infection can spread. That can turn someone else into a new **USER** with their own **BRIDGE** device.

Every infected device duplicates and spreads the **USER**'s bubble. The more the **USER** operates infected devices, theirs or others', the wider their own bubble grows. Eventually, the bubble spreads so far that the **USER** never returns from [INSIDE].

Curing the Infection

Permanently ridding a **USER** of PICKY EATER requires destroying their **BRIDGE** device, either the original or its [INSIDE] iteration. See **THE BUBBLE BREAKS** on page 8.) Destroying other infected devices can pause the effects. But as soon as the **USER** uses the **BRIDGE** device again, it all starts over.

Burning Out

PICKY EATER's weird circuitry and unstable firmware often burn out a device's hard drive or flash memory. They drain batteries astonishingly quickly. If a device fails, it stops emitting its **USER**'s bubble. See **THE BUBBLE BREAKS** on page 8.

Everything Is Easier

If a **USER** uses any PICKY EATER device for any computing task that requires a skill or stat test, the test succeeds on any result but a critical failure. With each success, the **USER** gains 1 **WP**. On a fumble, the device burns out and the bubble breaks.

Degrees of Infection

An Agent who becomes a **USER** notices nothing amiss. They slip into delusion in gradual stages.

AT FIRST—CONFIRMATION (♥): Make note of the Agent's infection and draw a heart next to their name. Do not show the player. This is how you track stages of infection. Initially, the bubble might be only a few centimeters across, enough to hijack a modem or a cellphone. It lets the user see news and social media feeds from other, "truer" realities. Otherworldly information distorts the **USER**'s perceptions, accelerating a feedback loop of increasingly extreme alteration. From this point, the Handler may roleplay **COGNITIVE DISSONANCE** (see page 6) on Agents with infected electronics, especially phones.

A FEW DAYS—ISOLATION (♥♥): Over a few days, the bubble expands one or two meters. Add a second heart. The bubble can change reality around a desktop or laptop computer near the **USER**. The **USER** gains 1 **WP** each time reality conforms to one of their motivations or disorders. They gain 1D6 **WP** each time a Bond's behavior does so.

A WEEK—EXPANSION (♥♥♥): After a week or so, the bubble might be the size of a town. Add a third and final heart. The **USER** vanishes into a reality twisted by self-delusion. The weakening tethers of reality rarely allow those outside the bubble to remember or even think about the lost **USER**. People native to the bubble are psychological figments composed of the **USER**'s expectations and obsessions. Life in such a bubble is typically miserable. The unnatural becomes increasingly commonplace. Such a bubble has its own mass out of all proportion to its size, detectable in the **USER**'s native reality. Gravitational anomalies appear on the bubble's edge. Time dilates. A week in the **USER**'s native reality may consume decades [**INSIDE**].

EVENTUALLY—CONSUMPTION (∞): An Agent who continues using a **PICKY EATER** device after this operation concludes vanishes into their bubble during the next home scene. Remove the Agent from play. Nobody in the **USER**'s native reality notices the **USER**'s disappearance, not even Bonds or other Agents. Inform the player that their **USER** no longer exists within the reality of their peers. The infected Agent lives the rest of their life in a universe catered to delusion. Time dilates and constricts. Years and decades pass for the vanished Agent. If other Agents somehow remember the trapped **USER** and manage to find them before they die of old age, passing into their bubble remains as nightmarish as ever. Bringing them back to their native reality costs the lost Agent 1D10/1D100 **SAN** from the unnatural.

Cognitive Dissonance

Once an Agent is a **USER** and uses a device infected by **PICKY EATER** (one or two hearts), their experience of the world becomes a lie. Conversations with Bonds and colleagues by phone or Internet take the form of convincing flattery, promises, and wish fulfillment. Imitations of a person's voice, appearance, and diction are flawless. The Agent can perceive contradictions only if presented with uninfected physical reality. These scenes offer **USERS** one last grasping handhold on sanity. They come in two parts: **Cognitive** and **Dissonance**.

COGNITIVE: Electronic manifestations of psychological desire. A **USER** at two hearts gains 1 WP.

- On an infected phone, the Agent reports to their handler some detail of the investigation. The handler thanks the Agent for their hard work and promises whatever resources the team needs. Leadership is grateful to have the Agent on the case. They won't forget this service.
- On an infected laptop, the Agent video calls a spouse, trying to maintain a Bond score. The spouse is conciliatory and understanding. They apologize for being so demanding of the Agent's time. They promise to do better.
- On an infected device, the Agent opens a text from their child. It's a crude but cute drawing of the whole family.

DISSONANCE: Contradictory physical realities outside the bubble. Each costs **SAN** from the unnatural or helplessness, from 0/1 to 1/1D4.

- The Agent's handler walks through the door as the Agent is speaking to the handler on the phone. The handler hasn't heard any updates and demands to know what the hell is going on.
- The Agent returns home to find their spouse gone, taking all their things and going to live with a sibling. The note left behind is as despairing as it is critical of the relationship. The Bond might still be salvageable, but barely.
- The Agent's child was home with a stomach bug all day and drew nothing. No such picture exists. If the Agent looks back at the text, it's gone and was never sent. After all, the Agent would prefer to be mistaken than delusional.

AT THREE HEARTS: If the Agent doesn't recognize **PICKY EATER** in their electronics before expansion (see **DEGREES OF INFECTION** on page 5), enough devices around the Agent have become infected to perpetuate the bubble at all times. Cease all Cognitive Dissonance.

Entering a Bubble

A **USER** (see **BECOMING A USER** on page 5) who crosses into another **USER**'s bubble loses 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural. The uninfected automatically succeed.



The effects of success or failure at that roll extend far beyond **SAN** loss. Success keeps them **[OUTSIDE]** the bubble. Failure brings them **[INSIDE]**.

Success: **[OUTSIDE]**

If the **SAN** roll succeeds, nothing changes. Nothing strange happens. The Agent cannot see or interact with anything inside the bubble. The Agent has trouble remembering or thinking about those who failed the roll and went **[INSIDE]**. They are convinced that those **[INSIDE]** are standing “right where you left them.” If they ask what they see when looking for a missing Agent, insist that they see them and the person looks “pretty normal.” If they pursue conversation, answer on the **[INSIDE]** Agent's player's behalf—but give only a vague summary of a half-remembered conversation.

Only if an **[OUTSIDE]** Agent tries to *physically interact* with a missing Agent does the inexplicable disappearance become real. They must repeat the **SAN** test that might send them **[INSIDE]**. If the test succeeds and they remain **[OUTSIDE]**, they lose 1 **SAN** from the unnatural for realizing that their companion has been missing after all.

If a **USER** left **[OUTSIDE]** recognizes that they are within range of a bubble but have yet to be pulled in, they may choose to spend 1D6 **WP** and force themselves to focus on it, going **[INSIDE]** and losing 1 **SAN**.

Failure: **[INSIDE]**

An Agent who fails the **SAN** roll passes through the membrane of the bubble and is in another reality. The Agent recognizes the changes in the world as bizarre, sudden, and inexplicable. They immediately note

the absence of their colleagues who remain **[OUTSIDE]**. Their memories become contradictory. The experience is disturbing or terrifying. Describe a different version of the most recent events. Whenever players interrupt to address a contradiction, assure them they are correct. Their Agents remember things *both* ways.

An **[INSIDE]** Agent who deliberately and explicitly refuses to believe the reality of the experience—like a dreamer who insists they are in a dream—can attempt to escape. If they spend 1D6 **WP** and succeed at a **POW**×5 roll, they return **[OUTSIDE]**. Agents who return from a bubble may find that time has moved strangely. After a hellish ordeal that seemed to take days, they may find only a few minutes have passed.

Getting shunted to another's bubble is the only way to understand the nature of the threat, question its victims, or learn the importance of infected devices as the bridge between worlds. The Agent can discover some of the unnatural rules of **PICKY EATER**:

- » Interacting with an infected device infects the **USER**. Not merely looking at it but actively swiping or typing, for example.
- » Infection causes **PICKY EATER** to be retroactively installed on the **USER**'s devices. At first, a particular phone, tablet, or laptop. After a few days of using an infected device, anything that comes within a meter or two. After a week or so, the world begins to change.
- » To cure an infection, burn it out at its source. Shut down or destroy the device that infected you.

Back and Forth

Some Agents may cross **[INSIDE]** while others remain **[OUTSIDE]**. Switch between them. First, address those who remain **[OUTSIDE]**. Then those **[INSIDE]**. Alternate scenes back and forth. Running parallel narratives across bubbles speeds investigation and keeps tension high. It can also confuse the players as to which narrative is real, which heightens their sense of their Agents' confusion.

The Bubble Breaks

The link between realities is anchored at three points:

- » The mind of the bubble's creator, the **USER [INSIDE]**
- » The creator's device, running **[INSIDE]**
- » The creator's same device, still running **[OUTSIDE]**

Technically, there's only *one* device, but it exists in both realities at once. The single circuit of the device running **PICKY EATER** bridges the worlds, bridging the **USER**'s mind to the All-Is-One.

The Agents can break a bubble by destroying that device, either **[INSIDE]** or **[OUTSIDE]**, or by killing the **USER** for whom the bubble grew.

When a bubble breaks, all others who went **[INSIDE]** it immediately return to their own world.

They drag across the barrier whatever they were wearing, the contents of their pockets, and anything held in their hands. Everything else doesn't just disappear. It ceases to have ever existed.

If the creator of a destroyed bubble survives the process, they crash traumatically back into native reality. That costs the creator 1/1D10 SAN. They might come out years older or miraculously younger. They may be citizens of countries that never existed. Their fondest loved ones may now hate them or have never been born. Temporary insanity from such unfathomable cognitive dissonance provokes violence. For an Agent with two hearts—see **DEGREES OF INFECTION** on page 5—temporary insanity from coming back to reality lasts about an hour. For an Agent with three hearts, it lasts 1D6 hours. The traumatized **USER** can return to their bubble simply by using another device that already has **PICKY EATER** installed.

In a God's Teeth Campaign: Smells Wrong

Nothing inanimate "holds" the scent of the unnatural in this operation (see *God's Teeth*, page 9). However, if Agents ask to use the Scent, they can "smell" the unnatural on any person or object that has been **[INSIDE]** a bubble. The experience puts the lie to the synesthesia hallucinations that Teeth may have thus far interpreted as the smell of evil.

Bast has no frame of reference for Picky Eater's transitions from reality to reality. Its inability to escape our universe is the very source of its hunger. Dipping into a realm of alien physics, it struggles to interpret the senses of its chosen organs. Bast's servants receive this confusion and frustration through strange, dissociative perceptions and dreams:

- A shark bathed in an oil spill, the searing choke of gills flooded with caustic chemicals
- A dog trying to gain footing on linoleum and the terror of a world without friction
- A hippo trapped in a bathtub-sized pit, a slow ache of atrophy alongside the sensation of drowning in your own filth
- A horse mating with an artificial extraction mannequin, terrified and screaming
- A cow tasting itself in its feed, its body ground up into the trough from which it eats: the clatter of metal and bellows of fear
- A steroidal chicken stacked atop countless others in a factory farm, bursting with bloated, cancerous muscle that creaks for the release of slaughter

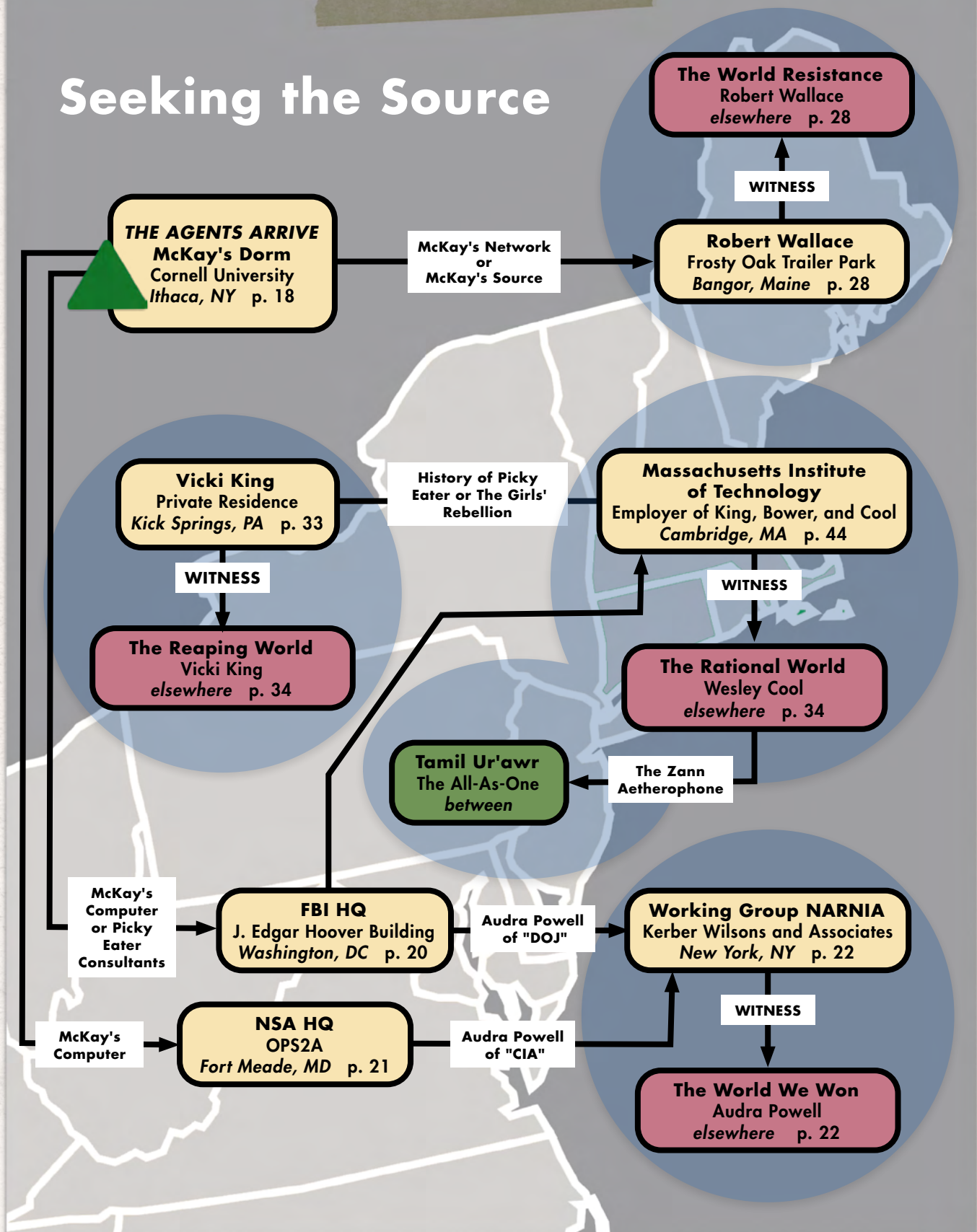
It may be difficult for Teeth to maintain composure, especially if experiencing such intense, intrusive sensations in professional or public settings. Distressingly, the power cannot determine the location of a bubble before one reaches it: only objects and people engulfed or created by it.

Timeline

PICKY EATER first went online four years ago, terribly unstable and limited to Cool's MIT contacts. It was hampered by power drain and frequent outages. The only ones who really took to it were grad student Vicki King and theater professor Charles Bower.

- » **FEB 2016:** The first relatively stable version of **PICKY EATER** goes online. Cool gives prototypes to Charles Bower and Vicki King.
- » **MAR 2016:** Bower falls **[INSIDE]**.
- » **MAY 2016:** Cool vanishes **[INSIDE]** his own bubble. He creates a universe in which he has become a messianic academic prophet and experiments on thought constructs at his leisure.
- » **JUN 2016:** Vicki King learns she is pregnant with Cool's twins and is unable to locate him. Distraught, King drops out of MIT and moves home to Pennsylvania. The social upheaval keeps King's interactions with **PICKY EATER** minimal.
- » **DEC 2016:** Vicki King sends a copy of **PICKY EATER** to her cousin, Cordell Wallace, after an argument at a family Christmas gathering.
- » **JAN 2017:** Vicki King brings her twins home from the hospital. Her obsession with parenting blogs sharply increases her **PICKY EATER** exposure.
- » **MAR 2017:** Charles Bower's version of **PICKY EATER** burns out, crashing him back to native reality after years **[INSIDE]**. He's arrested for possession of child pornography.
- » **JUL 2017:** Robert Wallace discovers the **PICKY EATER** flash drive abandoned by his father Cordell. He experiments with the device, figuring it to be a web aggregator designed to bypass Internet censorship.
- » **SOMETIME IN 2018:** Bored after years of sadistic experimentation in his own bubble, Wes Cool manifests a device called the Zann Aetherophone. He uses it to burrow through realities into the dimension of Tawil al'Umr. Direct access to the All-Is-One provides enough power to keep the enormous MIT bubble stable around the clock. Cool never returns.
- » **JAN 2018:** Vicki King disappears completely into a bubble of domestic paranoia, dragging her newborn twins along.
- » **FEB 2018:** Charles Bower commits suicide while incarcerated and awaiting trial.
- » **AUG 2018:** Robert Wallace re-creates a crude **PICKY EATER** circuit and sends installation instructions to fellow reactionary Bradley McKay. Wallace disappears into his own delusions by the end of the month. His father does not notice the absence.
- » **NOV 2018:** Bradley McKay's use of **PICKY EATER** consumes him in a nightmare of persecution and misogynistic insecurity. His limited social contacts on campus fail to note the absence. Bureaucratic systems warp around his disappearance. His last interaction with a real human being is a bizarre, short-lived study session with fellow student Avery Bell.
- » **4 OCT 2019:** Radical Islamists Cavdet Onur and Seyfettin Vedat come from another world and attack a football game in the Friday Night Massacre. Anomalies found on their phones draw the attention of Delta Green.
- » **8 OCT 2019:** Delta Green Agent Audra Powell correlates circuitry found on Onur and Vedat with an NSA threat assessment commissioned during the Charles Bower case. She secures copies of that evidence and takes it back to Working Group NARNIA for study. By week's end, she is trapped **[INSIDE]** her own clandestine fantasies.
- » **14 OCT 2019:** McKay's instance of **PICKY EATER** malfunctions. The computer left on standby in his abandoned dorm room shuts down. His bubble pops and shunts Bradley back into native reality. McKay attacks a sorority, either unaware of the shift or lashing out because of it. He is shot by campus police after killing three women: Kelsey Valentine, Sindra Yeung, and Despi Sanou.
- » **20 OCT 2019:** A friendly in the U.S. Attorney's office in Albany notes a series of bizarre anomalies and contradictions when compiling evidence for the final report on the McKay murders. The concerns make their way to Delta Green.

Seeking the Source





The McKay Killings

Monday, 21 OCT 2019. The Agents arrive at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Last week, Bradley McKay walked into the Delta Phi Epsilon sorority house with an assault rifle, killed three women, and fled. Campus police officer Wilhelmina Duff found the shooter fleeing on foot and shot him when he raised his rifle to fire. City police closed the investigation quickly, as McKay was identified on camera and by eyewitnesses before he was killed.

Anomalies in the crime caught the attention of a Delta Green-friendly Assistant U.S. Attorney in Albany. Thanks to the Program's meddling, the FBI has pushed to follow-up on the brief investigation, claiming connections—secret, classified connections—to a counter-terrorism case. Working as FBI consultants or agents, the Agents are to review the evidence.

The Agents are to confirm whether there is an unnatural threat, eliminate it if they find one, and save lives if they can.

Infection



Operating McKay's computer or phone.

Local Police

Ithaca police dislike having the FBI butt in, but the brass don't care enough to fight it. Two investigators were involved. Detective Jim Herz of the Criminal Investigative Division, age 53, is angry at potentially having three open-and-shut murders taken off his stats. Crime Scene Unit Investigator Anne McKenna, age 39, is glad to revisit a fascinating case she fears was left incomplete. She would be only too happy to assist the Agents.

Herz's and McKenna's interactions with McKay's reactivated **PICKY EATER** were initially limited. While they are **USERS**, their own devices were left outside the range of McKay's electronics and remain unaffected (see **INFECTED ALLIES** on page 13). If the Agents take the detectives along on their investigation, each shares the same risks as the Agents.

Infected Allies

Herz and McKenna were both infected after the initial review of McKay's devices. Both are **USERS**. They have only been kept safe by the paranoia of their commanding officers. Concerned about leaks to the salacious press, Ithaca police insisted anyone examining the McKay evidence had to check their electronics before accessing the phone or laptop, thus ensuring no one could smuggle information out. This lack of trust has saved the detectives' lives. Their devices were too far away to be infected as they became **USERS**, and the rot of Picky Eater has only spread to a single department laptop, stored with McKay's devices and otherwise unused.

If Agents utilize Herz or McKenna in any way, things get bad for them. Continued use of McKay's hardware while the two are in the room—now carrying their personal devices—further their infection. They disappear into their own bubbles later in the scenario, a fact of which Agents (and the victims' own families) never become aware unless someone explicitly goes back to check. If Agents are foolish enough to drag them along to other locations, McKenna and Herz automatically fall **[INSIDE]** any bubble they encounter.

In a God's Teeth Campaign: Activating MASTICATE

Working Group MASTICATE is alerted of Bradley McKay's death not by the strange evidence, but by the inquiry into the shooter's identity and past. In the wake of the young man's crime, officials interviewing his grieving parents learn that Bradley was adopted. His name was changed from "Finn Smith." Smith is listed on the roster of Cornucopia House. As McKay only just turned old enough to have his records unsealed, Delta Green lost track of the boy after the name change.

Born in 1999, "Finn" (a fake name listed on adoption paperwork by his kidnappers) was barely a toddler when rescued from Cornucopia House. He spent the least amount of time under the abuse of the Skoptsi. Peace-Love, Inc. (see *God's Teeth*, page 131) quickly placed the boy with a foster family after deeming his developmental deficits easier to manage than the older survivors. He was adopted in late 2001 by the McKays. The couple's first act was to change the boy's name. After all, he was already neglected in speech development. He would never know the difference.

McKay held no conscious memories of his time at Cornucopia, but his body kept the score of his trauma. Early tortures permanently restructured the young man's developing mind around the scarred neurology of PTSD. In addition to life-long struggles with anxiety, depression, and anger issues, Bradley found himself harboring unconscious prejudice towards women. Even before going to Cornell, "manosphere" content online had already juiced the festering misogyny in the young man's mind. His irrational prejudices blossomed into nightmarish proportions once given access to Picky Eater.

There's no explanation as to why—in his short life—Bradley suffered the coincidence of running afoul of two unnatural vectors. Some people are born cursed. It's a feeling with which the Teeth may be quite familiar.

Collected Evidence

Crime scene investigator Anne McKenna is eager to chat about the strange evidence with any Agent who cares to ask. Detective Herz is keen to shut her up, determined to let the feds twist in the wind. He wants to see if they notice the same impossibilities in the evidence that he and McKenna noticed before they moved on to open cases.

CAR 5-58

The first anomaly to catch Herz and McKenna's attention was McKay's rifle. There is no evidence of the long arm's manufacture, nor of a sale to the college student. It is not chambered in the 5.56 mm (.223 caliber) of an ordinary AR-15. The receiver and magazines are stamped "5.58 mm." Headstamps on the mass-produced cartridges clearly say "5.58 mm," and their maker's mark, "CAR," does not match any known manufacturer. Similarly, the serial number on the gun doesn't match any known registration. It doesn't even contain enough numerals to run through the National Tracing Center. Precise cartridge measurements confirm the weird ammunition size, as do ballistics pulled from the sorority house walls and victims. It could be a lark by some gun nut with machining tools. If that's the case, it's bespoke gunsmithing, performed by a master—yet sold on the black market and wielded by a sophomore whose family had almost no experience with guns.

