

TENEMENT 67

[a broken dreams larp]

SETTING DOCUMENT (4)

CITY PD

The world is large and there are many individuals and organisations who make it what it is. This set of documents are intended to provide some additional information on some of the significant personalities, lifestyles and fashions of 2040. The intention is to assist you the player or crew member in “getting into” the setting being created.

It has been created in collaboration with both the players and design team so please be respectful when using some of this source material for character inspiration.

Bribery [A tenement tale]

Everyone takes a backhander now and then. It's the only way to survive on a cop's wage. It's the ones who never take one you've gotta watch - because they're still surviving while keeping their noses clean. You never know but that usually means they're taking from someone who knows how to be subtle and that sorta someone is dangerous. That's the difference - everyone takes a backhander or two or three - but not everyone is 'on the take'. When taking money becomes habitual that's when the trouble starts.

Did I ever tell you what happened to my partner, Wendi? Good kid - smart head on her shoulders - joined the PD all full of hope and bright ideas. The look she gave me when I took the envelope that killed me - she didn't understand it wasn't a moral issue, it was just what you did to survive. I remember standing there counting the NP bills in the envelope and offering her part of that stack. The way she refused it - that sad, disappointed look made me feel like a real piece of shit.

Well after that I took a long hard look at my life and changed my ways. Maybe it was what was left of my inner child. Maybe it was some other psychologist bullshit, but I was done with backhanders. Wendi wanted a partner that kept their nose clean? Well, I was going to keep my nose clean - that was all there was to it. You gotta be able to trust the person at your side to watch your back.

As as long as I was taking bribes she didn't feel she could trust me - so I stopped. Is that so hard to believe?

Those were hard months, I can tell you: choosing whether to eat the one meal I could afford in the morning (and risk not being able to sleep from hunger) or in the evening (and be starving my whole shift); falling out with my buddies because I could never afford to carry my round, and never tipped; walking everywhere no matter the weather because I couldn't afford transport. But being a good partner comes first - every cop knows that. Wendi and I we were one hell of a team. Pulled in more creeps in those months than I'd done in the previous year.

Then the news came from the local Willow. Ma's cancer had spread and the cheap drugs weren't cutting it anymore. Needed advanced treatment was what they said. Advanced treatment - no prizes for guessing that wasn't something I was affording on no cop's salary.

I remember the first time Dr Black showed up. I was eating the second half of my meal (a trick I'd picked up from Wendi - split your meal packs into smaller portions and you get to eat more than once a day) and suddenly he was just there sitting at the table with me. Fuck, I thought I'd died and this was Death come to carry me away from this shithole.

I wish it had been Death. No, Dr Black was something entirely different. An evil genie - ready to grant my every fucking wish for a price: Ma's treatment - already paid for; my

brother's divorce settlement payments - covered; my pension - fat enough to retire in style maybe even leave the country. Every fucking wish and all of it untraceable (and undetectable to my partner). All Dr Black needed was for me to keep doing my job and then from time to time do one or two jobs for him.

I coulda told him to go fuck himself. Coulda told him to shove his wishes so far up his— Who am I kidding? Coulda let me ma' die, coulda let my brother get bankrupted by that shyster lawyer ex-husband of his, coulda retired with nothin' and died on the streets like a dog. Could you?

At first Dr Black's 'little jobs' were easy. Make some evidence 'go missing' - done. Pin a crime on someone - a creep who coulda done it even if it didn't this time. Leave the back door to the local PD station unlocked after I took my smoke break - easy.

They found Wendi in the break-room, her half portion of meal pack unfinished still steaming. Said it was some medical condition. A heart attack due to a birth defect that hadn't been detected. Bullshit. BULLSHIT. He killed her - I know he did. And I helped him do it.

So arrest me! Lock me up and throw away the goddamn key. Just don't call it bribery 'cause what I did was so much worse than that. I was on the take and it got my partner killed.

