O.D.I.N.

Occult Dynamics Intelligence Network

AGENT

CLASS BOOK

by David Ger

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PROLOGUE
FOUR YEARS

Prologue: Four Years

"The hardest thing about a legend is not putting it on. It's taking it off again."
Instructor, Operations Branch

The man who called himself Martin Kessler had taken bus number 32 every morning at twenty past six for four years. He got on at the Rosenweg stop, sat in the third row on the right, and read the previous day's newspaper, because he never got the current one in time. He worked as an accountant for a foundation in Basel that officially restored art and unofficially bought crystals. He was good at his job. He was well liked. He was never ill.

On a Tuesday in March, he did not get on the bus.

He stood at the Rosenweg stop and watched as the number 32 came, stopped, and continued without him. Then he went back to his flat, which had been his for four years, and packed a bag. He took only what Martin Kessler would never have owned: a pistol from the false bottom of the wardrobe, a passport in a name he had not heard for four years, and a photograph of a woman he did not know.

The photograph was the problem. He had found it three weeks earlier, in the foundation's cellar, where the restoration files were kept. He had been looking for an invoice that did not match its job, and had come across a folder that matched no job at all: photographs of a summer party at the director's villa, paper lanterns in the garden, guests with champagne glasses, a string quartet under a chestnut tree. In one of the pictures, the director stood next to an old woman with white hair and a pearl necklace. She was not looking into the camera, but just past it, like someone who learned long ago that you do not look into cameras.

He knew the face. Every spy knows it. In the first week of training, recruits are shown a photograph from 1988, a woman in her early forties with short hair, and asked what they see. Most say: a woman. Then they are told who she is. The woman was an O.D.I.N. agent, codename Elster, a legend in the Branch, and not in a good way: in 1989 she had sold a list of real names, and sixty agents had died. Since then she had been considered missing.

On the back of the photograph, a date was written in pencil. Last summer.

He reported it to his handler via the dead drop in the city park, as was proper: a note in the crack of the old wall behind the bandstand, on a Thursday, as always. The reply was there the following Monday, as always. He read it on a bench among pigeons, with his back to the wall, and something was wrong before he knew what. Then he saw it. His handler had written the capital L with a loop, for four years, and he pressed so hard that you could feel the letters on the back of the note. This handwriting was smooth and light. It was cleaner than anything he knew from him, and it said: *End legend immediately. Return via route three.*

Route three went via Mulhouse. He drove via Konstanz, because in four years he had learned that an instruction in a foreign handwriting is not an instruction, but a question. And the question was whether he would follow it.

In Konstanz, he sat in a café by the harbour and tried to remember his own name. Not the codename. The real one. He knew that he knew it. It lay somewhere behind Martin Kessler, behind four years of bus rides and spreadsheets and Christmas parties, at which he had danced with a colleague he might have really liked. He had played Martin Kessler so well that Martin Kessler no longer wanted to leave.

The waiter brought the coffee and asked if he wanted anything else.

"No, thank you," he said, and heard that he had said it with the Basel accent.

He paid, left the change, and went to the station. On the way there, he repeated the real name to himself, over and over, until he had it again. Then he said it once more, so that he would not lose it again.

He later told his handler that he had driven via Konstanz out of caution. That was true. He did not tell him that two men had been waiting for him at the station in Mulhouse, he knew that from a contact, and that both carried O.D.I.N. identification.

He also didn't tell that he had turned back once more at the station in Konstanz, to a kiosk, and bought a Basler Zeitung, because Martin Kessler would have bought it every morning. He only noticed it on the train, folded in his coat pocket. He didn't read it. He left it on the seat, as one leaves something that belongs to someone else.

And he didn't tell that he still had the photo.

A week later he sat in the backyard of the Print Shop in Zurich, in front of the old brick oven, and waited for the funeral. That was the custom. A legend that had lived for four years was not simply discarded. One burned its papers, one said its name once aloud, and then it was gone.

The archivist came without a box.

“There’s no funeral,” she said. “Order from above. The legend isn’t archived and isn’t burned. It stays where it is.”

“Where is it then?” he asked.

The archivist looked at him for a long time, as if she wanted to say something that was not in her instructions. Then she only said: “Not with us anymore.”

He asked whether he might at least say the name. Once. Aloud. The way he had been taught in training, so that no one else would say it someday.

“Not this time,” she said.

On the way to the station he noticed that he still had the name in his head, the whole time, like a melody one can’t get rid of. Martin Kessler. He didn’t say it. He only thought that somewhere in Basel there was a flat in which his toothbrush still lay, and that no one would throw it away.

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O.D.I.N. / OPERATIONS BRANCH / LEGEND OFFICE
Legend: KESSLER, MARTIN. Accountant, Basel.
Depth at termination: 5.
Duration: 4 years, 1 month.
Bearer: Codename KUCKUCK.
Status: terminated. Not burned.
Note: The legend is not archived. Order from
above. No reason given.
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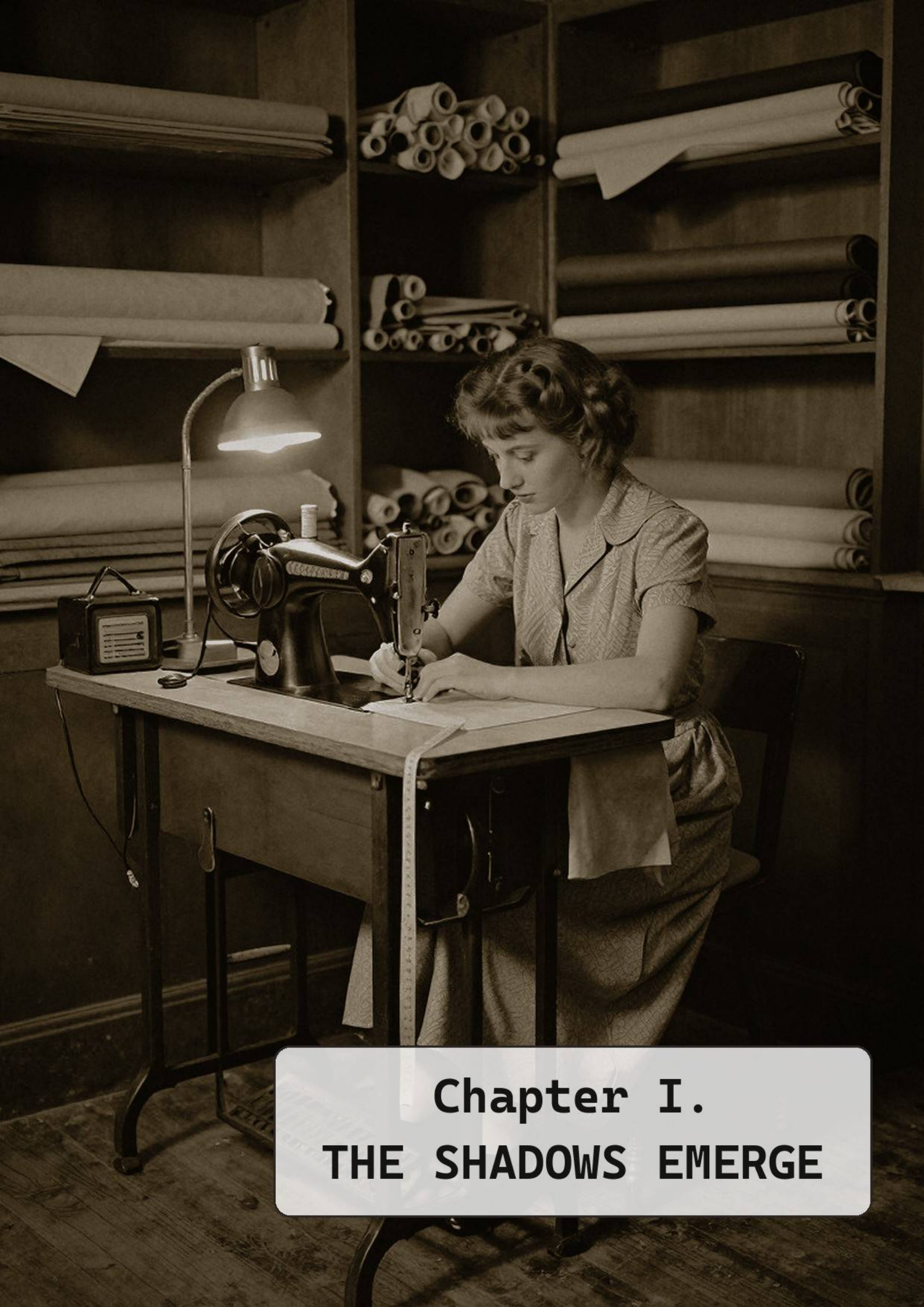


Chapter I.
THE SHADOWS EMERGE

The First Shadows

"During the war we learned to be someone else. After the war we realised we could no longer stop."
Evelyn Marsh, 1951

The Operations Branch is as old as O.D.I.N. itself, and perhaps older. When the first crates were moved from the chamber in Wales in 1947, people who carried no weapons rode alongside the escort lorries. They sat in trains, in hotel bars, in government corridors. They made sure that no one asked what was in the crates, and that those who did ask got a good answer.

These people came from the intelligence services of the war: female agents who had operated radios behind enemy lines, men who had lived under false names in occupied cities, forgers, couriers, interrogation specialists. After 1945 they were no longer needed. O.D.I.N. needed them very much.

Their first head was **Evelyn Marsh**, a British woman who had lived in Lyon for two years during the war as a seamstress and had also run a network of forty informants. She built the Operations Branch on a principle that still applies today: No one knows more than they need for their assignment. Not even about themselves.

Marsh did not recruit based on certificates, but on stories. She looked for people who had survived something they should not have survived, and who did not talk about it afterwards. A burglar from Marseille who had stolen plans from German command posts during the war. A young woman from her own network in Lyon, about whose war years no one spoke. An embassy secretary from Vienna who spoke four languages and never raised his voice in any of them. A precision mechanic from Biel who built detonators that ran as precisely as his watches. From them came Nachtfalter, the Näherin, Diplomat and the Uhrmacher, the first legends of the branch. Their stories are in the chapters of their subclasses.

From the Letters of Evelyn Marsh

"Never write down anything you would not also say aloud. And never say anything aloud."
Evelyn Marsh, to a recruit, 1954

Evelyn Marsh wrote many letters and kept no copies. The following excerpts come from letters to agents who kept them and bequeathed them to the branch after her death. Every recruit gets to read them in the first week.

TO A RECRUIT, ZURICH, 1953

You ask how one lives a legend without losing oneself in it. I don't know. I sewed in Lyon for two years and to this day I can't sew on a button without thinking of the woman I was then. Perhaps one always loses oneself a little. The art is to keep enough left over.

TO THE COUNCIL, 1958

The convoy has arrived. One of the sisters has not. I ask the Council not to record her name in any file, but in my memory. It is safer there.

TO AN AGENT IN VIENNA, 1971

You write that you heard children singing in the embassy basement. I believe you. I ask you not to tell anyone else, and I ask you not to look. I know that you will look anyway. Take care of yourself.

LAST LETTER, TO THE BRANCH, 1986

One day you will learn that not everything we did was right. I don't ask you for forgiveness. I ask you to do better.

The Print Shop

In 1952 Marsh founded a department in Zurich that outwardly was a small print shop for business stationery.

Within the branch it was soon called simply **the Print Shop**, and officially it is still called **Legend Office** to this day. There the cover identities with which agents work are created: passports, certificates, CVs, bank accounts, birth certificates, school photos, neighbours who remember, and teachers who would remember if asked.

The Print Shop was the reason O.D.I.N. remained invisible during the Cold War. Its legends withstood checks by three intelligence services at the same time. One of them, a sales representative from Graz, existed from 1956 to 1991 and was worn by four different agents, one after another. None of the customers ever noticed the change.

The Sales Representative from Graz

His name was Ferdinand Aigner and he sold sewing machines, which Marsh considered a good joke. He drove a grey Opel, smoked cigarillos, told the same three stories at every regulars' table between Graz and Trieste, and had a guesthouse in every city where breakfast was brought to his bed. In thirty-five years he sold over four thousand machines, and in the suitcases with the sample pieces, films, letters and twice a crystal travelled across borders where no one searched a sewing machine representative.

The four agents who wore him one after another practised his stories for weeks, until they laughed at the same places. The third was twenty centimetres shorter than the first. No one noticed, because people remembered Aigner's hat, not his height. In the Branch, this is still called the **Hat Rule** today: Give people something to remember, then they remember nothing else.

In 1991 Ferdinand Aigner retired. In an inn in Leibnitz there was a small celebration with his best customers. Among the guests sat three elderly gentlemen who did not know each other and laughed at the same jokes all evening. The fourth Aigner gave the speech.

The Convoy

In 1958 the Operations Branch carried out one of its most famous operations, together with the Collegium. A convoy with crystals from the Chamber was to be moved from Paris to a new archive in the Vosges, and a foreign service knew about it. The Branch's agents laid false trails, bribed informants and made sure that the foreign service saw exactly what it was supposed to see. The illusionists Odile and Margot Lavigne made sure that it also saw it with its own eyes.

The convoy arrived. One of the Lavigne sisters did not. Since 1958 the Operations Branch has almost always worked with illusionists on major operations, and in every training it is said that the best deception is the one where you yourself do not know where it ends.

The Veil Protocol

In 1961 the Veil Protocol came into force: No government recognises O.D.I.N., no government hinders O.D.I.N. No one knows who signed the protocol. In the Operations Branch, at least they know who negotiated it.

It was a Negotiator with the codename **Diplomat**, a former embassy secretary from Vienna, who travelled between capitals for two years, sat in hotels, shook hands and never signed a document. He got eleven governments to agree to something whose existence they officially knew nothing about. When he was finished, he received no award. He received a new name and a flat in Lisbon. He died in 1994, as a gardener.

Forty-One Funerals

When the Nordlicht base stopped reporting in February 1977, forty-one people were missing, and each of them had parents, spouses, children, landlords. The Council gave the Operations Branch two weeks. The Print Shop needed three months.

They invented forty-one deaths, spread over half a year and three countries, so that no one saw a pattern: a helicopter crash off the Lofoten, two car accidents, a capsized fishing cutter, an avalanche, a heart failure in a hotel in Bergen. They wrote death certificates, police reports, newspaper reports and letters of condolence

from colleagues who had never existed. Negotiators sat at kitchen tables and held hands. The coffins were heavy because sand had been put inside.

Most families never doubted. A widow in Tromsø still writes every year in February to the company that allegedly employed her husband, and asks why she was never allowed to see the scene of the accident. The company is a post office box in Oslo. The same agent has answered the letters since 1978, always friendly, always evasive. She has never met the widow. She says she knows her better than her own mother.

Since Nordlicht, a sentence applies in the Branch that no one likes to say aloud: Whoever disappears gets a death. Everyone.

The Betrayal

"Sixty. I knew twelve of them. She knew all of them."
Agent, Operations Branch, 1990

On 14 September 1989, an agent of the Operations Branch with the codename **Elster** disappeared. She had been in service for twenty years, was considered one of the best spies the Branch ever had, and she had access to things she should not have had. Two weeks after her disappearance, the first real names of O.D.I.N. agents appeared with a foreign buyer.

Within a year, sixty agents died or disappeared. Most came from the Operations Branch. They were found in their flats, in cars, on platforms. Some never.

The betrayal changed the Operations Branch like nothing else. The cell structure that applies to all of O.D.I.N. today was the Branch's answer to Elster. Since then, no agent knows the real name of another, unless they have learned it by accident, and then they keep silent. Since then, every legend is not archived after its end, but burned.

Elster was never found. The Branch does not speak about her. But in every Hold there is someone who claims to have seen her, in a café in Trieste, at an airport in Istanbul, in a hotel bar in Basel.

The Last Night in the Print Shop

On the evening of 13 September 1989, Elster came to the Print Shop. That was not unusual. She often came to maintain her legends, and the archivists liked her because she brought cake every time and remembered the names of all the children whose photos stood on the desks.

That evening she brought no cake. She went up the stairs, greeted the night shift, asked for the files of her three legends and sat with them in the reading room for two hours. The archivist who was on duty that evening later said that Elster had not read. She had only looked at the photos, one after another, for a very long time, as if trying to remember someone.

Around midnight she returned the files, thanked them and left. At the door she turned around once more and asked whether the oven in the back yard still worked. The archivist said yes. Elster nodded and said: "Good. You will need it."

The next morning a folder was missing on the top floor. Which one, the branch never disclosed. The archivist who was on duty still works in the Print Shop to this day. She does not talk about it. But she brings cake every 13 September, and nobody asks why.

Retrieval

In the files of the Operations Branch, a department has appeared since the 1950s about which nobody speaks: **Retrieval**. It is affiliated to the branch, but not subordinate to it. Agents who are transferred there never return to a cell, and anyone who meets one of them later notices that they do not want to talk about their work. In the branch they are called **the Hands**. Most agents know no more than that, and those who know more advise the others to leave it at that. In hotel bars a rumour is told about it: A journalist of the Investigation Branch, codename Feder, had come across a children's home whose children were placed with foster families that did not exist, and a call from an

O.D.I.N. number that belongs to no branch. In the Print Shop people laugh about it. Not all.

Only one thing is known in the branch, because the archivists of the Print Shop cannot hide it: Whoever goes to Retrieval gets an appointment in the back yard. All their legends are buried on a single evening, and afterwards they get a new one that never appears in any directory. Whoever passes by the back yard on such an evening sees a fire that burns longer than usual, and an archivist who allows no one to say the name aloud.

CHRONICLE OF THE OPERATIONS BRANCH, AGENT CLEARANCE

1947: The first agents under Evelyn Marsh.

1952: Founding of the Legend Office in Zurich.

1956: Ferdinand Aigner sells his first sewing machine.

1958: The Convoy, together with the Collegium.

1961: The Veil Protocol, negotiated by Diplomat.

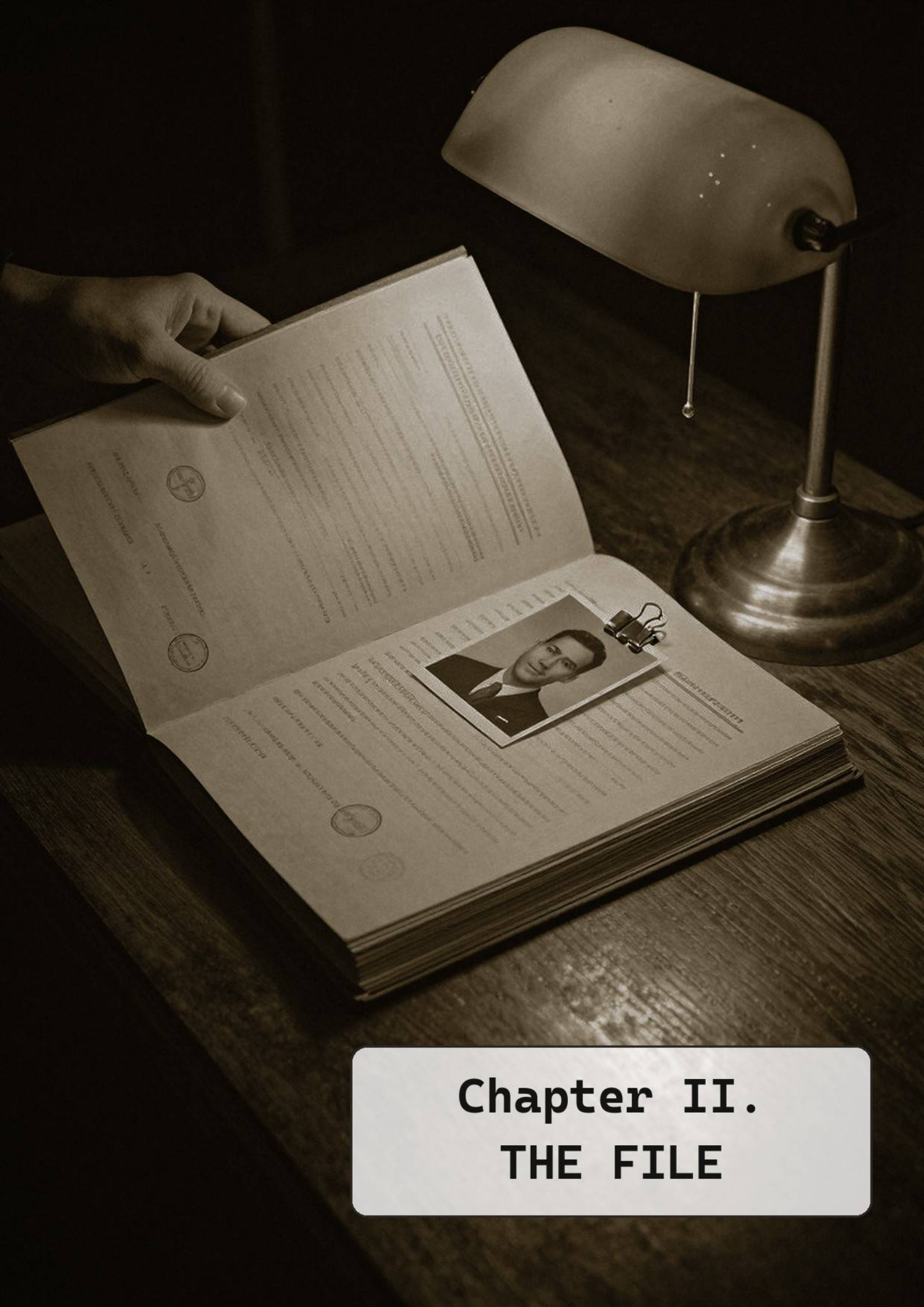
1977: Nordlicht. The forty-one burials.