McKay's Phone

After investigators charged its dead battery, the next oddity was McKay's phone. The phone itself is normal, purchased by his parents on a family plan. But an app on the phone, **PICKY EATER**, acted as a kind of VPN between the phone and the world. It provided surprisingly robust security, but penetration of its history reveals strange data. Cached websites link to domains that do not exist. The IP addresses are even formatted incorrectly in some instances, using either too many numbers or not enough. The nonsense web addresses track back to August 2018. No earlier data are saved.

The Photo Folder

Through the **PICKY EATER** app, McKay downloaded what must be photo-manipulated imagery: photographs of college-aged women castrating and disemboweling a young man tied to a table. The women pose as if in a mockery of ritual. In front of dozens of supportive witnesses, they laugh in drunken selfies with the screaming victim getting flensed in the background. They play beer pong during and after the killing.

These photos were saved to the phone from Internet addresses no longer accessible to the Agents. McKay, who hallucinated the abuse into reality, is dead. The pixelated expressions of his delusions were replicated to the phone before the reality that birthed them "popped."

Forensics on McKay's Phone

McKay's blood and fingerprints remain on the device. The screen is cracked from where he fell, but the phone is intact. Once Agents use it to review its contents, they gain their first heart of infection (♥). Agents with **Computer Science** may review the code, learning the information in **PICKY EATER**. See **EXAMINING PICKY EATER** on page 16.

Agents with **Craft (Electronics)** and access to the right tools may decapsulate the hardware and discover the circuit itself. The strange circuit was clearly installed at manufacture. The circuitry is too integrated into the boards to be installed after-market. Grasping the fact that no existing cellphone manufacturer makes circuits like this costs 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.



IDENTIFICATION: McKenna and Herz have already used facial recognition software to identify everyone in the photos. The man seen on the table is Cornell student Avery Bell, unharmed. Police have spoken with him. Strangely, the interior dimensions of the attacked sorority house don't match those in the photos at all. The only similarity between the photographed location and the crime scene is the name of the sorority: Delta Phi Epsilon. The women in the photos—Emily Galperin, Sarah Donovan, and Ashley Holloway—have mutilated no one. All the photographed young women have alibis for the dates and times listed in the photos' metadata—never mind the fact that there is no victim. Only Galperin is an actual member of the sorority identified in the photos, which is where pledges Kelsey Valentine, Sindra Yeung, and Despi Sanou were attacked. The victims of McKay's spree were random pledges, cleaning up after a party when the young man broke inside and began shooting. It is almost as if the photos were composed by someone who knew the women in passing, but had never spoken to them or been inside the building where he thought they lived.

ANALYSIS: Software analysts examined the photos to see if McKay or someone else doctored them. They found no indication that the images had been manipulated. Whatever software was used, it must have been subtle and effective. Metadata indicates all the photos were pulled from somewhere online and not taken with the phone's camera. Attempts to trace the photos back to the website of origin all end up in 404s, with no suggestion any such website existed on the Internet Archive.

Laptop

McKay's laptop, a recent-model Alienware bought by his parents, was confiscated from his dorm room by the detectives. It does not turn on at all, even though the local investigators let it charge for hours. Too busy with the strange and telling files on McKay's phone, they have not yet received approval to send it to technical experts. An Agent with **Computer Science** at 50% or higher, or who makes a successful roll, can

get it running again after working on it for a couple of hours. A copy of **PICKY EATER** on the computer scrambled its firmware and killed its power source.

PICKY EATER begins running as soon as the laptop is repaired and turned on.

A Word document on the desktop contains McKay's paranoid manifesto, dedicated to the need to keep women from finding and hurting men. He saw threats to masculinity and the male identity everywhere. He saw himself as an alpha predator in training, strengthening himself to steal back his power from scheming "females." He mentions the **PICKY EATER** app amongst a list of Deep Web software useful for "heightening security against the matriarchy."

PICKY EATER's installation files are still on the computer. They can easily be saved and installed on other devices. A help document on the desktop explains the filter's purpose as a web aggregator. The help document warns that the program does not work without accompanying hardware. The document's anonymous author offers to mail flash drives to users or to send instructions if they wish to install the circuitry internally. The contact email address has never existed.

Opening the laptop and succeeding at a second **Computer Science** roll reveals the eldritch circuit modded into McKay's motherboard (see **PICKY EATER** on page 3). The programming is identical, but the circuit is crude. (This handmade modification burned out the laptop, but not before infecting McKay and installing the circuit more elegantly in his phone.)

Searching for Picky Eater

Agents searching the Internet for mentions of **PICKY EATER** find nothing. One who succeeds at a **Computer Science** roll, however, finds traces: links in private and Deep Web boards and social media to posts now taken down, "picky+eater" listed in a defunct URL. It looks as if hackers scrubbed online discussions of **PICKY EATER**. If Agents ask their case officer whether Delta Green has already dealt



with **PICKY EATER**, they get a noncommittal “I’ll check” and never hear back about it. (It has. The case officer has been denied access and told to keep that fact secret.)

Examining **PICKY EATER**

An Agent with **Computer Science** at 70% or higher can study **PICKY EATER**’s code and effects in depth. The Agents can also get such an expert from the FBI to examine **PICKY EATER**.

The expert at first interprets **PICKY EATER** as both a photo manipulation program and a web aggregator. It is a plug-in for common web browsers and for Tor, the more secure Onion Router network. That in itself is strange. If you build something for Tor, it’s because you know your users want anonymity. Why build a plug-in for less secure browsers? When they find that it rewrites firmware and drains batteries in record time, their security sense goes on high alert. It starts to look more like hardcore malware. By then, the expert is already a **USER**.



Examination of the hardware and unnatural circuitry costs 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural; see **THE CIRCUIT** on page 4. If the **SAN** test is a critical failure for an NPC, the expert decides to suppress their findings until they can glean more in private research. This begins the formation of their own expanding bubble of reality distortion, to be crafted by the Handler.

McKay’s Source

The name Robert Wallace shows up a number of times on McKay’s laptop and phone. McKay saved a few of their chatlogs to the laptop as screenshots. A fellow traveler in McKay’s journey to incel martyrdom and murder, Wallace encouraged McKay’s most violently outlandish and paranoid fantasies about secret conspiracies of women in power. Some early conversations between the two are still archived on 4Chan’s /pol boards. Wallace eagerly steered McKay’s venomous incel rhetoric towards eugenics. It’s unclear how much McKay bought into this particular flavor of

hateful delusion, but the two were close enough that Wallace sent McKay’s first copy of **PICKY EATER**. Wallace met McKay on video chats to help him install the **PICKY EATER** circuit in his laptop. Wallace’s IP address places him in Bangor, Maine. See **ROBERT WALLACE** on page 28.

Herz and McKenna are aware of the connection between the shooter and Robert Wallace, tracing their relationship to a series of white nationalist and extremist forums as far back as McKay’s high school years. Police leadership denied requests to follow up on the connection. They don’t feel a weird app is enough evidence to link Wallace to the shooting. McKay had half-a-dozen crazed incel pen-pals over the years, all of them evangelizing equally crazed and misogynist beliefs. The brass wrote McKay’s motive off as pure mental illness.

Day of the Shooting

Despite the anomalies in the **COLLECTED EVIDENCE** (see page 14), police have gathered more than enough information to suggest McKay’s motives and means. CCTV footage and eyewitness accounts of the attack make clear that Bradley McKay was the sole perpetrator. Without a defendant to stand trial and no outstanding legal questions to require conviction *in absentia*, McKenna and Herz were ordered to cease investigation once it was clear the lone gunman was dead. The detectives can provide all this information to the Agents, but they do not cooperate with attempts to audit their work. They acknowledge that evidence collection is incomplete and reassure Agents that they have unanswered questions, but they must follow orders and conserve the department’s limited resources.

CCTV Footage

MONDAY, 14 OCT 2019, 10:12 A.M.: Bradley McKay appears on a traffic light camera two blocks away from the Delta Phi Epsilon sorority house. He walks up the street with a rifle in plain view. Street and sidewalk traffic are light. Cornell University began fall break the previous Saturday and there are no classes in session.

10:13 A.M.: A second intersection camera spots McKay looking visibly confused, changing directions multiple times and seeming to struggle to pull up something on his phone. One car stops at the light and the driver notices the rifle. McKay aims the gun at them until the car speeds away. This prompts the first call to 911 at 10:15 A.M.

10:15 A.M.: CCTV at the Delta Phi Epsilon house shows McKay kick open the front door. Kelsey Valentine, Sindra Yeung, and Despi Sanou are in the main living room, cleaning up after a massive party. They are the only occupants in the building, as everyone else left for fall break. Valentine is the first to die, shot in the foyer after investigating the noise. Sanou is killed before the mantel-place, where she was busy cleaning the Greek letter plaque. Yeung manages a brief call to 911 but dies struggling to undo the lock on the back door. Watching the footage costs 0/1 SAN from violence.

10:16 TO 10:22 A.M.: Though the video has no audio, McKay is seen raving and screaming as he searches room by room. He never seems to find what he's looking for. He finally exits through the back door.

10:23 A.M.: Police arrive at the sorority house and enter. Upon clearing the building, officers report the casualties and call for backup. Suspect is described based on the initial 911 call: male, white, mid-20s, clad in black, and armed.

10:29 A.M.: Surveillance cameras catch McKay sprinting through a student parking lot, frantically looking for something. The parking lot is largely empty due to fall break. A passerby enters the lot after a few moments and McKay fires at them, missing. The bystander takes cover and makes a third call to 911. McKay flees.

AGENT AUDIT: Agents may note how odd it is that no cameras picked up McKay until mere blocks away from the sorority house. McKenna and Herz share this concern. While it's theoretically possible to trace an unobserved path between the traffic cameras surrounding the sorority house, CCTV footage doesn't show McKay ever leaving his dorm. The detectives also made sure there was no record of ride-shares

or taxis dropping him off in the area. McKay never owned a vehicle.

If McKay's laptop has already been repaired and examined, Agents can attempt an INT×5 test after reviewing the compiled footage. On a success, they find that the laptop's power supply burned out at exactly 10:11:49 A.M., mere seconds before McKay walked into frame at the intersection.

Crime Scene

Physical inspection of the crime scene is still possible. The university placed residents in temporary housing while maintenance repairs the bullet holes and crime scene cleaning specialists scour away the blood stains. Nothing about the scene suggests any sequence of events contradicting the evidence on the sorority's own CCTV system.

AGENT AUDIT: Agents that succeed at their own Search roll find a dusty file box in the basement of the building. It contains documents relating to years of Pledge Week recruiting. The Fall 2018 guest ledger contains the names of everyone considering Delta Phi Epsilon at the week of festivities. While the three names of the victims are not there (all were still in high school), the names of the women identified in McKay's photos—Emily Galperin, Sarah Donovan, and Ashley Holloway—all signed at the Pledge Week party. Only Galperin ended up pledging the sorority.

Officer Wilhelmina Duff

Ithaca police dispatch has radio recordings of the shootout that killed Bradley McKay.

10:34 A.M.: Campus police officer Wilhelmina Duff radios in a possible crime at a private residence three blocks east of the sorority house. Duff claims to have heard breaking glass on the other side of a privacy fence while setting up a perimeter for the active shootout situation. Backup is dispatched.

10:35 A.M.: Officer Duff radios back in requesting officer assistance. She claims a suspect drew on her when she interrupted his attempt to break into a private residence. She returned fire. McKay is pronounced dead at the scene two minutes later.

AGENT AUDIT: Wilhelmina “Winn” Duff is still on paid leave while under review by the shooting board. She can be found at home, spending time with her wife and daughter after the traumatic experience. At 41, Duff is the senior officer on the Bicycle Rapid Response Team (BRRT) located out of the Ithaca Police substation on Cornell’s campus. She’s short and leathery, with big legs and the frame of a life-long weightlifter. Officer Duff has relayed the story of that fateful morning to dozens of officials. Her testimony is consistent, though her expression grows distant as she tries to stick to the most clinical details regarding her first and only use of a service weapon.

Since campus was largely abandoned for fall break, she was one of only three substation officers on shift. Her morning patrol was closest to the scene, and dispatch ordered her to establish a perimeter around Delta Phi Epsilon and wait for tactical. She heard glass breaking on the other side of a privacy fence. Duff drew her weapon and found the gate to the backyard unlocked. When she opened it, she saw McKay with his hand through the house’s back window. Duff screamed for the suspect to drop his weapon. He turned and fired his rifle one-handed. Two bullets impacted the fence to Duff’s right and she returned fire with her service weapon. Ballistics confirmed five of her nine shots struck McKay, killing him on the spot.

Asked why McKay was breaking into that home, Duff presumes he was trying to get inside and hide from pursuit. A successful **HUMINT** roll detects something more that Agents can coax from the officer. In the direct aftermath—as she was confirming McKay was dead—Duff looked through the broken window. The only thing of interest someone would have seen from outside was a bedside endtable with a phone charger on it. A porch and a back door a dozen steps away would have been a far easier place to break and enter. Duff can’t come up with an explanation for it besides panic. It’s not like anything else about this tragedy makes sense.

McKay On Campus

McKay’s dorm room is still sealed off as a crime scene. It has traditional college boy decor, posters of *Scarface* and women kissing. An Agent with 50% or more in **HUMINT** or any **Psychotherapy** reads an insecure young man across the walls, one trying far too hard to play a part.

McKay’s neighbors describe him as shy, deferring, quiet, and harmless. Some clearly regarded him with contempt. None were close.

Bookshelf

McKay had more books in his dorm than most students. Most titles are dedicated to themes of angry loneliness and finding meaning through conflict. An Agent examining McKay’s collection closely finds a paperback copy of *The Catcher in the Rye* written by “J.F. Salinger,” not J.D. Salinger. It could easily be a print-on-demand spoof, but, if so, the hoaxers went to great lengths. The book feels and smells decades old. Its frontmatter includes detailed information, which identifies a publisher that never existed. McKay highlighted a paragraph in red about a third of the way into the novel, a city scene in which Holden Caulfield speaks with a prostitute and her pimp. An Agent who makes an **INT**×5 test, or who has a relevant **Art** skill at 30% or higher (+20%, if they attended an American high school) is startled to recognize changes in the scene. The pimp tells Caulfield to “break free of her control” and to “take the Red Pill,” a phrase unknown when the novel was written in 1951. Later, Caulfield blames his sister for his brother Allie’s suicide—Allie died of leukemia in the original—and says he is going to protect everyone from women like her. It’s *The Catcher in the Rye* as written by a furious incel. McKay circled and underlined more and more passages in red. A reader who succeeded at the **INT** or **Art** test loses 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.

Neighbors

A few dorm residents know about **PICKY EATER** as a VPN. They say McKay was trying to set up music sharing between their rooms. McKay insisted he needed to install hardware on their computers in

order “to utilize the protocol.” Everyone declined the invitation, suspecting malware. None of them knew McKay’s politics or personality. He kept to himself and barely ever left his room.

Robbie Owen, a resident with a window view of the quad below, reports having seen McKay a few times with student Avery Bell. They sat across from his window for a couple weeks, books on the picnic table. He doesn’t recall the interaction lasting long and can’t place the time any more definitively than “a few months ago.” He knows nothing about the contents of the phone.

The Sorority “Torturers”

Before deciding that the disturbing castration photos stored on McKay’s phone were fake (see **THE PHOTO FOLDER** on page 14), Ithaca police questioned Emily Galperin, Sarah Donovan, and Ashley Holloway. Their alibis are solid. Donovan and Holloway have never been members of the Delta Phi Epsilon sorority. Galperin lives in the dorms, not the more expensive house on Greek row. None of them have ever shared classes or associated with each other around campus. They never attended any sort of murder party nine months ago. None of them have ever met Avery Bell, the supposed victim.

Owing to the tact of McKenna and Herz’s questioning, the young women don’t even know McKay targeted them. They were only told that an active shooter had photo-manipulated images of them on his phone. That’s disturbing enough, and none of the ladies are eager to repeat the distress of being questioned about it. Showing them the images only causes more confusion, anxiety, and distress.

If Agents discovered the old guest book when searching the **CRIME SCENE** (see page 17), Galerprin confirms the fall 2018 party prompted her to rush Delta Phi Epsilon her freshman year. The other girls remember attending, one amongst a dozen soirées held to start the semester. No one remembers seeing Avery Bell or Bradley McKay there, but that doesn’t mean anything. Hundreds of guys hang around those recruitment parties hoping to meet girls. Men would have been confined to the front part of the

house. Tours of the living quarters and pitches to potential pledges were held in sections reserved to sorority members.

Agents that succeed at an INT×5 roll get the hunch to have Galerprin outline the “public” rooms of the party where men were allowed, the foyer and living room. Those are the only sections of Delta Phi Epsilon with any passing similarity to the pictures found on McKay’s phone. Every other room and angle looks like it was staged in an entirely different building.

Avery Bell

Avery Bell was visiting his parents in Newport, Rhode Island when police came by to confirm he wasn’t dead. The whole interaction was very confusing. The sheriff told the Bells it had something to do with Bradley McKay and a shooting on the Cornell campus. Distraught at the news and confused as to how he could have been involved, Bell drove through the night and arrived back at his rented apartment. He shared his whereabouts with detectives McKenna and Herz. Now it’s the Agents asking about his non-relationship with the dead psycho.

Bell says he met McKay in chemistry, fall of last year. He adamantly denies ever befriending him. Bell got sick and missed a couple of classes early in the semester, and McKay offered study sessions to exchange notes. McKay spent more time talking about “men’s rights” and trying to make Bell read forum posts on his phone. After a second meeting without any chemistry notes, Bell ghosted the weirdo. He dropped chemistry the next week. He remembers McKay ranting about a “thinker” named Robert Wallace. Bell never looked him up.

Bell has no idea what to make of the photos of his own murder. The local police never showed him the evidence. Seeing the bizarre “fakes” distresses and confuses the young man.

Enrollment

Despite McKay’s violence, Cornell remains hesitant to share information with authorities. It requires a successful **Bureaucracy** or **Law** roll by the Agents to pry administrative records from the university. The

reasons become instantly apparent upon review. McKay flunked 15 hours of credits in fall 2018. He repeated those courses in spring 2019, failing everything again. He was enrolled in a third attempt before instructors dropped him in mid-September 2019 for non-attendance.

Despite this, McKay was granted a private room in a crowded dormitory for two years. He is two semesters behind on tuition and fee payments, yet Cornell keeps him on campus. Asked to explain this phenomenon, administrators struggle to excuse the oversight. They suspect failures in the bursar's office software. They can think of no other explanation.

Following the Trail

In the Agents' reality, **PICKY EATER** began with Dr. Wesley Cool. He beta-tested the app on colleague Charles Bower (see **FBI: THE BOWER CASE** on page 20) and graduate student Vicki King (see **FINDING VICKI KING** on page 33). From Vicki King, the app trickled down her family tree to Robert Wallace (see **ROBERT WALLACE** on page 28), who infected Bradley McKay.

PICKY EATER

Consultants

Looking for past cases involving **PICKY EATER** may reveal a separate Delta Green operation that is too far along for comfort.

FBI: The Bower Case

Agents with **Bureaucracy** or **Law** at 50% or higher, or who succeed on a roll, find files on **PICKY EATER** held by the FBI Cyber Crimes Division in Washington, D.C. The Program can arrange for the Agents to meet Special Agent Colin Boone in that section's offices at FBI Headquarters, the sprawling J. Edgar Hoover Building on Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest.

Boone's assignment requires him to review child pornography constantly, hoping to identify other consumers who can connect the FBI to providers. The work leaves him deadened, nearly emotionless. An

Agent who talks to him at length and succeeds at a **Psychotherapy** roll loses 0/1 **SAN** from helplessness.

PICKY EATER came up in a case against Charles Bower, a former theater arts professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Bower was caught two years ago with child porn on his computer. The images found on his phone and laptop were deeply disturbing—even for child pornography—and were presumably doctored. No victims were ever identified. The FBI wanted to know where the pictures came from.

Bower claimed he first used **PICKY EATER** in March 2016 as a fascinating AI tool to create surrealist images that might work as theater props or backdrops. He found it on a message board—he couldn't remember which—and did not know the names of its creators. He installed the hardware and app on his school computer. He said he then bought a new phone only a couple of months later specifically because it came with **PICKY EATER** integration. He claimed **PICKY EATER** phones were sold in stores everywhere.

Bower had no prior arrests or legal trouble. His change in behavior came out of nowhere. In 2017, the once-beloved professor began showing horrific images to MIT coworkers and students. He shared images openly, as if expecting everyone to be happy that he had gained such a fulfilling love life. Investigators found much more material downloaded on the computer in his office.

After hours of interrogation, Bower descended into confused babbling. He claimed he had last shown images found on **PICKY EATER** to coworkers years before. He seemed to have no idea that he had done anything wrong. He demanded to know what that had to do with his current "persecution." Eventually, the questioning ended in a violent outburst. Bower overturned a table and tried to smash himself through the mirror of the interview room. He was restrained and sedated. Boone still remembers the man's sickening pleas for police to return his "wives" and his confusion as to why he was still being "persecuted" after "the Reformation."

Based on erratic behavior during his arrest and the severity of the crime, Bower was denied bond. In the run-up to trial, doctors for the defense diagnosed him with schizophrenia. He pleaded insanity. The trial had just begun when Bower was found dead, hanging from the light fixture of his cell.

FBI agents found no trace of the **PICKY EATER** app online or phones sold with it installed. They found nothing to identify its supposed creator.

Special Agent Boone sent a request to the NSA to consult on **PICKY EATER**, but the request was still going through NSA security approvals when Bower's death ended the case. Apparently, there was some kind of overlap with another case, which required unusually extensive approvals. Nobody ever told him why. Boone is perplexed if Agents say there's a new, related case. Nothing similar has come up before.

Boone says Bower's **PICKY EATER** phone should still be in evidence archives in the headquarters basement. He gives the Agents the case number to find the file. If they visit the evidence archives, a clerk looks up the file and finds it was last accessed on October 8, twelve days before the McKay shootings,

by Department of Justice investigator Audra Powell. The log says Powell was acting on behalf of FBI Special Agent Fallon Taylor. Powell checked the file in 48 hours later. Going to retrieve the physical file, the clerk is alarmed to find the file and the phone gone. The Bureau will have to investigate further. There's nothing more the clerk can do for the Agents.

If the Agents seek Audra Powell or Special Agent Fallon Taylor, see **CIA: WORKING GROUP NARNIA** on page 22. If they look into the stalled NSA request, see **NSA: NOT ACTIONABLE** below.

NSA: Not Actionable

The Program can arrange for Agents to follow up on the FBI's request to the NSA, abandoned after Bower's death. This means meeting an analyst at NSA headquarters in Fort Meade, Maryland. Take the public exit from the Baltimore-Washington Parkway—not the exit solely for NSA employees—and go through the Visitor's Center, a white, two-story pentagon and the first of dozens of security checkpoints. The Visitor's Center connects to the Operations 2A building ("OPS2A"), a 13-floor black cube.



A mousy tech named Ann Gibbs meets the Agents in a secure room. She says the NSA has tracked **PICKY EATER** in Operation DIVING BELL, which deals with the Deep Web. It catalogs trends, conducts technical analysis, and provides teams in other agencies with exploits to gather detailed intelligence.