Welcome to City PD

Procedures haven't changed much in the last forty years, you bring someone in, gather evidence and hope your boss signs off on the arrest.

If not the perp is tossed back on the streets, if there's any doubt of conviction it doesn't get passed up the chain.

A lot of other things have changed though, every cop carries a piece now and there are a lot less cops working the city streets.

There's no budget for proactive policing beyond the laughable budgets fed down to serious crime units. Mention community policing and you'll be laughed out of the room, its all about tactical response now.

Protect and Serve is now Contain and Control.

The pay is crap but just like working for a corporation the job comes with accommodation, food allowance and if you are lucky enough will pay out to your family.

You won't be given state of the art equipment. Beyond your bio coded firearm and standard issue polymer T.R.U assault vest you won't get much else. It's all about street smarts, hard work and keeping out of the way of private contractors.

It's a family though, it's back up in a shitty world and it comes with a lot of unofficial benefits out in the tenements.

Everybody knows that tenement residents don't mess with cops and every cop knows where they aren't welcome. It's a fragile peace but it maintains the appearance that the Gov. give a remote shit about those trapped in poverty.

Mug a sap coming from a hard day at the factory and expect to be turned over and your winnings confiscated.

Mess with a cop and you'll end up dead.

Detectives

Investigate, identify and interrogation.

The three I's of detective work.

Back when budgets were higher you may have been assigned to community protection, robbery and burglary.

These day's chances are you'll be in the narcotics and homicide pool indefinitely trying to piece together the mess left behind by some nameless ganger. That is unless you are super unlucky and you get assigned to an undercover unit.

As a detective you are expect to put together your case notes before presenting them to your commanding officer. They'll make the call on passing the trash up the chain or not for prosecution.

"Bring 'em in by all means rookie but you'd better have a solid case or you'll be back in T.R.U fatigues faster than you can say police brutality."

T.R.U (Tactical Response Unit)

Before Gov. corruption allowed for private security personal to be given explicit jurisdiction of corporate land and facilities there were beat cops.

Remember them? They'd keep an eye on neighbourhoods, business and shopping districts. They are gone. Replaced by T.R.U Officers.

If a crime is reported in a safe zone or a detective needs back up these units swoop in. Heavily armed they are trained to take control of areas, put them on lock down, restrain and then segregate potential targets.

Despite the added danger it pays the same as a detective job but with much less opportunity to engage in side benefits. As a result any smart detective who wants their back up ready to do whatever is required will throw their T.R.U colleagues a bone here and there.

D.S Isaacs, City PD [A tenement tale]

Neon flared and buzzed as the drizzle fell, it was one of those hot, damp nights when sensible people should be inside with the air con on, no such luck here, Michal couldn't tell whether her mac needed replacing, condensation had gathered on the lining of the cheap artificial cloth, or she was sweating so damn much she just felt wet through. Next pay-check I'm splashing out on one of those real waxed cotton, old fashioned rain coats, she thought to herself as she ducked under the police tape, nodding to the uniform on duty.

The lifts were working in this place, it was clean too, cleaner than the last few crime scenes, she lived in a similar block, professionals, young families, retirees. All of them locked safely behind their secure doors, or so they hoped.

The lift dinged, and Michal stepped out, a fresh faced uniformed officer was bent over a potted plant retching, behind him an open door criss-crossed with police tape. She walked toward the doorway, stopping to hand the rookie a tissue. As he wiped his mouth she reached into an inside pocket fishing out a hip flask.

"Spit it out afterwards if you want, but you'll want to take that taste away." He nodded gratefully, knocking his head back, making sure the rim of the flask didn't touch his lips, and swilled the liquor around his mouth, bending once again to spit it into the plant pot.

"Another one?"

“Yeah.”

“Your first?”