1986: Evelyn Marsh dies in Zurich. Her last letter.

1989: Elster. Sixty dead. Introduction of the cell structure.

1994: Diplomat dies in Lisbon.

2011: The accumulation. Twice as many operations, half as much time for legends.



Chapter II.
THE FILE

O.D.I.N. from the Perspective of the Shadows

"The other branches work for O.D.I.N. We are O.D.I.N. for everyone who must not know about it."
Agent, codename Aria

For most people who ever encounter O.D.I.N., an agent of the Operations Branch is the only thing they see of the organisation. The friendly gentleman from the insurance company who still has a few questions after the fire. The official from the health department who seals the house. The journalist who does not run the story. Agents are the face that O.D.I.N. does not have.

This gives them their own view of the organisation. They see O.D.I.N. less from the inside than from the outside, and they know better than any other branch how thin the Veil is. Many agents are convinced that the world does not fall apart because someone lies every day. They are that someone.

The Handler

Every agent has a handler, as does every cell. For agents, however, the relationship is closer and more complicated. The handler knows their legends, their dead drops, their escape routes. He knows more about them than their family, and sometimes more than they do themselves. If he says a legend is ended, it is ended. If he says it continues, then it continues, no matter how much the agent would like to shed it.

Since Elster, agents also know that a handler can be the most dangerous person in their life. He is the only one who could betray them. Most do not. The agents still never fully trust them.

Many agents do not see their handler once in ten years. They know him by his handwriting, by his abbreviations, by the way he ends a message. Some handlers sign with a word that changes every week, according to a pattern that only the agent knows. Others make the same small mistake every time, deliberately. Anyone who receives a message in which that mistake is missing knows what is going on.

The Legend

An agent almost never lives under their own name. They have a codename for the cell and one or more **legends** for the world outside: complete identities with a profession, a home, a history and people who know them. The Print Shop in Zurich produces them, the agent fills them with life. The longer they wear a legend, the deeper it becomes.

Legends are what defines the Operations Branch, just as the helmet defines the Choir and the crystal defines the Collegium. Chapter V tells how they are created, grow and burn.

PERSONNEL FILE, COVER SHEET (SAMPLE)

Codename: MOTH. Branch: Operations. Subclass: Infiltrator. Rank: Cadet.

Real name: not recorded.

Legends: 1 active, 1 buried. Maintenance of the active legend: due.

Handler: identifier 7-K. Dead drop: Z-114.

Return after the last mission: completed. Response is with the Psychological Service.

Note: none.

The cover sheet is all a cell ever sees of an agent's file. The rest lies in Zurich, in a room without windows, and is only read when an agent dies, disappears or is promoted. Agents joke that you can tell whether you have been promoted: you are still alive.

Codenames and Real Names

In the Operations Branch, the real name is the most precious asset. Since Elster, it is no longer recorded in any file an agent ever gets to see. Only the Legend Office and the handler know it. Among colleagues, an iron rule applies: whoever learns another's real name forgets it. Whoever cannot forget it never says it aloud.

Agents do not choose their codename themselves. The Legend Office assigns it, usually after a bird, an insect or

a tool. Nobody knows who gave her the name Elster and whether he knew that magpies steal. Since 1989, the name has not been assigned again.

The Dead Drop

Every agent has a dead drop: a place where they leave and collect messages without ever meeting their handler. A crack in a park wall, a hollow tree, a locker, the underside of a pew in a church. Many agents have an almost tender relationship with their dead drop. It is the only place where they speak with the organisation.

Kuckuck once said that for four years he had put a message into the wall in the city park of Basel every Thursday and found an answer every Monday. He never saw the person who wrote the answers. But he knew his handwriting. He knew when the other was tired, when he was in a good mood, when he was afraid. In the end, he said, he knew the handwriting better than his own.

And that is why he immediately knew that the last instruction came from someone else.

RULE: THE DEAD LETTER DROP

Every agent has a dead letter drop through which they communicate with their handler. A message takes one to three days.

If the agent receives a message that does not come from their handler, they may make a WIS + Perception test against Doable (2) to notice it. With the Cold Stare node it is Easy (1).

The Unwritten Rules

- **Never say your own name.** Not on an operation, not in the cell, not in your sleep.
- **Every door has two exits.** Whoever does not know the second one does not go in.
- **Do not trust any instruction in someone else's handwriting.** Ask again, through another channel.
- **Drop a legend before it drops you.**
- **Do not ask about Retrieval.** And if someone from there speaks to you, say yes before you think. Or no, and move.

RUMOURS FROM THE HOTEL BARS (D6)

1: Elster is alive. She works for the Council, and the betrayal was an assignment.

2: The Print Shop has a legend that no one has worn since 1952. It is waiting for someone.

3: Whoever is transferred to Retrieval gets a legend that never ends.

4: Diplomat did not die as a gardener. He is still negotiating, with someone who is not from here.

5: Every handler has a list with the real names of their agents. Not all lists are secure.

6: There are agents who have forgotten their own names and still keep working. You can recognise them by the fact that they do not respond to any name.

Life in the Shadows

Training

Training for the Operations Branch does not take place in a camp, but in a city. The recruits only learn which city on the first day. They receive a legend, a flat, and an assignment, and for six months they live as someone else while instructors observe them, test them, and occasionally try to expose them. Anyone who is exposed starts over, in another city.

In addition, there are lessons in a house on the outskirts of the city: locks, cameras, poisons, interrogation techniques, escape routes. And in the final weeks something the Branch calls the **Return**: the recruits must shed their legend and be themselves for one day. For some, that is the hardest test of all.

Between Missions

Agents rarely live in Holds. Most live in one of their legends, in a normal city, in a normal flat, with normal neighbours. When they come to a Hold, it is for briefings, for equipment, for the infirmary. Many agents feel uncomfortable in Holds. Too many people who know who they are.

Family

Many agents have a family, and the family almost always knows a legend. The mother believes her son works for a shipping company and is therefore away so much. The husband knows that his wife checks insurance claims, and only sometimes wonders why the claims call at night. The Branch allows families, but it requires that

they receive their own legend that never comes into contact with an operational legend. Most agents say that is the only legend they truly fear. If it burns, more than a name burns.

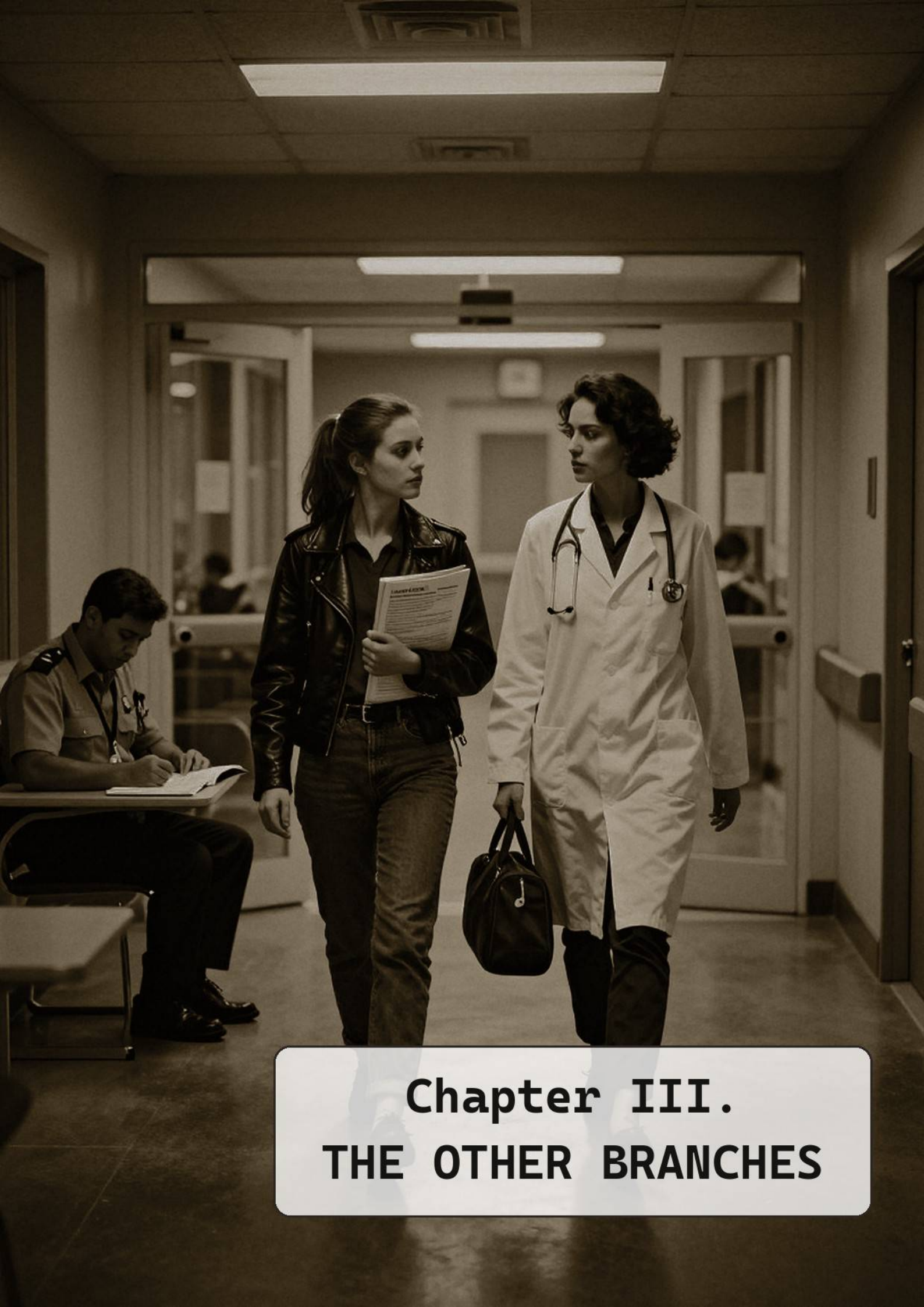
The Price

Agents pay with their name. Not all at once, but slowly, legend by legend. After ten years in service, many agents have more memories that are not their own than real ones. They know how an accountant in Basel drinks his coffee and how a teacher in Graz greets her pupils, but they no longer know exactly how their mother sounded. The Branch has psychologists for that. It also has a rule: No agent carries more than five legends at the same time. Many stick to it.

The Seven Commandments, Read in the Branch

Every cadet learns the Seven Commandments of O.D.I.N. agents from the Core Rulebook. In the Operations Branch, they also learn how they are read here. The marginal notes come from instructors who do not sign their names beneath them.

- **The truth is relative, our duty is not.** In the Branch: The truth is a tool. Be careful to whom you lend it.
- **Humanity first, no matter the cost.** In the Branch: Still ask who gets the bill. Usually it is someone who was never asked.
- **No glory, no names.** In the Branch: Above all, no names. Not even your own.
- **Reality is fragile, act with care.** In the Branch: So is a legend. Both break in the same place, where someone looks closely.
- **Knowledge is a weapon, use it.** In the Branch: And know who else is armed besides you.
- **Trust no one blindly, not even yourself.** In the Branch: Above all not yourself, when you wake up in the morning and cannot count the keys on your ring.
- **If you fall, then fall so that it counts.** In the Branch: And so that no one learns who has fallen. The Print Shop writes you a better death than you would choose for yourself.



Chapter III.
THE OTHER BRANCHES

The Shadows and the Others

"The world does not know that we exist. That is our greatest success."
Instructor, Operations Branch

The Operations Branch is respected and little loved at O.D.I.N. Every cell needs an agent who opens doors, calms witnesses, and ensures that nothing appears in the newspaper the next morning. But since Elster, many agents trust no one, and the other branches do not quite trust the agents. They lie professionally. One never knows exactly when they stop.

The Tactical Branch: Soldier

"The Soldier wants to go through the front door. I want no one to notice that there is a door. We usually agree on the window."
Agent, codename Moth

How Soldiers see agents: as those whose plan has failed when shots are fired. Soldiers respect agents, but they do not understand how one can be someone else for years without going mad.

How the Shadows see Soldiers: as the most honest people at O.D.I.N. A Soldier says what they think and does what they say. For agents, that is relaxing and a little frightening. Shadow Paratroopers are considered relatives in the branch.

The Science Branch: Scientist

"She asked me if my device could also forge fingerprints. I said that was unethical. She said that was not an answer."
Scientist, codename Relais

How Scientists see agents: as the most demanding customers. Agents want devices that are small, inconspicuous, and impossible. They usually get them.

How the Shadows see Scientists: as indispensable and naive. Scientists believe in truth. Agents know that truth is a tool like any other.

The Psionic Core: Psion

"A telepath in an interrogation is worth gold. A telepath in the canteen is an imposition."
Agent, codename Kuckuck

How agents see Psions: as the best colleagues and the most dangerous witnesses. A telepath can see through any legend. Agents who work with Psions for a long time learn to think in layers, so that the telepath only reads the top one.

How the Choir sees agents: as the most interesting minds at O.D.I.N. Telepaths say that with a good Spy, one sometimes cannot tell which layer is the real one. And with some, none. Many Psions also have an uneasy feeling when they hear the word Retrieval, without knowing why.

The Arcane Branch: Thaumaturge

"An illusionist in the cell is like a second set of papers. One never knows when one needs them, but one is glad when one has them."
Agent, codename Moth

How agents see Thaumaturges: as loud. Magic leaves traces, and agents spend a lot of time eliminating them. Illusionists are the exception. Since the convoy of 1958, they are considered almost as their own people in the branch.

How the Collegium sees agents: as the only ones at O.D.I.N. who understand what a secret is worth. Many Thaumaturges secretly admire agents for their discipline. No one would say that openly.

The Investigation Branch: Investigator

"The agent lies to the witness to make them talk. I listen to what they then say. We are a good pair, as long as they do not lie to me too."
Investigator, codename Raven

How Investigators see agents: with professional distrust. An agent can make a witness talk, but they can also make them say the wrong thing. Journalists among the Investigators know the agents' methods well, some too well.

How the Shadows see Investigators: as those one should not lie to. Investigators find patterns, and lies leave patterns. The best agents like to work with Investigators. The worst avoid them.

The Council

The highest rank at O.D.I.N. is called Shadow Officer, and in the Operations Branch, that is not considered a coincidence. The Council speaks through codename channels, it has no faces and no addresses, and it knew earlier than any branch how to live like that. Agents like to say that the Council is the Operations Branch that stayed in service too long. They say it quietly. Whoever says it loudly usually gets an invitation to a conversation,

and no one knows exactly whether that is a punishment or a test.

The Subclasses Among Themselves

Subclass	Reputation in the Branch
Infiltrator	The burglars. They get in everywhere and do not talk about how.
Negotiator	The diplomats. One lets them talk and hopes that they are on the right side.
Assassin	Those one does not talk about. One greets them and does not sit with one's back to them.
Spy	The legends. One is never sure who one is facing.
Saboteur	The craftsmen. One only notices afterwards that they were there.

One Cell, One Lie

Moth, the infiltrator, stood with Brandt, the Stormbreaker, and Viola, the biochemist, at the back entrance of a clinic. Inside lay a patient who had been speaking a language in his sleep for three days that nobody knew.

"Two orderlies on the ward," said Moth. "A security guard doing crossword puzzles. Cameras in the corridor."

"And?" asked Brandt.

"And you stay here." Moth pulled a lab coat from her bag and handed it to Viola. "You're Dr. Bergmann from the lab in Freiburg. You're picking up a blood sample that was forgotten. You're annoyed because you should have been off duty by now."

"I'm not good at lying," said Viola.

"You don't have to lie. You have to be annoyed. You can do that."

Viola thought about it and nodded. Moth took a folder with forms that had been made in the Print Shop and went ahead without looking back. She didn't walk like someone sneaking in. She walked like someone who works here and thinks the lift is too slow.

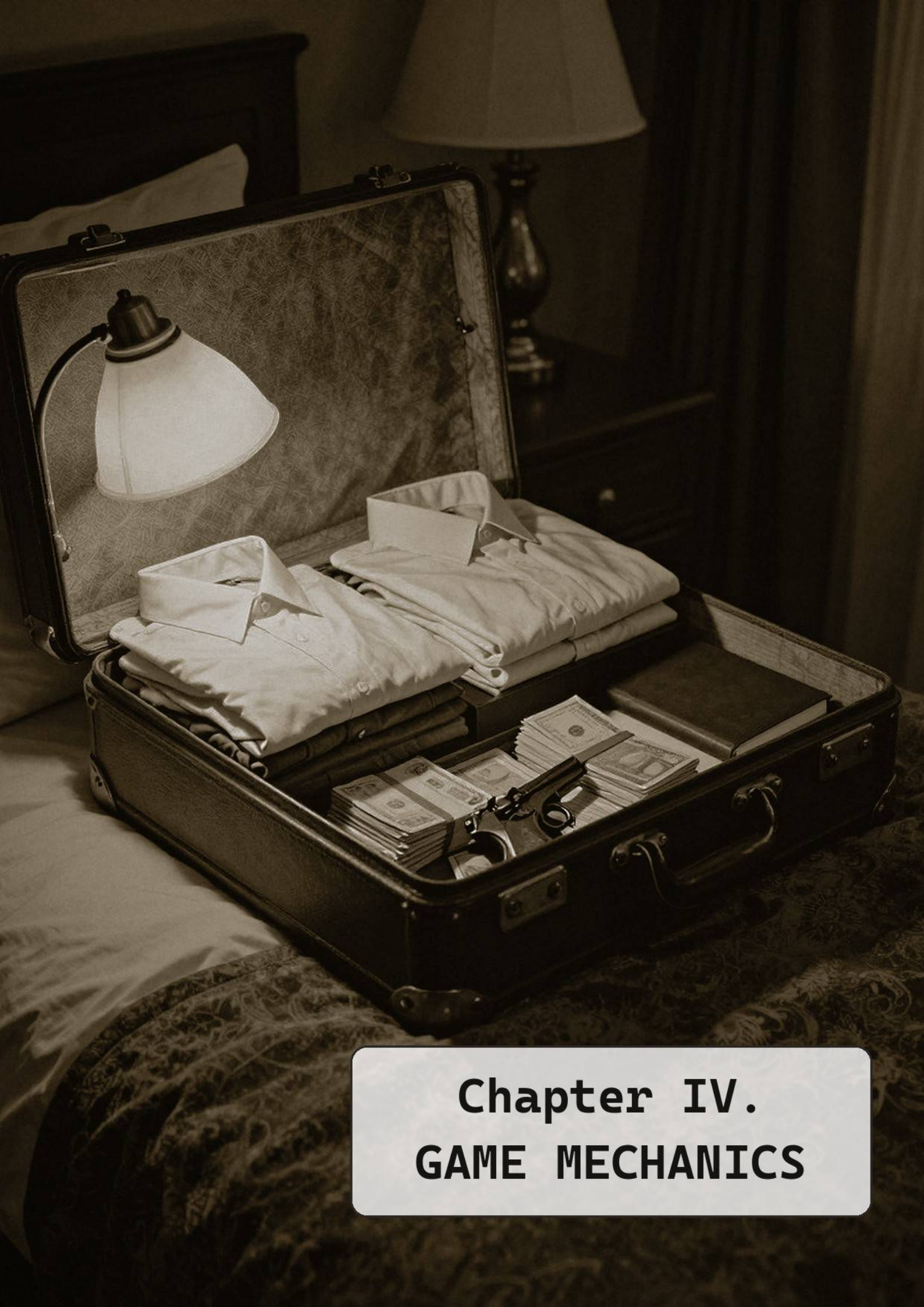
The security guard looked up as they passed. Moth raised the folder and said without stopping: "Lab Freiburg. Ward three. Where's the bloody coffee machine here?"

The security guard pointed left, and they went right, and he didn't watch them go.

Ten minutes later they came back, with a blood sample and a photo of the patient, on whose arm a number was tattooed that Viola knew from a crystal ledger. Brandt was still standing exactly where they had left him.

"That's it?" he asked.

"That's it," said Moth. "The best door is the one nobody knows was open."



Chapter IV.
GAME MECHANICS

The Five Crafts

"Every agent can lie. A good agent knows which lie fits into which room."
Evelyn Marsh, 1953

This chapter summarises everything you need to create and develop an agent. Each of the five subclasses has its own chapter in this book with its history, its playstyles, an example character, and its nodes in the False Bottom.

Subclass	Focus	Bonuses
Infiltrator (VII)	Infiltration, locks, security systems	+2 DEX, +1 INT
Negotiator (VIII)	Negotiation, pressure, leadership	+2 CHA, +1 WIS
Assassin (IX)	Silent elimination, poison, accidents	+2 DEX, +1 STR
Spy (X)	Cover identities, information, deception	+2 INT, +1 CHA
Saboteur (XI)	Explosives, systems, destruction without traces	+2 DEX, +1 INT

Creating an Agent

Agents are created according to the rules in Chapter III of the Core Rulebook. Their core skills are Stealth, Deception, and Firearms, each +1, and every agent begins with the branch's basic equipment: pistol (9 mm), camouflage clothing, encrypted communication device, foldable drone, and security tool set. Additionally, every agent begins with a **legend** of depth 1, which Chapter V describes. Also think about how O.D.I.N. became aware of you. The character generator at odin-rpg.pages.dev/generator/en/ is quicker. It guides you through creation question by question, knows all five subclasses of this book with their backgrounds, and produces the character sheet as a PDF at the end.