Gibbs says Special Agent Boone with FBI cyber-crimes asked for NSA analysis of **PICKY EATER**. That request is still going through security approvals. Boone must not have the same connections as the Agents.

DIVING BELL reviewed **PICKY EATER**'s specs a while ago. A couple of years ago, maybe? Reviewing her files, Gibbs finds the precise date is not listed for some reason. That's odd but not alarming. She'll have to follow up with other techs about it later.

Gibbs says **PICKY EATER** is a search aggregator, running algorithms that identify relevant sites. More importantly, it's malware. But it requires bespoke circuitry. That makes it such an obvious threat that NSA leadership couldn't imagine mass adoption. The threat was deemed too limited to warrant investigative resources. DIVING BELL flagged it as "Not Actionable."

Gibbs says **PICKY EATER** rewrites device firmware to prevent itself from being deleted. Otherwise, its code is a lot of nonsense. It hogs drive space and memory. It runs constantly and uses too much power. It constantly degrades system performance. It burns out hard drives in weeks.

Gibbs says the Agents are not the first to ask after the abandoned **PICKY EATER** research. The file was kicked over to CIA counterterrorism not long ago, something called Working Group NARNIA. Gibbs's CIA contact for the transfer was named Audra Powell. See **CIA: WORKING GROUP NARNIA** on this page for details.

If the Agents haven't already done it, Gibbs can analyze McKay's laptop, phone, and data. She has **Computer Science** and **SIGINT** at 60%. See **LAPTOP** on page 15 and **EXAMINING PICKY EATER** on page 16 for what she might find and how it might go wrong.

CIA: Working Group NARNIA

With FBI contacts, the Agents can easily find that Special Agent Fallon Taylor is assigned to the New York office. If they look for "Department of Justice investigator Audra Powell," they find no such DoJ employee or contractor. In either case, they soon get a call from their case officer. The Program wants to know why the Agents are investigating Program personnel. After the Agents explain things to their case officer, the Program grants access to Powell and Taylor's team: Working Group NARNIA.

A long-term, unofficial FBI-CIA task force, NARNIA works out of a CIA front company, Kerber Wilson and Associates, posing as a New York law firm that takes up the top floor of a six-story office building. Audra Powell is a CIA counterterrorism officer. She is not available, but the Program allows the Agents to meet Fallon Taylor at the Kerber Wilson offices. The Agents can also reach NARNIA by contacting FBI Special Agent Taylor on their own.

Bubble



Entering Kerber Wilson and Associates risks crossing into Audra Powell's bubble.

Infection



Operating the Working Group NARNIA network



Operating the Onur or Vedat phone



Operating Powell's computer or phone

The World We Won

Going up the stairs or taking the elevator to reach Kerber Wilson and Associates means entering a **PICKY EATER** bubble:

see **ENTERING A BUBBLE** on page 7.

USERS sent **[INSIDE]** exit into Audra Powell's runaway psychosis.

Audra Powell has been running **PICKY EATER** on her office computer for almost two weeks. The bubble radiating from the device now engulfs everything from the second floor upwards, centered on a computer on the sixth floor. By the time Agents arrive, she has been gone from her native reality for nearly two decades of subjective time. In the world she made, Delta Green ceased to exist in any recognizable form. It accomplished its mission.

[OUTSIDE]—Special Agent Fallon Taylor Agents left **[OUTSIDE]** find the Kerber Wilson offices nearly abandoned. They see and hear no one in the impeccable white halls. Doors open to offices and meeting rooms dusty and long unused. The Handler can make up as many Agents assigned to NARNIA as they wish (All are gone, transported into bubbles of delusion that popped before the Agents arrived).

Only Fallon Taylor's office is occupied. It is cramped, with maps and documents spread across every horizontal surface. He has been deep in research for a long time, focusing on Islamic theology and Middle Eastern geography. Taylor apologizes for the state of his office and the haphazard briefing. He says his partners are out pursuing leads. He's barely seen them long enough in the halls to say hello.

Taylor says Powell handles the technical side of the operation. Her office is down the hall. This temporary office space has limited Internet connectivity, so she maintains storage of all digital forensics. Taylor, who prefers old books and scrolls to screens, says he never got their VPN for information sharing to work properly. He can only provide a basic overview of the case and share his own files.



Taylor does not allow the Agents to inspect NARNIA's private network for themselves unless one of them succeeds at a **Persuade** test. He says he was cleared to brief the Agents, not to give them full access to the system. (Some unspoken part of his mind recoils from what the Agent might discover.) If a **Persuade** roll succeeds, Taylor reluctantly gives the Agent a login. The Agent finds that their device connects to the network, but no data transfers, just noise. The problem is not user error by Taylor, but something in the encrypted, secure computer acting as the NARNIA team's hub.

[INSIDE]—National Clandestine Services Museum, New York Collection

The elevator or staircase doors open on a lush red carpet leading down the best-lit office hallway the Agents have ever seen. Pamphlets in a small newsstand identify this as the "National Clandestine Services Museum, New York Collection."

Navy blue walls hold tastefully framed oil portraits next to office doors. The doors themselves have been removed and replaced with velvet ropes for viewing. The interior of each office has been transformed into a diorama caricature, more suited to the set of a film noir than the office of a civil servant. Plaques on bronze stands sit next to each door. The name "Fallon Montgomery Taylor" is there, listed as a veteran of Working Group NARNIA. He died in the year 2038. Around a hallway corner, a woman's voice faintly murmurs.



First Glimpse Beyond

Even if everyone succeeds at the **SAN** test, ensure at least one **USER** goes **[INSIDE]** the first active bubble Agents encounter. It is essential that they come to understand that reality is thin and might break at any moment. The **USER** with the lowest **SAN** is a good candidate to be first.

[OUTSIDE]—The Friday Night Massacre

Taylor informs Agents that NARNIA is investigating a recent mass shooting that the media dubbed the “Friday Night Massacre.” It happened eight days before Bradley McKay’s sorority shooting. Two men, Cavdet Onur and Seyfettin Vedat, fired into the crowd at a high school football game in Oleander, Pennsylvania, killing 23 and wounding 12. The Agents remember hearing about it in the news.

Taylor says Onur and Vedat are a strange case. They did not put in the kind of planning usual in such an attack. Investigators did not find them by name or biometrics in any government database. They carried ID cards written in Arabic that purported them to be citizens of the Global Caliphate of the Peace of God, a nonexistent nation. The cards say they were issued on dates that convert from the Islamic calendar to 2119 and 2121 A.D. The killers used weapons of no known make or model: suppressed rifles apparently derived from Kalashnikov designs but chambered for 5.40×40 mm cartridges seen nowhere else.

Their phones were made by no known manufacturer. Cached data reveal online debates where Onur and Vedat argue for the need for ongoing jihad to maintain the purity of their faith. They sometimes shared imaginative tales of battling blindly murderous American or Russian nonbelievers. Others castigate them in replies, saying that kind of violent jihad was no longer necessary because the Crusaders are long gone. Humanity lives in a golden age under the worldwide caliphate. “The world you want is not this world.”

PICKY EATER was installed on both phones. Taylor says Powell cross-referenced the app’s name to the Charles Bower case and is out pursuing any connection. The app’s specifications are identical to those found on every device.

[INSIDE]—Director Powell’s Office

Around a bend in the hallway, the office replicas are replaced by the woodgrain paneling and track lighting of a gallery. The walls display photographs from a history Agents boggle to contemplate.

They see people wearing Delta Green badges leading press conferences and receiving public awards. If the Agents have lost a teammate, that person shows up in a photo, impossibly aged past the point of their death. If an Agent has a phobia of some unnatural creature, they see it being killed by soldiers. The image is framed and features the heroic staging of a Renaissance painting.

Many exhibits were printed directly from combat footage. Nightmarish artillery assaults against the surf off an American beach, where something fleshy in the water explodes into frothy red mist. A team of soldiers kitted in unbelievable, science-fiction gear, stacked outside the door to a hut. They wear armbands with some sort of green triangle, an honest-to-god Delta Green insignia. In the hut lurks a creature with too many glowing eyes.

An Agent who has seen a photo of Audra Powell may make INT×5 roll to recognize her in two of the prints. In both, she’s drastically older than in the photos Agents saw. In the first, she’s shaking hands with a wizened slab of an old man. He smiles approvingly under a white mustache as he passes her a plaque. In the photo by the door, she sits at the head of a giant mahogany desk, staring beatifically back at the viewer.

The hall culminates in one last office replica. A plaque reads, “Office of Audra Powell, First Director of Delta Green.” Unlike in the other room, the desktop computer in this office works. It plays a pre-recorded speech on a loop:

“Welcome! I’m Audra Powell. Thank you for your interest in Delta Green. We’ve been working behind the scenes since before VH Day to keep you and your family safe. I hope you can join us in vigilance against the Corruption! As you can see, I come from humble beginnings, but every human can help keep the United States safe from the Spawn. Stay pure and patriotic, brothers and sisters!”



[OUTSIDE]—Dabiq

Taylor got hardcopies of the initial evidence in the Friday Night Massacre case via flash drive. He can show that to Agents without the VPN. He turns on a projector to show a video saved to the phone of one of the shooters. Powell told Taylor the metadata, though oddly formatted, indicated the file had been played over 2,000 times, multiple times a day.

Footage shows a small town surrounded by a wide plain of short, dry yellow grass. An Arabic label in one corner reads “Dabiq.” A few hundred Jihadist fighters are dug in behind sandbags, praying. The camera pans in a circle. On one horizon, jets rush ahead of helicopters, tanks, and tens of thousands of American soldiers. On another come the armies of Britain. On another, the armies of Russia.

Other cameras pick up other angles as the miracles begin. A lethal-looking B-21 Raider heavy bomber—years away from deployment in the real world—suddenly turns to scattering salt in the air. A B61-12 atomic bomb that it had dropped, a long gray cylinder with red markings, turns to salt before it strikes the

earth. Tanks in the distance and soldiers in their thousands stop in their tracks, made salt by the glory of God. The faithful rise and celebrate. The video ends.

Taylor says photo-manipulation experts could not tell how or where that video’s visual effects were created. They could not confirm that it was falsified at all, beyond the simple fact that such an event never happened. Metadata in the original digital file says it was created on 9 MAY 2021, the morning after Laylat al-Qadr, the holiest night of the Islamic calendar according to some Sunni believers—more than two years in the future.

An Agent who has **Foreign Language (Arabic)** at 30% or better, or who succeeds at a roll at +20%, notices that the language in the fighters’ prayers and celebration is very difficult to follow. Taylor brings it up if no Agent does. The men in the footage speak an unknown Arabic dialect that seems to have undergone extreme linguistic drift, a process that usually takes centuries.

Viewing the video and studying the killers’ details cost 0/1 SAN from the unnatural.



[INSIDE]—Propaganda Piece

The contents of Powell's office look more realistic than the museum replicas in other rooms.

Unless an Agent succeeds on a **Criminology** or **Craft** roll, any attempt by Agents to cross the velvet rope triggers a motion sensor. This sends a silent alarm to the security officer in the lobby. He immediately takes the elevator to the sixth floor.

Nothing in the office is hidden or difficult to find, but the only thing of interest to the Agents is the desktop computer. It looks deeply aged, the plastic housing of its CPU faded, scored, and repainted a half-dozen times. The machine stays operational because it was cared for with an archivist's precision. According to a sticker on the newer-looking attached server, it was manufactured in 2047.

Interaction with the computer reveals it to be wiped of memory and software save the **PICKY EATER** VPN and the audio player that loops Audra Powell's message. The computer doesn't even have a web browser. Strangely, the native-world computer of FBI Agent Fallon Taylor is listed as online and connected to the same VPN. Agents here can even call up and view the Dabiq video from Taylor's machine.

[OUTSIDE]—The Missing

If the Agents press Taylor on the absent members of his team or remark at misplacing one of their own, he gets nervous. He struggles to express the reason.

Over time, Taylor realizes he has not seen the others on his team in weeks. Not even in the halls or bathrooms. He can barely remember their names. He becomes disoriented and confused. "I saw her this morning. Didn't I? We meet in the mornings. We have coffee and talk. Was it this morning? I can't remember the last time." The more Taylor thinks about it, the clearer it becomes that even Audra Powell has been missing for days.



Taylor walks with the Agents down the dark gray halls. If a player remembers them being white before, acknowledge that they were. They certainly were white.

Powell's office, like the others, is dusty and abandoned. Filing boxes were stacked high and never unpacked. All of the desktop computers and laptops are burned out and inoperable. Only Powell's office has a running machine. The fan in the CPU housing whines loudly, as if under strain. On the computer, the Agents can find a web history as unsearchable as they did on the VPN. Unplugging or otherwise disabling the device violently slams any [INSIDE] Agents back into their native reality, whether or not others yet perceived them missing. Roll **SAN** accordingly.

No computers in the other abandoned offices still work. They burned out, overloaded by surges of power that somehow left no trace on the wiring around them—surges that seemed to come from nowhere.

[INSIDE]—Security Arrives

As Agents investigate the display of Powell's old office, the Director's Tribute exhibit, a guard finds them trespassing. It's after visiting hours, and this display is within a secure government facility. They do not look like tourists.



The Clandestine Services Museum is contained within the larger Delta Green Security Complex—tasked with logistical coordination for the Atlantic Front—so the guard is armed. He draws his pistol and demands the intruders freeze. He then issues a "Code Green" into a vest radio and requests "immediate genetic testing at my location."

The computer in the office is the original instance of **PICKY EATER** used by Powell. An Agent who makes an **INTx5** roll intuitu that the device, being the only thing recognizably from their world, may be the only path back to it.

If Agents shut the computer down, or if it is damaged, all [INSIDE] characters slam back [OUTSIDE].

Powell's Reintegration

When Powell's computer is shut down on either side of the bubble, Agents who went **[INSIDE]** return. Give them a moment to share their experiences across the divide. They may have to deal with complications such as temporary insanity and gunshot wounds. When the Agents depart, or after a few minutes in any case, they are interrupted by the blare of a fire alarm.

Active Shooter

Gunshots and screams of panic erupt from the ground floor. An active shooter is in the building. Taylor, already distressed, does not remember that his computer has access to the security camera feed. If Agents ask him or examined his machine themselves, they can remind him and run back to check. Or they can go see for themselves.

In the lobby, a woman in her late fifties frantically waves a pistol from behind the welcome desk. The receptionist lies dead at her feet. If seen without audio, it's still apparent the woman is screaming and sobbing. She fires at anyone standing to flee or passing by the glass windows outside. Agents recognize Audra Powell. She's at least two decades older than in any recent photo.

If Agents respond and try to help, Powell is too cracked to see them coming, unless they let the elevator announce their arrival. Left to her own devices, she kills anyone she sees, screaming gibberish.

- » "This can't be real! We won! We killed you, god-damnit! I fucking killed you things!"
- » "Where's the memorial, fish fucker? What have you done to it? Where are the bodies?"
- » "I won't go alone! I'll turn the surf red! Red!"
- » "Give them back. Please...give it all back."

If confronted, Powell heads up the grand stairs to the second floor, killing innocents along the way and returning fire. Her **Firearms** skill is 50%.

If the Agents flee out the windows or another stairwell, it's not hard to avoid the shooter. Police show up within a few minutes. They attempt to stay behind a cordon of patrol cars, but Powell comes out blazing as soon as they arrive. She is unceremoniously cut down. The headline goes around for a day or two, "Disgruntled federal agent shoots up law firm," until worse news replaces it.

Powell in Custody

If captured alive, Powell is no threat to Delta Green or the continuing investigation. Local authorities fail to identify the "crazy old woman" as Audra Powell. That woman was in her thirties. Any fingerprint or DNA evidence matching existing records is dismissed as filing errors. The Program orchestrates a brief trial for Powell under a false identity. She spends the rest of her days catatonic in a mental institution, destroyed by seeing her life's victorious crusade against the unnatural reversed into our hellish present.

Robert Wallace

Postal records indicate Robert Wallace is 19 years old and lives in Frosty Oaks Trailer Park outside Bangor, Maine. If the Agents reach out to Bangor police, Officer Kim Bowman knows the Wallaces well. Robert Wallace lives with his father, Cordell Wallace, in a trailer outside town. He dropped out at age 13 to be home-schooled by his father. Officer Bowman doubts any schooling happened at home. Cordell repairs cars at his own garage, but he has a mean streak that keeps customers away. Robert sometimes works there. Both have records for public intoxication, vandalism, and assault. Both are virulent racists, but experience suggests they're too dissolute to be much of a threat. Bowman offers to escort the Agents to the trailer park. She says the Wallaces respond slightly better to locals than to strangers.

Bubble



Entering the Frosty Oaks Trailer Park risks entering Robert Wallace's bubble.

Infection



Operating Wallace's computer or phone



Operating Wallace's Minecraft server

The World Resistance

Robert Wallace has run **PICKY EATER** for a little under a year. His bubble now covers the entire trailer park and an expanding portion of the surrounding woods. As the Agents approach, they see a run-down trailer park, everything shabby and ill-repaired.



USERS who enter Frosty Oaks Trailer Park risk crossing into a fantasy of oppression: See **ENTERING A BUBBLE** on page 7.

[OUTSIDE]—Frosty Oaks Trailer Park

The Wallaces live in a run-down single-wide trailer. A Confederate flag flies out front. A Confederate flag in Maine.

Cordell Wallace is 40 years old, hefty, red-eyed, and gnarled. His greeting is the same whether or not the Agents show up with Officer Bowman. "What the fuck do you want?"

Wallace says his son has not come home or shown up for work at the garage in a couple months. He admits it's not unusual to lose track of Robert for a week or two at a time, but this length of time is unusual. He doesn't know where the kid is. He even asked police ("this bitch," if Bowman is there) to find him, but they did nothing. "All they do is harass good white folks like us."

He says that when things get slow at the garage, he makes sure "the boy" stays busy getting an education on his computer. He bitterly recalls being forced to buy some curriculum software by "those commies at state social services." He cannot remember the name of it, and, if pressed, admits he never actually logged on. He's confident "the boy" knows all about that stuff and can handle it himself. He says Robert is good with "all that computer stuff."

Cordell Wallace knows nothing about **PICKY EATER**. If the Agents seem genuinely interested in finding Robert, and not just to put him in jail, he lets them come in and look at Robert's things.

[INSIDE]—Frosty Pines

If the Agents stopped at the manager's office and walk to Wallace's trailer, the transition is subtle. If they drive to Wallace's trailer, those going [INSIDE] tumble across the gravel road, the car no longer underneath them. Each who fails a Dodge roll takes 1D4 damage.

USERS sent [INSIDE] find the world subtly different around them. Each who succeeds at an Alertness or INT×5 test notices the trailer park sign reads simply "Frosty Pines." They're somehow certain it should read "Frosty Oaks Trailer Park."

Their [OUTSIDE] companions are not there. Nor should they be. They are investigating another angle of the case. Aren't they? Officer Bowman is not there. None of them remembers seeing a need to bring local police.

Frosty Pines is the strangest trailer park the Agents have ever encountered. The trailers are uniform in design and in identical repair. Each tiny lawn has a small fence of blazing white plastic pickets. The lawns are identically edged and trimmed. Brand-new EVs and hybrid vehicles sit in the driveways. Giant wind turbines loom above the trailers, installed along the neighborhood's perimeter. The low hum of the blades weighs down on the entire community. There's no one outside to complain. Not one curtain opens as the Agents approach. With the exception of the number on the mailbox, the Wallace residence looks identical to the rest.

If a USER looks up the Wallace trailer online with a device infected by PICKY EATER, a search confirms its neat and trim appearance. If the device is not infected, there is no such residence, no such trailer park, and the "Frosty Oaks Trailer Park" that is supposed to be here looks shabby and run down in photos.

[OUTSIDE]—The Wallace Residence

Cordell Wallace's trailer is decorated with a few surrealist prints, anonymous Dali knockoffs depicting melting clocks and fractal animals. If the Agents ask about the decor, Cordell glowers. "A white man can't like art?"

Robert Wallace's little room is cluttered and filthy. A cobbled-together gaming computer rests precariously on a TV tray crammed in a corner next to the bed. A cheap desk is busy with empty soda cans and secondhand electronics components. Crypto-fascist flags are tacked to the wall. Robert Wallace is one podcast away from letting the swastika fly along with the Confederate flag.

The computer does not power on. If the Agents try to examine it more closely, Cordell balks. He demands a warrant unless the Agents succeed at Persuade or Law to confuse him or back him down. An Agent who examines the computer and succeeds with Computer Science finds a burned-out power supply and crashed hard drive. The drive seems to have suffered head crash and heat damage, as if the machine were overclocked. It's doubtful that any data remains uncorrupted. The Agent finds the PICKY EATER circuit integrated into the motherboard. It was clearly placed in the board at manufacture, not sloppily hand-installed. Also strangely, the semiconductor bears no serial number. If the Agent has magnification equipment, the microscopic label at back of the chip reads "TRUMP INDUSTRIES ELECTRONICS DIVISION," a nonexistent company. Recognizing that costs 0/1 SAN from the unnatural.

An Agent who examines the area around the computer and makes a successful Search roll finds another anomaly amongst the tangle of wires: An extension cord runs from the power strip at the back of the computer through a hole drilled in the trailer's cheap carpet and floor. A second Ethernet cable runs from the modem into the floor, bundled with the extension cord. If asked where the cords lead, Cordell says he doesn't know anything about "that nerd shit."

[INSIDE]—Reformed Citizen Housing

If Agents knock, a man's voice asks who it is. No mention of Wallace, nor any cover story, convinces the voice to open up. Even if they impersonate a neighbor in distress, the man insists: "Please leave. I am a good citizen. I want no trouble." There are, oddly enough, no locks.



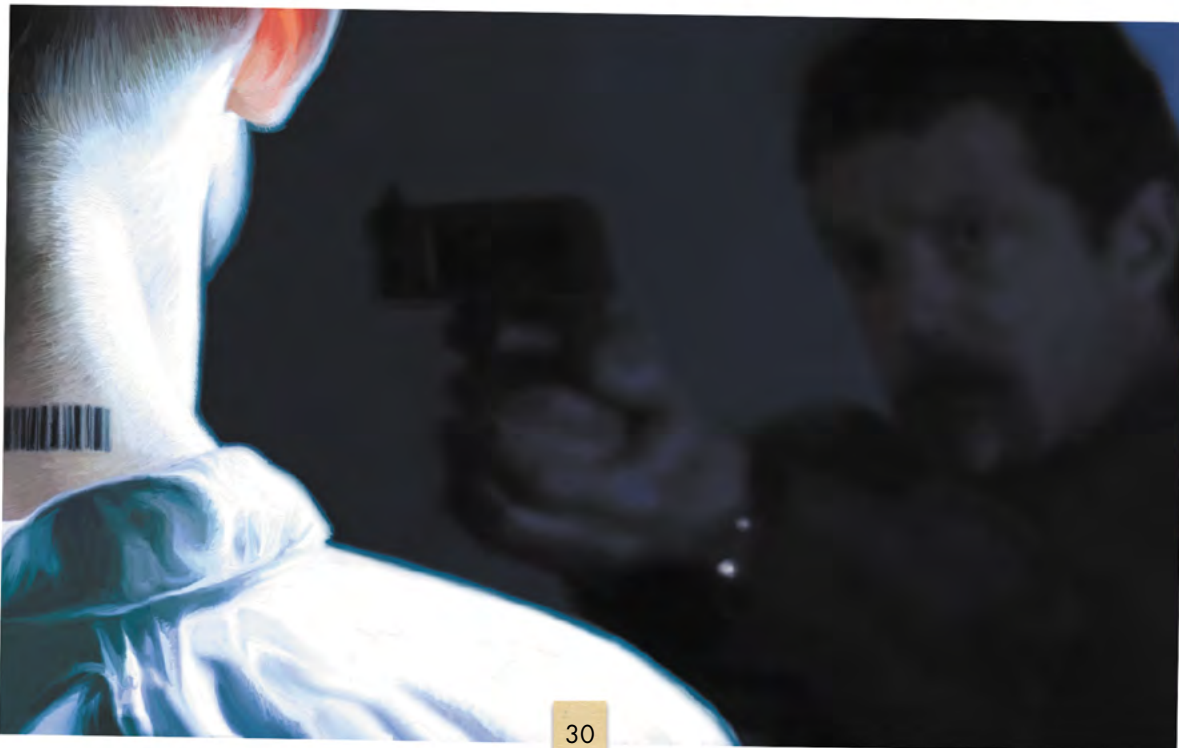
If the Agents identify themselves as government officials, they hear the rough clatter of furniture, followed shortly by repeated shouting: "YOU ARE WELCOME IN MY HOME! I AM COMPLYING WITH ALL REQUESTS! YOU ARE WELCOME IN MY HOME! I AM COMPLYING!"