“Yeah...” A sheepish grin followed,

“Don’t worry kid, it happened to us all.” Michal sighed, “You can stay out here, make sure none of the neighbours start rubber-necking, wouldn’t want some kid having nightmares for the rest of their life.” The rookie nodded gratefully. As Michal continued along the corridor, “Oh, and if they haven’t already, get on the radio and get my sister over here, I want her on the scene asap.”

“Yes, Detective Isaacs!” his voice came from behind her, they always knew who she was, even in a big force like this, it was a blessing and a curse.

SOCO weren’t on scene yet, rooting around a pocket Michal found a bag of sterile booties and gloves, she slipped them on, no need to contaminate the scene any further. Sticking to the edge of the hallway, she headed further into the flat. She knew where it would be, the same place as the last five. Through the living room, past the kitchen, no signs of a struggle, keys and a bag of shopping lay on the kitchen counter, waiting to be unpacked. A rustle came from behind her,

“You decided to join me rookie?” Michal questioned as she turned. Huh, no rookie... scanning the room she reached for her piece, flicking off the catch on the holster, her fingers closing around the grip. A scrabbling noise came

from the sofa, and a small blue-grey feline head poked out from beneath it, of course, a cat, some kibble had been in the bag of shopping.

“Hey little one.” Michal crouched, reaching her hand out toward the cat, it slinked out from its hiding place, and cautiously sniffed her hand. She seemed to satisfy whatever requirements it was looking for, as it head butted her hand and started purring as she scratched behind its velvet soft ears.

“Come on sweetie, I bet you want feeding don’t you?” Michal stood, the cat meowed and trotted toward the kitchen area, “Let me guess, you’ve never been fed huh?” the cat wound itself around her ankles as Michal grabbed the box of kibble and filled up the waiting bowl. She took the bowl shaking it, “C’mon my lovely, let’s get you in the bedroom out of the way.” plaintive meows came from the ground, “Look, if you trip me up, well, okay, you’ll still get your food, but you might get squished and you wouldn’t get any more fuss.” Another meow, Michal placed the food bowl on the floor of the bedroom, shutting the door behind her to the sound of contented crunching.

Back to the task at hand, she headed toward the bathroom again, the door was ajar, just a crack. She pushed it open, a heavy sigh met the scene that greeted her eyes, no wonder the rookie had lost his breakfast. You saw some bad things on this job but sometimes, the viciousness of it, the cold calculated thought behind it still got you. No-one in their right mind

did a thing like this. There was no point in hanging around, it was him for sure. She went back into the flat and hunted for a cat carrier, there would be hell to pay with her sister if she let an animal run loose around the crime scene, and they didn't want evidence wondering off.

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"... And it seems the Anubis killer has stuck again, this time moving on from the tenements, maybe now the police will finally start invest-"

"Switch that rubbish off, kid, this entire damn taskforce is investigating it. Anubis killer? Where do they come up with this stuff?" The DI was her usual cheery self.

"Well Skip, I mean, the scales, the feather, the heart, the bloody hieroglyphs..."

"And where are they getting those details? This fucking nick's got more leaks than a dammed sieve."

"Guv," Michal interrupted the DI's tirade, she nodded toward the door where a fancy suit was waiting, "We've got company." The DI sighed rising from her desk,

"Help you?"

"The Chief Constable would like to talk to you DI Summers." Iainy noises greeted the request from the various assembled officers,

"Shut it you lot, get back to work, Isaacs, keep this lot in line will you?"

"I'll do my best..." The Skipper accompanied the suit out of the department, "Right, you 'orrible lot,"

"Yeah, yeah, you 'aint a sergeant yet Isaacs."