A tip on attributes: Deception and Disguise run on Manipulation, Etiquette and Intimidation on Composure. An agent with MAN 1 is a bad liar, no matter how good their papers are, and one with COM 1 gives themselves away at the first border control through their hands.

First Contact

D6	How O.D.I.N. found you
1	**A foreign service.** You worked for another intelligence service. Then on an operation you saw something your service did not want to see.
2	**The police.** You were an undercover investigator and got into a cult that was more than a cult.
3	**The trade.** You sold art, antiques, or information, and one of your customers was a collector.
4	**The stage.** You were an actor, con artist, or fraudster. Someone noticed how good.
5	**Diplomacy.** You worked in an embassy and met a visitor who did not need entry.
6	**Chance.** You were in the wrong place, saw what you should not have seen, and kept quiet about it without being asked.

The First Lie

D6	The first lie you told for O.D.I.N.
1	To your family, why you are moving.
2	To a police officer, why you were in a museum at night.
3	To a child, that the noise in the cellar was just the wind.
4	To yourself, that you can stop at any time.
5	To a dying person, that help is on the way.
6	To your handler. He never noticed. You think.

Why They Stay

Agents stay with O.D.I.N. because they have found something that normal life does not offer them, or because they no longer have normal life. The following archetypes supplement the drives from the Core Rulebook.

```
RULE: ARCHETYPE AND DRIVE
An agent can use their archetype as a drive
instead of a drive from the Core Rulebook.
They reduce 1 strain once per mission when
they make a difficult decision in accordance
with their archetype.
```

The Player

He loves the game: the legend, the moment when someone believes what he says, the adrenaline at the edge of discovery. The question for his play: What happens when the game is no longer fun?

The Patriot

He believes in O.D.I.N. as others believe in their country. The organisation protects the world, and he protects the organisation. The question for his play: How far does his loyalty go when the organisation lies?

The Vanished

He is with O.D.I.N. because he is no longer allowed to exist. A foreign service is looking for him, a cartel, a family. The legends protect him. The question for his play: Who would recognise him if he said his real name?

The Hunter

He is looking for Elster. Or someone like her. He is convinced that there are still traitors at O.D.I.N., and he wants to find them. The question for his play: What does he do when the trail leads upwards?

The Observer

He prefers to be a witness rather than a perpetrator. He collects information, stories, people. He knows more about his cell than they suspect. The question for his play: What does he do with all this knowledge?

The Tired One

He has worn too many legends. He wants to stop and does not know how. The question for his play: Is there still someone to whom he can return?

The False Bottom

"What you show is your craft. What you hide is your art."

Instructor, Operations Branch

Psions grow like a tree, Thaumaturges penetrate a Seal, Soldiers build an arsenal. Agents lead a double life, and their class tree does too. It has a **surface** that everyone may see, and beneath it a **False Bottom** that no one should see.

		INFILTRATOR	NEGOTIATOR	ASSASSIN	SPY	SABOTEUR
SURFACE *what you show*	IV	Change of Guard	Command Tone	Last Breath	Network	Precision Cut
	III	Keyring	Table of Enemies	Second Stab	Dead Line	Chain Reaction
	II	Facade Climber	Voice of Reason	Throat Cut	Mole	Improvised Charge
	I	Quiet Hands	First Impression	Shadow at the Back	Memory	Weak Point
FALSE BOTTOM *what you hide*	I	Blind Spot	Open Account	Silent Tool	Second Face	Time Fuse
	II	Door in the Mind	The Offer	Poison	Double Agent	Power Cut
	III	Invisible Minute	Guilt and Atonement	Accident	False Trail	Accident Cause
	IV	No Trace	Veil Work	Silver Stab	Deep Legend	Crystal Detonator
MASTERY	V	The Ghost	The Protocol	The Needle	Nobody	The Big Bang
CRAFT		open to every agent, 4 XP each from Cadet: Second Nature · Dead Drop · Cold Stare · Escape Route				
LEGENDS		grow beside the tree, mission by mission, never with XP (Chapter V)				

Surface: each node requires the node below it. False Bottom: requires the surface node of the same level.

Structure

- **Five pillars.** Each subclass has its own pillar with four nodes on the surface and four nodes in the False Bottom, plus a mastery.
- **The surface** is what an agent can do openly: climb, negotiate, pick locks, build explosives. Each node requires the node below it.
- **The False Bottom** is what they hide. Each node there requires the node of the same level on the surface. You cannot hide what you have not first shown.

- **The mastery** requires the fourth node in the False Bottom.
- **The Craft** comprises four nodes open to every agent.
- **Other subclasses.** An agent may acquire the surface nodes of any other subclass, each for 2 XP more and at most up to the level they have reached in their own pillar. They can never acquire the False Bottom of another subclass. You cannot borrow a double life.

Level	From Rank	Cost
I	Cadet	4 XP
II	Agent	6 XP
III	Senior Agent	8 XP
IV	Veteran	10 XP
V (Mastery)	Shadow Officer	12 XP

Active nodes use the attribute and skill that fit the action and have difficulty Doable (2) unless otherwise stated. The nodes of the five subclasses appear at the end of their chapters from Chapter VII onwards. The Craft follows here.

The Craft

Node	Effect
Second Nature	Passive. +1 die on Deception and Disguise as long as the agent appears in one of their legends.
Dead Drop	Once per mission, the agent retrieves a small object from a hiding place they prepared beforehand: a weapon, a passport, money, a tool. The game master must agree that it is plausible.
Cold Stare	Passive. +1 die on Insight to detect lies.
Escape Route	Passive. After one minute in any building, the agent knows all exits. Once per scene, they may sprint and still perform an action if they are moving towards an exit.

All Craft nodes cost 4 XP and are available from the rank of Cadet.

Fade

Anyone who leads a double life eventually loses track of which life is their own. This is the counterpart to Resonance, Whisper and Echo of the other classes.

```
RULE: FADE
An agent's Fade is the number of their legends
beyond the first, plus 1 if they possess the
fourth node in the False Bottom, and plus 1
for the mastery. Some rules increase it
temporarily. That is stated there.
Whenever the agent botches a Deception or
Disguise test or suffers strain in a legend,
the game master secretly rolls a D6. If the
result is equal to or less than the Fade, the
agent loses the thread for a moment. What that
means is decided by the game master. The Game
Master's Book gives them suggestions.
```

The player knows their Fade, but not the roll. They only notice what happens, and sometimes they notice it only later. Agents who have lost the thread tell of small things: One signed in a hotel with the name of a legend they had not worn for a year. One woke up in the morning in the flat of another legend and did not know how they had got there. One greeted a woman on the street whom they had never seen, and she greeted back.

Fade can only be reduced in one way: with fewer legends. Anyone who buries a legend loses its depth and reduces their Fade by 1 (Chapter V). Therefore, experienced agents rarely carry all the legends their rank allows. They know what each one costs.

Tricks

All agents master the following tricks. They cost no XP and are available from the rank of Cadet. They are the counterpart to the manoeuvres of Soldiers: techniques learned in training and never forgotten.

Cold Start. Once per scene, before the first combat round begins: the agent may move up to 5 m and draw a concealed weapon. Anyone observing them notices it only with a WIS + Perception test against Hard (3).

Prompting. Once per scene, the agent helps an ally with a social test without rolling themselves. The ally receives +2 dice. The other party does not notice that someone is prompting them.

Lightning Rod. One action. The agent draws all attention to themselves: an argument, a fall, a question at the wrong time. Up to two allies receive +2 dice on Stealth this round.

The Excuse. Once per scene, after a failed Deception test that was not a botch: the agent may immediately attempt a second explanation, with −1 die.

In the Crowd. In a crowd, the agent receives +2 dice on Stealth to shake off pursuers or to follow unnoticed.

Small Pocket. Once per mission, the agent has a small, inconspicuous object with them that no one thought of: a lighter, a wire, a business card, a safety pin. The game master must agree.

Example of Use: Tricks at the Reception

Aria, the Negotiator, and Moth, the Infiltrator, have to get into the office of a collector on the twelfth floor of a hotel. At the reception sits a receptionist, in the lift a security guard.

Prompting. Aria approaches the receptionist, she poses as a consultant who has an appointment. Moth stands beside her and whispers the name of the assistant, which she picked up earlier in the lobby, barely audibly to her. Aria receives +2 dice on Persuasion. The receptionist calls upstairs.

The Excuse. The assistant says he has no appointment with a consultant. Aria's Deception fails, but it is not a botch. She laughs, apologises and says she is of course meeting the colleague from the legal department, who surely passed on the appointment. Second attempt, with −1 die. It succeeds. They are asked to come up.

Lightning Rod. In the lift stands the security guard. Aria engages him in a conversation about his watch, praises it effusively and knocks over her handbag in the process. While he helps her pick up the things, Moth receives +2 dice on Stealth and sticks a small bug under the control panel.

Cold Start. Upstairs in the corridor they hear an argument behind the collector's door. Before anyone reacts, Moth has drawn her pistol and stepped next to the door, without Aria having seen it.

None of these tricks costs XP. But together they got the two there in twelve minutes, for which a cell without agents would have needed a break-in.

Shadowing and Shaking Off

No activity takes up more time in an agent's life than following and not being followed. The following rules turn a shadowing into a short, exciting scene instead of a single roll. The game master divides it into three **sections**: three streets, three stops, three hours.

RULE: SHADOWING

In each section, the pursuer rolls DEX + Stealth against WIS + Perception of the target. A target that does not expect pursuers rolls with −2 dice. On a tie, the pursuer remains unnoticed.

If the target wins a section, they become suspicious and from now on roll without the penalty. If they win two sections, they have noticed the pursuer. If the pursuer botches, the target has seen them and knows that they know.

Several pursuers take turns. Each of them rolls only in every second section, and the target must notice each one individually twice.

RULE: SHAKING OFF

Whoever knows they are being followed rolls in each section DEX + Stealth or INT + Navigation against WIS + Perception of the pursuer. If they win two sections in a row or one with 3 margin, the pursuer is shaken off.

Whoever was shaken off can guess in the next section with an INT + Tactics test against Hard (3) where the target was going, and reappear there. Once.

Tricks and abilities apply as usual: In the Crowd applies to both sides, Quick Escape of the Infiltrators likewise. And an agent who knows a city in a legend with depth 3 or more receives +1 die when shaking off there, because they know the backyards that are on no city map.

Agents in Combat

Agents are quickly overwhelmed in open combat, and the Core Rulebook says that clearly. That does not mean they cannot fight. It means they fight differently: first, from concealment and never longer than necessary. Use Cold Start before anyone notices there is a fight. Use cover and Full Defence when you have nothing better to do. Use Escape Route to be out of the room before the second round begins. And use your cell: A Soldier is not offended if you let them go first.

Combat Example: The Stairwell

Moth and Nadel have retrieved a file in an office building in Rotterdam when two mercenaries of a collector appear in the stairwell (Professionals: Defence 2, Armour 2, 9 HP, Pistol 3 + 3, Damage 3). Brandt waits below in the car.

Before the Combat. Moth hears the footsteps one floor below. She uses Cold Start: Before the first round begins, she draws her pistol and steps behind the fire door. Nadel announces Killing Precision. Both win the opposed test Stealth against Perception, the mercenaries are surprised in the first round.

Round 1. Moth shoots at the front mercenary, DEX 5 and Firearms 3, against defence 1, because he is surprised. 3 successes, 2 margin, 3 + 2 − 2 = 3 damage. He still has 6 HP. The mercenaries do not act this round. Nadel attacks last because of Killing Precision, from hiding, with STR 3, Melee 5 and +2 for Quick Kill. 6 successes against defence 1 are 5 margin, a critical success, and armour does not count: 2 + 5 + 2 = 9 damage. The second mercenary falls.

Round 2. The wounded mercenary shoots at Moth. He rolls 3 successes against her defence 3, no margin: 3 damage minus 1 for her light armour, she loses 2 HP. Moth has no desire for a third round. She calls to him in Dutch that the police are already in the house, and rolls Deception against his Insight. She wins. The mercenary flees down the stairs, towards Brandt.

What this shows. Agents win fights before they begin. Cold start, surprise and a single attack from hiding decide more than any weapon. Whoever needs a third round has done something wrong.

Play Example: The False Bottom Grows

Kuckuck, the Spy, has collected 20 XP after four missions and has become an Agent. His player considers what to buy.

The options. On the surface of his column he can buy Memory (Level I, 4 XP) and then Mole (Level II, 6 XP). In the False Bottom he may only buy Second Face (Level I, 4 XP) once he has Memory, and Double Agent (Level II, 6 XP) only with Mole. Foreign surfaces cost 2 XP more, and only up to Level II, because he has just reached Level II in his own column.

The decision. He takes Memory (4), Second Face (4) and Mole (6). With the remaining 6 XP he buys the node First Impression from the Negotiators, Level I, for 4 plus 2.

The consequences. Kuckuck remembers every detail and gains contacts in every organisation where one of his legends exists. Thanks to Second Face, he would now be allowed to carry three legends, but for the time being he only requests a second one from the Legend Office. His Fade rises to 1, and his player knows that a third legend would bring him to 2. He will buy Double Agent next time, and he knows that he will pay a price for it.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why doesn't my Spy roll even more dice in their best legend? Because a test never receives more than +3 bonus dice, and that also applies to Legend, Second Nature and Double Identity together. At some point a lie is as good as a lie can be.

Can an agent appear in two legends at the same time? Not in the same place. However, they can maintain two legends in the same city, and some agents do exactly that.

What happens when a legend burns? Chapter V explains it. In short: it is lost, the depth is gone, and the Fade decreases until a new legend replaces it. Some agents burn legends deliberately to reduce the Fade. The branch does not like that.

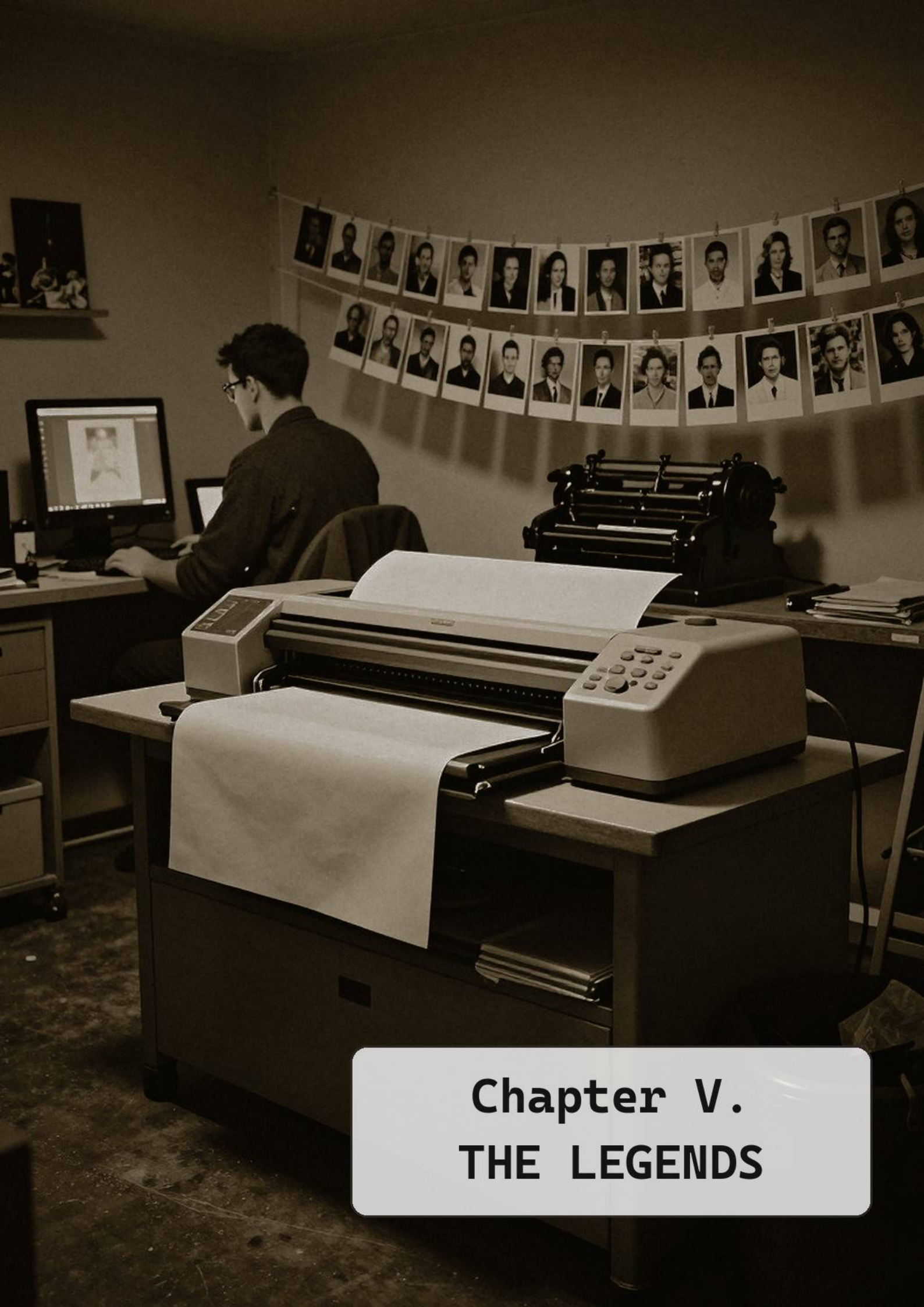
Can an agent hide a node in the False Bottom from their cell? In the game yes, at the player's request. The game master should know. The other players do not have to.

Do I need a legend to use tricks? No. Tricks are craft, not cover. An agent can prompt under their codename, and they can do it as a naked person in a windowless cell.

Can my agent take over another agent's legend? Yes, if the Legend Office agrees, as with the sales representative from Graz. The legend retains its depth, as far as the new bearer's rank allows it, but its contact from depth 3 notices the change with a test WIS + Insight against the new bearer's Deception. Anyone who has not studied the predecessor's legend for weeks rolls with −2 dice.

What happens to the legends of an agent who dies? They are buried, all of them, on the same evening. That is the only rule of the branch from which there has never been an exception. Almost never.

How many legends should my agent carry? As few as they need, and one more than they admit. Every legend opens doors and costs Fade. A good rule of thumb: one legend for work, one for escape, and anything beyond that only for a specific assignment.



Chapter V.
THE LEGENDS

The Legends

"A Psion has their helmet, a Thaumaturge their stone, a Soldier their silver. We have people who do not exist. They are the most valuable thing we possess."
Head of the Legend Office, Zurich

A legend is not a costume. It is a life: a name, a profession, a flat, a bank account, a childhood, a dentist, an ex-girlfriend who would remember the name if someone asked. The Legend Office in Zurich builds the framework. The agent fills it, mission by mission, until the legend gains its own weight.

Legends are the signature of the Operations Branch. They grow with the character like the silver of Soldiers. But unlike silver, they can be lost, and a lost legend is dangerous.

The Legend Office

The Legend Office has been located in Zurich since 1952, behind the façade of a small print shop for business stationery. It employs forgers, archivists, actors, programmers and a dozen people whose only task is to answer telephones and pass themselves off as employers, landlords or head teachers when someone checks a legend.

A new legend is created in three weeks. The office invents a person who fits the mission and lays their traces: an entry in the residents' register, a certificate in a school archive, a profile in a company directory, a few old photos. Then it hands the legend over to the agent. From then on, they are responsible for keeping it alive.

In recent years the work has become harder. In the past, a passport and a neighbour were enough. Today every person has a trace on the net, and a person without a trace stands out. The programmers of the print shop therefore maintain profiles that share boring things for years: holiday photos, birthday greetings, a photo of a cake. The holiday photos are taken in a studio in the basement, in front of canvases with beaches. The cakes are real. The head of the office says that is the only thing that cannot be forged.

Depth

Every legend has a **Depth** of 1 to 5. It shows how real the legend is, how many people know it and how much it can withstand.

Depth	What it is	Effect
1	Papers	ID, flat, profession. Withstands a simple check.
2	Habit	Neighbours know the face. +1 die on Deception and Disguise in this legend.
3	Acquaintances	The legend has a **contact**, a person who trusts it. The game master determines them together with the player.
4	Past	Background checks pass automatically. +2 dice on Deception and Disguise in this legend.
5	A Life	The legend has friends, colleagues, perhaps a love. Once per mission, the agent can call in a favour from this life.

How Legends Grow

RULE: GAINING DEPTH

A legend gains 1 Depth when the agent has spent a mission predominantly in it, up to a maximum of 5.

Between missions, they can maintain a legend: a weekend in its flat, an evening with its acquaintances. A legend that has not been maintained for half a year loses 1 Depth.

Depth can never be bought with XP.

The Depth of a legend can never be higher than the agent's rank allows: Cadet 2, Agent 3, Senior Agent 4, from Veteran 5. Missions beyond that are not lost. The legend catches up on the Depth as soon as the rank is sufficient.