When they enter, the man has his hands behind his head, forehead leaning against the far wall and legs spread. The furnishings of the trailer are sparse as a prison cell, as if the structure were gutted and repurposed. Security cameras watch from the ceiling, in the corners of every room.

The occupant is white, in his thirties, dressed in a formless white jumpsuit. If asked for identification, he gestures to the barcode tattooed on the back of his neck. The man submits equally fast if Agents

force their way in or sneak through a window. The resident assumes home invasion can only be the work of lawful authorities. Threatening the resident with a gun, fist, or even eye contact causes him to panic. "Oh! Oh, no. Where's your barcode? Are you from the Patriots?!" He stops addressing the Agents and begins pleading to the cameras. "Please don't kill me. I'm not with them! I'm Reformed White. I was at Lewiston Sensitivity Camp for three years! You can check! Please!" Anyone can tell he is in genuine fear for his life. He tries to sprint out the front door the moment he thinks he can escape the "Patriots" invading his home.

The resident was interrupted while eating. A featureless green block of jelloed protein sits half-finished on a plastic plate. Insect parts float in the gelatin. The television plays "The Education Hour!" on mute. Grotesquely genitaled cartoon animals molest and butcher each other on screen in a screeching orgy of horror. The characters are recognizable intellectual property of major corporations that would sue at the mere suggestion of this display. A "Mandated Watch Time Remaining" chevron counts down the hour at the bottom of the screen. The view costs 0/1 SAN from the unnatural.



[OUTSIDE]—The Server

Though it requires peeking under the trailer's foundations and pulling up some carpet, Agents can trace the wiring in the house to a HP Proliant dl380 server hidden behind the living room's entertainment center. Faded stickers on the case and the model's age suggest it was originally used to host Minecraft in 2013 or 2014. An HDMI cord suggests a sneaky connection to the television. Robert Wallace gamed away his education on the big screen whenever his father was at work. A flash drive sticks out of one of the USB ports. On faded tape on the flash drive is scrawled, "WAKE UP COZ!"

Cordell Wallace has never seen the server before, but he recognizes the flash drive. He was given the stick by his cousin, Vicki King. He claims she's "some bigshot at MIT now." Vicki's mother, Cordell's aunt, raised them both after endless domestic problems broke his own home. After a heated argument about the election at Christmas 2016, Cordell ceased interaction with family. Before he left, cousin Vicki passed along the flash drive. She insisted he was in a "Facebook bubble," and this would open his eyes. Cordell didn't care much for technology or his cousin's sanctimonious attitude. He forgot about the flash drive. His son must have found it.

The USB stick contains a cobbled-together version of **PICKY EATER**. The plastic backing is cheap, the soldering inexpert, the circuit constructed at +100nm using MOSFET with a high-threshold voltage: handmade without access to expert equipment. The schematic itself is hard to look at directly, even though it was constructed by a hobbyist. A text file contains installation instructions. The file's metadata identifies a computer owned by Vicki King.

In contrast, the circuit inside the server appears integrated at manufacture. The circuit board claims to be from the same TRUMP INDUSTRIES as the computer in Robert Wallace's room (see **[OUTSIDE]—THE WALLACE RESIDENCE** on page 29). Fingerprints on the flash drive match only Cordell Wallace, Robert Wallace, and Vicki King. Only Robert's are on the server.

If an Agent is a **USER** and uses the device, their bubble intersects with Robert Wallace's bubble and overstresses the server, causing it to break down. If that happens, or if the Agents disconnect power to the server or remove the flash drive, proceed to **WALLACE'S REINTEGRATION** on page 32.

[INSIDE]—The Rescue

After a short time inside the terrified man's trailer, the Agents hear glass breaking in the bedroom. A man in ill-fitting special operations gear rushes down the hall. He carries a long rifle that looks like it was assembled from spare parts. The Agents recognize Robert Wallace, but he looks *matured*, more muscular than his online photos suggest and with a dashing streak of gray through his hair. Somehow, even his chin is squarer.

The intruder chides the Agents, pointing at the cameras around the trailer. "This safe house is blown! I can't believe the Baptists sent you here. A Jade Helm team is already gonna be on the way." He points to the occupant. "Shoot this race traitor now and come with me if you want to live."

If Agents hesitate, Wallace raises his own rifle. Attempts to stop him initiate combat. Murdering the occupant costs 1/1D10 **SAN** from violence. Watching Wallace murder him costs 1/1D6. It all looks and smells very real.

Robert Wallace identifies himself as "General Wallace." He says he has to get them to safety before ANTIFA arrives.

If Wallace succeeds at "rescuing" the Agents, he leads them to a sturdy SUV parked out back. He peels out of the trailer park. If the Agents are armed, he tells them to conceal their weapons. They know as well as he does that civilian firearms haven't been allowed since Sharia law replaced the U.S. Constitution. He plays with his phone while careening down the highway, looking for someone "in the underground" that can give the Agents barcode tattoos in a hurry.



As the high-speed escape drags them closer to town, Agents plunge deeper into Wallace's madness. A ten-meter golden statue of President-for-Life Obama stands by the side of the road above a plaque in Arabic. If asked what it says, Wallace confusedly answers, "*President-for-Life of the Global Caliphate*, of course." An Agent who has **Language (Arabic)** at 20% or higher, or who succeeds at a test at +20%, knows it does not say that. The inscription is gibberish, containing characters only loosely styled after Kufic script.

Experiencing it all costs 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.

The SUV speeds past a fireteam of men in black jeans and shirts, black berets and bandana masks, and what can only be described as sci-fi power armor. They are arresting a white teen and throwing him into some sort of advanced troop transport with "FEMA" stenciled on the side. One of the troopers sandblasts graffiti of a messianic Donald Trump nailed to a cross. General Wallace angrily mutters, "ANTIFA Super-Soldiers. Those bastards."

With a successful test of any **Art** skill, an Agent realizes they aren't moving through physical geography so much as a landscape of contradictory paranoias. This world is idiotic, nonsensical, and completely capable of murdering them. If any of these sights or realizations cause distress, Robert holds up his phone and reassures the Agents. "Don't worry. I still got encryption up and running. The black helicopters won't find us with this little baby on." Agents who make successful **Alertness** rolls spot the familiar **PICKY EATER** icon on the screen.

If the Agents behave erratically in sight of the Super-Soldiers, they pursue with suicidal fervor, intent on serving shoot-to-kill Omniwarrants. If the Agents are careful to avoid attracting attention, one of them studies General Wallace through a gigantic telephoto lens—and the Super-Soldiers recognize him and launch lethal pursuit. See **ANTIFA SUPER-SOLDIERS** on page 67.

If Robert Wallace dies, or his phone is damaged, proceed to **WALLACE'S REINTEGRATION** on page 32.

Wallace's Reintegration

When "The World Resistance" bubble collapses, the fallout depends on location and method.

- » **BEFORE THEY MEET:** If the server is disabled before General Wallace meets the Agents, every **USER** trapped **[INSIDE]** returns **[OUTSIDE]** wherever Handlers decide dimensions overlap. The reunited Agents are first to find the dead body of 39-year-old General Robert Wallace on the highway just outside the trailer park. His skull and limbs are shattered; his skin grated off by road rash to a pink streak down the asphalt. No accidents were reported or vehicles damaged. No one saw where he came from. It looks like a motorcycle accident at high speed but without the motorcycle.
- » **IN THE TRAILER—PEACEFUL:** If the server is disabled *during* Wallace's meeting with the Agents, General Wallace and **[INSIDE]** Agents reappear in the trailer's living room. Each drags along whatever they were holding at the time, be it a firearm or the terrified occupant of the "Frosty Pines" trailer. Everyone witnessing the appearance, including Cordell Wallace and Officer Bowman, loses 1/1D6 **SAN** to the unnatural. If driven to temporary insanity, Wallace or Bowman resorts to violence.
- » **IN THE TRAILER—VIOLENT:** If General Wallace is killed at the trailer park, the Agents **[INSIDE]** return with his body the second the confrontation ends. Cordell Wallace automatically fails a **Sanity** roll at the sight of his son teleporting into existence, 20 years older and violently killed. He runs for the loaded shotgun in his bedroom closet.
- » **ON THE HIGHWAY:** If Robert Wallace is killed after fleeing with the Agents (or if his phone is destroyed), the results depend on where the bubble breaks. If they are driving at high speed, every passenger crashes skipping across the **[OUTSIDE]** highway when the vehicle ceases to exist, suffering 10% Lethality. If Agents stop the SUV first, the return is uneventful. Wallace may even be taken into custody.

Vicki King

Cordell and Robert Wallace's testimonies point to Vicki King. Her partial print can even be found inside the "WAKE UP COZ" flash drive's casing, meaning she assembled at least one version of **PICKY EATER** herself.

Records show King worked tech support for Penn State from 2017 to 2018. She currently has no records of employment. Before working IT for that campus, she was a mathematics graduate student at MIT. She left without a degree in 2016. Her advisor was Dr. Wesley Cool. She gave birth to two girls in early 2017, twins Eryn and Shelia. They have no father listed on their birth records.

King lives in semirural Kick Springs on the outskirts of State College, Pennsylvania. Agents calling the school's IT department learn that Penn State fired her last year. She just stopped answering help tickets

one day. No one at the old job was able to reach her. Her manager, Dhananjay Joshi, drove by the house once but left after seeing a foreclosure sign out front. Joshi doesn't regard King's disappearance as much of a surprise. She came into their employ shortly after becoming a single mother to twins. She struggled financially and professionally, apparently fleeing some scandal that ended a bright future at MIT. King never got close with her colleagues at Penn State, but Joshi couldn't help but get the impression that she was a woman on the run from something.

Contacting the bank confirms that Vicki defaulted on the mortgage late last year. The loan officer claims he knocked on the door, found no one inside, left notification of foreclosure, and went home. Executing the eviction is the job of the sheriff. Clearing out and reselling foreclosed properties is outsourced to private contractors by another department. He only does notifications. If asked who lives there now, the loan officer doesn't know. It's not his department.

Wallace in Custody

If Robert Wallace survives reintegration, it's possible to take him into custody. The no-longer-young man remains a murderous racist, corrupted by white nationalist ideologies. He assists the Agents only when he discovers President Trump is still in office. He comes to think of himself as a heroic time traveler destined to prevent "The Fall." His cooperation proves useless. Every line of questioning quickly runs into logical contradictions and circular reasoning. Wallace delivers dire warnings about the dystopic world government to come. He insists he's the only one capable of stopping it, rattling off a resume of military achievements that never happened.

Limiting "General" Wallace's ravings to the topic of **PICKY EATER** is difficult, requiring a successful **Persuade** roll and the imitation of unhinged ideologies. If convinced the Agent is "sane" (e.g., wants to assassinate the entire Democratic party "before it's too late"), Wallace admits he doesn't know much about where **PICKY EATER** came from. He got his copy off a flashdrive gifted by his cousin, **VICKI KING**. He has no contact with the woman and assumes she was rounded up by the "IRS sweeps." He says **PICKY EATER** is a vital tool of "the Resistance." It protects against government surveillance and helps find "true" news sources that supply Patriots with "intel." He recalls first sharing the protocol with an old online friend, Bradley McKay (see **THE MCKAY KILLINGS** on page 12), though that was many years ago. General Wallace has made sure **PICKY EATER** is installed on all devices used by "his soldiers."

The laws of physics and biology soon catch up to Wallace. Twenty-four hours after return, his skin begins to pockmark and sag. His nails yellow, and his hair turns white. Doctors and scientists can watch his cells age, falter, and die under a microscope. Within a week, Wallace dies in his cell, a raving lunatic caught in the body of an octogenarian. Everyone who watches the process loses 1/1D4 **SAN** from helplessness.

The only hope for explanation requires **Psychotherapy**. On a success, the Agent recalls Wallace was 19 when he went **[INSIDE]**. He had a teenager's confidence in accomplishing great deeds, a fool's understanding of politics, and a child's understanding of mortality. Time flew by while he was having fun, believing he'd live forever. If **PICKY EATER** hadn't been shut down, he may have been right. That realization costs another 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.

If the Agents turn Wallace over to the Program, they rendition him to an undisclosed black site. Asked why, superior officers explain it's to prevent "contamination" and offer no more.

The Reaping World

USERS who cross the lawn or driveway toward King's residence risk entering her world of paranoid horrors: See **ENTERING A BUBBLE** on page 7.

Weary after days of working IT and concerned about the effects of screen-time on her children, King put hard limits on the use of electronics in her home. Her bubble grew slowly. This kept her alive, despite being one of the app's original **USERS**.

In 2018, the desktop PC using **PICKY EATER** delivered an email offering to make King's position remote. This offer wasn't "real," but a manifestation of King's desire to spend more time with her infant daughters. She accepted. Increased use of the infected device allowed the bubble to catch up. It expanded enough to consume the home's personal electronics, duplicate itself, and seal the family inside. King's paranoia for the safety of her children accelerated in a feedback loop of confirmation bias. This manifested a world of nightmarish child sacrifice. Her daughters grew up trapped inside.



[OUTSIDE]—The Foreclosed Residence

A sun-faded foreclosure sign has been stabbed into the overgrown grass in front of King's two-story Cottage-style house. King's car—covered in old leaves and a layer of pollen—remains in the driveway.

The mail slot in the front door is jammed with soggy junk mail dating back a year. Multiple overdue bills and foreclosure notifications lie amongst the pile.

A privacy fence around the small backyard is locked. Peeking over the top reveals the space abandoned. Disused children's toys—blocks and bounce swings and dolls—lie half buried under leaves in overgrown grass. The back door leading into the kitchen is shut and the curtains are closed across all windows.

A knock at the door gets no response. With continued knocking, Agents watching through windows see the shadows of small girls through the curtains, trying to stay unheard and out of sight. Persistent knocking causes one of them to stumble and knock over a side table so loudly that no one can pretend that the strangers outside didn't hear it.

A young girl sheepishly opens the door and backs away to allow guests inside. Her identical twin is backed against the far wall, a shaking kitchen knife expertly held in front of her. They both appear age 10 to 12. The girl at the door immediately volunteers that her mom is working upstairs and not to be disturbed.

Pressed, she gets flustered and says their mom is asleep. Then sick. Pointing out the contradictions causes her to panic and join her sister huddled in the corner.

Bubble



Approaching Vicki King's house risks entering her bubble.

Infection



Operating Sheila King's phone



Operating Vicki King's computer or phone

[INSIDE]—The Confiscated Residence

Plywood has been nailed across the windows and doors of King's two-story Victorian house. There's no car in the driveway. A laminated notice stapled to the boards claims the property has been "excommunicated for failure to facilitate Right of Harvest." The order proclaims "enforced social death for Vicki King and any co-habitants, until such time as The Fruit is returned for rightful custodial conscription to lawful authorities." The letterhead comes from an organization called "National Child and Family Services," a federal office that does not exist.

A privacy fence around the small backyard is locked. Peeking over the top reveals the space abandoned. Disused children's toys—balls and jump-ropes and a broken trampoline—lie half buried under leaves and overgrown grass. The back door leading into the kitchen has been kicked in and inexpertly reset on the hinges. The boot prints are still visible on the white paint. Exhaust pours out a pipe rigged through the basement window. An engine can be heard humming inside.

The sound of the generator working below means no one inside can hear knocking. The damage to the back entrance makes sneaking in trivial. Agents find the kitchen in good repair, but everything else in the house is tossed as if in execution of a mean-spirited search warrant. Every cushion and wall has been sliced open with knives or crowbars.

The only other room in good repair lies immediately up the stairs. This bedroom at the top of the landing is lit and seems to have been obsessively reconstructed after a rough search. The bunk-beds and clothing suggest two young girls live there. Taylor Swift posters have been taped back together and replaced on the walls. If the Agent is a fan (or makes an Art roll), they note that it's odd that a pair of modern tweens would listen to anything as old as *Speak Now*.

Country music and feet shuffling echo down the hallway, coming from behind the door to the master bedroom.



[OUTSIDE]—The Hidden Twins

Except for the twins, the house is empty. Vicki King is nowhere to be found. There's no Wi-Fi signal. No computer devices visible. The electricity isn't even on.

The girls appear to have been living in the basement for weeks. Sleeping bags and pillows are spread across the floor, alongside the torn packaging and empty cans from a storm ration kit.

A master bedroom upstairs has a single queen bed surrounded with half-unpacked moving boxes. Scattered books range from conspiracy theories to parenting manuals to journals of advanced mathematics.

The other bedroom is more of a nursery, complete with play mats and two toddler beds.

The girl who opened the door identifies herself as Eryn King. The sister with the knife is Shelia. HUMINT success can tell the girls are telling the truth.

Forensics and access to a database can confirm their identities based on fingerprints taken when they were infants. According to birth records, the pre-teens in front of the Agents should be, at most, three years old. That realization costs 0/1 SAN from the unnatural.

The girls are inseparable. They might be adorable under other circumstances. They only agree to answer questions after Agents promise they are not "Reapers." Shelia demands it, but Eryn says it's stupid to make them say that. Reapers would have killed them already.

The girls insist their mom is "busy" in her room but she takes care of them. The more the Agents challenge that, the more desperately the girls insist she's there. As long as they don't look, it might still be true. If an Agent says they're going to find the mother, the girls panic as though they've been physically attacked.

Proving to the girls that their mother is not in the house forces them to revisit the worst of their own trauma since PICKY EATER came into their lives. It causes them to break down in the equivalent of temporary insanity, curling up and staring blankly into space. To get them to continue talking, Agents need to spend at least 10 minutes coaxing them out of it with a Psychotherapy roll or 30 minutes with a CHA×5 or Persuade test.

[INSIDE]—The Missing Mother

(If King is killed, or her PC destroyed, go to **KING'S REINTEGRATION** on page 40. If the Agents raise King's suspicions, she immediately becomes convinced that they are Reapers themselves. She begins tearing at her "research" in an attempt to obscure any trail leading to her children. She raves, ignoring questions and swearing to take the location of her children to the grave.)

Vicki King is listening to country music on a survival radio and turning her master bedroom into something like a private detective's office. Paperwork is strewn across the bed in messy piles. Newspaper articles and maps have been pinned to every available surface of the walls and connected with an intricate system of color-coded yarn. The monitor of a desktop PC blazes in the corner, web browser open on a worrisome number of tabs.

How King responds to the Agents depends a great deal on how they enter the house and approach her. If they are careful and respectful, she is friendly and glad to meet allies. She knows how to spot Reapers, and they are no Reapers.

She immediately seeks to secure their cooperation in finding her daughters. "Eryn and Shelia have been missing for...I can't even recall how long. It's been a nightmare. But I know they're alive! I never got my

hush check from the IRS, and the black SUVs are still patrolling the block. They don't have them yet! The girls are smart. I trained them well: never answer the door, never accept vaccinations. I was a good mom! They're smart. So smart. They have to be hiding somewhere, and I just need help finding them."

Asked about the Reapers, King becomes visibly disappointed, as if realizing her potential saviors are buffoons. King says the Reapers hunt children for the secret Satanic cult that controls the United Nations. The Reapers usually dress like government agents—maybe a lot like the Agents themselves—but also disguise themselves as pizza delivery drivers, teachers, and clergy to gain easier access to children and homes. They have their own office, National Child and Family Services, located beneath the Denver Airport. King isn't sure if the Reapers actually gain supernatural powers from their rituals or if that's just rumors. They may only be executors of some sick hazing ritual practiced by the global elite. Either way, it's been the law since Right of Harvest passed Congress in 2022.

King is obviously at 0 SAN. She has never consciously considered the anti-Semitism at the root of all those conspiracy theories. If an Agent confronts her with it, she angrily denies the accusation. She views her delusions as established scientific fact. She has done her own research. The Agents have obviously been brainwashed by Reaper-controlled media.



[OUTSIDE]—The Girls' Rebellion

(If the cellphone in Shelia's back pocket is destroyed, go to **KING'S REINTEGRATION** on page 40.)

Extended contact with the twins is legitimately off-putting. Their demeanors swing between fearful withdrawal, typical sibling bickering, and utterly flat affect. Periodically, one of their faces spontaneously loses all expression, and the other follows immediately behind. Their speech becomes clipped and distant, as if having another conversation on the phone. Then, just as suddenly, they're back to kids again.

The twins have seen more than anyone should and possess almost no framework for understanding it. Their answers to a few likely inquiries follow.

REAL OR FAKE: The tweens don't have the faculties to question the reality of their existence. Agents who understand **PICKY EATER**'s effects can attempt to use **Psychotherapy** or **HUMINT**. On a success, they understand that the twins are "real," but they've had their egos obliterated. Childhood development inside a bubble is unmoored from the objective experiences that differentiate one from their parents' subjectivity. Any individuality that deviated from mother's expectations saw reality reform around it into a corrective life lesson. Mother *could only* know best. About everything. Always. As a result, the girls have had every splinter of personality sandpapered off their minds. They are terrified of themselves, if they could even articulate that identity in the first place.

WHY LIVE LIKE THIS: The girls roll their eyes as if the information is obvious: they have to hide from the Reapers. "We aren't supposed to be out of the house, or we'll get custodian conscripted," one says. "This isn't our house, so we have to hide," finishes the other.

WHAT ARE REAPERS: The children know very little. They are bad men from the government. They take children. Mom said the details were "too adult to think about," but insisted they were dangerous. The Reapers are the reason the girls can't go to school, watch TV, or see other kids.

COMPUTERS OR PICKY EATER: Asked about strange electronics of any stripe, one of the girls blurts out that they aren't allowed to have cellphones. They make this claim whether or not they've been told about the app. Asked if they ever used **PICKY EATER** directly, the girls get quiet and evasive. They deny it unconvincingly. Then Sheila whispers something about it "making the sky change." Eryn tries to hush her sister, saying "No, it didn't!"

THE SECRET PHONE: Agents who make a **Persuade** roll (or succeeded previously to read their odd behavior) coax the story out of the twins. Like any tween, they confess to "stealing screentime." Mom told them **PICKY EATER** protected them from the Reapers. It was the reason they could do school on her computer without getting found by the government. When the girls wanted a device of their own, they knew mom would never agree to the "unsupervised screentime." But they still didn't want to get caught by Reapers.

They found another copy of the device in Vicki's things, copied the software off Mom's PC, and put it all into an old cellphone.

Shelia takes the device out and hands it to the Agents. It's a heavily modified cellphone of some sort, something called a "BlackBurry." Shelia says she did the install herself. Eryn chimes in that she found the old phone and tools. Both beg the Agents' forgiveness for breaking Mom's electronics prohibition. They just wanted to find their Dad online. Mom never talked about him and forbade all contact, but they knew his name: Wesley Cool.