"And yet, the skipper left me in charge I wonder why that might be Murph? Anyway, naughty children, it's time for some good old fashioned police work," Michal said with great relish "The computers might be able to tell that 50 people walked by the victims flat that day, and that 20 of those were the same 10 people, who live nearby, but it cannot tell if one of those other 30 was the same person wearing a disguise, or if they were just walking past or casing the joint. So we are going to watch all the surveillance," groans greeted this announcement, "BY HAND," she continued, "yes with our very own eyeballs, in pairs, I don't want us missing something because someone was too bored or too tired." more mutterings of discontent. "Look, I know, I know it's a ball-ache, I know it's hard, but all the tech in the world hasn't got us anywhere with this case, so let's try it old school. Murph, as you so kindly volunteered. Me and you are watching the footage from the lobby." Laughter and jeers greeted the announcement, Murphy shook their head ruefully, the clattering and chattering recommenced as everyone organised themselves, Khan started getting everyone's requests for take-away, as Hitch refilled the coffee machine, it was going to be a long night.

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He was getting bolder, another three killings in the middle class areas of town, and now the first in uptown. There was going to hell to pay, they knew the guy was white, medium build, twenties to forties, just like every other serial killer in the entirety of history. He'd always surveilled his victims, cased their homes weeks, even months before he killed them. The only notable thing was his disguises were always clean, too clean and new most of the time, Isaacs' personal theory was he was from uptown himself, self entitled pricks the lot of them. She knew a lot of the force thought the same, no-one was saying anything though. It was hard enough surviving in this job without some scum bag killing you and you didn't need them upstairs gunning for your job too.

The victims were a mixed bunch, they'd all done something wrong but who hadn't? Shit, maybe he went after six for forgetting to feed their cat, if that was the bar Isaacs might be next. Though it was very hard to forget to feed that black hole masquerading as a cat. She'd adopted the little fuzz ball, and she would let you know the minute she could see the bottom of the bowl. And right now Michal would rather be sat at home with Rookie than here. The private security that controlled the building were getting in a pissing contest with the DI... Isaacs knew who her money was on.

Once the brass had turned up they'd been allowed inside, not that there was much point, the crime-scene was contaminated to hell and back, there was going to be another fight over the surveillance records. Oh they'd eventually get them, suspiciously clean of anything of use, the hunt was on now the ivory towers of the rich had been stained with blood. Private security firms would be all over this, whoever found this guy was in for a big pay day, and the gratitude of the wealthy, which was often worth more than mere money. The department might finally get the resources they desperately needed, but you never could tell, the wishes of the rich were fickle and difficult to predict.

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He was running, the smog and smoke fogging her vision Michal ran too, she'd come close to losing him a few times, but the sound of his dress shoes clipping on the pavement always bought her back to him. He disappeared again, Michal stopped, her breath was rasping, she held it, blood thundering in her ears, she pushed the usual sounds of the city to the background, ignoring them one by one, she let out a slow breath. He must be getting tired too, he had access to the swanky gym equipment money could buy but he wasn't used to running in these streets, these were her streets, and she's be damned if she was going to let him run loose on them any longer.

Something, a noise out of place, the scrape of a flat hard sole against grimy concrete, slipping on

an oil slick. Michal un-holstered her piece, keeping it close to her body, feet carefully placed, slow is smooth, smooth is fast, the mantra echoing through her every movement. She continued along the alley way, stalking, passing one turning with only a cursory glance, the next one, she knew it, she could feel it. Another few steps, she turned the corner, "Don't. Even. Think. About it." she clipped, the pipe that had been waiting to smash into her skull fell from his fingers, clattering on the pavement. "Turn around, against the wall." She took delight in his grimace as he leaned against the filth and grime. "Aldus Jones, you're under arrest," the satisfying click of handcuffs fastening around his wrists was the sweetest noise she had ever heard, "You do not have to say anything. But, it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence. Do you understand?" She didn't even wait for his answer before radioing in, "All units, this is Detective Isaacs, suspect has been apprehended, can I get a pick up? Over."

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The mood in the station was sour, they'd been riding high for weeks, they finally got the bastard, and they had him bang to rights, he'd been caught red-handed, the victim had survived, just, though she was so damn traumatised they didn't want to use her as a witness, but everything, everything was in place.