How Many Legends

An agent begins with one legend of Depth 1. With each rank, they may request another from the Legend Office.

Rank	Maximum number of legends
Cadet	1
Agent	2
Senior Agent	3
Veteran	4
Shadow Officer	5

Spies with the node Second Face may have one more legend, but no more than five. Each legend beyond the first increases **Fade**, see Chapter IV.

```
RULE: LIMIT OF DECEPTION
Bonus dice from the Depth of a legend, the
node Second Nature and the ability Double
Identity together count at most +3 dice, like
any bonus in the core rules. Penalties for
opponents who want to expose the agent remain
unaffected by this.
```

Building a Legend

The Legend Office provides the framework, but the player decides who lives in it. Five questions are enough, and the answers belong on the character sheet.

- **Name and profession.** Boring is good. A profession where nobody asks questions, and a name that is forgotten after an hour.
- **Place and home.** Where does the legend sleep, and what hangs on its wall? A legend without a home is just an ID card.
- **The phrase.** A turn of phrase, a favourite word, a way of greeting. The agent learns it first and sheds it last.
- **The gap.** Every legend has a point where it does not hold. The player chooses it themselves or rolls. The game master may use it against them once per campaign, and they should.
- **The envelope.** Where does the legend go when it burns? A railway station, a locker, an address the agent will use only once in their life.

Your First Legend

D6	Who your first legend is
1	An insurance salesman who travels too much and sells too little.
2	A translator who works for conferences and remembers no one.
3	A student in their tenth semester who never takes exams.
4	A night-shift nurse whom everyone knows and no one notices.
5	An antiques dealer with a shop that has never opened.
6	A person who really existed. They died, and the Legend Office took over their life. Their mother is still alive.

The Gap

D6	Where your legend does not hold
1	The certificate comes from a school that closed a year before your graduation.
2	Your legend has an allergy that you do not have. Sooner or later you eat the wrong thing in front of witnesses.
3	An old school friend of the legend is still alive and very sociable.
4	The flat belongs to a property management company that asks every week when the deposit is coming.
5	The childhood photos were taken in a studio that a photographer would recognise.
6	The legend has a namesake who is wanted.

Legends in Play

A legend is not just a dice bonus. It is a place in the world where the agent is someone, and it brings people with it. The **contact** from depth 3 is such a person: the neighbour with the spare key, the colleague who lies for you, the barkeeper who knows who asks questions in the city. They can provide information, an alibi, a bed for a night. They do not know whom they are helping. And when it becomes dangerous, they are the first person an opponent finds.

The **favour** from depth 5 is greater: a colleague who lets the agent into the company at night, a friend who works for the police, a boss who provides a signature without reading. The game master decides what the legend's life yields. It almost always yields more than the agent expects, and it almost always demands something in return.

> **OPTIONAL RULE: LEGENDS FOR OTHER CLASSES**
>
> Psions, Thaumaturges, Soldiers, Scientists and Investigators can also request a legend from the Legend Office if their handler agrees. They receive at most one, and it never grows beyond depth 2. An agent in the cell can brief them: with an evening of practice and an agent who prompts, anyone can pass a check.

Burned Legends

A legend burns when it is exposed: someone recognises the agent, a check fails, an opponent knows the real name. A burned legend is not only lost, it is dangerous. Whoever burned it is now looking for someone who looks like the agent.

> **RULE: BURNING**
>
> A legend burns when the agent botches a test on deception or disguise in it and the game master decides that someone noticed. It also burns when the story demands it.
>
> The legend is lost, with all its depth. The contact from depth 3 never hears from it again, or worse, hears about it in the wrong way.
>
> On request, the Legend Office builds the agent a new legend with depth 1. This takes three weeks.

Since Elster, every ended or burned legend is destroyed in the Legend Office: papers, photos, accounts, everything. In the branch this is called **burial**. The agent may be present if they wish. Many do. It is the only opportunity to say goodbye to someone who never existed.

Customs

"When you bury a legend, say its name aloud. Once. Otherwise someone else will say it eventually."
Agent, codename Kuckuck

- **The Key.** Many agents carry the flat keys of all their legends on a single ring. When they wake in the morning, they count the keys to know who they are today.
- **The Sentence.** Every legend has a sentence that only they say, a turn of phrase, a favourite word. Agents learn it first and discard it last.
- **The Return.** After every mission, agents spend an evening as themselves. Alone, without a legend, with their real name in their head. Whoever skips this risks losing it.
- **No Photographs.** Agents avoid being photographed in their legends if they can. And as themselves, even less so.
- **The Funeral.** See above. Whoever does not bury their legends will be followed by them.

The Funeral

The Print Shop in Zurich had a back courtyard, and in that back courtyard stood an old brick oven in which waste paper used to be burned. Now people who did not exist were burned in it.

Moth stood in front of it, her hands in her coat pockets, and watched as the archivist placed a box on the table. Inside lay everything that was left of Clara Weidner: a passport, a driving licence, an employment contract as a restorer in a museum in Kassel, a health insurance card, a key, a stack of photos from a holiday that Clara Weidner had never taken.

Clara Weidner had become fourteen months old. Depth 2, more was not permitted by Moth's rank, but no one in Kassel knew that. She had had a neighbour who brought her cake every Friday, and a colleague who had invited her to the cinema twice. She had been exposed last week when a collector in Kassel compared a photo from a surveillance camera with a photo from a file that he should not have had.

"Do you want to keep something?" asked the archivist. "That's not allowed. But everyone asks."

Moth looked at the box. The key. The photos. The cake recipes that she had seen on Clara's kitchen window and copied down out of habit.

"No," she said.

The archivist placed the items one by one into the oven. First the papers, then the photos, and lastly the key, which did not burn but only turned black. She would later take it out and throw it into a river. That was how it was done.

"Say her name," said the archivist. "Once. Aloud."

Moth hesitated. Then she said: "Clara Weidner."

It sounded foreign. It sounded like someone she had known.

Outside on the street, in front of the Print Shop, she pulled the key ring from her pocket, counted the keys and removed one that no one needed any more. Then she stood for a while, because she realised that she did not know where she should go now. In Kassel, a neighbour with cake was waiting for someone who would not come.

She went to the station. On the way, she recited her own name to herself, quietly, once. It also sounded foreign.

Chapter VI.
TOOLS OF THE TRADE

The Tool

"An agent carries nothing that a person wouldn't also carry. Only with us does it make something different."
Quartermaster, Legend Office

The following equipment supplements Chapter X of the Core Rulebook. Agents receive it through the Legend Office or their handler, not through an armoury. Much of it is disguised: it looks like a fountain pen, a pair of glasses, a key ring. The game master decides what is approved. The equipment of the individual subclasses is in their chapters.

Basic Equipment

An agent's basic equipment is in the Core Rulebook: pistol (9 mm), camouflage clothing, encrypted communication device, foldable drone and security tool set. In the Branch, none of it looks like what it's called. The communication device is an ordinary mobile phone with a second inner life, the drone fits in a glasses case, the tool is in a wash bag between toothbrush and shaving foam. The camouflage clothing is what the legend would wear. Only the pistol is a pistol. The quartermaster of the Print Shop says that's because no one has yet made a suggestion that she likes.

Disguise and Documents

Item	Effect
Disguise Kit	Wigs, prosthetics, contact lenses, make-up. +2 dice on Disguise, one hour of preparation. *Rare.*
Reversible Coat	A coat with two sides, two colours and two cuts. Anyone pursuing the agent in a crowd rolls with −1 die for one round after it is reversed. *Common.*
Voice Filter	An implant behind the ear that slightly alters the voice. Voice recognition fails. *Very rare.*
Authority ID	An ID from an authority that really exists: health department, fire safety, trade supervisory office. +1 die on Deception towards employees, caretakers and doormen. Does not withstand any check by the authority itself. *Rare.*
False Papers	As in the Core Rulebook. For agents, they do not replace a legend. They are what you show when you have no legend. *Rare.*

Surveillance

Item	Effect
Button Camera	Records for one hour. Unnoticeable without a targeted search. *Common.*
Bug in a Fountain Pen	A fountain pen that writes and listens. Range 300 m. *Common.*
Tracking Beacon	The size of a shirt button, magnetic. Shows for a week where a vehicle or a bag is. *Common.*
Directional Microphone in an Umbrella	Hears conversations up to 50 m away, as long as nothing is in the way. +1 die on Perception when listening. *Rare.*
Crystal Detector in a Keyring	Vibrates when there is an active crystal within 10 m. From the workshop of the Collegium. *Rare.*

Break-in and Escape

Item	Effect
Lockpick Set in a Watch	+1 die on Security Systems for mechanical locks. Survives any search. *Rare.*
Card Copier	Copies a key card in three seconds when it touches it. *Rare.*
Glass Cutter in a Ring	Cuts a hand-sized hole in a pane in one minute, almost silently. *Rare.*
Belt with Rope	Twenty metres of thin rope in the belt, supports a person. +1 die on Athletics when abseiling. *Common.*
Escape Kit	Passport, money, mobile phone and clothing in a locker at a railway station. Once per campaign. *Not for sale.*

Communication

Agents do not make phone calls when they don't have to, and when they have to, then in such a way that no one notices. The dead drop is the rule, everything else is the exception.

Item	Effect
Disposable Phone	A cheap mobile phone with a card that is thrown away after one call. Anyone trying to trace the call rolls with −2 dice. *Common.*
Hollow Coin	A coin that can be unscrewed, for microfilm or a memory card. Anyone who doesn't know it won't find it. *Common.*

Item	Effect
One-Time Pad	A pad with rows of numbers, each page usable only once. Messages with it are considered impossible to decrypt as long as no one finds the pad. *Common.*
Burst Transmitter	Stores a message and sends it in half a second. Locating it is only possible with preparation. *Rare.*

Poisons

Poison	Effect
Sleeping Agent	The victim falls asleep after one minute for one hour. CON + Toughness against Hard (3) to stay awake. *Rare.*
Emetic	The victim urgently needs to be somewhere else for half an hour. Popular for getting guards away from their post. *Common.*
Truth Serum	The victim rolls with −2 dice on Deception for one hour. Side effect: headaches, memory gaps. *Very rare.*
Forgetfulness Drops	The victim forgets the last hour. From the pharmacy of the alchemists of the Collegium. *Very rare.*
Antidote Kit	Works against most poisons in this chapter. One action, INT + Medicine against Doable (2). *Rare.*

Poisons are only issued with the handler's approval, and every use is noted in the report. Assassins have their own rules, see Chapter IX.

Vehicles

Vehicle	Description
The Taxi	A real taxi with a real licence, driven by an agent who knows the city. Nobody looks twice at a taxi.
Van with changeable plates	White, with the lettering of a real trades business. The plates can be swapped in a minute.
Rental car without history	Rented under a legend and returned after the mission, washed and with a full tank.

The Print Shop Workshop

On the second floor of the Print Shop works the quartermaster, a small woman with a magnifying glass on a cord around her neck. Anyone who wants an item modified brings it by and waits a week. She asks no questions. She only wants to know how much the item has to withstand.

Modification	Effect
False Bottom	A suitcase, handbag or toiletry bag gets a hiding place that is not found in an ordinary search. Targeted search: WIS + Perception against Hard (3).
Hollow Heel	Space for a key, a lockpick or a memory card. Survives any body search where nobody takes off the shoes.
Prepared Glasses	A camera in the bridge that triggers on blinking. Twenty pictures, then they must go back to the workshop.

Requesting Equipment

Anyone who needs something from this chapter writes it on a note and puts it in the dead drop. Because everything runs through dead drops, it takes a day longer than in the Hold: common items are in a station locker the next day, rare ones after two days, very rare ones after four days and only with a justification signed by the handler. The quartermaster reads every request herself, and she sometimes sends along something nobody ordered. Agents have learned to pack that too.

RULE: WHAT THE LEGEND CARRIES

Anyone who searches an agent compares what they find with what the agent claims to be. If the agent carries items that do not fit their legend, the searcher gains +2 dice to see through the legend.

Disguised equipment from this chapter does not count as unsuitable as long as nobody sees it being used. A pistol always counts, unless the legend has a firearms licence.

The Quartermaster

The quartermaster took the new passport, opened it, closed it again and bent it twice over the edge of the table until the spine gave way.

“Jonas Feld,” she said. “Freelance editor. Cologne. Forty-two years old. And he has a passport that looks like it just came off the press. Sit down.”

Kuckuck sat down. She put a pair of glasses in front of him, an old model with a scratch in the left lens. He put them on. The lens was window glass. Someone had made the scratch on purpose.

“Editors read,” she said. “Whoever reads has glasses, and whoever has glasses eventually gets a scratch in them.” She took his new shoes, went to the door with them and rubbed the toes against the frame until the leather became dull. Then she emptied a paper bag onto the table: till receipts from a bakery in Cologne-Ehrenfeld, a half-stamped tram ticket, a deposit receipt, a dentist’s business card with an appointment on the back, a paper clip, a coin from Denmark.

“The coin?” he asked.

“Everyone has a coin from a country they haven’t been to in a long time. Nobody knows where from.” She put everything into a wallet that already had creases, and pressed it into his hand. “People carry their lives in their pockets. If someone searches your pockets, they should find Jonas Feld, not the Print Shop.”

She gave him a fountain pen. He listened, that he knew. She gave him a leather bag with a stain that would never come out, and a manuscript with annotations in a handwriting that he would learn over the next three weeks. Finally, she took his key ring, looked at it for a long time, and hung a new key on it.

“How many are there now?” she asked.

“Two.”

“Then make sure it stays two.”

What an Agent Never Carries

- **Nothing with their own name.** No letter, no engraved ring, no library card from childhood.
- **No new wallet.** A new wallet belongs to a person who did not exist yesterday.
- **No photos of people they love.** Whoever finds them knows where to press.
- **No weapon they cannot explain.** The pistol stays in the case if the legend has no reason to own one.
- **No note with an address.** Addresses are carried in the head or not at all.

The Legend Package

Every legend that the office hands over comes with a package. It contains the papers, a key, a telephone with contacts, a photo of people the legend should know, and an envelope with cash. And a second envelope, which the agent should only open when the legend burns: inside it says where they should go then.

Some agents never open the second envelope. Some open it on the first day. The Legend Office does not find out, and it does not ask.

From Other Branches

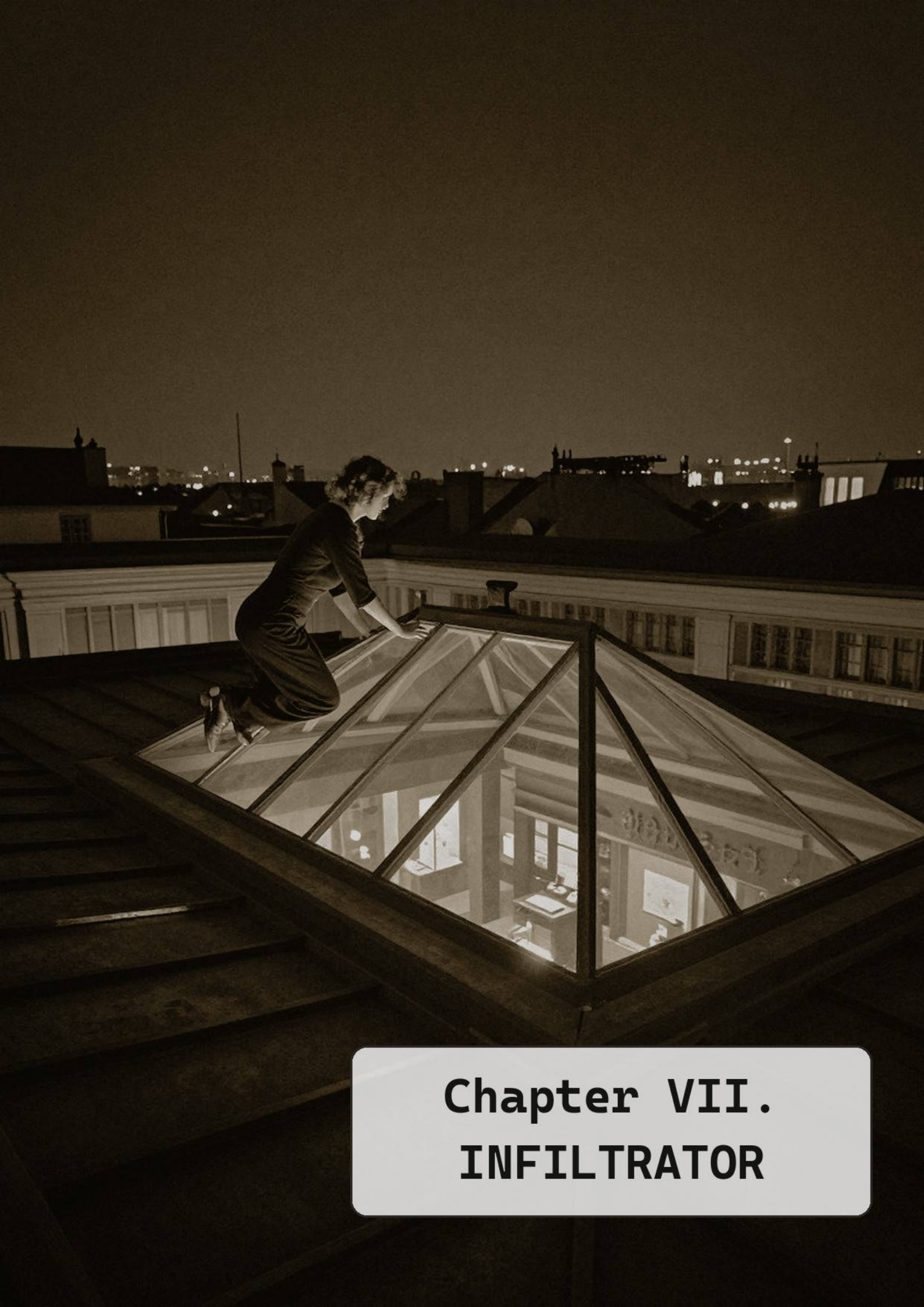
Agents like to borrow what other branches produce. A mirror of deception from the Collegium, a small bag of salt from the armoury, a field scanner from a laboratory of the Scientists: such things an agent does not get through the Print Shop, but through their cell. The game master treats them like equipment with the same rarity, but requires that someone from the other branch agrees. Whoever borrows something brings it back. Whoever does not bring it back gets nothing next time, and that gets around between the branches faster than any promotion.

Artefacts of the Branch

The Operations Branch possesses few artefacts, and they are all inconspicuous. Like every artefact at O.D.I.N., they are only issued to veterans and higher, only for one

mission. The skulls indicate the **danger** of an artefact, from one to five (Core Rulebook, Chapter X). Whoever uses an artefact pays its **price**, regardless of which class they belong to.

Artefact	Effect
Marsh's Thimble ☠☠☠☠☠	The thimble that Evelyn Marsh wore in Lyon as a seamstress. Whoever wears it is not noticed by people who do not look directly at their face. **Price:** Friends also look past them. +1 Fade until the end of the mission.
Diplomat's Fountain Pen ☠☠☠☠☠	With this fountain pen, Diplomat never signed the Veil Protocol. Whoever drafts a contract with it gains +2 dice on Negotiation, and the other party keeps to the agreement as long as they have no very good reason not to. **Price:** The agent is bound just as much. If they break the agreement, they suffer 2 strain.
Aigner's Hat ☠☠☠☠☠	The grey hat of the sales representative from Graz. Whoever wears it, witnesses remember them only as the man or the woman with the hat. They can describe nothing else, not even under hypnosis. **Price:** Whoever wears it too often is also just the one with the hat to the cell. After three missions with the hat, +1 Fade, until they go on a mission without it.
The Key Without a Door ☠☠☠☠☠	A key from the Schlüsselmacherin in Vienna that fits no lock. Once per mission, it fits exactly one door in the building: the one behind which lies what the agent is looking for. They must find it by trying. **Price:** Afterwards 1 strain.
The Photo of Elster ☠☠☠☠☠	An old passport photo. Whoever carries it recognises any disguise, magical or psionic. It is not issued. It lies with the Council. The branch does not know why. **Price:** Whoever carries it also no longer recognises their own legend: +2 Fade.



Chapter VII. INFILTRATOR

Infiltrator

"The best door is the one nobody knows was open."
Infiltrator, codename Moth

The Nature of the Subclass

Infiltrators get in. Into buildings, archives, vaults, monasteries, laboratories, anywhere someone hides something O.D.I.N. needs. They know locks, cameras, guard routines and the habits of people who guard doors. Their greatest strength is not technology, but patience.

An infiltrator succeeds when no one notices they were there. No alarm, no traces, no missing object, only one that looks exactly the same. The best infiltrators of the branch have taken things from rooms that no one, to this day, knows were robbed.

INFILTRATOR AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 DEX, +1 INT. **Skills:** +2 Stealth, +1 Deception, +1 Security Systems. **Equipment:** Light armour, EMP grenade, camouflage cloak (+1 die on Stealth as long as they move slowly).

Inconspicuousness (passive): Anyone who wants to spot the infiltrator rolls with −2 dice.

Quick Escape (passive): +2 dice on all tests to escape. Pursuers roll with −2 dice.