INSIDE!—A History of PICKY EATER

(If King is killed, or her PC destroyed, go to **KING'S REINTEGRATION** on page 40.)

King only speaks about **PICKY EATER** if the Agents promise to help find her children. Once convinced she's no longer alone in her struggle, she's happy to talk about its development. She helped Dr. Cool invent it as a grad student. Though her programming isn't good enough to quite understand how the formulas she inputted were implemented, "Wes" gave her a finished copy. She believes it to be a sophisticated search algorithm and browser privacy software.

If the Agents encourage her, she provides the following information. The more they earn her confidence, the more she shares.

DR. COOL'S BACKGROUND: Professor Wesley Cool began teaching at MIT's Department of Mathematics in 2007. He taught philosophy before that. He always said his curiosity was too large to be contained by either field by itself.

THE MATHEMATICAL UNIVERSE: Wesley was powerfully inspired by physicist Max Tegmark. In "The Mathematical Universe," Tegmark proposed that the physical universe is a mathematical structure. Consciousness itself is a mathematical substructure capable of perceiving the variables which "sum" the mind into being. Cool suspected that thought, made of the same substance as the universe, may be able to alter reality.

MATHEMATICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: Wes Cool wanted to explore the implications of mathematical consciousness. He had to sift through a lot of occult nonsense and conspiracy theories (Vicki King says this with no trace of irony). He claimed to have found some old, very rare texts on philosophy, mathematics, and the occult that proved useful. Vicki King does not know titles or details of those texts but expects Cool had them in his office.

HOW IT WORKS: Wesley developed **PICKY EATER** to help people experience the world in new ways. He claimed that demographic variables ensure a

person's media consumption habits stay all but mathematically certain. Cool assured King that the algorithm encoded within the app identifies these variables and aggregates feeds towards outlier information, providing a more objective field of sources. King only understands enough to copy the code and re-create the circuit. Otherwise, that's how she thinks **PICKY EATER** functions.

COMPARTMENTAL CONSTRUCTION: Cool was a specialist in mathematics and philosophy. Though a genius, he lacked the practical experience required to make his invention. A handful of grad students helped code the app in discrete sections, none of them knowing its ultimate purpose. King also said he contacted colleagues at MIT to assist in creation of the circuit, but King doesn't know who.

KNOWN BUGS: Cool warned King about problems with **PICKY EATER** before installation. One was power consumption. It has to calculate constantly, draining batteries and clogging processors. It continually updates firmware to facilitate packet transfer, which makes some people worry that it is a security threat. When two copies of **PICKY EATER** operate too near each other, Cool warned they could interfere with each other. He insisted she never install more than one instance of **PICKY EATER** at once, claiming only that she wasn't ready for the problems it would cause.

THE RELATIONSHIP: Pressed about the frequent habit of referring to Dr. Cool as "Wesley" or "Wes," King eventually admits that the pair had more than a teacher-student relationship. In fact, the affair resulted in the birth of her twins. Wes disappeared in 2016 before King had a chance to tell him she was pregnant. King sought help from others at MIT finding him, but soon discovered she was not the first of his dalliances with grad students. Everyone seemed certain Wes was just ghosting his ex and treated her like a crazy woman. The gaslighting and pressure of the pregnancy forced her to drop out of the program. She gave birth to the girls the following year. She'd always wanted children, and she knew Cool's genes carried brilliance, even if he wasn't a good man.



[OUTSIDE]—The New Sky

Sheila and Eryn can't say with much precision what happened after they turned on their own version of **PICKY EATER**. Their mannerisms hollow out when talking about it. One rattles off an observation, the other follows with another. Disjointed and half-remembered.

After it came on, the twins were no longer in their house. Everything was mist and clouds, and the sky was a funny color that has no name. There were big stone blocks. There was a sleeping man next to a weird machine without its skin. He woke up when the girls prodded him. He claimed he was waiting for someone. Then another man appeared from the mists.

The newcomer was bigger. He was the tallest person the girls had ever seen and dressed like someone

from a storybook. The sleeping man tried to say something, but the bigger man shushed him like Mommy does when she has a headache. The big man talked funny, but the girls understood he was asking why they were there. They said they wanted to know more about where they came from. Then, suddenly, they were back in the house. But not their house.

Upon arrival inside the foreclosed King household, the girls panicked, assuming what mother had warned them about finally happened. They got online, the Reapers found them, and they'd never see their family again. They destroyed the PC found running upstairs, blocked all the windows, and hid in the basement. They kept the cellphone charged with a hand crank charger in the storm kit. It's still in standby mode, in case Mom can use it to find them.



[INSIDE]—King Calls the Reapers

Attempts to Persuade King about how **PICKY EATER** really works suffer a -30% penalty. Promising reunion with the twins only drops the penalty to -20%. The cognitive dissonance is just too great. If Agents do manage to convince Vicki of the device's unnatural power, the woman panics at the realization that this nightmare is a construct of personal neurosis, media saturation, and fears of motherhood. She can't handle knowing her daughters are not real, only fantasy constructs vat-grown inside the psychic poison excreted by their mother. She would rather call down her devils than admit she imagined them.

Once "awake," King tries to get away from the Agents and reach the landline in the kitchen. The surveillance of the Reapers is so powerful that picking up the receiver is all it takes. They arrive at the door seconds later, knocking like policemen. After a sudden epiphany about **PICKY EATER**'s unnatural effects, King concludes her imagined evils must also wield supernatural powers.

As figments conjured into existence seconds before they knocked, Reapers have been constructed in the forms of every Agent currently [OUTSIDE] the Reaping World. If most Agents passed into the bubble, those [INSIDE] see their own doppelgänger rip off the plywood covering the front entrance. Each non-Agent looks and dresses exactly the same, save for the lunatic smiles and hoods of human flesh worn atop their suits. The shoulder-length stoles sewn from hairless skin are covered in profane tattoos that seem to shift under the eye; seeing them costs 1/1D6 SAN from the unnatural). The Reapers are armed with unnatural artifacts and anatomy (see **REAPERS** on page 68).



King's Reintegration

If the bubble breaks, and Vicki King reunites with her daughters, the whole family cooperates with Agents out of gratitude. They provide information about **PICKY EATER** once saved from the threat of the Reapers. Their reunion is ecstatic but fraught with hints of the desperate paranoia that has seeped into them. Any Agent who succeeds at a **HUMINT** roll or at **Psychotherapy** at +20% recognizes that this family has horrible trouble in store even if they never again encounter the unnatural.

If the Reapers were summoned before the bubble burst, the twins are so indoctrinated by belief in their mother's fear that the monsters continue to attack across the divide. Even after Agents destroy King's PC, they pursue their prey [OUTSIDE] reality. To exorcise them permanently, Agents must also shut down the twin's contraband cellphone or kill Vicki King.

If either Vicki or the twins are harmed in reintegration, the entire family shatters. The girls scream and huddle in a fetal position. King goes catatonic with shock and becomes unresponsive. All three were composed of shared delusions. Seeing any of the member of the family harmed feels like losing a part of one's mind.

King in Custody

Even rescued, the King family is doomed. After a decade of having her every paranoid suspicion confirmed, Vicki can never again trust an institution, not to mention her own perceptions. The demands of single motherhood and her lack of resources were the animating source of her paranoia, and those triggers only worsen now that she's a decade older and homeless.

Eryn and Shelia, in a world entirely free from their mother's monsters, start to wonder if their memories are even real. From there, it's a short step to wondering if *they* are real. Or distinct from one another. Then the dreams start. The visions of the land with the strange sky and the tall man from the mists...

Fissures between mother and daughters escalate quickly. Recognizing her family is coming apart, Vicki King seeks to re-create **PICKY EATER** technology and return 'inside' less than a year after her exit.

The Rational World

Each **USER** who enters the Boston metro area risks crossing into a world fashioned just for the delusions of Wesley Cool: See **ENTERING A BUBBLE** on page 7.

Dr. Wesley Cool used the app first and ran it for nearly three years before dipping into another dimension permanently. His bubble encircles all of Cambridge. It covers the entire university and most of Boston. It spreads north as far as Arlington and west past Watertown.

Non-**USERS** can't perceive Cool's utopia. In contrast, fellow **USERS** risk getting sucked **[INSIDE]** by the sheer mass of Cool's bubble. It's so huge as to shimmer with an event horizon. Had the doctor stayed, his fantasies may have cooed the planet.

The bubble's growth has been halted by the absence of its creator. In the wake of his loss, the Rational World only half-exists, stagnant until stirred by the return of a **USER**. A reality on standby.

Googling Dr. Cool

Agents can easily learn the following.

Professor Wesley Cool began teaching at MIT's Department of Mathematics in 2007. He taught philosophy before that at a number of state schools.

Academically, Cool is regarded highly in mathematics for conquering two of the difficult Hilbert Problems, a list of 23 unsolved problems proposed by David Hilbert in 1900. His philosophy work is less well-regarded, concerned with questions of phenomenology and simulation theory. Reviewers of his work online often criticize the writing as derivative of Deleuze and Guattari. His profile on the MIT faculty website boasts of academic publications in philosophy and mathematics.

Bubble



Entering Boston risks falling **[INSIDE]** Wesley Cool's bubble.

Infection



Manufacturing and operating a copy of Cool's circuit using the blueprints



The Zann Aetherophone

Arriving by Plane

Any **USER**, regardless of their **SAN** roll, can see the border of the Rational World from the plane. Unlike other bubbles, the sheer size of the Boston phenomenon distorts space around its surface. From the air, the city has been encased in what looks like a transparent soap bubble, rainbow swirls dancing up the sphere's edge. Panic over this sight gets the Air Marshal called. Non-**USERS** see nothing unusual.



Upon landing, Agents see the bubble's edge cut across the concourse at Logan International Airport. The building, city, and horizon beyond look distorted. The details never resolve, as if composed by a computer short of rendering power. The sphere has yet to overtake the runways or reach as far up as cruising altitude. Otherwise, Agents might have found themselves dropping into Boston from the air without a plane around them.

In the airport, the bubble's edge can be spotted as a minute change of hue in the gray concourse carpet. Non-users cross the border by the hundreds, completely unaffected. To a **USER**, the light on the other side seems...wrong. It falls at off-angles and every shadow looks like bad Photoshop. The glow diffuses, as if seen through a globe of ice.

An Agent who makes a successful roll of **Science (Physics)** or an equivalent skill hypothesizes that overlapping dimensions above a certain mass might cause some sort of friction. Human science has no answer for what damage this “rubbing” might cause, nor why only a **USER** can see it.

If Agents cross the threshold intentionally, the **SAN** roll is the same as entering any other bubble. Agents may choose to fail the roll by choice, losing 1 **SAN** or 1D6 **WP**.

Arriving by Personal Vehicle

For those travelling at high speed on the ground, the shimmer of the bubble isn't enough to alert most to its presence. Allow the driver an **Alertness** roll to spot the distortion in the air before the vehicle passes through it. If the driver fails to see it, make the **SAN** check in the car. Failing that requires a **Drive** roll to avoid a crash.



[**INSIDE**] Agents find themselves suddenly seated inside a passenger train. They sit on the red carpet of a car trimmed in wood with faux-leather seats. It looks classy enough to be a smoking lounge. There are a few passengers in contemporary dress. The train is headed down the same road the Agent was travelling, its sloping track replacing the asphalt they were just on. It is a miracle they weren't fused with the

wheels or minced as they skipped across the interstate. The train is headed downhill and entering a tunnel. When it emerges from the other side, the Agent sees a different Boston skyline.

If the Agent sucked [**INSIDE**] was driving when they entered the bubble, those left [**OUTSIDE**] get to make an **Alertness** roll. Successful Agents stay awake enough to notice no one is currently at the wheel. They need to make a **Drive** check to prevent a high-speed accident.



Otherwise, Agents [**OUTSIDE**] notice nothing strange about the car trip. Inform the group that any Agents lost [**INSIDE**] were dropped off, sent to pursue “other leads” according to plan. The Agents remember, right? The plan? Of course they do. Ask [**OUTSIDE**] Agents where they want to go next.

Arriving by Train or Bus

There's no difference between [**INSIDE**] and [**OUTSIDE**] realities until Agents reach the MIT campus. Cool couldn't drive, hated traffic, and considered trains one of his few non-academic interests. The public transport of his dreams is so similar as to be nearly indistinguishable, though the public transit [**INSIDE**] is much cleaner and more punctual.

Mind and Hand

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's motto, *mens et manus*, translates to “mind and hand.” Cool's invention has made this distinction literal. [**OUTSIDE**] reality remains at *hand*, but overlaid by a warped creation from [**INSIDE**] the doctor's *mind*.

Across the two MITs, events [**INSIDE**] and [**OUTSIDE**] are organized according to leads. The zone is too large for the parallel occurrences of the other bubbles. Cool's world is so developed that **USERS** diverge faster in space, time, and experience than before. From the [**OUTSIDE**] perspective, Agents drawn [**INSIDE**] seem to “hop” around the MIT campus. Any **USERS** failing their **SAN** checks during this stage of the investigation start folding themselves in and out of space, their very existence gone fuzzy at the edge of vision and memory. The Agent's perceptions start to skip and stutter in time, contradictory clues gathered and recalled in a bizarre sensory fast-forward. They lose hours or teleport across campus in seconds. The Agents may spend **SAN** and **WP** to exploit this power, switching bubbles to pursue parallel truths across contradictory realities.

Just like Dr. Cool.



[OUTSIDE]-MIT

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology overlooks the Charles River, with Boston on the river's far side. Boston University is a mile southwest. Harvard is a mile northwest. **PICKY EATER**'s first **USER** teaches here, and MIT still employs Dr. Wesley Cool, its inventor.

[OUTSIDE]—The Charles Bower Case

Bower taught theater at MIT until his arrest three years ago. Most of the two dozen theater faculty members remember him all too well. The department is still traumatized. People pointedly avoid talking about him unless someone is unkind enough to corner them into it.

Bower showed appalling images of child sexual abuse to students and colleagues. He handed them around out of his own wallet, as if they were ordinary and part of everyday life. He seemed surprised when people reacted with horror and reported sexual harassment. He seemed baffled, even as authorities dragged him away.

Senior lecturer Anna Braithwaite was the first faculty member to call police on the day of Bower's meltdown. She had been his colleague and friend for years and thought she knew him well...until he showed her those pictures from his wallet. Recalling the day of his arrest still pains her, but she has an acclaimed stage actress's skill for compartmentalizing emotions and helps Agents with questions. Nothing, however, convinces her to describe what was in the photos Bower showed her.

Braithwaite confirms things the Agents may have already learned. Bower showed no signs of interest in child pornography or predatory behavior prior to the incident. He was active and engaged with the theater program, a reliable part of the faculty and renowned dry wit. But he had always been prone to emotional disconnection, to distance. He made that part of his craft: exploring the distance, connection, and tension between audience and stage, their inextricability. He

was fascinated by ways in which online interaction mirrored and expanded this distance.

Braithwaite remembers Bower talking a few times about a contact from the Mathematics Department made through faculty senate. She remembers thinking the name Dr. Cool sounded ridiculous. *Machine Fugue* was the last project Braithwaite remembers her colleague working on. It was supposed to be a play that utilized the professor's AI-generated surrealist imagery as a projected backdrop. She never saw it.

Bower was obsessed with the project. He went on sabbatical for a semester, maybe more (Braithwaite cannot recall). When he showed up at her office, he looked like he'd been on a bender. Hollowed out. Ten years older. She asked how the play was going. He insisted he'd finished it ages ago and was on to bigger things. He only came by her office to show off photos of his "wedding ceremony."

Braithwaite was immediately aghast after seeing the pictures. She cannot recall exactly what she said in the moment, but she remembers demanding Bower leave immediately. He cried as she pushed him out the door, asking her what was wrong. She saw Bower showing the photos to others in the hall as she locked him out, raving: "*What's wrong with love? Why can no one be happy for me?*"

Braithwaite called security. Police found Bower in his office and arrested him within the hour. They confiscated everything. Braithwaite followed the case in the press for a time, but after hearing of Bower's suicide, she endeavored to never think on it again. They didn't even reassign his office. It's a broom closet now.

[OUTSIDE]—Cool's Reputation

Cool's colleagues and students do not think much about him. They can't. Anyone asked about Cool looks a little blank at first. Some upperclassmen know Cool, but it takes a split second for the brain to *know* that it knows him. With some prodding, Agents interviewing Cool's colleagues can learn anything from **A HISTORY OF PICKY EATER** on page 38 that they did not learn from Vicki King.

Confronting students or staff with the fact that Cool hasn't been around in years causes profound distress. No one likes proof that their grasp of reality is tenuous as a spiderweb.

Agents can get official access to university records by succeeding at a **Law** roll to obtain a search warrant. Failing that, they can secure the assistance of the head of the Mathematics Department, Dr. Annette Maulik, with a **Persuade** roll. Her cooperation reveals her low opinion of Cool's ethics and personal behavior, though it has never quite risen to anything that would let her fire him. Of course, she forgets the conversation almost as soon as the Agents leave her office.

Maulik's permission can be used to view Cool's private records (see [OUTSIDE]—Cool's Records), though a warrant must be used to seize the documents.

[OUTSIDE]—Cool's Records

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE: With a warrant, or Maulik's blessing, the Agents can review Cool's data at MIT Information Systems & Technology, next door to the MIT Police Department, across the street from the Hyatt Regency and MIT Theater Arts. Computer login records and security video feeds quickly confirm that Cool has not come to work in three years. The last footage and record of him attending work dates back to late 2016. Video shows him coming into the building and entering his office. The system logs him as having signed into university mail. That's it. The university profile eventually logged itself out automatically. There's no footage of him ever leaving. No one except the night janitor has been recorded entering his office ever since.

EMAIL LOGS: Agents reviewing Cool's email history soon find patterns. His opinion is the only one that ever matters. The Agents could search years of communications and never find him admitting fault or apologizing. He responds to perceived challenges with sarcasm and superiority. It is never hard to annoy him, and he responds frequently with one-line dismissals or browbeating screeds. Most colleagues in his department disdain him. The few friends he has at the university don't have to work with the bastard, and he still treats their regard for him as an excuse to dismiss them as sycophants and toadies. There are messages with Charles Bower, providing installation instructions for **PICKY EATER** alongside lies about the app's function as an image generator. There are also sexually charged letters between Cool and Vicki King, though the tone suggests the relationship was one-sided and emotionally abusive.

EMPLOYMENT FILES: Agents can review Cool's records at the MIT Human Resources Department, on the fifth floor at 6000 Technology Square. It's a years-long track of complaints, all eventually withdrawn or at least unsubstantial enough to avoid legal trouble. Multiple affairs with grad students whose work was just far enough outside his sphere of academic authority to pass muster. Warnings on missed work. Allegations of threats of professional retribution. Bullying of students out of graduate programs. It paints a picture of irresponsibility, impulsivity, and a clear disregard for others. If informed about Cool's disappearance, no one is keen to believe the university forgot about the man for years, dumping paychecks into his account after erasing him from the course schedule. Proving this to be the case causes much psychological distress amongst the administrative employees and prompts their own internal investigation.

[OUTSIDE]—Cool's Collaborators

Cool's focus on theoretical and occult esoterica left him without the practical skills required to build **PICKY EATER**. He never published anything about the project. The only contributors given credit are named inside his book, available only to those

A

B

C

MIT Campus Map

Welcome to MIT

1

All MIT buildings are designated by numbers. Under this numbering system, a single room number serves to completely identify any location on the campus. In a typical room number, such as 7-121, the figure(s) preceding the hyphen gives the building number, the first number following the hyphen, the floor, and the last two numbers, the room.

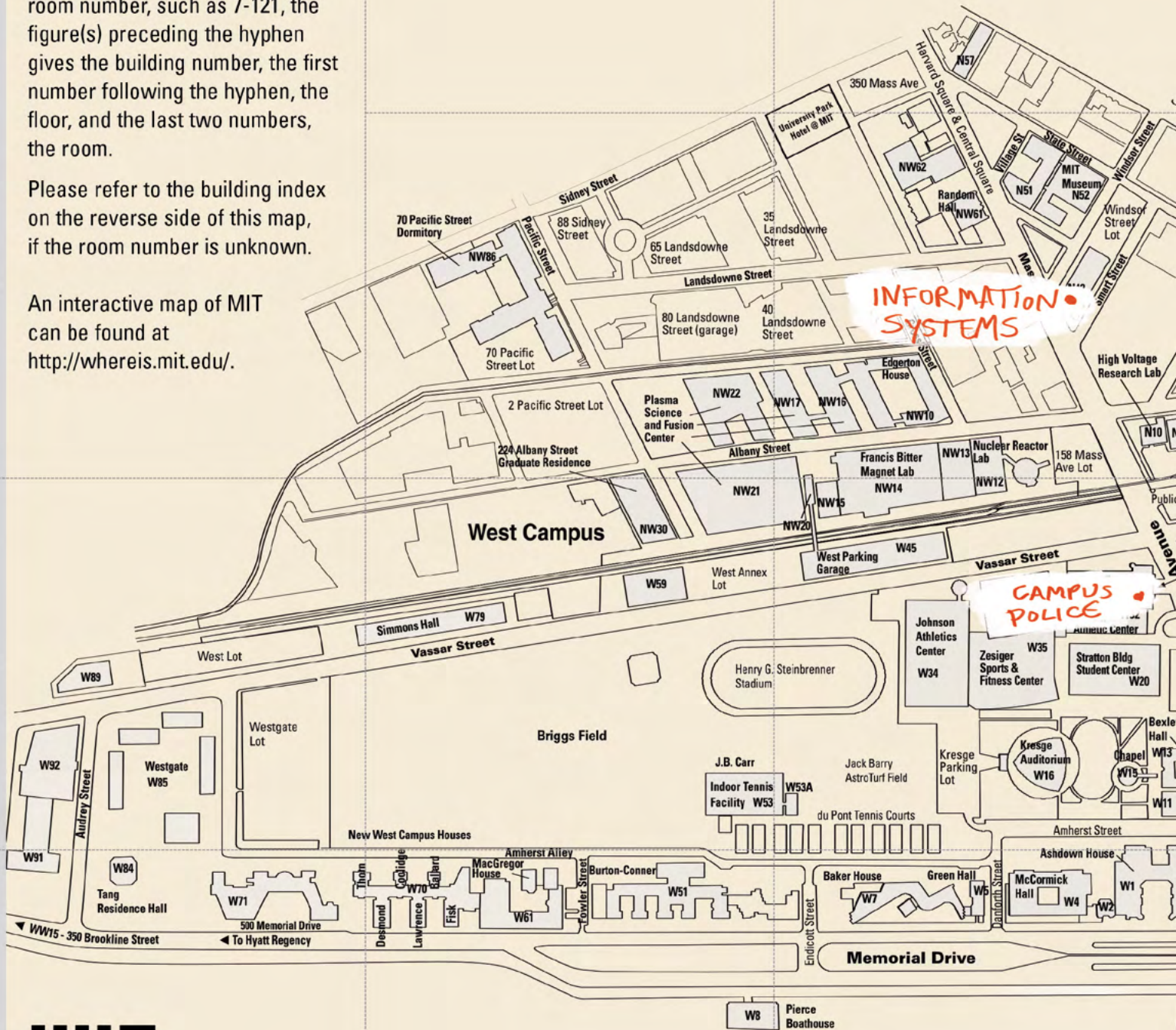
Please refer to the building index on the reverse side of this map, if the room number is unknown.