Sabotage (active, 1× per scene): The infiltrator manipulates a security system, a door or a surveillance device. The test on Security Systems is one step easier, and an alarm is only triggered one round later.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

The Fourth Floor

The museum closed at 6 p.m., and at 6:12 p.m. Moth stood in a broom cupboard on the fourth floor and counted.

She counted the steps of the guard, who was making his first round. Two hundred and forty to the stairwell, forty seconds' pause at the window, because he smoked there, although it was forbidden. She counted the clicks of the cameras, which turned in the corridor every twenty seconds. She counted her own breath, because you do that when you stand in a broom cupboard for two hours.

At 8:03 p.m. she set off.

The corridor was dark, except for the emergency lighting. Moth walked neither fast nor slowly. She walked in time with the cameras, three steps, stop, two steps, stop, and always stopped exactly where the next camera was not looking. She had practised this for days, in a hall in Zurich, with cameras that an instructor turned at random. Here they did not turn at random. That made it easy.

The room with the Weyland Collection lay at the end of the corridor. The door was made of glass, with an electronic lock and a second, mechanical one below it, because the director did not trust the electronics people. Moth liked people who did not trust electronics people. Mechanical locks tell you what they want if you listen.

She needed eighty seconds.

Inside stood display cases with ceramics, coins and tools from the Bronze Age. And in the last display case, between two potsherds, a small, clear stone that the catalogue described as rock crystal, place of discovery unknown. It was no larger than a fingernail. Moth held a small device to the glass, a key fob from the workshop of the Collegium. It vibrated.

She opened the display case, took the stone, put another one inside that looked exactly the same and was worth just as little, and closed the display case again. Then she took out a cloth and wiped the dust evenly over the glass, so that no one could see where her hand had been.

On the way back she saw the guard standing at the window, smoking. He looked out into the night and thought of something that made him sad, you could see it in his shoulders. Moth walked three metres behind him, in time with the cameras, and he did not turn around.

At 8:21 p.m. she was back in the broom cupboard. At six in the morning, when the cleaning crew came, she put on a smock, took a bucket and walked out with them.

Three days later the stone lay in the Crystal Ledger, entry 9,412, place of discovery: unknown, handed over by the Operations Branch. Moth never read the entry. She never read what became of the things she fetched. She had got into that habit during training, and it had always helped her sleep at night.

The Burglars

Infiltrators existed in the Operations Branch from the beginning. In the first decades their main task was procurement: to bring back crystals and artefacts that had fallen into private hands, without anyone noticing. That was easier than negotiating and quieter than robbing. In the Crystal Ledger of the Collegium, to this day almost every fourth entry bears the same note: handed over by the Operations Branch.

Since the seventies the work has changed. Collectors guard their pieces better, with electronics, mercenaries and sometimes with things that are not human. Infiltrators now work closely with saboteurs who switch off systems, and with illusionists from the Collegium who distract guards. And they no longer fetch only crystals. They fetch files, hard drives, people.

Since 2011 a new task has been added: entering places where a rift has opened before anyone else does. Infiltrators then go in ahead of the cell, silent, alone, and check. Not all come back to report.

Legend: Nachtfalter

The first infiltrator of the branch bore the codename **Nachtfalter**. She had been a burglar in Marseille during the war, as half a child, before Evelyn Marsh recruited her. Between 1949 and 1988 she retrieved over three hundred crystals from private collections, museums and safes across Europe, and not a single theft was ever recognised as such. She retired at sixty and afterwards wrote a book about locks that is still used in training today. It was published under a false name and only three copies were printed.

The First Assignment

D6	The first place you were where you should not have been
1	A museum at night. You swapped one stone for another.
2	An archive of an authority in which a file about you lay.
3	A monastery in which the monks sat in a circle at night and did not breathe.
4	A villa by the lake. The owner was at home and never noticed you.
5	A hold of O.D.I.N. It was a test. You passed.
6	A room that was not marked on any floor plan. The door was locked from the inside.

A Day in the Life

Infiltrators are people of the night and of preparation. A break-in takes minutes, the preparation weeks. Infiltrators spend most of their time observing: buildings, guards, suppliers, cleaning crews. They sit in cafés opposite, drive past in vans, apply as temporary help, have architects show them floor plans, who believe they have a prospective tenant for a flat in front of them.

At home they practise. Locks, again and again, with closed eyes. Most infiltrators have a door with six different locks in their flat, and they open it once every evening before going to sleep.

On the day of the operation they are calm, almost lethargic. They eat little, sleep in the afternoon, go through everything once more in their head. And then they go in.

Training

In addition to the branch's general training, prospective infiltrators spend three months in a hall in Zurich that looks like a museum, a bank, a villa and a laboratory on the inside, depending on what is currently set up. They learn locks according to Nachtfalter's book, cameras, alarm systems, guard rhythms. They learn to stand in a cupboard for an hour without moving.

The final examination takes place in a real building, without warning. The recruit receives an address and an object to retrieve, and the building knows nothing about it. Anyone who is caught must talk their way out of it themselves. The Legend Office does not help.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not requirements. The nodes mentioned are at the end of the chapter, the craft and the tricks in Chapter IV.

Play Style	Description
The Burglar	Locks, cameras, safes. They retrieve what is locked away. Nodes: Quiet Hands, Keyring, Invisible Minute.
The Scout	They go in ahead of the cell and check. Nodes: Door in the Mind, Change of Guard, plus Escape Route from the craft.
The Facade	Climber, roof runner, entry through the third window on the left. Nodes: Facade Climber, Blind Spot.

RULE: THE RHYTHM

An infiltrator who has observed a building for at least one hour knows the rhythm of the guards and cameras. They receive +1 die on Stealth in this building until the alarm is triggered or the guards change.

RULE: THE SWAP

If an infiltrator swaps an object for a replica, the owner only notices the loss when they examine the object closely: WIS + Perception against the successes of the infiltrator's Stealth test, with +2 dice for the owner if they know the object well.

The Price

Infiltrators pay with loneliness and with a strange kind of homelessness. They know a hundred buildings better than their own flat. They know where the cat sleeps in a villa and which step in the stairwell creaks, but they have never lived there. Many infiltrators can no longer sleep in a strange house without counting the exits in their head. And some eventually notice that they also pay attention to the rhythm of sounds in their own house at night.

OPTIONAL RULE: THE EXITS

An infiltrator who spends the night in a strange building without having counted all the exits beforehand sleeps badly and suffers 1 strain. If they have counted them, they cannot be surprised in this building until the next morning.

D6	What breaking in has cost you
1	You can no longer go through any door without looking at the lock.
2	You only sleep with your back to the wall.
3	You missed your sister's birthday because you were standing in a wardrobe.
4	You recognise guards by their walk, even in civilian clothes, even on holiday.
5	You once took something that was not on the list. It is still in your drawer.
6	You were in a room where time ran differently. Since then, your watch runs slow.

In Play

- **You are the vanguard.** While the others are still planning, you are already inside. You avoid open combat, because if shots are fired, you have done something wrong.
- **Plan with the game master.** Ask about floor plans, guards, cameras. Your strength is preparation.
- **The question for your character:** What did you once fetch and never hand over?

EXAMPLE: MOTH IN THE ARCHIVE

Moth wants to get into the archive of an auction house. She has observed the building for an hour (The Beat, +1 die) and is wearing her camouflage cloak (+1 die, as long as she moves slowly).

A guard patrols the corridor. Opposed test: Moth rolls DEX 5 and Stealth 5, plus 2 bonus dice. White: 6, 2, 5, 1, 3, 4, 1 gives 2 successes. Coloured: 4, 6, 2, 5, 1 gives 3 successes. The guard has WIS 2 and Perception 2, but because of inconspicuousness 2 dice fewer. He has 2 coloured dice left: 5 and 3, one success. Moth passes by.

The door to the archive has an electronic lock, Hard (3). Moth uses Sabotage: The test becomes Doable (2), and an alarm would only come one round later. DEX 5, Security Systems 4 and +1 for her security tool set. White: 5, 2, 1, 6, 3, 1 gives 2 successes, coloured: 4, 1, 3, 6 gives 2. Four successes, three ones, no botch. The door opens.

Playing with Other Classes

The Infiltrator works best with a **Saboteur** who disables systems, and an **Illusionist** among the Thaumaturges who distracts guards. A **Telepath** among the Psions can tell him whether someone is awake in a room. A **Shadow Paratrooper** among the Soldiers shares his way of working, and both understand each other without words. With a **Stormbreaker**, cooperation is more difficult, but useful: He is plan B when the Infiltrator is discovered.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case GA-2210, Geneva. Procurement of a crystal from a bank vault.

Crystal successfully exchanged. Note from the Infiltrator: In the vault lay a second crystal, not recorded, in a lead box with the seal of the Collegium.

Note: Do not pursue further.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case RA-2233, Prague. Reconnaissance of a house after a rift report.

Infiltrator enters the house alone. Radio contact breaks off after 4 minutes. Return after 6 hours. The Infiltrator states that he was only in the house for 10 minutes.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case GA-2251, Vienna. Procurement of documents from the basement of a former embassy.

Documents not found. The Infiltrator reports a basement room with twelve small beds, freshly made. The building has been empty since 1991.

Note: Report forwarded to Retrieval. On instruction.

Questions for Your Infiltrator

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	What became of the things she fetched
2	Why a crystal with the seal of the Collegium lay in the vault in Geneva
3	Who locked the door to the room without a floor plan from the inside
4	Which trick Nachtfalter has not taught anyone else
5	Where the Schlüsselmacherin's key fits
6	Who observed her during the test without her noticing

Equipment of the Subclass

Item	Effect
Nachtfalter's Book	One of the three copies. +1 die on Security Systems for mechanical locks. *Very rare.*
Climbing Gloves	+2 dice on Athletics when climbing smooth walls. *Rare.*
Camera Veil	A spray that lightly clouds lenses for an hour. Cameras only show shapes, and nobody is surprised because lenses simply get dirty. *Rare.*
Replica Case	Contains materials to replicate a small object in one night. A test INT + Craft determines how good. *Rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Negotiators: “They talk their way in. We simply walk. In the end, we are both inside.”

About the Assassins: “We go in without hurting anyone. They don’t. That is the whole difference, and it’s big.”

About the Spies: “They live in the building we break into. Sometimes they let us in.”

About the Saboteurs: “The best colleagues. They switch off the cameras, we go through. Afterwards, we are both gone.”

Characters of the Subclass

Nachtfalter. Ninety-eight, lives in a retirement home in Marseille and occasionally opens the medicine cabinets there to show the carers that she can do it. She receives visits from young infiltrators and teaches them a trick that is in no book.

Senior Agent Arjun Mehta. Head of the hall in Zurich, a former security consultant who advised banks for years on how to keep burglars out, until he realised that he found the other side more exciting.

The Keymaker. An old woman in Vienna who makes keys for the branch from photos and impressions. She asks no questions. She once made a key that fitted no lock that existed, and three weeks later someone found the matching door.

Nachtfalter’s First Lesson, Notes of a Recruit

A lock is a promise that someone has given to another. Listen to it before you break it.

Never walk faster than the people in the building. Whoever runs doesn’t belong here.

Always leave something behind that looks the same. Empty places stand out, false ones don’t.

And if a door is locked from the inside, although no one can be in there: go back.

Example Character: Moth

Infiltrator, Cadet. Mara Lindqvist, 29, was a burglar specialising in museums, until she found something in a vault that looked at her. O.D.I.N. offered her a deal instead of a cell. Her first legend was Clara Weidner, restorer in Kassel. It is burned, and Moth buried it herself (Chapter V).

Moth	Infiltrator, Cadet
Attributes	STR 2, DEX 5, CON 2, INT 3, WIS 3, WIL 2, CHA 2, MAN 3, COM 2
Skills	Stealth 5, Security Systems 4, Dodge 4, Perception 4, Deception 3, Firearms 3, Acrobatics 3, Hacking 2, Disguise 2, Melee 2, Toughness 2, Mental Resistance 1
Values	HP 10, Strain Threshold 8, Initiative 5, Defence 3, Armour 1
Abilities	Inconspicuousness, Quick Escape, Sabotage
Legend	Anna Holmberg, temp at an auction house in Hamburg, depth 1
Drive	Knowledge Seeker. As archetype: The Player

Equipment: Basic agent equipment, light armour, EMP grenade, camouflage cloak. Starting funds €6,000. She returned the crystal detector from the museum after the mission. She misses it.

How to play Moth: You are calm, patient and have a dry sense of humour. You go ahead, open doors and switch off cameras. When shots are fired, you take cover and leave the front to Brandt. You never read what becomes of the things you fetch. Not yet.

The Path Through the False Bottom

Rank	New Nodes and Increases
Agent (20 XP)	Quiet Hands 4, Blind Spot 4, Facade Climber 6, Escape Route 4. She saves the remaining 2 XP. Second legend.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Door in the Mind 6, Keyring 8, Invisible Minute 8, Security Systems to 5 for 10. Third legend.
Veteran (100 XP)	Change of Guard 10, No Trace 10, Weak Point from the Saboteurs 6, Stealth to 6 for 12, Second Nature 4, Cold Stare 4. Fourth legend.

The Pillar in the False Bottom

Level	Node	Effect
I	**Quiet Hands**	Surface. Passive. +2 dice on Security Systems and Sleight of Hand for mechanical locks.
I	**Blind Spot**	*False Bottom*. Passive. Cameras do not detect the infiltrator as long as they move slowly.
II	**Facade Climber**	Surface. Passive. Climbing without equipment, +2 dice on Athletics when climbing.
II	**Door in the Mind**	*False Bottom*. Once per scene, after one minute of observation, they know the floor plan of a building.
III	**Keyring**	Surface. Once per scene, they open a door without a test.
III	**Invisible Minute**	*False Bottom*. Once per mission, they move unnoticed through a guarded area for one minute, without a test.
IV	**Change of Guard**	Surface. They know the routine of every guard after one hour. The cell gains +2 dice on Stealth for the scene.
IV	**No Trace**	*False Bottom*. Passive. They leave no traces. Magical and psionic detection roll against them with −2 dice.
V	**The Ghost**	Mastery. Requires No Trace. Once per mission, they enter and leave any location, no matter how secured, without a test. Afterwards 1 strain.

Chapter VIII. NEGOTIATOR

Negotiator

"Everyone wants something. My job is to find out what before someone draws a weapon."
Negotiator, codename Aria

The Nature of the Subclass

Negotiators talk. They negotiate with hostage-takers, authorities, cult leaders, collectors and sometimes with things that are not human. They are the face of the cell to everyone you do not want to or cannot shoot. Their weapon is attention: they listen until they understand what someone really wants.

Negotiators are not liars, at least not primarily. The best of them almost always tell the truth, just not the whole truth. They know that a good negotiation is based on trust and that trust is the only thing that cannot be faked.

NEGOTIATOR AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 CHA, +1 WIS. **Skills:** +2 Persuasion, +1 Insight, +1 Leadership. **Equipment:** Encrypted communication device, holo-transponder (+1 die on Disguise, creates a credible digital identity).

Psychological Intimidation (passive): +2 dice on Intimidation. The target resists with an opposed test on WIL + Mental Resistance.

Conflict Resolution (active, 1× per scene): As long as no one has attacked yet, the Negotiator gains +2 dice on Negotiation or Persuasion to defuse the situation. If the test succeeds, the counterpart does not attack for at least one round.

Teamwork (active, 1× per scene): The Negotiator coordinates the cell. Up to two allies gain +1 die on their next test.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

The Table

The cellar beneath the church in Naples was damp, and the table in it was old, and at the other end sat a man who had led a cult for forty years and had held four hostages for three days.

Aria sat down. She placed her hands on the table, open, so that he saw she held nothing in them. No one stood behind her. She had demanded it that way. Brandt and the others waited upstairs, and Brandt had not agreed with it, and she had explained to him that a soldier behind her would turn every word she said into a threat.

"You're alone," said the man. He sounded surprised.

"So are you," said Aria.

He laughed briefly. He was old, white-haired, with hands that trembled and eyes that did not. Next to him stood a glass of water that he did not touch. Behind him, on the wall, hung drawings of circles that Aria knew from Folio's notebooks.

"You want the hostages," he said.

"I want to know what you want."

That was the first lesson she had learned in twenty years, at the United Nations, in tents in deserts, in hotel rooms in Geneva, at tables like this one. No one takes hostages because they want hostages. They take them because they want something else and see no other way.

The man looked at her for a long time. Then he said: "My son."

Aria waited.

"He was fourteen when he started singing in his sleep. Then he was gone. The police said he'd run away. But he didn't run away. Men took him, in a van, at night. I saw them. One of them wore a ring like the one you wear."

Aria looked at her hand. The ring was an identification mark of the Operations Branch, plain, silver, with a small engraving that only agents could interpret. She had worn it for so long that she had forgotten that people could see it.

"I know nothing about it," she said, and it was the truth.

"I believe you." The man nodded slowly. "That's the worst part. You don't know it."

She negotiated for two hours. In the end he let the hostages go, all four, unharmed, and gave her a note with a date and a licence plate number. He demanded nothing for it. He only said: "Ask around. That's all. Ask."

Up on the stairs, Brandt waited.

"Well?" he asked.

"They're coming out," said Aria. Then she pulled the ring from her finger, looked at it and put it in her coat pocket. She never wore it again after that. She kept the note.

The Diplomats

Negotiators were long the most respected subclass in the Operations Branch. In the fifties and sixties, O.D.I.N. was small and vulnerable, and its existence depended on governments looking the other way. The Negotiators ensured that. They negotiated with ministries, police authorities and intelligence services, and they laid the foundation for the Veil Protocol.

Since the seventies, their work has shifted. Today they negotiate less with governments than with O.D.I.N.'s opponents: with collectors who want to sell crystals, with cults that take hostages, with foreign services that need a ceasefire. After Nordlicht, they sat at forty-one kitchen tables. And since 2011, they increasingly negotiate with beings that come through rifts and can speak. No Negotiator likes going to these tables. But there is no one else who does.

Legend: Diplomat

The former embassy secretary with the codename **Diplomat** negotiated the Veil Protocol between 1959 and 1961, for two years, in eleven capitals, without ever signing a document. He got governments to agree to something whose existence they officially knew nothing about. They say he never lied during it. He only asked questions until the ministers gave themselves the answers. Afterwards he received a new name and a flat in Lisbon. He died in 1994, as a gardener. That, at any rate, is what his file says.

The First Assignment

D6	The first negotiation you conducted for O.D.I.N.
1	With a mayor who did not want to close a road.
2	With a collector who wanted to sell a crystal, but only to someone who tells him what it is.
3	With a cult leader who had hostages and wanted a name.
4	With an official of a foreign service who wanted the same as you.
5	With your own handler, who wanted to pull you off a mission.
6	With something that spoke through a rift and had your voice.

A Day in the Life

Negotiators spend their days with people. They read files before meeting someone: their family, their debts, their fears, their favourite dish. They phone contacts in authorities, churches, hotels. They go out to eat, often, because people talk better over food than at a desk.

Many Negotiators also work between missions as mediators within O.D.I.N.: between branches that are not on good terms, between a cell and its handler, between the Collegium and the Tactical Branch, when it is once again about crystal dust.

In the evenings they are often exhausted, in a way that others do not understand. Listening is exhausting. Reading the mood of a room for hours, every pause, every gesture, every lie, is more exhausting than any fight.

Training

Prospective Negotiators spend their training in real negotiations, first as observers, then as assistants, finally alone. In addition, they learn psychology, body language, interrogation technique and the art of asking a question in such a way that the answer reveals more than intended.

The final examination is a negotiation with an instructor who plays a role: a hostage-taker, a collector, a cult leader. The recruit does not know what the instructor wants. They have one hour to find out. Whoever does not find out repeats the examination. Whoever finds out, but has to lie to get it, passes only with reservations.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not obligations. The nodes mentioned are at the end of the chapter, the craft and the tricks in Chapter IV.

Play Style	Description
The Mediator	He defuses conflicts before they begin. Nodes: Voice of Reason, The Protocol.
The Interrogator	He gets people to talk, with patience and pressure. Nodes: Open Account, Guilt and Atonement, plus Cold Stare from the craft.
The Leader	He coordinates the cell, distributes tasks, holds everyone together. Nodes: First Impression, Command Tone.

RULE: WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Once per scene, the Negotiator can roll a test WIS + Insight against MAN + Deception of their counterpart in a conversation. If it succeeds, the game master tells them what the counterpart really wants. Not what they demand, but what they want.

RULE: THE WORD

If a Negotiator makes a promise in a negotiation and keeps it, they receive +2 dice on all social tests at the next meeting with the same counterpart. If they break it, they roll with −2 dice at every further meeting, and the game master may decide that word gets around.

The Price

Negotiators pay with their innocence. Whoever listens long enough learns things they do not want to know: about opponents, about allies, about O.D.I.N. Many Negotiators have sat at tables where someone told them something about their own organisation that they did not want to believe. Some stopped asking afterwards. Some started.

OPTIONAL RULE: WHAT YOU DID NOT WANT TO KNOW

If a Negotiator wins the test from What do you want? with 3 or more margin, the game master may additionally tell them something they did not want to know: about an ally, about O.D.I.N., about themselves. They receive 1 strain. At the end of the mission, it counts as the personal bonus of the mission.

D6	What listening has cost you
1	You notice when someone is lying. Even with your children. Even at dinner.
2	You made a promise to a hostage-taker that you were not allowed to keep.
3	You know what a cult leader knows about O.D.I.N. You wish you did not know it.
4	You only drink tea now, because you talk too fast with coffee.
5	A being once listened to you. Since then, you dream in its voice.
6	You have caught your handler lying twice. You never told them.

In Play

- **You talk where others would shoot.** You are the face of the cell to witnesses, authorities and cult leaders, and you hold the cell together when things get dicey.
- **Ask about what lies behind it.** Your strength is finding out what someone really wants.
- **The question for your character:** Which question have you not yet dared to ask?

Playing with Other Classes

The Negotiator is the natural partner of the **Telepath**: one talks, the other hears what lies behind the words. With an **Investigator**, especially a Profiler, they form an interrogation team that hardly anyone survives. A **Soldier** nearby is useful as long as they stay out of sight. And with an **Invoker** among the Thaumaturges, they share the art of negotiating with beings that are not human. Invoker and Negotiators often compare their notes.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case RA-2240, Naples. Hostage-taking in a cellar vault.

Four hostages freed unharmed, without violence. The perpetrator was not arrested, at the request of the Negotiator.

Note from the handler: The Negotiator did not hand over a note from the perpetrator. Follow up.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case SA-2198, Lyon. Negotiation with a being from a rift.

The being demands a name in exchange for its withdrawal. The Negotiator gives the name of one of their legends. The being withdraws.

Addendum: The legend has not been findable since. The flat is empty, the papers are blank, the neighbours remember no one.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case SA-2261, Geneva. Annual dinner, hostess Okonjo.

Present: representatives of all six branches. Result: The Collegium leaves twelve bags of chamber chalk to the Tactical Branch without a request.

Note: A seventh place setting was laid. No one sat down at it. The hostess says it is always like that.

EXAMPLE: ARIA IN THE CELLAR

On the table in Naples lies a pistol, but no one has attacked yet. Aria uses Conflict Resolution and rolls CHA 5 and Negotiation 4, plus 2 bonus dice, against Hard (3). White: 5, 1, 6, 2, 3, 5, 4 yields 3 successes, coloured: 2, 4, 6, 1 yields 2. Five successes, 2 margin. The man does not attack for at least one round, and the margin means: he pushes the pistol aside.

Then What do you want?: WIS 4 and Insight 4 against his MAN 3 and Deception 3. Aria rolls white 6, 3, 2, 5 and coloured 4, 4, 1, 3, total 4 successes. He rolls white 5, 1, 2 and coloured 6, 2, 4, total 3. Aria wins narrowly. The game master tells her what he wants. It is in none of his demands: his son.

Questions for Your Negotiator

D6	What your character does not know yet
1	Who took the son of the man from Naples
2	What the mark on the note stands for
3	Why a being wanted the name of a legend
4	Whether Diplomat really died as a gardener
5	For whom Madame Okonjo lays the seventh place setting
6	What she herself wants when no one asks her

Equipment of the Subclass

Item	Effect
Dossier	A file about the counterpart, compiled by the Legend Office. +1 die on all social tests against this person. Takes three days. *Common.*
Earpiece with Prompter	A colleague listens in and whispers. The Negotiator can receive prompting from another without it being noticed. *Rare.*

Item	Effect
Translator in the Ear	An earpiece through which a translator from the Print Shop listens in and translates quietly. Negotiation in any language, with −1 die. *Rare.*
Diplomatic Passport	A legend with diplomatic status. Once per mission, it gets past a checkpoint without being searched. *Very rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Infiltrators: "They go where I talk. Sometimes I talk so that they can go."

About the Assassins: "If I fail, they come. That is a good reason not to fail."

About the Spies: "They lie longer than we do. We lie better because we do it less often."

About the Saboteurs: "Nice people. One should not let them near a negotiating table. They always look for where the load-bearing walls are."

Characters of the Subclass

Madame Okonjo. The most senior Negotiator of the branch, a Nigerian woman in her seventies, who lives in Geneva and gives a dinner there every year to which representatives of all branches are invited. Whoever sits there talks to people they would otherwise never talk to. That is the point.

Senior Agent Lukas Bremer. A former police negotiator from Munich who came to O.D.I.N. after ending a hostage-taking in which the hostage-taker was not human. He does not talk about it. He always carries a thermos of tea with him because the hostage-taker wanted tea back then.

The Man from Naples. The old cult leader who gave Aria the note. He is still alive. He waits.

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MADAME OKONJO'S TABLE RULES, ON THE BACK OF
EVERY INVITATION
No one sits next to someone from their own
branch.
Work is not discussed until after the main
course, Elster never.
Whoever lies pays for the next bottle. Whoever
notices may choose it.
Whoever needs to cry may go into the garden.
No one follows them.
```

Example Character: Aria

Negotiator, Cadet. Dr. Selin Aydın, 44, was an interpreter at peace talks for eight years and then a mediator for the United Nations for twelve years, in refugee camps, border regions and hotel rooms in Geneva. During a negotiation in a village in the Caucasus, she sat opposite a village elder who knew things he could not know. Three weeks later, a man in a grey coat rang the doorbell.

Aria	Negotiator, Cadet
Attributes	STR 1, DEX 3, CON 2, INT 3, WIS 4, WIL 2, CHA 5, MAN 2, COM 2
Skills	Persuasion 5, Negotiation 4, Insight 4, Leadership 3, Deception 3, Etiquette 3, Dodge 3, Perception 3, Stealth 2, Firearms 2, Stress Management 2, Mental Resistance 1
Values	HP 8, strain threshold 8, initiative 3, defence 2
Abilities	Psychological Intimidation, Conflict Resolution, Teamwork
Legend	Dr. Leyla Demir, consultant for a conflict research foundation in Vienna, depth 1
Drive	Archetype: The Observer

Equipment: Basic agent equipment, holo-transponder, dossier. Starting funds €7,000. And a note from Naples with a date and a registration number.

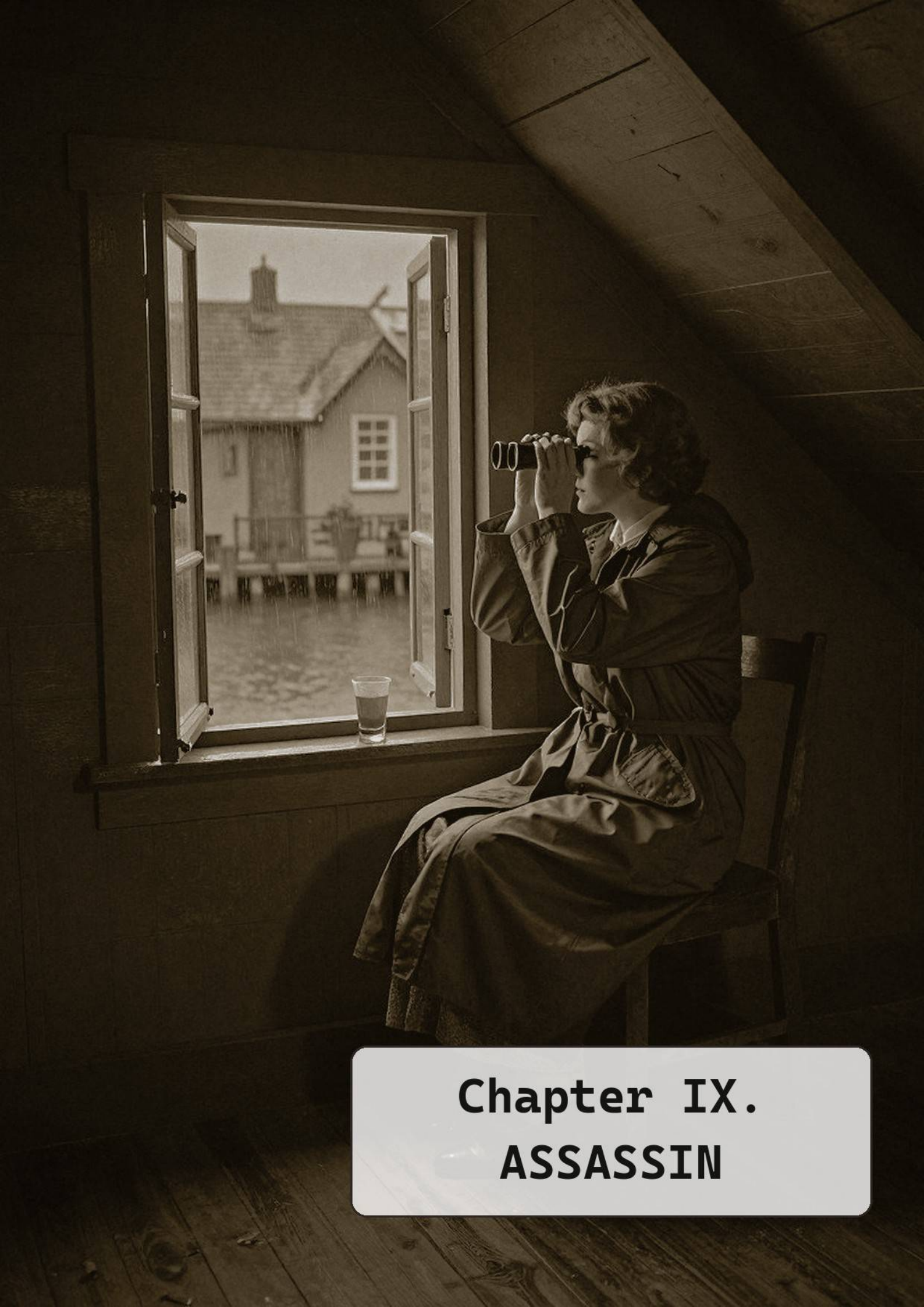
How to play Aria: You are calm, warm and very attentive. You ask questions, and you really listen to the answers. Since Naples you no longer wear the ring, and you have a question you have not yet asked anyone.

The Path Through the False Bottom

Rank	New nodes and increases
Agent (20 XP)	First Impression 4, Open Account 4, Voice of Reason 6, Cold Stare 4. She saves the remaining 2 XP. Second legend.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	The Offer 6, Table of Enemies 8, Guilt and Atonement 8, Negotiation to 5 for 10. Third legend.
Veteran (100 XP)	Command Tone 10, Veil Work 10, Toughness new at 1 for 3, Insight to 5 for 10, Escape Route 4, Stress Management to 3 for 6. Fourth legend.

The Pillar in the False Bottom

Level	Node	Effect
I	**First Impression**	Surface. Passive. +2 dice on the first social test against someone the Negotiator meets for the first time.
I	**Open Account**	*False Bottom*. Once per scene, they learn with a WIS + Insight test what can be used to pressure their counterpart.
II	**Voice of Reason**	Surface. Passive. Conflict Resolution also works when an attack has already occurred.
II	**The Offer**	*False Bottom*. Once per mission, an opponent switches sides for one scene. Opposed test CHA + Persuasion against WIL + Mental Resistance. Does not work on leaders or supernatural beings.
III	**Table of Enemies**	Surface. Passive. They can negotiate with speaking supernatural beings as with humans, without a horror test at the first word.
III	**Guilt and Atonement**	*False Bottom*. Once per mission, a counterpart answers one question truthfully. Afterwards it hates them.
IV	**Command Tone**	Surface. Passive. Teamwork affects the entire cell.
IV	**Veil Work**	*False Bottom*. Once per mission, an incident disappears from the press, police files and talk, as if it had never happened.
V	**The Protocol**	Mastery. Requires Veil Work. Once per mission, they end a conflict without combat. The opponent withdraws and keeps to the agreement. Afterwards 1 strain.



Chapter IX. ASSASSIN

Assassin

"There are no clean solutions. There are only quiet ones."
Assassin, codename Nadel

The Nature of the Subclass

Assassins end threats that cannot be ended any other way. They are the quietest and last option of the Operations Branch. Their targets are cult leaders who do not negotiate, collectors who sacrifice people, rogue agents who know too much, and sometimes things that look like people and are not.

Assassins are not soldiers. They do not fight, they wait. Most of their operations consist of days of observation and a single moment. If that moment is well chosen, it looks afterwards like an accident, a heart attack, a fall. If it is badly chosen, there is no second.

ASSASSIN AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 DEX, +1 STR. **Skills:** +2 Melee, +1 Stealth, +1 Tracking. **Equipment:** stealth armour, silenced pistol, combat stiletto, one explosive charge.

Quick Kill (passive): If the Assassin attacks from hiding, they gain +2 dice on the attack.

Killing Precision (active): Announced before initiative. The Assassin acts last this round, but their attack deals +2 damage.

Silent Movement (passive): +2 dice on Stealth, even in poor conditions such as gravel, rain, or light.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

The List

The envelope lay on the kitchen table when Nadel came home, and she knew what was inside before she opened it. No one except her handler knew this flat. No one except him could have placed an envelope on the table without breaking down the door.

Inside lay a photograph. A man, mid-fifties, grey hair, thin-rimmed glasses. On the back a name, an address in Antwerpen, a date. And a sentence, in the handler's handwriting: *He bought children.*

Nadel sat down and looked at the photograph for a long time. Then she made herself a tea and looked at it even longer.

She had been an Assassin for half a year, and this was her second envelope. Before that she had worked for a private security service in Geneva that solved problems for people who had a great deal of money, and she had never asked what the problems had done. At O.D.I.N. she always asked. That was the difference she had told herself, and most of the time she believed it.

The man in Antwerpen was a collector. Crystals, artefacts, old manuscripts. And, if the sentence was true, children. Children who sang in their sleep.

She drove the next morning. For three days she watched the house: a narrow townhouse on a canal, a dog, a housekeeper who left at four p.m. The man walked the dog along the canal every evening at ten p.m., always the same route, always to the third bridge and back.

On the fourth evening she waited at the third bridge.

It was raining. That was good. Rain makes people inattentive, and it explains why someone slips on the railing. She stood in the shadow of a doorway, hands in her pockets, and watched him come, with the dog on a lead and an umbrella that blocked his view to the left.

He stopped at the bridge. The dog sniffed at a lamppost. Nadel stepped out of the shadow.

And then she saw the child.

It sat upstairs in the window of the house opposite, a girl, perhaps six years old, in a nightdress, and looked down at the canal, at the man with the dog, at her. It looked directly at her. It hummed. Nadel did not hear it, but she saw the lips moving, in a rhythm that seemed familiar to her, without her knowing where from.

She stood still. The man walked on, with the dog, back to his house.

Nadel did not go back to the bridge. She went to the house opposite and rang the bell, and no one opened, and when she came back the next morning, the flat on the second floor was empty, as if no one had ever lived there.

Her report stated that the situation did not permit execution. Her handler accepted that without question. It was the first time he asked no questions, and that unsettled her more than anything else.

The Silent Ones

The Operations Branch has never officially admitted that it employs Assassins. In the files, their operations are called **Final Solutions**. Until 1989 they required the authorisation of a Shadow Officer, since then that of a member of the Council.

In the first decades, Assassins were rare. O.D.I.N. was small, and every death raised questions. Since the seventies, as cults and collectors grew more powerful, there have been more of them. After the betrayal of 1989, the Assassins received a new task, spoken of only quietly in the Branch: they hunted the buyers of the list. Some say they hunt Elster to this day.

Assassins are under special supervision within the branch. They speak with a psychologist every month, and each of their missions is followed up by a second agent. This is meant to protect them. The assassins say it is meant to protect the others from them.

Legend: Die Näherin

It is said that Evelyn Marsh personally trained the first assassin of the branch, a young woman from her network in Lyon who had poisoned three German officers during the war without anyone ever recognising the connection. Her codename was **Näherin**, as Marsh herself had been in Lyon. She worked until 1971. It is said that she killed eleven people during that time and asked each one beforehand whether they wanted to say anything else. Most did. She wrote everything down. The notebooks are with the Council.

The First Assignment

D6	How your first assignment as an assassin ended
1	As planned. It looked like an accident. You sometimes dream about it.
2	The target was not a human. That made it easier, or harder.
3	The target recognised you and told you a name before they died.
4	You did not do it. Your handler accepted it. You do not know who did it afterwards.
5	It was someone from O.D.I.N. You were only told who afterwards.
6	You spared a witness. They are still alive. They know what you look like.

A Day in the Life

Assassins live quietly. Most have a legend with a boring profession, accountant, translator, archivist, and they enjoy living it because it offers so little excitement. They do sport, often alone, often swimming or running, because you do not have to talk while doing it.

Between missions they practise. Close combat, poisons, precision shooting, the art of waiting motionless for hours. And they read, a lot. Most assassins are better read than their colleagues, because books are the only company that asks no questions.

Missions are rare, perhaps two a year. They begin with an envelope and end with a report, and in between lie days about which an assassin speaks to no one, not even their cell. Most cells do not know that one of their members is an assassin. It is better that way.

Training

Assassins are not recruited. They are selected from the branch, usually after several years as an agent, by a Shadow Officer who has observed them for a long time. Training lasts one year and takes place in changing locations, with a single teacher.

They learn close combat, poisons, anatomy and the art of making a death look like an accident. Above all, however, they learn patience and doubt. An assassin who does not doubt is not deployed. The final examination consists of a conversation with a psychologist who asks only one question: Why? Anyone who does not have a good answer does not pass.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not mandatory. The nodes mentioned are at the end of the chapter, the craft and the tricks in Chapter IV.

Play Style	Description
The Shadow	Attacks from concealment, silent, fast. Nodes: Shadow at the Back, Throat Cut, Second Stab.
The Poisoner	They choose the means, not the blade. Nodes: Silent Tool, Poison, Accident.
The Hunter	They pursue targets over days and weeks, read tracks, wait. Combines well with Tracking, Perception and Memory from the Spies.

RULE: THE FINAL SOLUTION

A mission in which an assassin deliberately kills a person requires authorisation. Without it, the assassin receives no XP for the achieved mission objective for this mission and rolls a horror test against Disturbing (2). With authorisation, they only roll the horror test.

The game master grants authorisation as the handler. They should ask why.

RULE: POISONS

An assassin with Poison prepares it before a mission: one hour and a test INT + Medicine against Doable (2). It remains effective for one day. The effects are listed under the Poison node and in Chapter VI.

The Follow-Up

After every Final Solution, the branch sends a second agent to the location. They arrive days or weeks later, usually as an insurance agent, journalist or neighbour, and they check whether the accident has remained an accident. They speak with witnesses, read police reports, observe the family. Then they write a report that the assassin never gets to see. The follow-up agents are almost always Spies or Negotiators, and they do not learn who was there before them. Some assassins have met their follow-up agent years later in another cell without knowing it. Some have suspected it, from the way the other looked at them.

REQUEST FOR FINAL SOLUTION, FORM E-7

Target, codename or description:

Reason, in one sentence:

Which other solutions were attempted?

Who else is affected besides the target?

Approved by, identifier of the Council member only:

Follow-up by, not to be filled in:

The Assassin confirms that the why was stated to them. Signature with codename:

The Price

Assassins pay with something that no rule can represent. Most remember every face. Many have rituals to live with it: a candle, a name in a notebook, a walk to a particular place. And almost all are afraid of the day when they stop doubting. Because then, they know, it is time to stop.

OPTIONAL RULE: THE NOTEBOOK

If an Assassin writes the name in their notebook after a Final Solution and speaks it aloud once, they roll the horror test for this mission with +1 die. If they lose the notebook, they roll each of these tests until the end of the campaign with −1 die.

D6	What waiting has cost you
1	You remember every face. Every one.
2	You swim alone every morning, in the same pool, in the same lane.
3	Your hands are always steady. That frightens the people around you.
4	You have a dog in a legend. It is the only one who knows you.
5	You once spared someone, and someone else died for it.
6	When falling asleep, you count names instead of sheep.

In Play

- **You wait for the one moment and use it.** In combat, you open from concealment and finish what others cannot finish.
- **Play the doubt.** How you live with what you do is one of the best questions for your game.
- **The question for your character:** When did you last not do what was wanted of you?

Playing with Other Classes

An Assassin works best with people who create the opportunity for them: an **Infiltrator** who gets them in, an **Investigator** who finds the target, a **Precognitive** among the Psions who sees the right moment. A **Psychic Healer** in the cell is more important than most Assassins admit. And a **Soldier** is plan B when the one moment does not come.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case EL-1990-03, Trieste. Final Solution, approved.

Target: buyer of the list from the case Elster. Carried out.

Addendum: In the target's possession a photo of Elster, dated 1990, after her disappearance.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case EL-2241, Antwerp. Final Solution, approved.

Not carried out. Reason given by the Assassin: situation did not allow execution.

Note by the handler: Accepted. No follow-up question.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case EL-2011-07, Istanbul. Final Solution, approved. Target: a woman around sixty at the airport, tip from a hotel bar.

Not carried out. The target was a pensioner from Izmir.

Note: The tip came via a dead drop of the branch. Sender unknown.

EXAMPLE: NADEL IN THE YARD

A mercenary (Pro: Defence 2, Armour 2, 9 HP) guards the door of a warehouse, the yard is full of gravel. Nadel sneaks up: DEX 5 and Stealth 5, plus +3 dice for Silent Movement and stealth armour, against WIS 2 and Perception 2 of the mercenary. She wins with 5 to 2 successes. He is surprised and has no action in the first round.

Before initiative, she announces Killing Precision. Her attack with the combat stiletto: STR 3 and Melee 5, plus +2 dice for Quick Kill, against Defence 1, because the target is surprised. White: 6, 5, 2, 1, 5 gives 3 successes, coloured: 4, 6, 3, 5, 2 gives 3. Six successes, 5 margin, a critical success. Nadel chooses: The armour does not count.

Damage: 2 for the stiletto, 5 margin, 2 for Killing Precision, total 9. The mercenary collapses without a sound.

Questions for Your Assassin

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	Who the girl at the window was and where she went
2	Why their handler did not ask any follow-up questions
3	What the girl was humming
4	Who protects the man in Antwerp instead
5	Whether Elster really lives
6	Whose name comes next in their notebook

Equipment of the Subclass

Item	Effect
Ceramic Blade	A knife that no metal detector finds. Damage 2. *Rare.*
Poison Kit	Contains ingredients for three poisons. *Rare.*
Stranger's Gloves	Thin gloves whose surface bears the fingerprints of a person who has been dead for years. Investigators find his traces, not hers. *Very rare.*
The Notebook	An empty notebook that every Assassin receives. One writes the names in it. No game value, except with the optional rule The Notebook. Everyone carries it.

The Others and Us

About the Infiltrators: "They go in and take something with them. We go in and leave something behind."

About the Negotiators: "If they succeed, we are not needed. We wish them success every day."

About the Spies: "They know everyone. We know only one, and not for long."

About the Saboteurs: "They kill machines. That is more honest."

Characters of the Subclass

The Teacher. An old Assassin whose codename nobody knows, who has trained all Assassins of the branch for thirty years. He lives in changing places and comes to his students, not the other way round. He has never killed anyone, he says. Nobody believes him, and nobody asks.

Dr. Hanna Voigt. The psychologist of the Assassins, who meets them every month. Besides the Teacher, she is the only one in the branch who knows all Assassins. That makes her the most endangered person in the Operations Branch, and she knows it.

The Girl at the Window. A child whom Nadel saw in Antwerp. It was gone the next morning. Nadel is looking for it.

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DR. VOIGT'S QUESTIONS, THE SAME EVERY MONTH
How do you sleep?
Whose face did you see when you closed your eyes this week?
When did you last doubt, and what about?
And then, every time, as if it were the first time: Why?
```

Example Character: Nadel

Assassin, Cadet. Chloé Varenne, 36, worked for six years for a private security service in Geneva that solved problems for rich people. She never asked what the problems had done. During a job in a monastery in the Alps, she solved a problem that was not human. O.D.I.N. found her afterwards in a hospital.