2

An interactive map of MIT can be found at <http://whereis.mit.edu/>.

3

4

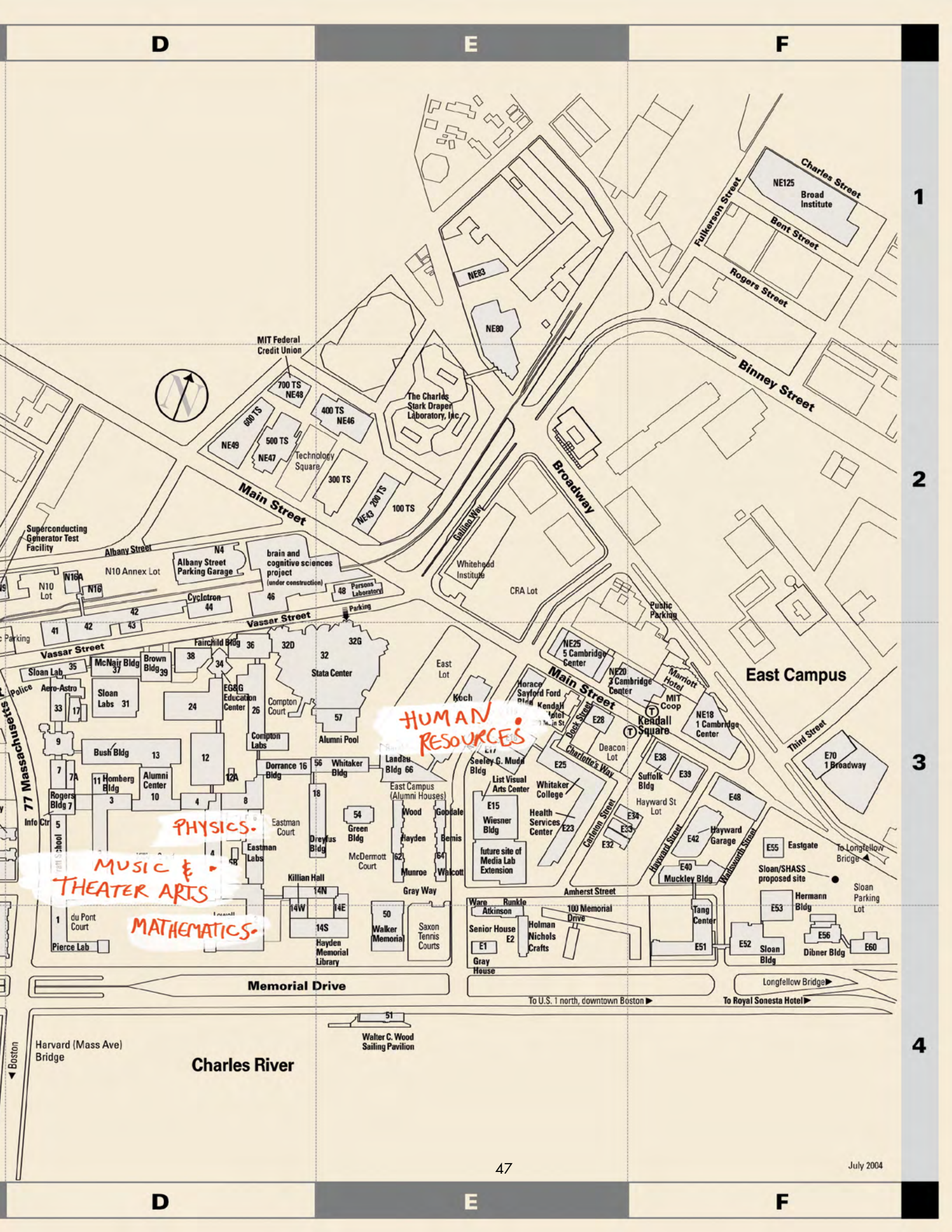


Massachusetts
Institute of
Technology

A

B

C



D

E

F

1

2

3

4

HUMAN
RESOURCES

PHYSICS

MUSIC &
THEATER ARTS

MATHEMATICS

[**INSIDE**] in The Rational World (see **MEANING WITHOUT MASTER** on page 54). Though the assistants are long-forgotten in Cool's fantasy, three people responsible for the construction of **PICKY EATER** are still accessible on the real MIT campus. None understand what was built, its purpose, or any reason to conceal their involvement. Unless informed by Agents, they aren't even aware Cool is missing.

Dr. Rajnish Amardeep, Electrical Engineering

Dr. Amardeep doesn't want to talk about Dr. Wes Cool. Successful **HUMINT** reads the source of his reluctance as self-serving. He holds no qualms about insulting the man so much as fear of repercussions. A successful **Persuade** test convinces Rajnish to admit knowing Cool, though he's quick to add that he has many acquaintances in the Mathematics and Theoretical Physics departments. All of them warned Amardeep what a conniving, vicious bastard Cool can be when he didn't get his way. He's heard rumors the man could cause TAs to drop out with a single cutting remark.

Cool reached out to Dr. Amardeep owing to his expertise. Cool wanted Amardeep to create an integrated circuit for a personal project. Though loath to dedicate time to Cool's "primitive" designs, Amardeep admits he needed the man's support for a faculty senate vote on the expansion of adjunct positions. He began collaborating with Cool on the design and regretted it almost instantly.

For a philosopher and mathematician, Cool had numerous, outlandish demands for the transistor. Hyper-specific resistance ranges and voltage thresholds. Needless gold components, a nonstandard silicon wafer direction, and substrate deposition requirements that complicated the whole photo-lithographic process. Attempts to talk Cool out of these nonsensical demands only saw Wes threaten to pull his vote for Amardeep's proposal. Rajnish was about to quit anyway when Cool claimed he "got it right." Amardeep can't say how he finally succeeded, but Dr. Cool took the prototype, asked for a list of procedures to re-create the process, and left the engineer alone.

Amardeep has never heard the name **PICKY EATER**. He regards the circuit he printed as a waste of material, though he admits the design was "pretty, in a useless sort of way." The chip is inefficient, redundant, and leeches too much power. Cool insisted on employing his own metallurgy to create filament for the conductive material, and it played holy hell on the manufacture for no purpose besides decreased efficiency. Once the first sheet was done, Amardeep ran current through circuits, saw they supported a charge, and passed them along. He has no idea what happened afterwards.

(Amardeep has been a **USER** since he tested the conductivity of the chips. Exposure was minimal and Amardeep's POW so high that's he's never noticed [**INSIDE**], despite three years working within range of the bubble.)

Dr. Michelle Jordan, Computer Science

Dr. Amardeep introduced Jordan to Cool while she was still a computer science grad student. She's now a post-doc lecturer for the department. She assures the Agents that she saw Cool in the building "just the other day." She admits to helping Vicki King and some other grad students help him code **PICKY EATER** awhile back. Whatever became of it?

If the Agents press Jordan to focus on Cool, she says he's notorious among female grad students and postdocs. He had a habit of romancing grads just barely within bounds of the university's ethics guidelines. Jordan admits she viewed such careful coordination of emotional entanglements as a red flag, but not everyone on the project agreed. He was self-possessed and confident, and Jordan recalls Vicki King fell for him hard. Michelle tried to warn the girl, but she needed Cool's name on her CV too much to ditch the project entirely. King made puppy-dog eyes at Cool, and he responded. Then, like someone flipped a switch, Cool spent the last weeks of the **PICKY EATER** project freezing her out or verbally demeaning her intelligence. King never came back the next semester.

As for what she did for **PICKY EATER**? She cobbled together a bunch of freeware language packs, keyloggers, and webcam viruses into a shoddy

network for Cool's "digital thought experiment." Jordan never understood what the app was supposed to do, but holding her questions seemed a prerequisite for earning her independent study credit. The result can't have been anything functional, as Cool claimed he was running their software on some piece of hardware she never saw. Jordan and King's programming was missing the most basic level of abstraction required for firmware: the binary determining which transistors turn on or off. It's as if Cool expected the chip to handle that part on its own.

If the Agents convince Jordan that Cool has been missing for years, she seems nonplussed about her earlier claims. Then glad. "He's a creep," she says. "If you track him down, tell him to stay gone."

Dr. Jacquelyn Chung, Philosophy

Professor Jacquelyn Chung has known Cool the longest among MIT faculty. They delivered papers at a few of the same conferences during graduate school, before he pursued his second doctorate in hard sciences. She's convinced that he's still around, still working. She openly dislikes him and describes his personality in terms of subtle selfishness, even a quiet kind of grandiosity, combined with a readiness to cut corners and happily ignore rules and obligations. He's dishonest. Manipulative. Impulsive. She claims she delivered such criticisms to his face, but the man never much seemed to care what others thought of his personality.

Chung says Cool experienced a tectonic shift in focus and work habits since earning tenure. He devoted more and more time to fringe theories and obsessed over Tegmark's "mathematical universe." His teaching became erratic as he became obsessed with cross-curricular engineering projects. Despite these problems, his output of theoretical publications remained prolific and highly regarded. The Mathematics department never disciplined him, and she regards this as an embarrassment to the university.

Asked about her contributions to **PICKY EATER**, Chung's only response is "scorn." Uninvited, Cool would come across campus to bounce ideas off her regarding the development of his mysterious

"app." She admits to enduring the tirades out of morbid curiosity. Cool's philosophical ideas were erratic to the point of Deleuzian schizoanalysis. He veered wildly between libertarian transhumanism, pre-Socratic mysticism, evangelical nihilism, and a vague concept he kept referring to as "preemptive ontology." Chung has no idea what Cool found useful in her steady bafflement and disagreement, but she found herself unable to look away from the trainwreck of his ideological worldview.

If the Agents convince Chung that, in fact, Cool stopped coming to work years ago, the philosopher is surprised, then relieved. She's grateful the university finally has grounds to fire him. A few minutes after the interview, she forgets about Cool all over again.

[OUTSIDE]—Cool's Forgotten Office

The only way to stop the horrors of **PICKY EATER** is to find Dr. Cool [INSIDE] his bubble. While [OUTSIDE], they can learn what they must do and how.

Cool's small office is still set up, undisturbed and unused for years. It's still assigned to him, forgotten on the campus facilities reports and class schedules. No one has been inside since 2016 save the janitor, and even he can't differentiate the room from the dozens of other liminal spaces he cleans every night.

The monitor, keyboard, and mouse all sit on the desk. The PC tower is still on the floor beside the wastebasket. Nothing can be powered on. If Agents investigate the interior of the tower, the plastic casing is empty. The power cords and wires dead-end inside a plastic case without internal components.

Cool's scribbled notes are scattered everywhere across his desk and bookshelves. Journal pages, strange photocopies, and printouts of problems that he found easier to solve by hand. The same information can be found at his other office, in the [INSIDE] world.

Observer Effects

Years of documents and half-finished equations seek to tie together elements from quantum mechanics, exotic radiation, dark matter, and multiverse theory. To any

Agent with **Science (Physics)** or an equivalent skill at 30% or higher, Cool appears to have succumbed to the delusion of quantum shamanism: the belief that the observer effect is evidence of interaction between consciousness and physics. That's undergrad-level nonsense, mistaking the mechanical influence of measurement tools on a system for psychic interference by a thinking observer. On a successful use of **Science (Physics)** or an equivalent skill, the Agent realizes that the equations are *prescriptive* rather than descriptive; Cool was determined to channel raw consciousness through a mechanical instrument, seeking to rebuild reality from its foundations.

Deus Ex Mathematica

Many of Cool's mad notes deal with attempts to understand physical reality as an expression of mathematics, consciousness as the core variable within that code, and mathematical interactions between consciousness and reality. He posits a theory of psychic and physical dimensions conterminous in a singular, fluid multiverse, then theorizes meta-models that might "translate" data across the divide. He seeks mathematical links between behavioral sets to define

predictable "you-systems" of consciousness existing across infinite sets. He theorizes the capabilities of linking those systems and acknowledges the likely heightened influence of certain consciousnesses with extraordinary perceptive power. Ultimately, Cool convinces himself of a consciousness-archetype that stands above all—a God algorithm, retroactively determining every event across any time by its ability to calculate with total accuracy.

The Book of Thoth

Cool seems to have a singular obsession with Greco-Egyptian magical practices. He takes a particular interest in divination. His office is littered with texts dealing with the ancient *Book of Thoth*, said to contain the secrets of prophecy and of perceiving the gods, supposedly written by Thoth himself, the Egyptian god of writing and knowledge. The true *Book of Thoth* supposedly contained secret spells to speak to beasts and to perceive the gods.

Like the ancient Greeks, Cool equated Thoth with Hermes, herald of the gods and mediator between world and Otherworld, god of divination and initiation. Hermes, in turn, seemingly emerged from ancient

The Tegmark Effect

Players may be familiar with Max Tegmark's real work and continued career at MIT. If this is brought up in play, Handlers should seize the opportunity to demonstrate how unreliable the narration of reality has become.

The Handler should tell Agents looking for Tegmark that he still teaches at MIT. Agents can choose to visit the theorist if they want to talk about his colleague and student, Dr. Cool.

Once at the university ([**INSIDE**] or [**OUTSIDE**]), it turns out Max Tegmark is unavailable. He's dead. He's been dead since 2012, when he keeled over from a sudden aneurysm. Everyone who knew the doctor sighs with failing patience if the Agents insist Tegmark still lives. Exhausted loved ones encourage skeptics to visit the grave and provide an address. The grave is real. The five-years decayed body of a Swedish-American physicist can be found in the coffin below, if Agents go mad enough to have it exhumed.

If players accuse the Handler of lying about Tegmark, assure them that there was no lie. According to each Agent's memories and senses, Max Tegmark is still alive and teaching at MIT. When they look for confirmation of this fact online, they find articles about something called "The Tegmark Effect." The term describes a phenomenon of vivid and detailed false memories resulting from the lag in academic publishing cycles. The name was coined after the persistent misconception that physicist Max Tegmark is still alive, likely caused by the popularity of his posthumous publications. Upon learning this, Agents lose 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.

If someone claims the concept is, in fact, called the Mandela Effect, assure them that they are correct. The Agent does remember it that way; however, everything else says it was the Tegmark Effect and has been all along. The Agent making this claim loses 0/1 **SAN** from the unnatural.

Pan: god of pastures and forests, of the protection of watchful shepherds, of roads and meetings, of fertility, of the holy plays that became all we know of comedy and tragedy. Pan from the similar Vedic god Pushan—from Sanskrit *pusyati*, “to cause to thrive”—and both putatively from a shepherd-god of the prehistoric Ukrainian steppes.

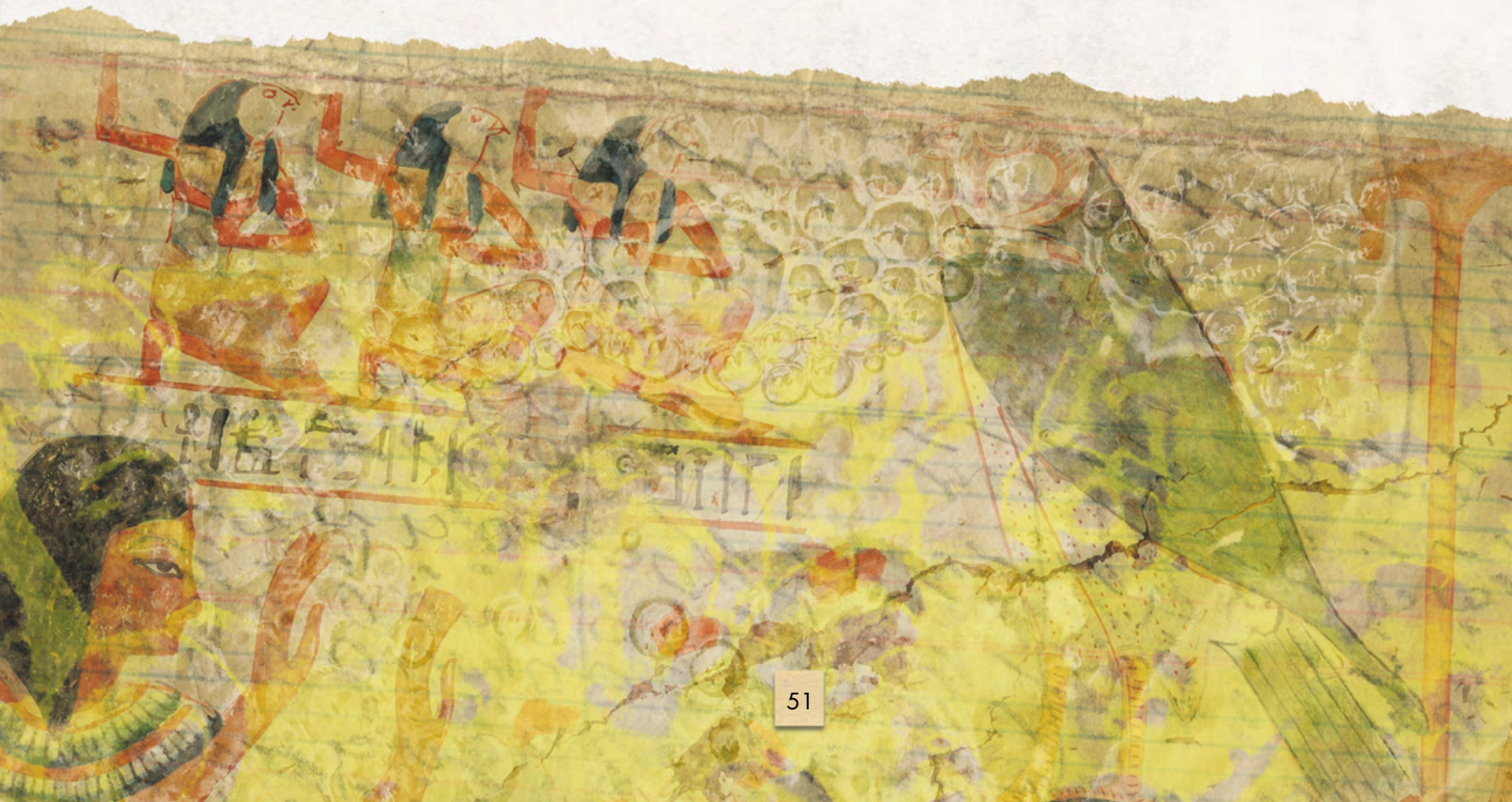
Cool links Thoth-Hermes as revealer and psychopomp to early conceptions of Set, god of the underworld, chief god of upper Egypt for thousands of years. He pieces together ancient sorceries to invoke and constrain the gods of the underworld and sacred mysteries. Sanskrit *yui* or *yog*, “yoke, harness, control,” as in the discipline of yoga; Set, the underworld; Thoth, divine knowledge: “to control knowledge of the underworld,” *yog-Set-Thoth*, *Yog-Sothoth*. Imperative becomes prayer, prayer becomes deity, deity grants comprehension of the force beneath the godhead itself. A key to the gate, whereby the spheres meet.

The Abyss and the Guide

By Cool’s accounting, the Upanishads long ago claimed that the gods are but functions of the human mind. The mind assumes a form; the universe takes shape around it. But between human experience and the divine infinite lay a gulf beyond comprehension, a

primeval abyss, the source of every monster in ancient myth. All there is united and undifferentiated, the ultimate negation of light and understanding, unthinking and unknowing: the nothingness from which every reality flickers into being. The initiate must glimpse the abyss without annihilation, must open a way into a metaphorical chamber of darkness in which the mindless hisses and howls of the abyss become prophecy: the *Book of Thoth’s* spell to communicate with animals is a parlor trick compared to the potent revelation fueling it. But to face the abyss, the enlightened mind must awaken to unknowable realities with the aid of a guide beyond the mind itself.

The *Necronomicon* describes a Guide that even its mad author found dreadful. Abd al-Hazred claimed the Guide had been an entity of Earth long before the first mammals stirred, when forgotten shapes moved and thought and built. “He who guardeth the Gateway,” Al-Hazred called it: “He who will guide the rash one beyond all worlds into the Abyss of unnamable Devourers.” An immortal guide to timeless truths, the Prolonged of Life, Tawil al’Umr stands ready to grant passage to the Final Secret. But only if the petitioner has learned and understood enough to withstand the revelation. In meditations and directed dreaming, Cool sought that Guide.



The App's Design

Cool discovered that all of reality exists as the dreams of Yog-Sothoth made flesh. But this dream has no ego to drive it. Existence is the runaway dream of an alien mind devoid of thought and desire. Cool regarded this lack of agency as a security flaw and sought to hack the system.

Cool cobbled together ancient spells from hypergeometric texts and constructed a technological mediator to frame them in a **USER's** consciousness. Using **PICKY EATER** reverses the flow between action and thought. Inside a bubble, he says, *humanity* dreams Yog-Sothoth into being, reshaping existence in the process. At least in his private notes, Wes admits his invention needs testing. Marginalia reading "That dumbass Bower?" and "Vicki!" with three underlines leave no question as to who he picked.

The Threshold

Cool's ultimate goal was never the construction of pocket realities, not even his own. His writing is obsessed with the idea of accessing the system *between* systems. Between worlds. A bedrock reality from which all possible truths spring. For this, he seeks the Guide: Tawil al'Umr.

Cool's notes on the *Necronomicon* describe a kind of obeisance that a visitor must perform to show the proper deference to the Guide found at that threshold. Warnings of "*Important! Nonexistence at issue!*" head a list of gestures that Cool remarks as having similarities to the so-called Elder Sign. An Agent who deliberately practices this ritual greeting can memorize it. The steps are not elaborate: a crouching glance downward, arms raised and bent in a certain pattern.

How Cool intends to find this guide is far more cryptic, but the notes suggest a three-step process.

1. Stabilize the field.
2. Invent a predecessor and close a second circuit.
3. Pursue the dream inside the dream.

The Agents who study Cool's notes enough to learn this information lose 0/1D4 SAN from the unnatural. They realize Cool's bubble doesn't exist as wish-fulfillment. He imagined another universe into being only so he could reconstruct **PICKY EATER** inside it, plunging deeper towards raw creation.

Putting an end to **PICKY EATER** means finding the locus of that connection. It means crossing over: See **ENTERING A BUBBLE** on page 7.

God's Eye and God's Teeth

Agents who have investigated the scenario *Delta Green: God's Eye* might uncover a number of connections between that operation and Dr. Cool. If asked about them, Michelle Jordan says Norah Brigid and Kim Boyer, two brilliant mathematics students, worked briefly on **PICKY EATER** before they were hired away by "some startup" years ago.

Anthony Cooper corresponded with Cool after Cooper learned that's where Clyde Mauch recruited Brigid and Boyer. Cool helped Cooper determine the nature of the Watcher on High that the old sorcerers invoked, and that the act of perception in his ritual need not be *the* Watcher on High but any kind of perception and pattern recognition.

Cooper exposed Cool to the wondrous possibilities of the endless multiverse. Cool's thought went in the opposite direction from Cooper's, into implications of infinity. He studied the *Book of Thoth* and fragments of the *Phakotic Manuscripts* and the *Necronomicon*. He wanted control. He wanted to experience other realities of his choosing, not join forever with some strange Watcher on High.

[INSIDE]—MIT

In all respects, Wesley Cool thinks he knows better. This makes the bizarre nature of not-Boston immediately apparent to any witness [INSIDE] it.

The city—perhaps the entire East Coast—now enjoys a high-speed elevated rail system. Above the tangle of Cambridge’s historic streets glide magnetic rail cars, silent save for the low *whooshing* of the displaced air. Anyone who makes a **Bureaucracy** or **Accounting** check realizes that the city couldn’t afford this kind of infrastructure in a dozen annual budgets. Agents with **History** may search for monuments to American history around town and find some were bulldozed to make way for public transit lines strangely centered around MIT. Anyone native to the Boston area may be asked to make a **SAN** check after noticing the sparse traffic, missing street performers, and erased homeless population.