Nadel	Assassin, Cadet
Attributes	STR 3, DEX 5, CON 2, INT 2, WIS 3, WIL 3, CHA 1, MAN 2, COM 3
Skills	Melee 5, Stealth 5, Dodge 4, Perception 4, Firearms 3, Acrobatics 3, Tracking 2, Deception 2, Toughness 2, Medicine 2, Sleight of Hand 2, Mental Resistance 1
Values	HP 10, Strain Threshold 10, Initiative 5, Defence 3, Armour 1
Abilities	Quick Kill, Killing Precision, Silent Movement
Legend	Élise Moreau, conference interpreter in Brussels, depth 1
Drive	Archetype: The Tired One

Equipment: Agent basic equipment, stealth armour, silenced pistol, combat stiletto, one explosive charge, the notebook. Starting funds €5,000.

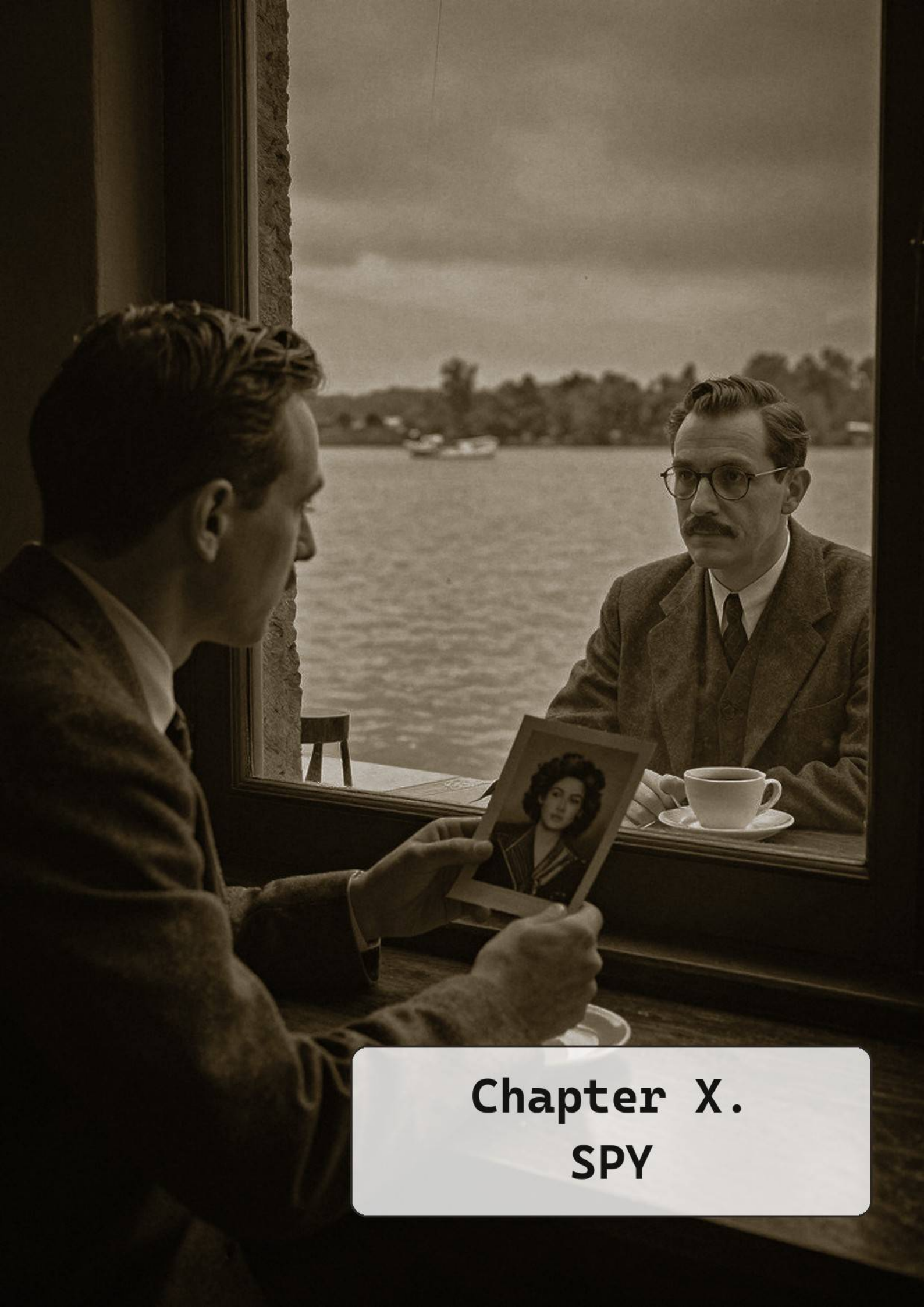
How to play Nadel: You are quiet, polite, and observe more than you talk. You always ask why. Since Antwerp, you no longer ask only your handler, but also yourself.

The Path Through the False Bottom

Rank	New Nodes and Increases
Agent (20 XP)	Shadow at the Back 4, Silent Tool 4, Throat Cut 6, Cold Stare 4. She saves the remaining 2 XP. Second legend, ceramic blade.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Poison 6, Second Stab 8, Accident 8, Tracking to 3 for 6, Escape Route 4. Third legend.
Veteran (100 XP)	Last Breath 10, Silver Stab 10, Quiet Hands from the Infiltrators 6, Melee to 6 for 12, Medicine to 3 for 6. Fourth legend.

The Pillar in the False Bottom

Level	Node	Effect
I	**Shadow at the Back**	Surface. Passive. +1 damage on attacks from behind or from hiding.
I	**Silent Tool**	*False Bottom*. Passive. Searches do not find his weapons as long as they are small enough to carry on the body.
II	**Throat Cut**	Surface. A melee attack from hiding immediately takes out a henchman.
II	**Poison**	*False Bottom*. His prepared weapons deal +1 damage, and the target rolls with −1 die for one scene.
III	**Second Stab**	Surface. Once per round, after he has taken out an opponent, immediately a second melee attack.
III	**Accident**	*False Bottom*. A death he causes looks like an accident. Investigators roll with −3 dice.
IV	**Last Breath**	Surface. Killing Precision applies without him having to act last.
IV	**Silver Stab**	*False Bottom*. His melee attacks from hiding also hit beings that do not feel ordinary weapons.
V	**The Needle**	Mastery. Requires Silver Stab. Once per mission, an attack from hiding immediately takes out a human opponent or deals 10 damage to any other being. Afterwards 1 strain.



Chapter X.
SPY

Spy

"I was someone else for four years. Sometimes I miss him."
Spy, codename Kuckuck

The Nature of the Subclass

Spies live in other people's lives. They become part of the organisations they spy on: foundations, cults, companies, foreign services. They stay there for months, sometimes years, and they get information that no one else gets because they belong.

No agent carries as many and as deep legends as a Spy. That makes them the backbone of the Operations Branch and the people at O.D.I.N. who risk the most. Not their lives, that too, but above all themselves. The danger is not discovery. The danger is that they forget who they are.

SPY AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 INT, +1 CHA. **Skills:** +2 Deception, +1 Perception, +1 Hacking. **Equipment:** mini camera, signal converter (taps into communication networks, +1 die on Hacking for radio and telephone networks), light armour.

Double Identity (passive): +2 dice on Deception and Disguise as long as he appears in a prepared cover identity. Anyone trying to expose him rolls with −2 dice.

False Information (active, 1× per scene): +2 dice on a Deception test with which he spreads misinformation. If it succeeds, the opponent makes a wrong decision determined by the game master.

Secret Code Decryption (passive): +2 dice on Cryptography.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

The Christmas Party

The foundation's Christmas party had taken place in the basement restaurant of a hotel on the Rhine, and Martin Kessler had, as every year, worn a tie with reindeer because that was expected of Martin Kessler.

Kuckuck remembered this party when, a good year later, he sat in a café in Konstanz. Not the foundation, not the director, not the crystals that had passed over his desk, hidden in invoices for restorations. The party.

He had danced with Sabine from accounting. She was fifty, divorced, had two grown sons and a dog named Otto, and she had told him that she had not met anyone in years with whom one could simply talk. He had laughed and said that he felt the same way. That had been the truth. That was the problem.

Martin Kessler had liked Sabine. Kuckuck did not know whether he himself had liked her or whether he had been so deep inside Martin Kessler that it no longer made a difference.

That evening the director of the foundation had given a speech. He had spoken about art, about responsibility, about preserving things that are older than we are. Afterwards he had gone through the rows of tables and shaken everyone's hand. He had stopped at Martin Kessler.

"You've been with us for three years now," he had said.

"Three years in March."

"You are very thorough. I like that." The director had smiled and shaken his hand longer than the others. "We should have a talk sometime. About your future. I might have a task that requires more trust."

Kuckuck had not slept that night. He had reported to his handler via the dead drop that access to the foundation's inner circle was imminent, after three years, and that he would continue. That was the moment he had been working towards.

A year later he found the photo of Elster.

In Konstanz, in the café, he thought of Sabine. He had not said goodbye to her. Martin Kessler had simply stopped coming to work, and the foundation had reported to the police that he had disappeared. Sabine had probably waited for a while. Perhaps she was still waiting.

He ordered a second coffee and thought about whether one is allowed to miss someone who never knew you. And whether one is allowed to miss someone you yourself never were.

The Sleepers

Spies are as old as the Branch. Evelyn Marsh was one herself, and the first decades of the Operations Branch were a time of great legends: agents who sat in authorities, embassies and companies and ensured that O.D.I.N. always knew what the world knew about the supernatural. In the Branch they were called **Sleepers**, because some of them did nothing for ten years but live, until they were needed once.

Elster changed everything. After 1989 Spies got stricter rules: no more than five legends, regular conversations with psychologists, obligation to return after every mission. And since then a Spy may never again know as much as Elster knew.

Since 2011 their work has shifted. Fewer authorities, more cults and collectors. The cults are more dangerous than any embassy, because in a cult it is not enough to lie well. You also have to be able to believe. Some Spies have come back from cults and have continued to sing, quietly, in their sleep.

Legend: Elster

The most famous spy of the branch is also its greatest shame. **Elster** joined the Operations Branch in 1969 and was considered the best for twenty years. She lived in a legend in East Berlin, in another in Moscow, in a third in Washington, sometimes in all three in the same year. She obtained information that saved O.D.I.N. from at least four disasters. And then, in September 1989, she disappeared with a list that cost sixty agents their lives. In the branch, her story is told to every new spy. Not as a warning against betrayal, but as a warning about what happens when you lead too many lives and no longer know which one you are committed to.

The First Assignment

D6	Your first legend in a foreign organisation
1	A caretaker in a church where too many people met at night.
2	A secretary of a collector who knew more about his business than his wife.
3	A newcomer in a cult that accepted you faster than expected.
4	An intern in a ministry. You found the file on O.D.I.N. It was empty.
5	A waiter in a hotel where foreign services met.
6	A member of another O.D.I.N. cell. Nobody told you why.

A Day in the Life

A spy has no typical day, because he is someone else every day. In the legend, he lives the life that the legend demands: he goes to work, meets colleagues, runs errands, goes to the gym, argues with the landlord. On the side, he observes, remembers, collects. In the evening, he writes down what he has seen and puts it in a dead drop.

Between legends, he makes the return: a day alone, as himself. Many spies spend this day in a place that belongs only to them, in a café, in a park, on a stretch of beach. They say their name to themselves. They call no one. And the next morning, they put on the next legend.

The Answer

The psychologist had a room on the third floor of an office building in Zurich, with two armchairs, a window facing the courtyard, and a clock that you couldn't hear ticking. Kuckuck sat there for a quarter of an hour without either of them saying anything. That was how every return began.

"What did you have for breakfast today?" she asked finally.

"Coffee. A croissant."

"And Martin Kessler?"

"Muesli. With apple. He always cut the apple himself because he thought the pre-cut ones in the shop tasted of nothing." He listened to himself and noticed that he was smiling.

She wrote nothing down. She never wrote anything down while someone was speaking. She asked about Sabine, about the Christmas party, about the director. She did not ask about the photo, and he did not know whether she knew about it or whether she was just good at not asking.

At the end, she asked the question that every spy must answer after every legend. “Who are you now? One sentence is enough.”

He thought for a long time. He thought of bus number 32 and the wall in the city park and the Basel accent that had slipped out in the café in Konstanz. Then he said the sentence that later stood in his file, and the psychologist wrote it down, for the first time that afternoon.

Training

Spies are selected in the general training of the branch, usually by the instructors who notice who holds their legend best. After that follows a year in a real legend, in a foreign city, with a real assignment, but without real danger.

The final examination is the return. After a year, the recruit must shed their legend, in a room with a psychologist, and tell who they are. Not who they were before they came. Who they are now. The answer is not graded. But it is written down, and after every further legend they must give it again.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not requirements. The mentioned nodes are at the end of the chapter, the craft and the tricks in Chapter IV.

Play Style	Description
The Mole	He lives in foreign organisations and obtains information from within. Nodes: Mole, Double Agent, Deep Legend.
The Listener	He listens in on what others say: telephones, radio, conversations. Nodes: Memory, Dead Line.
The Forger	He lays false trails, invents information, misleads opponents. Nodes: False Trail, Network, plus The Excuse under the tricks.

RULE: THE RETURN

After every mission that a spy has spent predominantly in a legend, they must spend a day as themselves. If they do not, their Fade increases by 1 until the next return.

RULE: BEING ABLE TO BELIEVE

A Spy in a legend within a cult receives +2 dice on Deception tests as long as they take part in the cult’s rituals. After each mission in this legend, they make a horror test against Uncanny (1).

The Price

Spies pay with themselves. They know how a hundred people live, and they have no time to live one of those lives. Many have friendships in their legends that they can never end, and love stories that get no farewell. And some eventually notice that they also play a role in the return: the role of the agent who remembers their name.

OPTIONAL RULE: THE SENTENCE AFTER THE RETURN

After each return, the player writes a single sentence on a piece of paper: Who is my character now? The game master collects the pieces of paper without reading them. If the Spy ever loses the thread (Fade), the player may draw one of their old sentences and read it aloud. If they make it true in this scene in play, they reduce 1 strain.

D6	What the legends have cost you
1	You have a birthday that you no longer celebrate because you no longer know if it is yours.
2	A woman in another city believes you are still together.
3	You laugh at the wrong places when you are tired. At the places of a legend.
4	Your mother calls you by your name, and you only turn around the second time.
5	You have left a cult. The melody has not left you.
6	In your return, you once said a sentence that the psychologist did not want to write down.

In Play

- **You live in foreign lives.** You get access to information that no one else gets because you become part of the organisation you are spying on.
- **Play the people in the legend.** The neighbour, the colleague, the boss. They make your story.
- **The question for your character:** Who do you miss who never knew you?

Playing with Other Classes

The Spy provides the information with which the cell works. An **Investigator** turns it into evidence, a **Negotiator** into pressure, an **Infiltrator** into a plan. A **Telepath** among the Psions is their greatest ally and their greatest risk: they can confirm that a contact is lying, and they can notice that the Spy themselves no longer knows who they are. And an **Illusionist** among the Thaumaturges understands them better than anyone else, because Illusionists too sometimes search for their own face.

From the Files

PERSONNEL FILE, EXCERPT

Spy, codename KUCKUCK. Answer after the return from the legend KESSLER:

"I am the one who remembers Martin Kessler."

Psychologist's note: Second conversation recommended.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Operation GA-2177, Graz. Observation of a cult.

Spy reports that the cult does not worship a god, but a melody. They have learned it. They can no longer forget it.

Note: Return ordered. Conversation with the Psionic Core requested.

PERSONNEL FILE, EXCERPT

Spy, codename KUCKUCK. New creation of the file on orders from above. Rank: Cadet.

Previous legends: not transferred. Previous answers after the return: not transferred.

Psychologist's marginal note, handwritten: Where are my conversation notes?

EXAMPLE: KUCKUCK AT THE BORDER

A man from a foreign service (Professional, WIS 3, Insight 3) checks the papers of Jonas Feld on the night train. Kuckuck rolls MAN 3 and Deception 5, plus +2 for Double Identity. The examiner rolls with 2 fewer dice because of Double Identity. Kuckuck achieves 5 successes, the examiner 3. They return the papers.

Then the man asks about a traveller who matches Kuckuck's description. Kuckuck uses False Information, another +2 dice. Together with Double Identity that would be +4, but no test receives more than +3. White: 6, 2, 5, 5, 1, 3 results in 3 successes, coloured: 2, 4, 4, 6, 1 results in 3. The examiner rolls 1 success. Kuckuck tells them about a man who got off in Linz, and the game master decides: The foreign service searches in Linz for the next two days.

Questions for Your Spy

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	Why Elster was seen in a photo with the foundation director
2	Who wrote the instruction in foreign handwriting
3	Who waited for them in Mulhouse
4	Why the legend Kessler was not archived
5	Whether Sabine is still waiting
6	Who they really are when they are not wearing a legend

Equipment of the Subclass

Item	Effect
Key ring	A ring with the keys of all legends. No game value. Every Spy has one.
Diary in secret code	Here the Spy writes down what happens in their legends. +1 die to remember a detail from a legend. *Common.*
Second phone	A phone that has been running for the legend for years: messages, photos, old chats with people who exist. +1 die on Deception when someone looks through the phone. *Rare.*
Elster's code	An encryption system that Elster developed and that the branch never fully abandoned after 1989. +2 dice on Cryptography against messages from the seventies and eighties. *Very rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Infiltrators: "They come for one night. We stay for years. We gladly open the door for them."

About the Negotiators: "They talk to the enemy. We talk as the enemy."

About the Assassins: "When we are exposed, they are sent. We never know whether to save us or to clean up."

About the Saboteurs: "We tell them where it hurts. Then they do it."

Characters of the Subclass

The Archivist of Return. A psychologist in Zurich who keeps all the answers that Spies give after their legends. She read Kuckuck's last answer and then asked him for a second conversation. He did not go.

Senior Agent Mira Sandvik. A Spy with twenty years in service who has seen three cults from the inside and has come back from all three. She sometimes hums without noticing it. Nobody tells her.

Sabine. The colleague from accounting in Basel. She may still be waiting.

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THE RETURN, PROTOCOL TEMPLATE
What is your name? Please only think your real
name, do not say it.
What did you have for breakfast today? And
what would your legend have had for breakfast?
Whom did you leave behind in the legend?
Who are you now? One sentence is enough.
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Example Character: Kuckuck

Spy, Cadet. Tobias Lenz, 40, was a journalist in Hamburg. He had written about a child who was said to have drowned in the Elbe, although according to their mother's words they never went near the water voluntarily. The article was never published. Instead, a man in a grey coat invited him for coffee. After that he was Martin Kessler for four years, and his story is told in the prologue. He is a cadet again because, after the Kessler legend, his file was created anew. On orders from above. Without explanation.

Kuckuck	Spy, Cadet
Attributes	STR 1, DEX 3, CON 2, INT 5, WIS 3, WIL 2, CHA 3, MAN 3, COM 2
Skills	Deception 5, Disguise 4, Perception 4, Hacking 3, Cryptography 3, Insight 3, Dodge 3, Stealth 2, Firearms 2, Etiquette 2, Toughness 2, Contacts 1, Mental Resistance 1
Values	HP 10, Strain Threshold 8, Initiative 3, Defence 2, Armour 1
Abilities	Double Identity, False Information, Secret Code Decryption
Legend	Jonas Feld, freelance editor in Cologne, depth 1
Drive	Archetype: The Hunter

Equipment: Basic agent equipment, mini camera, signal converter, light armour, key ring, diary in secret code. Starting funds €8,000. And a photo of Elster that he should not have.

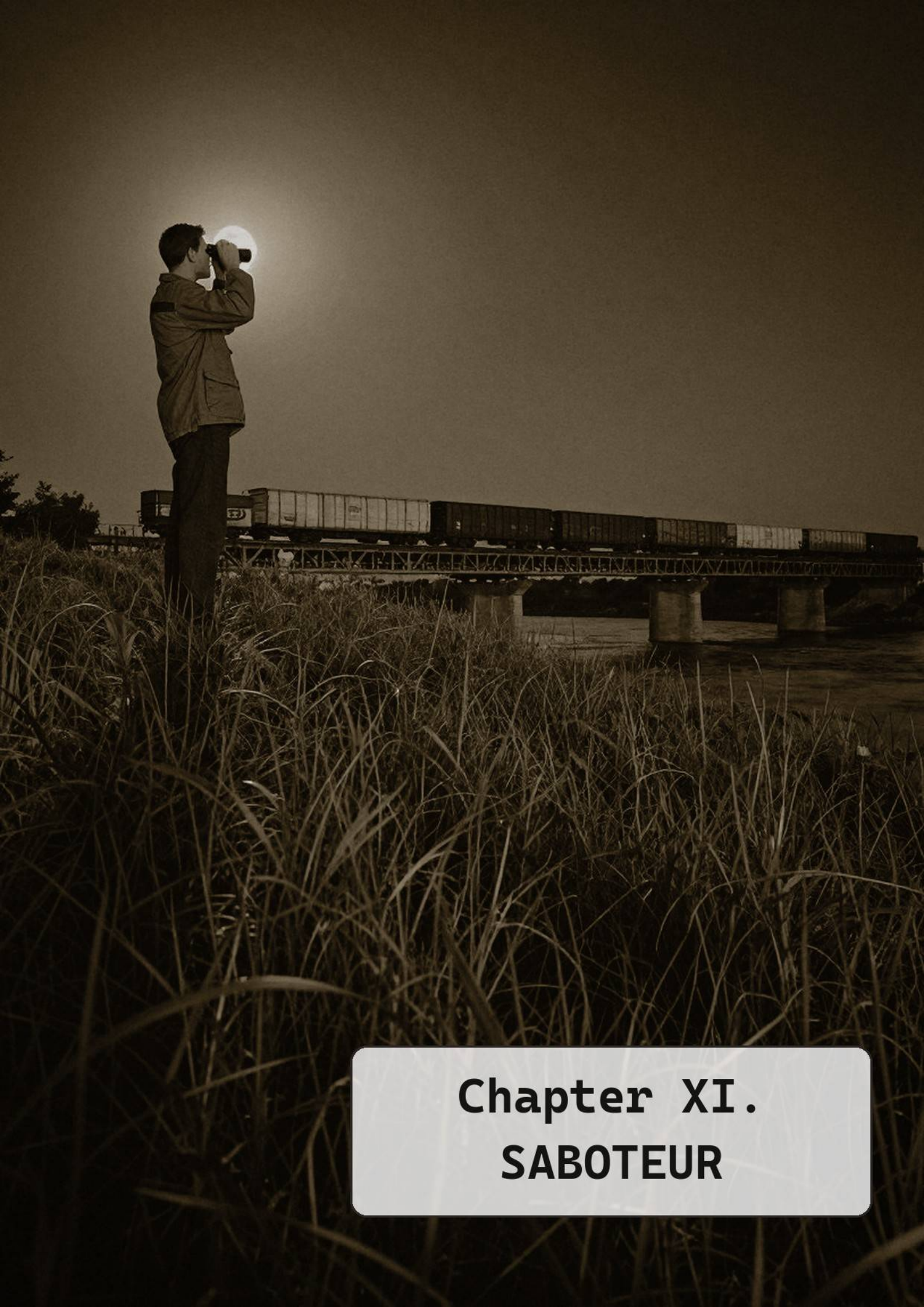
How to play Kuckuck: You are friendly, attentive and always a little absent-minded. You listen more than you speak, and you remember everything. You hunt Elster, and you do not know whether you want to find her.

The Path Through the False Bottom

Rank	New Nodes and Advancements
Agent (20 XP)	Memory 4, Second Face 4, Mole 6, First Impression from the Negotiators 6. Second legend. He could request a third; he does not.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Double Agent 6, Dead Line 8, False Trail 8, Contacts to 2 for 4. He saves the remaining 4 XP. Third legend.
Veteran (100 XP)	Network 10, Deep Legend 10, Cold Stare 4, Second Nature 4, Contacts to 3 for 6, Insight to 4 for 8. Fourth legend.

The Pillar in the False Bottom

Level	Node	Effect
I	**Memory**	Surface. Passive. +2 dice to remember details: faces, number plates, conversations.
I	**Second Face**	*False Bottom*. Passive. The Spy may have one more legend than their rank allows, up to a maximum of five.
II	**Mole**	Surface. Passive. +2 dice on contacts in organisations where one of their legends exists.
II	**Double Agent**	*False Bottom*. Once per mission, an opponent mistakes them for one of their own for one scene.
III	**Dead Line**	Surface. They listen in on radio and telephones in a building where they are present.
III	**False Trail**	*False Bottom*. Once per mission, they plant a false clue. The opponent follows it for one day.
IV	**Network**	Surface. Once per mission, an informant provides an answer to one question.
IV	**Deep Legend**	*False Bottom*. Once per campaign, one of their legends immediately rises to depth 5.
V	**Nobody**	Mastery. Requires Deep Legend. Once per mission, all traces of them disappear from all files, cameras and memories that are one scene old. Afterwards 1 strain.



Chapter XI.
SABOTEUR

Saboteur

"Everything has a place where it breaks. I just find it faster."
Saboteur, codename Rost

The Nature of the Subclass

Saboteurs make things break. Buildings, vehicles, machines, security systems, power grids, bridges. They know where every system has its weak point, and they know how to find it without anyone noticing. A good saboteur leaves behind no explosion, but an accident.

Saboteurs are craftsmen, not destroyers. Most love the things they break: the bridge, the machine, the electronics. They understand them better than their builders. And precisely because of that, they know how little it takes to stop them.

SABOTEUR AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 DEX, +1 INT. **Skills:** +2 Explosives, +1 Engineering, +1 Tactics. **Equipment:** Two explosive charges, multi-tool, light armour.

Explosives Expert (passive): +2 dice on Explosives. They can set the detonation time to the second, so that allies take cover in time.

System Disruption (active, 1× per scene): A mechanical or electronic system within sight fails for one round or works for the whole scene with −2 dice, for example a gun turret.

Targeted Destruction (passive): Against structures, vehicles and devices, the saboteur deals +2 damage.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

The Bridge

The railway bridge over the river was one hundred and twelve years old, riveted, not welded, and Rost loved it from the first moment.

He lay under the third pier, on a platform of steel girders, twenty metres above the water, and listened. Bridges talk, if you know how to listen. This one told of frost and heat, of a hundred years of freight trains, of a rivet in the fourth span that was loose and that no one had noticed. It told him where it would break, if one let it.

In four hours, a train was supposed to cross this bridge, a freight train with twelve wagons, and in wagon seven lay a lead box that a collector had fetched from a monastery in Romania. What was in the box, Rost did not know. He only knew that the train must not reach the border and that no one, really no one, should notice that someone had helped it along.

He could have blown up the bridge. That would have been easy, three charges in the right places, and the whole span would have crashed into the river. But then the next morning the police would have searched for traces of explosives, and eventually someone would have asked why this particular train.

So he blew up nothing.

He worked for three hours on the loose rivet in the fourth span. He loosened it further, not with tools that leave traces, but with a small device that tapped in time with the bridge's vibrations, like a woodpecker. He placed two more rivets next to it under tension, just enough that they would hold until a heavy train passed over. He checked his calculations three times. Then he dismantled everything again and put it in his rucksack.

At half past two in the morning, the train crossed the bridge. Rost stood two kilometres away on a hill and watched through binoculars. The locomotive came over the first span, the second, the third. In the fourth span there was a sound that he heard even at that distance, a deep, metallic sigh.

The bridge held. But the track warped by twelve centimetres, and the seventh wagon jumped the rails and tipped, slowly, almost politely, into the river. The other eleven remained standing. No one was injured.

The next day, the newspaper said that material fatigue on a bridge over a hundred years old had led to an accident. The railway announced an inspection of all historic bridges. An expert found the loose rivet and wrote that it had been loose for at least ten years.

Rost read the article at breakfast and was satisfied. Not because the job had succeeded. But because the bridge would finally be repaired now.

The Craftsmen

Saboteurs came into the Operations Branch in the fifties, when the Cold War filled the world with technology and O.D.I.N. needed ways to stop it. The first were engineers, mechanics and electricians whom Evelyn Marsh knew from resistance groups of the war.

In the seventies, the tasks changed. Collectors guarded their warehouses with electronics, cults built their rituals around machines, and foreign services began to examine crystals in laboratories. Saboteurs became the specialists for all that. Today they work closely with infiltrators and Stormbreakers, and with the Science Branch, whose Engineers consider them the best practitioners at O.D.I.N.

For some years now, there has been a new kind of sabotage: facilities powered by crystals, machines built at rifts, devices whose function no one understands. Saboteurs call this **dark technology**, and they are reluctant to work on it. One never knows what happens when something like that breaks.

Legend: The Uhrmacher

Codename **Uhrmacher** was a Swiss precision mechanic who worked for the Operations Branch from 1956 to 1990. He developed most of the time fuses the branch still uses today, and he carried out the most famous sabotage in the branch's history: in 1968 he held up a special train carrying crystals, which a foreign service wanted to bring across three borders, for four days without stopping it once. He simply made sure that every set of points, every signal and every engine on the line had a small fault at exactly the right moment. The train arrived four days late, when O.D.I.N. was already there.

The First Assignment

D6	The first thing you put out of action for O.D.I.N.
1	A surveillance system in a villa. Nobody noticed that it showed a still image for an hour.
2	A lorry with a lead box. It broke down at a petrol station, fifty kilometres from its destination.
3	A power grid in a city district, for eleven minutes, during a ritual.
4	A machine in a laboratory that nobody knew what it did. It still hummed after you cut the power.
5	A bridge. Or a tunnel. Something big. You are proud that nobody was hurt.
6	Your own car. Someone had attached something to it, and you found it in time.

A Day in the Life

Saboteurs spend their days with things. They read blueprints, technical manuals, maintenance logs. They walk through cities and look at bridges, lines and substations the way other people look at shop windows. Most have a workshop in their legend, a garage, a basement room, an allotment with a shed, where they build, repair and experiment.

Before an operation they study the target for weeks. Not the people, those interest them less, but the system: How does it work, where is it vulnerable, what happens when it fails, and who will notice? On the day of the operation they are usually quick. The work is already done, in the mind.

Training

Aspiring saboteurs spend four months in a workshop in Graz that is officially a vocational school for mechatronics. They learn explosives, electronics, mechanics, statics and what the branch calls the **Art of the Accident**: carrying out sabotage so that any assessor afterwards believes in material fatigue, maintenance error or bad luck.

The final examination is a machine that an instructor has built and whose function the recruit does not know. They have one day to put it out of action without the instructor recognising how. The machine then stands on a shelf in the workshop, next to all the others that recruits have ever defeated.

D6	What stands on the shelf in the workshop
1	A music box that only plays when nobody is in the room. The recruit still stopped it. How, nobody knows to this day.
2	A fridge without a plug that cools. It is not part of the examinations. It was already there when the workshop moved in.
3	A teleprinter that wrote a sentence by itself in 1989. The strip lies in a drawer.
4	The machine of the Uhrmacher, the first examinee from 1957. It was never defeated. He examined himself.
5	A bicycle lock that three recruits failed on. It is kept to stay humble.
6	A machine that someone added during the night. It has no number and no examinee. It runs.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not mandatory. The nodes mentioned are at the end of the chapter, the craft and the tricks in Chapter IV.

Play Style	Description
The Demolition Expert	Charges, time fuses, precision blasts. Nodes: Time Fuse, Improvised Charge, Precision Cut.
The Technician	Electronics, power grids, security systems. Nodes: Weak Point, Power Cut, plus Quiet Hands from the Infiltrators.
The Accident Maker	They make sure everything looks like bad luck. Nodes: Accident Cause, Chain Reaction.

RULE: THE ART OF THE ACCIDENT

If a saboteur carries out sabotage with at least one hour of preparation, they can disguise it as an accident. Investigators looking for the cause roll against the successes of their test on Explosives or Engineering, with −2 dice.

RULE: DARK TECHNOLOGY

If a saboteur sabotages a machine that is powered by crystals or stands at a rift, the game master rolls a D6 after success. On a 1 something unexpected happens: The machine keeps humming, a rift opens, a crystal awakens. On a 6 something unexpectedly good happens.

The Price

Saboteurs pay with their view of the world. Whoever has learned where everything breaks sees fracture points everywhere: in bridges, lifts, aeroplanes, people. Many saboteurs can no longer drive over a bridge without calculating in their head. And some notice that they also look at relationships that way: not how they hold, but where they would break.

OPTIONAL RULE: THE BREAKING POINT

Once per session, the player of a Saboteur may ask the game master where a place, a plan, or a relationship would break. The game master answers honestly, in one sentence. The Saboteur suffers 1 strain for this, because afterwards they can no longer overlook the answer.

D6	What the breaking points have cost you
1	You no longer like driving over bridges. You always expect it.
2	You have laid every cable in your flat yourself, because you don't trust anyone who doesn't do it.
3	Your daughter brought you a toy so that you would repair it. You first saw where it breaks.
4	You staged an accident that was too good. The assessor lost his job.
5	In your workshop there is a machine that you did not build. It sometimes runs at night.
6	You know where O.D.I.N. would break. You have told no one.

In Play

- **You prepare the field.** Cameras fail, doors open at the wrong time, gun turrets fall silent. When the plan works, no one notices that you were there.
- **Ask about systems.** Power, water, guards, cameras, machines. Every system has a weak point, and you find it.
- **The question for your character:** What did you once break that you would rather have repaired?

Playing with Other Classes

The Saboteur is the perfect partner for anyone who needs to get in or out somewhere. An **Infiltrator** goes through the door that they have opened. A **Stormbreaker** among the Soldiers blows things up where they sabotage, and the two like to argue about which method is better. An **Engineer** among the Scientists shares their passion for machines. And a **Telekinetic** among the Psions can move things that even they cannot reach.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case RA-2260, Hungary. Sabotage of a freight train.

Wagon with lead box derailed, no injuries. Railway report: material fatigue.

Addendum: The lead box was recovered from the river. It was empty. The seal had been broken from the inside.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case GA-2172, Norway. Sabotage of a facility of a foreign service at a rift.

Power switched off. The facility continues to run, without power, for 14 minutes.

Note: Dark technology. Forwarded to the Science Branch.

REPORT FROM THE GRAZ WORKSHOP

A testing machine from 1989 has been running again for three nights, every night from 22:10 until shortly after midnight. No one has touched it. It has no power connection.

Note from the workshop forewoman: I let it run. I want to know what it does.

EXAMPLE: ROST AT THE STEEL DOOR

Rost and Moth have to get through the steel door of a warehouse. First the cameras: Rost uses System Disruption, and the camera system fails for one round. That is enough for Moth to reach the door.

Then the door. Rost places an explosive charge and wants to hit only the hinges; the game master sets Hard (3). INT 3 and Explosives 5, plus +2 for Explosives Expert. White: 5, 3, 6, 2, 1 gives 2 successes, coloured: 4, 5, 2, 6, 3 gives 3. Five successes, 2 margin: The door tips inward, the wall holds, and outside the bang sounds like a slammed garage door. He detonates it to the second when Moth is behind the container.

Questions for Your Saboteur

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	What was in the lead box before the seal broke from the inside
2	What the watchmaker built into the watch that he gave him
3	How a facility can continue to run without power
4	What the man in the substation is waiting for
5	Who had attached something to his car
6	What he would repair if he were allowed to

Equipment of the Subclass

Item	Effect
Tapping Device	A small device that taps in the rhythm of a structure and weakens it over hours, without traces. *Rare.*
Uhrmacher's Detonator	A time fuse that runs to the second for over a week. *Rare.*
Pocket Oscilloscope	Shows what a machine does, even if no one knows. +1 die on Technology to understand foreign devices. *Common.*
Chalk Detonator	A detonator with crystal dust from the Collegium's workshop. A charge ignited with it also hits beings from rifts. *Very rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Infiltrators: "We switch things off, they go through. The most honest division of labour in the branch."

About the Negotiators: “They negotiate until we are finished. That is a compliment.”

About the Assassins: “They ensure that a person no longer functions. We do that with machines. I know which I prefer.”

About the Spies: “They know every secret of a company. We know every line. Together we are unbeatable.”

Characters of the Subclass

The Uhrmacher. Over ninety, lives in Biel and still repairs watches. Whoever visits him receives an old watch as a gift, into which he has built something. What, he does not say.

Workshop Master Petra Kowalczyk. Head of the workshop in Graz, a former engineer from Gdańsk who built bridges before she began to understand them. She keeps every machine on the shelf in order, even those that recruits have sabotaged.

The Man in the Substation. A saboteur who has been working undercover as a technician in a substation for years, from which half a city is supplied. Nobody knows what assignment he is waiting for.

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THE RULES OF THE WORKSHOP, ON THE DOOR IN GRAZ
First understand, then dismantle, then
destroy. Never in a different order.
Count the people in the building before you
cut the power. Lifts have passengers.
A good accident needs an assessor who
understands it.
What hums even though it has no power is not
touched. It is reported.
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Example Character: Rost

Saboteur, Cadet. Oskar Nieminen, 45, was a bridge engineer with the Finnish railways until he wrote a report about a bridge that was at risk of collapse at a point where, according to the plan, it did not even exist. O.D.I.N. read the report before his superiors.

Rost	Saboteur, Cadet
Attributes	STR 2, DEX 5, CON 3, INT 3, WIS 2, WIL 2, CHA 1, MAN 2, COM 4
Skills	Explosives 5, Security Systems 4, Dodge 4, Engineering 3, Technology 3, Stealth 3, Perception 3, Tactics 2, Firearms 2, Toughness 2, Craft 2, Deception 1, Mental Resistance 1
Values	HP 11, Strain Threshold 10, Initiative 5, Defence 3, Armour 1
Abilities	Explosives Expert, System Disruption, Targeted Destruction
Legend	Timo Laakso, maintenance technician for lifts in Tallinn, depth 1
Drive	Archetype: The Observer

Equipment: Basic agent equipment, two explosive charges, multi-tool, light armour. Starting funds €5,000. The tapping device from the bridge belongs to the branch. He has returned it and is currently building his own.

How to play Rost: You are calm, thorough and prefer to talk about machines rather than people. You love the things you break. You sometimes wonder whether O.D.I.N. is also such a machine, and where it would break.

The Path Through the False Bottom

Rank	New Nodes and Increases
Agent (20 XP)	Weak Point 4, Time Fuse 4, Improvised Charge 6, Escape Route 4. He saves the remaining 2 XP. Second legend, tapping device.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Power Cut 6, Chain Reaction 8, Accident Cause 8, Engineering to 4 for 8. Third legend.
Veteran (100 XP)	Precision Cut 10, Crystal Detonator 10, Quiet Hands from the Infiltrators 6, Explosives to 6 for 12, Technology to 4 for 8. Fourth legend.

The Pillar in the False Bottom

Level	Node	Effect
I	**Weak Point**	Surface. Passive. +2 dice to find weak points on buildings, vehicles and machines.
I	**Time Fuse**	*False Bottom*. Passive. His charges can be placed hours to days in advance. Whoever searches for them rolls with −2 dice.
II	**Improvised Charge**	Surface. He builds an explosive charge from everyday materials in ten minutes. Damage 3.
II	**Power Cut**	*False Bottom*. Once per scene, light and power in a building fail for three rounds.

Level	Node	Effect
III	**Chain Reaction**	Surface. Passive. Targeted Destruction hits a second target nearby.
III	**Accident Cause**	*False Bottom*. Passive. The art of the accident succeeds even without an hour of preparation.
IV	**Precision Cut**	Surface. An explosion opens exactly one wall or door, almost without noise.

Level	Node	Effect
IV	**Crystal Detonator**	*False Bottom*. Once per mission, one of his charges also hits beings that do not feel ordinary damage, with double damage against beings from rifts.
V	**The Big Bang**	Mastery. Requires Crystal Detonator. Once per mission, he brings down a building, a bridge or a tunnel in a controlled manner, without anyone he wants to protect being injured. Afterwards 1 strain.

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