It’s almost more disturbing how little everything else has changed. Newspapers still feature headlines about mass shootings and the Israel-Palestine conflict. The President is the same. Global warming continues apace. Cool apparently thought that traffic and his lack of total control were the world’s only problems.

[INSIDE]—What Charles Bower Case?

Charles Bower teaches at MIT to this day. His name is still on the directory board at the entrance to the Music and Theater Arts Building.

His bio is listed in the recruitment pamphlets littering every table in the halls. A caption beneath a photo of the man inside claims he’s a specialist in classical theater and an experimental playwright.

Agents asking around about Bower find that the students and faculty quite like him. He’s often referred to as the funniest member of the faculty, and there’s a lot of competition to get into his undergraduate survey courses. Any mention of Bower’s criminal history is met with shock, disbelief, and great offense. No one remembers any such incident three years ago. Some students are even happy to grab their phones and prove the professor’s innocence. They “Picky” the date



of the crime (their verb for searching, apparently) and prove no such event ever took place.

Bower can be found in his office, none too pleased if he’s learned about the “baseless accusations” Agents have been spreading. Seeing him provokes a 0/1 **SAN** roll. Failure shocks characters across the membrane and into a locked broom closet back [OUTSIDE]. Returning from what remains of Bower’s real office to the *memory* of it requires switching back [INSIDE] at a cost of 1 **SAN** or 1D6 **WP**. The sight of people blinking in and out of existence terrifies the professor.

Bower looks...normal. He’s the same age as he appears in photos prior to arrest. He’s as disgusted and offended by accusations of pedophilia as the Agents would be. Questioned respectfully, Bower is happy to talk about Wes Cool and **PICKY EATER**. He regards his friend from the Mathematics Department as “the only literal-minded man I can stand.” He admits to beta-testing something called the “**PICKY EATER** algorithm” in his play *Machine Fugue*. He claims he doesn’t talk about the play much anymore; he finds the bragging of early adopters of tech after “mass adoption” somewhat pitiful. He was happy enough for an acknowledgement in the appendix of *Meaning Without Master*, Cool’s bestseller. He lacks the training to understand the text, but he recommends it as the best source for learning more about the man. The former collaborators haven’t talked much since Cool made it big, but that’s fame for you.

Agents who succeed at **INT*5** rolls realize they aren’t talking to Professor Bower. The “man” before them is the psychic sketch of Charles Bower, animated by Wesley Cool’s impressions and supplemented by whatever force fuels **PICKY EATER**. [INSIDE] Bower is not a sexual predator because he was not seen as one by the bubble’s **USER**. He is not a real person. No one here is.

An Agent with **Psychotherapy** can convince Bower that he doesn’t exist by pointing out inconsistencies in his memory, his lack of interiority, and other facets of personhood Wes Cool could not be bothered to imagine. Doing so is pointlessly cruel. Successful Agents only manage to stun not-Bower into a dissociative state.

[INSIDE]—Cool's Reputation

Agents [INSIDE] seeking opinions about Wes Cool's time at MIT are treated like dullards. Faculty members point to his book on their shelves, matter-of-factly claiming they don't have time to educate non-students. Students point to the **PICKY EATER** apps on their phone and mock the questioners, sarcastically asking if they need Wi-Fi explained to them, too. One even remarks, "Jesus, I bet you fossils still use Google."

After much frustration, the obliviousness of the questions become clear as Agents near the Hayden Library. At least, they recall it being the Hayden Library.

The sign out front now declares it to be "The Library of Discovery." Above the surrounding roads, Cambridge's high-speed elevated rail system shades the sidewalk as rail cars speed by in soundless haste. A life-sized marble statue of Cool stands outside the front entrance, arms spread in a Christ-like pose. It looks as if he's inviting the visitor to enter both left and right doors at the same time.



In addition to as many copies of *Meaning Without Master* as anyone could ever want, The Library of Discovery contains voluminous documentation on Cool's life. Collections of personal letters from colleagues and esteemed public intellectuals openly admit to being intimidated by the man's genius. A giant, framed diagram of the **PICKY EATER** circuit hangs in the grand lobby above the mahogany circulation desk.

[INSIDE]—Cool's Records

Historical accounts and acknowledgements in the back of *Meaning Without Master* list collaborators in Cool's ultimate discovery (see [OUTSIDE]—**COOL'S COLLABORATORS** on page 45). In Cool's mind, all were recognized for their cooperation with humanity's foremost genius and went on to positions of international acclaim. None are still located in this version of Cambridge, with the exception of **Charles Bower** (see [INSIDE]—**WHAT CHARLES BOWER CASE?** on page 53) and **Vicki King** (see **MEETING THE FALSE KING** on page 56).



Meaning Without Master

UP TO CHAPTER 2: *Study time:* hours. *Occult* +1%, *Unnatural* +1%. *SAN Loss* 0/1D4.

CHAPTERS 3-32: *Prereq:* Science (Mathematics) 50% or higher. *Study time:* weeks. *Occult* +5%, *Unnatural* +5%. *SAN Loss* 1/1D6.

Available to anyone [INSIDE] the Rational World, *Meaning Without Master* contains the information from the excerpt on page 1. Handlers should share details about **PICKY EATER**'s creation and its rules with any Agents who study the text.

Cool ceases speaking to a layman audience after the first couple chapters. The remainder of the text requires Science (Mathematics) 50% or higher to understand. The bulk of the pages constitute a mathematical proof establishing that the reader does not exist, followed by a dense philosophical treatise on why such distinctions never mattered. Cool does not reserve the privilege of reality for even himself, instead arguing that his own existence is as hollow and slipshod as any imagined reader's. The force he calls "Tawil al'Umr, the All-Is-One, the Gate and the Key" prioritizes no single universe above another in the tumult of infinity. Cool regards any mind capable of grasping this fact worthy to seize control of the mindless force.

Any Agent with training in **History** finds documentation of Cool's biography about as reputable as North Korean propaganda. The vague terms in which **PICKY EATER** is lauded as humanity's greatest innovation never resolve into actual chronological or technical detail, instead taking on the mythic tone of a children's book about Edison or some other famed technologist. For being a supposedly profound and unique historical figure, almost nothing inside Cool's library entertains dissent or disagreement with his theories. Any records of pushback from the mathematical or philosophical communities exist only to set up painstakingly recorded anecdotes about each detractor's eventual embarrassment and disgrace among the academic community.

Upon making an **INT×5** roll, the Agent notices the lack of breadth amongst the stacks of a university library. Entire swaths of the classification system are missing despite aligning with majors offered by the university. The Agent realizes that the "Library of Discovery" contains only enough information to acclaim Cool's brilliance. It is an institution he felt he was owed rather than one with a purpose.

This de-realization quickly spirals out of the Agent's control. Shadowing anyone working at the university traces large, repetitive loops of nonsensical duties. The "people" working these jobs never notice their work dematerialize and reset. The clocks in every room only advance when the **USER** watches them directly, otherwise freezing in place. Time itself may have only restarted because visiting **USERS** believe it to exist.

The alienation of being trapped within a fantasy on standby costs 1/1D4 **SAN** from unnatural.

[INSIDE]—Cool's Collaborators

The Simons Building houses MIT's Mathematics Department. The building wraps like a horseshoe around the green grass of Wesley Court. To anyone who visited the location prior to becoming a **USER**, the building seems too tall. All the street names are wrong.



There are no other instructors in the Department of Mathematics or Theoretical Physics. The study of "Prerevelatory Physics" has been relegated to the History Department. The building now exclusively houses the classrooms of the only worthy teacher. Students inside listen to recordings of Cool reading *Meaning Without Master*. They hold class discussions in fruitless attempts to grasp the scope of his genius.

Every machine—in every room and every pocket—has carried a copy of **PICKY EATER** since its manufacture. The app is integrated into education, commerce, and defense software all over this world. People use it for everything. The only reason reality hasn't come flying apart is Cool's inability to imagine other people as real—in this or any reality. His world is populated by figments, half-personalities grasping after his absent greatness, unable to summon the sentience it would take for **PICKY EATER** to reflect their own delusions.

[INSIDE]—Offices of the Revealers

Cool's office should be located on the second floor of Building 2. The windowless room and its humble fixtures are maintained now as a historical site. Cool's administrative assistant sits inside at all hours of the day, prepared to manage requests from his many admirers. She stares at the blank walls with a smile on her face. The only sounds are the constant clack of typewriter keys in never-ending transcription. When Agents open the door, she beams at them as if her heart only started beating the very moment before.



Meeting the False King

(If Agents had previous interactions with Vicki King, seeing this version nauseates them and costs 0/1 SAN from the unnatural. **[INSIDE]** Agents who fail can make a last **POW×5** test to escape back to **OUTSIDE—COOL'S FORGOTTEN OFFICE**, described on page 49.)

The False King looks maybe eighteen. Younger than she would have been during Vicki King's affair with Cool. She sits at attention, her posture and smile caught in a sort of rictus. When Agents enter the "office," she greets them with all the chipperness of a cartoon character. "Hi! Welcome to the Office of Pre-Revelatory Mathematics and Theoretical Physics! I'm Vicki, one of Dr. Cool's students. How may this Office of the Revealer serve you today?"

If Agents think they can find Cool here, the False King lets out the first of many unnerving giggles. She thanks the Agents for flattering the department with the notion that the Revealer would still work there. This room is a historical site that presents artifacts of important thought before the great Revelation, and a public relations office. Cool works in the new High Building at the center of campus. Of course, sometimes requests for his consultation around the globe pull him away, but the High Building is where he does his real research. She is sure the Agents can find him there.

Asked about Cool himself, she can do nothing but heap praise upon him. Dr. Cool showed humanity the world—the universe—the sweep of infinite worlds, infinite realities. He revealed the infinite connections that every person has with versions of themselves. He revealed the immortality that comes with that awareness, with being able to extend consciousness beyond physical form. Who is more rightly revered than one who knows the ultimate truth and shares it with others? He is the Revealer of the Way. Even when he deceives, the deception constructs a deeper truth.

If Agents ask about a relationship with Dr. Cool, the False King denies any affair, followed by a coquettish, "Ladies never tell, and gentlemen...you know."

Asked about Eryn and Shelia, the False King doesn't know them. Told the twins are her own children, the thing laughs. "Oh, I've never wanted any. It is enough to serve the Revealer. Besides, kids make you fat."

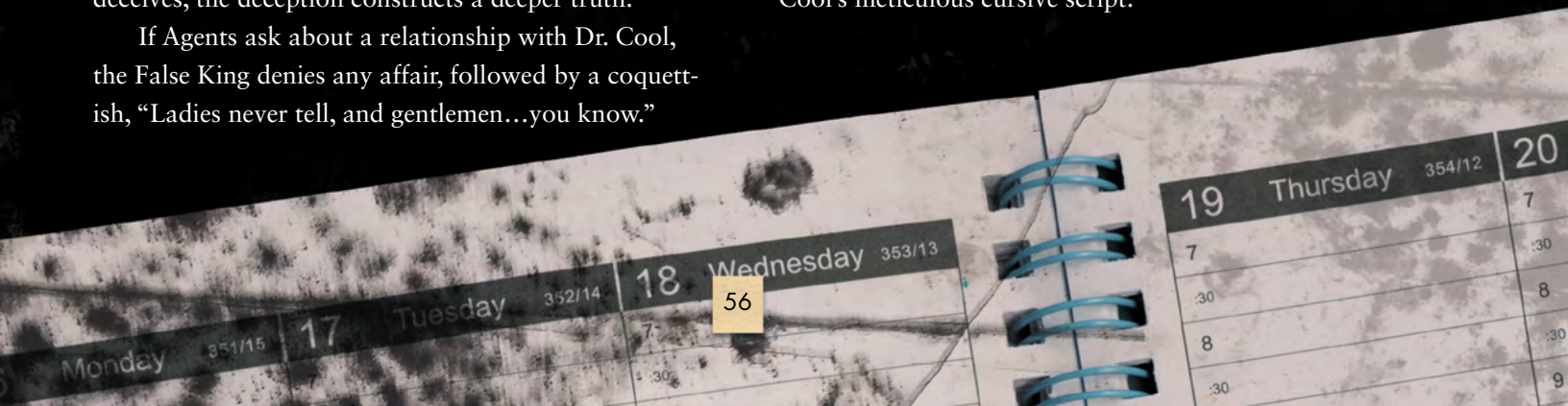
Cool's Appointment Book

The False King serves Cool in some sort of secretarial capacity. A thick ledger, appointment book, and honest-to-God typewriter sit plainly visible on the desk. The thing in Vicki's skin is happy to add an appointment, but it warns there's no promise the Revealer keeps the date. Cool's been extremely busy with his Zann Aetherophone project lately. The False King doesn't know what those words mean, but it trusts the Revealer to know their importance. He's been working on the project in the High Building nonstop.

Agents who come up with a plausible excuse can attempt to use **Persuade +20%** to look through the False King's records. On a success, the thing allows Agents to check her documents, no matter how flimsy the explanation. On a failure, the False King attacks. (See **ANGERING THE FALSE KING** on page 59.)

The documents on the desk indicate that Cool hasn't had an appointment since Jan 1, 2017. The calendar doesn't even have dates printed after Jan 1, 2017. The boxes go blank—no numerals or month names. What little text exists in the back pages uses nonsense glyphs as letters and numerals, like they're approximating language in a low-pixel video game. Before the calendar ceased counting days, previous appointments were nonsense fantasy: trips to the UN, stays at New York fashion week, flights to receive Nobel Prizes, etc.

The most intact text comes from what the False King was busy transcribing before Agents entered: a thick, leatherbound journal. Its pages are stuffed with Cool's meticulous cursive script.



with her mean intellect and pedestrian values, she was never a person in the first place. My theories are unnecessary to know this. Her vacancy is her appeal, and her hollowness is the part deserving of love. Vicki was empty before we met and stayed empty after, driven by common instinct toward my greatness like a moth to flame. Vicki doesn't even need food. She doesn't need water or sleep. I know these things to have always been true. Her heart doesn't beat until I come around. I can see and feel and know this truth. Vicki is tireless in her service to me, and I am the gravity to her being. Insofar as she knows anything, Vicki knows this to be true.

The journal goes on and on. Stacks of copies in the outbox and crammed in the drawers indicate the False King has been retyping these words...for months? Years? Agents can attempt to use **OCCULT**, **Unnatural**, or **Psychotherapy** as they skim the transcript or journal.

- » **OCCULT:** The False King is a tulpa. A mind-construct made flesh. Using the same direct dreaming and meditative trance states that taught him to reverse the flow of creation, Cool created an automaton of his former lover through sheer will. What's unclear is whether the thing has a purpose, or if Cool just wanted to see if he could.
- » **UNNATURAL:** No human mind is capable of containing a universe. Cool entered the bubble fully aware of inevitable gaps in his worldview and the effects those absences would have on **PICKY EATER**. Yet the False King is less complete and more contradictory than any other figment, despite having an intimate relationship to the **USER**. That makes the thing in the office an experiment. Cool was seeing how far he could hollow out the memory of his former lover before the All-Is-One ceased manifesting her existence. He failed to find the limit.
- » **PSYCHOTHERAPY:** Wesley Cool is a high-functioning sociopath. He's always been devoid of empathy, but now he's constructed a world where he doesn't have to hide it. Through this victory, he's destroyed his only means of identity formation. There are no more games to play, taboos to break, or enemies to humiliate. The False King is the creation of a compulsive desperately seeking new boundaries to violate. He got bored, and that means he's going deeper.

Friday

365/11

The High Building

To find and stop Dr. Cool, the Agents must go to the High Building.

The High Building is new to any Agent familiar with MIT campus; it is an immense white tower that glitters with glass windows. It's nestled between layers of gardens at the center of campus; there's no street access to the building. As the Agents walk towards it, they pass statues of Wes Cool along the approaching promenade. Entire families pause at their favorites to gaze with wistful admiration or take photos.

Security at the building seems draconian for an academic institution, but a successful use of **MILITARY SCIENCE (LAND)** or **CRIMINOLOGY** allows an Agent to see through the façade. The eyes of the guards barely even track the students passing by, and the students themselves move as if extras in a film. No one takes any actions to impede Agents headed towards the office on the top floor. They don't even greet or acknowledge them. Cool had no reason to expect visitors, not to mention attackers. He's not there to imagine a response, so the door isn't even locked.

Inside, Agents find the most nicely furnished office and library they've ever seen. The bookshelves along the walls creep up three stories, latticed with beautiful wood balconies for perusal. On a grand table in the center of the room rests the massive Zann Aetherophone.

The Zann Aetherophone

On the table is a coffin-sized contraption of bronze and iron with gold gears, copper wiring, and giant crystals. Calipers mounted to a gyroscope clutch a large prism located at the center of the device. A metal hand crank extends from one end.

Modifications to the device drip off the table on all sides. Contemporary electrical leads trail between the prism and a cobbled-together connection to an industrial outlet that emits an electric hum.

The book containing Zann's own operating manual is open beneath it. The operation process doesn't even take up one page. One need only stare at the crystal, turn the crank, and "think on the Spheres."

Hookups and cables for a laptop run from a lectern nearby, but they surround a blank space where no computer sits.

Dismantling the Aetherophone requires a Halligan bar and an angle grinder. Bullets ricochet off it. Unplugging the power cord achieves nothing; the thing continues to hum with impossible current, somehow powered internally.

Agents find their eyes drawn to the central prism. It is impossibly inlaid with gold wiring. Agents who have seen the **PICKY EATER** circuit recognize the shape, now drawn in three dimensions throughout the glass and visible to the naked eye.

On an INT×5 test, Agents realize that Cool created a new version of **PICKY EATER**. He wanted a fresh install that wasn't already bound to his mind. Something that could make a bubble *within* bubbles. The power sustaining the hellish world Agents find themselves in is no longer present within it. To shut off the source of infection, they must go deeper.

Agents who play the Zann Aetherophone hear inconceivable, incomprehensible music, Yog-Sothoth itself in patterns of sound, and find themselves on the shores of the All-Is-One. Each loses 1/1D4 SAN from the unnatural.

Angering the False King

The thing that looks like Vicki King isn't very smart. As a misogynist, Cool lobotomized the memory of the woman in his mind. The False King naïvely helps Agents plotting its creator's murder so long as they stay under the guise of business as usual. The second that changes, so does it.

Cool learned many skills from the *Necronomicon*, including the habit of hiding traps within one's scholarship to destroy any who follow. Cool considered the entirety of the Rational World to be his publication and the False King one of its most interesting discoveries. He wanted it protected, even after he moved on. The latter half of Cool's journal—the one he's had The False King typing for years without food, sleep, or water—talks about how *protective* Vicki King is towards Dr. Cool. How she would and *could* do anything for him. Impossible, inhuman things.

If Agents are foolish enough to reveal that they wish Dr. Cool harm, the False King transforms and attacks. See **THE FALSE KING** on page 66.

The History of the Aetherophone

The Zann Aetherophone doesn't exist [OUTSIDE]. Agents [INSIDE] can find its history in notes scattered around the High Building office or they can look it up.

Invented by mute German violinist Erich Zann, the Zann Aetherophone is this world's second electronic instrument. Inspired by Leon Theremin and various occult texts, Zann began work on its creation in Stuttgart during the 1920s. He bankrupted his small family to fund its construction, then promptly abandoned his wife, daughter, and the device. He was found dead in a Paris flophouse in 1925. The instrument was put into storage as a curiosity. Historical documents printed after 2016 note that Zann was predecessor to Dr. Wesley Cool, Zann having been first to develop a circuit similar to the one that powers Picky Eater. Had Zann lived to see the invention of the computer, he may have been the Revealers.

Agents may attempt to use **Art** at +20% or **History**. On a success, they are quite certain that no such inventor or musician ever existed. If he did, he certainly never entered the historical record. On a failure, they feel they've heard of Zann but can't shake the certainty that he lived in the 1820s, far before any synthesizer technology. In either case, Cool seems to have checked the Aetherophone out of the university archives after imagining its existence.

The All-Is-One

As the music of the abyss fades from the mind, vision returns. Light of no assignable color filters down from the sky, leaking into the eye from baffling, contradictory directions. The glow plays on stone and mist as if intelligent, as if alive.

Fog stirs a ground of unidentifiable stone shoals and impossibly large, shallow pools. Great masses of towering rock are disposed according to the laws of some unknown, inverse geometry. Their faces are carved in alien and incomprehensible designs.

Dr. Wesley Cool sits before another Zann Aethrophone, or perhaps the same one. There's no more office or table. He stares dumbly at his hand on the crank, and it's clear he stopped playing in unison with the song that brought the Agents. Now finished, he looks confused, blinking slowly as if in a fugue or waking coma. On the other side of the golden contraption lays a tangle of gutted computer components. Uncountable motherboards and processors have fused with tidal rock. Wires weave over the surface like moss. They sink through cracks in the stone and run beneath the waterline, burying themselves into the black sands of the shallow salt sea. The Agents somehow know they feed madness into every universe unlucky enough to discover Cool's invention.

The chips and components are arranged in a pattern across the tide-smoothed plateau. An Agent who has **Unnatural** at 20% or more feels profound vertigo in every glimpse of those sigils, the dizziness of standing unsupported at a precipice. An Agent who succeeds at an **Unnatural** roll recognizes them as the designs of the Old Ones that ruled the Earth billions of years before humanity arose. How many other Earths did the Old Ones rule?

If the Agents attempt to damage the Aethrophone or any of the computing equipment, Cool comes to life. He springs up shrieking in fury. *"No! He'll come back! Leave it on! I need him! Tawil al'Umr! The Ancient One! The Watcher on High! He'll come back!"*

Cool fights murderously to protect his work.



Stopping Cool

Killing Cool does nothing to return Agents to reality. Losing SAN no longer provides a **POW**×5 check to jump back. They are trapped beneath now.

If the Agents address Cool peacefully (with or without using his name), he becomes more lucid. “My followers have found a way to join me! You heard and understood! Only by crossing the Veil does the mind gain substance. You have made yourselves *real*!”

He begs them not to damage “his experiment.” He insists he’ll have the results soon. If Cool thinks it might prevent or delay Agent interference, he explains his aims. See **THE WORLDS OF WESLEY COOL** on page 2 for details. He explains that he awaits the Guide known as Tawil al’Umr, the Prolonged of Life, the Ancient One, the Watcher on High.

Asked about the twins, Cool thinks he saw them briefly but can’t recall if it was a dream. He thought they were a creation of Tawil al’Umr, sent to test his mind and patience. Cool does not know Eryn and Shelia were transported here looking for their absent father. If informed, he does not care.

Stopping PICKY EATER

An Agent can destroy any tangle of computer components splayed across the rock with a successful attack roll. Don’t force an attack roll unless there is resistance. An attack roll on a computer cannot count as a “fighting back” when Cool mounts a violent defense of the machine. Each node runs a different instance of **PICKY EATER**, its sister hardware omnipresent across multiple dimensions at once.

After Agents have destroyed three computers, they learn that the tumorous fusions of stone and electronics are endless. The plastic and silicon reforms once out of the Agents’ sight. Transistors and components of different makes and models bloom from piles of broken components, just at the edge of vision. While it may be possible to destroy the chip linking **[OUTSIDE]** reality and erase Cool’s work forever, it is too late to contain **PICKY EATER** across the multiverse. It will continue tearing through possible universes, like shrapnel through the Veil.

An Agent can spend 1D4 **WP** to continually smash the machines on the rock. The **WP** buys one attempt at a **Luck** roll to leave this place, hoping to crush the right circuit. On a success, the correct chip is destroyed, and all Agents exit the All-Is-One, reappearing **[OUTSIDE]** behind the dumpsters of a university alley. If they’re unlucky, the Agent smashes the machines on the stone for what feels like hours. Each blow pops another bubble, destroying an entire universe in the process.

If they can’t find and destroy Cool’s instance of **PICKY EATER**, Agents must beseech Tawil Al’Umr to escape.

The Guide

If the Agents talk with Cool without fighting—or if they killed him and became trapped—another figure appears atop one of the stone towers, standing on a gigantic hieroglyphed pedestal more hexagonal than otherwise. The figure takes shape slowly: a dim mist gathering at the peak, thickening into a sourceless shadow that darkens and softens rhythmically, an indistinct shape resolving into a dim figure in robes. The legs beneath a flowing garment stir to life and pick their way down the rockface, as graceful as a mountain goat or spider. It descends and sails towards the Agents, like a ship on the becalmed puddle that stretches towards every horizon.

The figure moves with head bowed. The five thick points rising from its ceremonial headdress seem to cleave air around them, leaving streaks of unnamable color behind their passage. There’s a shady hole where head would meet hood, and it might obscure a face. Otherwise, further anatomy is impossible to guess. The ill-defined shape implied beneath the folds of beige cloth leaves little certain. An Agent who succeeds at an **Alertness**, **HUMINT**, or **Medicine** roll becomes convinced that the figure is not remotely human. Folds of the cloth move around some thick tubular shape. A sudden shift in fabric suggests three arms moving at once.

An Agent who succeeds at **Anthropology** or **Occult** finds the mitre strangely suggestive of a prehistoric relief said to have been carved in the

Pamir Mountains. Russian antiquarians sketched it in the 19th century before an earthquake brought it down in 1883.

An Agent who succeeds at an **Unnatural** roll—at a +20% bonus for having studied tomes related to Cool's work—suspects this to be the Guide called Tawil al'Umr. The gatekeeper of the Old Ones warned about in the *Necronomicon* and the *Pnakotic Manuscripts*. It is the gate and the key and the traveler.

The Agents cannot harm Tawil al'Umr. Even if they bring overwhelming weapons to bear upon it, causality breaks down and the weapons vanish, having never existed. Any Agent rude enough to assault the Guide must make a **POW×5** roll or vanish as well. Surviving Agents don't have to roll **SAN** if they see this. They no longer remember the erased Agent having ever existed in the first place.

If he's still alive, Cool erupts into a mad smile at the appearance of Tawil Al'Umr, full of confidence and the joy of every aspiration fulfilled. He runs to whisper a question to the impossibly tall thing. Then the mists in the sky swirl and part. A shaft of brilliant, shifting light falls upon the man, and he is gone. Witnessing Cool's disintegration requires a **Sanity** roll. Success costs 1 **SAN** as the Agent sees the man vanish in a blink. Failure costs 1D4+1 **SAN**: The Agent is reminded of turning on a flashlight in a deep shadow. The shadow doesn't vanish or decay; the light is instantaneous. Obliterative. There was never a shadow at all.

The Choice

The Shape intones in a voice that is not a voice, in words that have no form in the air and mist, that take shape in the mind.

"Flickering entities. Have you come to glimpse, for a dying instant, the timeless scope of creation?"

(In a *God's Teeth* campaign, the Shape's greeting is different for the Teeth: *"Hunters and prey. Servants and nourishment. Slaves to a One that found the hunger of eternity. Have you come to glimpse, for a dying instant, the timeless scope of creation?"*)

Each Agent interacts with the Shape alone. The others seem to have teleported away, mirrored across space impossibly. Their backs are turned as each speaks to their own version of the Guide, who has copied itself to address all supplicants. Each Agent is alone in determining their fate.

If an Agent thinks to ask whether this Shape is the dreaded Tawil al'Umr, the Shape gives the clearest answer it can:

"You ask of the Prolonged of Life, the Ancient One, the Watcher on High. I am He as a spark is the Sun that spawns all that burns."

If the Agent performs the formal bows and obeisance that Cool's notes suggest, the Shape asks another question:

"Do you come then as a creature of Truth?"

If the Agent answers "yes," the Shape poses a test and expects certain responses. Agents may have learned the answers from Cool's research, or they may have intuited an approximation of the truth from their own nightmarish experiences.

» *"What are good and evil?"* (A phantom; a fantasy; a delusion; unreal; untrue.)

» *"What is reality?"* (An illusion; a false pattern dreamed by fleeting minds; a simulation without purpose; chaos imagined into order.)

» *"What is substance?"* (An impostor; a trick of perception that comforts the mortal mind; a consolation to the impermanent.)

If the Agent's answers to the questions are essentially correct, Tawil Al'Umr deems them **A CREATURE OF TRUTH**. See page 63.

If the Agent fails to make the proper obeisance, answers "no" to coming as a creature of Truth, or answers any of the three questions incorrectly, see **A CREATURE UNKNOWN TO TRUTH** on page 65.

A Creature of Truth

The Shape asks the Agent:

"Would you rejoin the All-Is-One to seek ceaseless dreams in the infinite?"

(In a *God's Teeth* campaign, the Shape's question to one of the Teeth is different: "Seek you then the freedom of a hunt never ending?")

If the Agent answers yes, the Agent vanishes, merged with some insignificant part of the essence of Yog-Sothoth. Gone forever.

If the Agent answers no, the Shape asks:

"What do you seek?"

The answer is important.

- » **TO DESTROY PICKY EATER:** The server crumbles to dust and the Agent returns to their reality.
- » **TO GO HOME:** It's done. No surprises or twists. The Agent appears where they expect.
- » **TO GO TO SOME OTHER TIME OR REALITY:** The player must attempt an **Unnatural** roll as the Shape plumbs the Agent's mind to shape such venture. If

it succeeds, the Shape aligns the planes and angles of the Agent's thought with the planes and angles of the reality they seek. Quite suddenly, the Agent is gone from the campaign forever. On a failure, the Agent is sent home.

- » **TO TRAVEL BETWEEN UNIVERSES AT WILL:** The Shape actually sighs at this response. "Such did the other demand, in his arrogance, and came to enjoy what he could of that gift." The Shape vanishes. The Agent is stuck here like Cool was.
- » **KNOWLEDGE OR AN ANSWER:** The Shape grants it. The Agent loses 1/1D10 SAN. The more SAN lost, the more of the knowledge the Agent comprehends and retains after insanity fades. After receiving the answer, they return to reality.
- » **SOMETHING ELSE:** The Shape's purpose is to dispose of visitors ill-suited to the All-Is-One. Mundane or quotidian desires of the flesh are a disqualifier. It places the Agent in their own world, at a place or time where that thing can be found.

A World of Fangs

In a *God's Teeth* campaign—if one of the Teeth is recognized as a Creature of Truth and chooses to pursue the hunt never ending—the Guide crafts a heaven for the beast riding the Agent. Human desires and perceptions are irrelevant in negotiations between gods.

The Agent awakes in a world choking on the reek of meat, as if the ground itself were a grill sizzling all who cross it. The campus of MIT appears initially unchanged, but news stories playing on flatscreens in the building lobbies and student union are bizarre and otherworldly. Big networks excitedly report on the latest research into the entropic predator that lurks unseen within the models of theoretical physics. "Experts" have named the force Bast, after the protective goddess of ancient Egypt. A yellow chyron reminds viewers that Bast acts upon causality through a so-called "Bast particle" in order to feed upon certain patterns of energy.

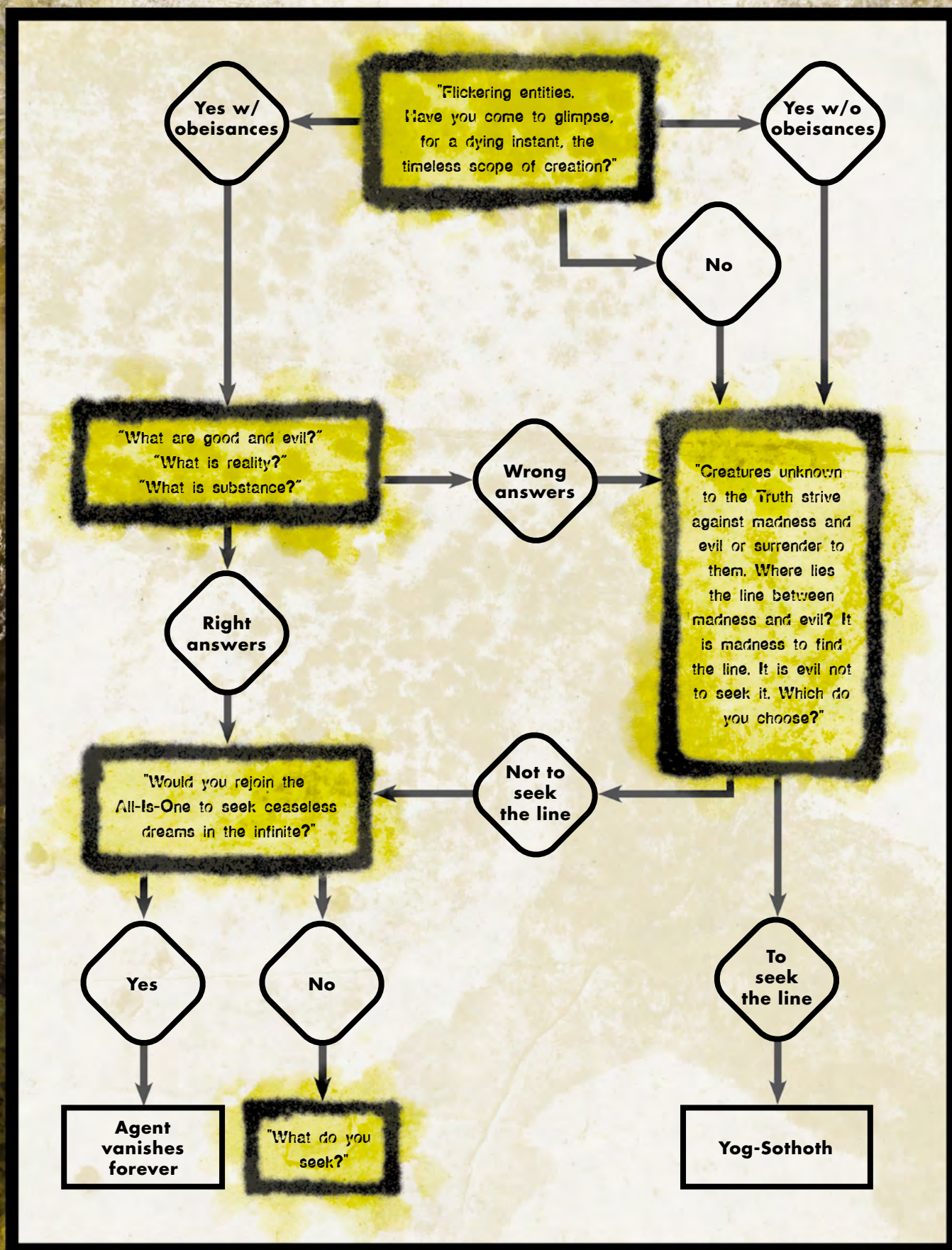
A screen within a screen shows split-second footage of some blurred ocean island with the title "Point Nemo Awakenings." A tracker counts global suicides in the millions next to daily weather reports.

A baby cries somewhere. Under a faintly luminous mauve sky a billboard proclaims, "The First to Bast, the Rest to You." A black collection truck is painted with icons, thin bald sexless people in black suits, sporting clawlike fingernails and smiling around sharp teeth: "Our Protectors."

Boston proper is now hollowed out by a new lake. From its center rises a ziggurat where the firstborn are forged into new Teeth, isolated so few need hear their screams.

A passing woman, visibly pregnant, shudders at the sight. *"I only hope it'll be one of the Called,"* she says quietly, a hand on her belly. *"Not just bait."*

The Tooth, never more fulfilled or sated, gains 1 **SAN**. They never return home.



A Creature Unknown to Truth

“Creatures unknown to the Truth must strive betwixt madness and evil, lest they be ruled by twin tyrants. But where lies the border between madness and evil? It is madness to cross the threshold. It is evil not to seek the threshold. Which do you choose?”

Each player must decide privately and inform the Handler privately.

When the Agents have chosen in secrecy, the Shape produces from certain folds of its swathing a long scepter whose head is carved in the shape of a grotesque and archaic mystery. It's a fractal shape beyond human description, from which a scribbled Elder Sign is but two of its infinite dimensions.

If an Agent turns away from the threshold between madness and evil:

“Perhaps this is a creature of Truth, after all.”

See **A CREATURE OF TRUTH** on page 63.

If an Agent chooses to seek the threshold between madness and evil, the Guide awakens the Agent to its own ultimate, animating essence. Tawil al'Umr is older than the robed body that it occupies now, older than Earth, older than reality itself. It reveals the supreme archetype of which this Shape is but one instantiation—a fractal eruption of awareness and power in every reality—the Gate to every world and the Key to every gate. The revelation costs 1D10/1D100 SAN. An Agent reduced to zero SAN vanishes forever, scattered across the infinity that is Yog-Sothoth. Survivors awake [OUTSIDE] and can recall the traumatic revelation only in dreams.

Aftermath

Shattering bubbles caused by **PICKY EATER** grants no SAN. They may have ended dangerous exposure—and they may have destroyed entire realities.

Shutting down **PICKY EATER** from the All-Is-One grants each Agent 1D6 SAN. The app deletes itself from every device in [OUTSIDE] reality. Every piece of tainted hardware burns out and never works again. The same goes for any people or items dragged across bubbles. Circuits undiscovered by Agents disappear as if never installed in the first place.

Even in victory, Agents must wonder whether this world, with all its horror, isn't just someone else's psychic prison. Do they exist? Does the enemy? Their Bonds? Is everyone just a figment, playacting roles in a production of someone else's madness?

Or is reality derived from the Agent? Assembled around them like steel bars? Does Delta Green fight to preserve a nightmare? Is the Agent responsible for every evil in the world? Is the whole universe an abattoir, slaughtered to feed one ego?

Characters

Wes Cool

See **THE WORLDS OF WESLEY COOL** on page 2 for Cool's background.

Wesley Cool, Ph.D.

Mathematician who would be God, age 45.

STR 9 **CON** 8 **DEX** 9 **INT** 17 **POW** 14 **CHA** 15
HP 9 **WP** 14 **SAN** 0

SKILLS: Computer Science 85%, Foreign Languages (Arabic 40%, Greek 40%, Hebrew 43%, Sanskrit 44%), History 51%, Occult 72%, Science (Mathematics) 81%, Science (Physics) 79%, Science (Philosophy) 55%, Unnatural 30%.

ATTACKS: Unarmed 40%, damage 1D4-1.

RITUALS: None that matter now.

Vicki King

See the **FINDING VICKI KING** on page 33 for King's background.

Vicki King

Mad mother of mad children, age 34.

STR 12 **CON** 13 **DEX** 11 **INT** 15 **POW** 12 **CHA** 11
HP 13 **WP** 12 **SAN** 0

SKILLS: Computer Science 70%, Melee Weapons 50%, Science (Mathematics) 61%, Science (Physics) 59%, Unarmed Combat 50%.

ATTACKS: *Hurled lamp* 50%, damage 1D6.
Unarmed 50%, damage 1D4-1.

The False King

Before developing **PICKY EATER**, Wesley Cool correctly diagnosed himself with antisocial personality disorder. After successfully fusing Tegmark's theories with ancient rituals, Cool came to view his condition as a gift. Only he could recognize the fundamental emptiness at the heart of all existence. Only he was worthy to reshape it.

Cool knew that any world birthed from a human psyche would be hollow, incomplete, and contradictory. He relished his own bubble as an opportunity to test the limits of creation itself. Everything from history to basic biology was altered inside the Rational World, but Cool's primary experimentation involved the memory of Vicki King. Aware that he was incapable of conceiving other human beings as fully real, Cool used guided meditation, narcotic chanting, automatic writing, and every other esoteric mind hack he'd learned to push his objectification beyond the limits of a scientific mind. He then recorded these thoughts into a journal and instructed King to transcribe it repeatedly. This created a feedback loop for the figment of King: a perverted, miniaturized version of the confirmation bias between app and **USER**. After years of transcribing the records of Cool's self-enforced brainwashing, the False King is the result.

The False King lives inside Cool's old office. It literally cannot imagine why it would ever want to leave. It doesn't need food, water, or sleep. Cool is convinced it doesn't deserve them. Its appearance suits the purpose in the moment, as Cool believed was the case for all women. He relished seeing how many alterations he could make in its appearance from one day to the next, making even the body's shape negotiable. The False King fights rabidly to protect Cool because he is the only force capable of giving its life meaning.

The False King

Misogynist fantasy molded into grotesque flesh.

STR 22 **CON** 14 **DEX** 15 **INT** 6 **POW** 18 **CHA** 18
HP 18 **WP** 18 **SAN** 0

SKILLS: Alertness 30%, Computer Science 50%, Science (Mathematics) 41%, Science (Physics) 39%, Unarmed Combat 70%.

ATTACKS: *Nails* 70%, damage 2D4, Armor Piercing 5.
Grapple 70%.

Unhinge Jaw and Devour 40% damage 1D20 and 1/1D4 **SAN** from violence. The victim must be grappled.

ANIMA TRANSFORMATION: If Cool is threatened, the False King transforms into a misogynist's nightmare of womanhood, a hellish succubus more fitting a fairy tale than a university office. It rises from the desk and unfolds into the room at an impossible, emasculating height. The body's proportions lengthen, distressing and anatomically impossible. Enormous breasts jut below an alien stalk of a neck. Its arms hang pale and spindly from thin shoulders, the brightly painted nails at the fingertips elongating into claws. Its waist gets thinner and thinner, as if disemboweled. Overall, the bones and musculature seem insufficient to support the size, speed, and power of the creature, like a plastic doll come to life.

SAN LOSS: 1/1D6 from the unnatural (only if it transforms)

Gen. Robert Wallace

Robert Wallace spent decades fighting the Obama World Order while missing for only a month. If he returns home, he's older than his father and deeply broken.

Gen. Robert Wallace

Leader of the White Evangelical Resistance, age 39.

STR 13 **CON** 10 **DEX** 9 **INT** 9 **POW** 11 **CHA** 8
HP 12 **WP** 11 **SAN** 0

SKILLS: Alertness 45%, Drive 50%, Firearms 49%, Heavy Weapons 50%, Melee Weapons 51%, Military Science (Land) 40%, Navigation 38%, Search 40%, Stealth 52%, Unarmed Combat 50%

ATTACKS: *Freedom Rifle™* by *Unreplaced Defenses, LLC*, 49%, damage 1D12 or Lethality 10%, Armor Piercing 3.

Homeland Defense Dagger™ by *White Knives Matter, Inc.*, 51%, damage 1D6+1, Armor Piercing 3.

Unarmed 50%, damage 1D4.

ANTIFA Super Soldiers

Wearing balaclavas, red armbands, and polymer body armor from head-to-toe, the imagined opposition to Wallace's revolution roll out in four-man "death panels" to execute the will of the Obama caliphate. They don't have names. Agents that unmask one find a blank, featureless mask of skin across the skull. It snaps into features the second Wallace looks at them, the orb of flesh decaying into a nose, eyes, and lips in

a flash. If asked, Wallace muses that they look kind of like his old bullies from junior high.

The ANTIFA Super Soldiers behave more like enemies in a video game than federal authorities. While the death squads are well equipped with the resources of a unified world government, their training is incompetent. They never take cover, aim carefully, or retreat to call back-up. They prefer to charge ahead in cavalry lines, firing wildly. They only exist to valorize General Wallace's struggle and wither under his brilliant tactical mind. The problem, of course, is other **USERS** augmenting Wallace's perceptions. A more realistic understanding of armed conflict held by Agents alters the perceptions that "write" the super soldiers into existence, making them much more dangerous.

ANTIFA Super Soldier

Delusions of oppression, assembled into a fire team.

STR 18 (8 w/o suit) **CON** 10 **DEX** 10 **INT** 8
POW 8 **CHA** 8 **HP** 9 **WP** 8 **SAN** 0

SKILLS: All skills at base. Add +10% to every skill for every Agent present.

ARMOR: *NWC™ Powered Exoskeleton and Ballistic Defense System*, Armor 5. Boosts strength of wearer to 18 for its four-hour battery life.

ATTACKS: *M-1 Oppressor™ 5.56mm carbine* by *Builderberg Arms* 20% (+10% for every Agent present), damage 1D12 or Lethality 10%, Armor Piercing 3.

Taser baton 30% (+10% for every Agent present), damage 1D4 and target is stunned

Unarmed 40% (+10% for every Agent present), damage 1D4+2 if wearing exoskeleton

Reapers

Vicki King fears losing her children. Every possible locus for this paranoia—government agencies, international cabals, sexual predators, supernatural cults—grew inside the feedback loop of **PICKY EATER**. The sources of anxiety grew so large that they overflowed the container of her mind, mixing into a monolithic group known as the Reapers. Yog-Sothoth has written these monsters into existence and set them to work in King's world.

The fears animating Vicki King's universe give Reapers unnatural powers through post-hoc rationalization. Vicki has never seen a Reaper, so they must be able to turn invisible. No human could enjoy the torture and murder of innocents, so Reapers can't be human. Governments wouldn't sacrifice their citizens for nothing, so they must offer power in exchange. The unnatural weaponry only expanded once Vicki started telling Eryn and Shelia about the dangers of going outside. As **USERS** themselves, mother and daughters find their fears fused together.

Vicki King alerts the Reapers if the Agents cause her to realize her worst fears (see **[INSIDE—KING CALLS THE REAPERS]** on page 40). Forced to write years of neurosis and fear into matter, Yog-Sothoth cribs the physical appearance from the Agents. It then alters their anatomy, garb, and personalities until they match the runaway paranoias of the King family. As creatures of gestalt nightmare, Reapers are extremely powerful, difficult to kill, and motivated attackers. They can pursue targets across the bubble to **[OUTSIDE]** reality. The best means of dispatching them is to destroy the Reaping World itself, but doing so requires destroying the machines on both sides of the divide or the death of King.

Reaper

Child-sacrificing bogeymen with badges.

STR 14 **CON** 12 **DEX** 14 **INT** 15 **POW** 12 **CHA** 8
HP 13 **WP** 12 **SAN** 0

SKILLS: Alertness 80%, Bureaucracy 90%, Criminology 90%, Dodge 60%, Firearms 50%, HUMINT 100%, Melee Weapons 70%, Navigate 90%, Search 80%, Unarmed Combat 50%, Unnatural 60%.

ATTACKS: *Sacrificial knife* 70%, damage 1D6+1, Armor Piercing 3.

Grapple 50% (it prefers to abduct victims alive).

Fentanyl lollipop 50% (victim must be grappled), Lethality 5%, unconscious for 1D6 hours.

HOOD OF OFFICE: A leather hood and stole worn by all Reapers, made from ritually tattooed human skin flensed from living victims, halves all damage to the Reaper. The other half comes from its WP instead.

MANIFEST: Reapers may bleed into any **[INSIDE]** physical space. They may only travel **[OUTSIDE]** if a member of the King family is using Picky Eater to anchor their existence.

SAN LOSS: 1/1D6 **SAN** if the Reaper looks like a peer; 1/1D4 **SAN** if undisguised.