And then the fancy lawyers in their suits worth more than a month's salary arrived, and it all started to go wrong. He was going to be released without charge and there wasn't a damn thing they could do about it.

Michal's tea had gone cold while she'd waded through the mountain of paper work on her desk, time for another cup, she fished out the caddy of loose leaf Assam she kept in her bottom draw for when she really needed a decent brew, as she rolled back her chair suddenly alarms started blaring. Shit, the custody alarm, the custody sergeant was about to have a very bad day. Tea temporarily forgotten she rushed out the door, they were only two floors above the cells here and the stairwell was directly outside the squad's door. In a hot minute she was in the cell block, the door was open and a uniformed officer rushed in with the defibrillator and first aid kit, Michal followed close behind, she's done her first aid training like everyone else and with a doctor for a sister you learned some extra stuff.

The inmates in the communal holding were against the wall, on their knees, officers cuffing them, as another performed CPR on a lying figure, as the officer moved to allow the defib pads to be attached Michal caught a glimpse of the face of the injured inmate, it was Jones. Barely recognisable, if she hadn't spent weeks memorising that face she wouldn't know it was him. He was beaten to a pulp, blood was everywhere, all the other occupants of the cell had blood on their hands and shoes. The

amount of claret on the floor, there was no way anything was bringing him back, she felt sick, he was a monster, but this, this wasn't right, this wasn't justice.

The fluorescent lights suddenly seemed glaringly bright and harsh, and Michal almost fell as she stepped backwards to allow a prisoner to be escorted out of the cell.

"You alright detective?"

"Yeah, yeah, I just, I wanted this one to make it to court y'know." the uniform murmured in agreement as he hustled the prisoner to another cell. There was no point in hanging around, even if she had been able to save him, she wasn't entirely sure she would have, and knowing that made her feel sick, wrong to her very core. Michal made her way back up to the squad room, putting the tea caddy back and pulling out the bottle of vodka also hidden in her desk. She poured a slug into her mug, only realising as she went to drink it was still half full of cold tea.

"Fuck this." The vodka went back in the drawer, the mug was emptied into the dingy sink in the corner, normally she was pretty diligent about washing up, keeping everything ship shape and Bristol fashion. But not today. Today it just wasn't worth it. Drinking alone was a bad plan, so Michal headed to the boozier across the road from the station, the rest of the squad would be there soon enough.

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“So Detective Isaacs-”

“That’s Detective Sergeant Isaacs as you well know.”

“I wouldn’t be so sure about that, Detective Sergeant” the latter word was said with scorn. Michal sighed, it was going to be a long interview. “You were the arresting officer of Mr Jones, you’d be working the case for almost 2 years, didn’t you want him dead?”

“No, I wanted him to see justice”

“But that wasn’t going to happen, he was going to be realised, all charges dropped...”

“Look, was I upset? Damn right, Disappointed and angry you bet? But I never laid a finger on him and I didn’t see anyone else do so either.”

The interview had gone on forever, Michal was on “administrative” leave, along with the entire squad, and various others from across the nick. Hours in front of IA, called up again and again. Jones’s family were pushing for heads to roll, Michal had been made Sergeant on the back of her arrest of Jones, the way things were going she’d be lucky if she made a beat constable at this rate. Security tapes had gone missing and no-one was saying a word, it didn’t matter how much money you had, the thin blue line had closed ranks. IA were doing their best, money wasn’t driving them as much as the fact they knew something wasn’t right, Michal didn’t blame them, but no-one liked the rat squad, and they weren’t getting anywhere either.

Finally, one evening the phone call came. Michal was sat at home, curled up on the sofa, a purring Rookie keeping her feet warm. IA were ruling it as manslaughter by the other inmates, the custody sergeant and the two detectives who signed him over were getting a slap on the wrist, nothing on their permanent records thanks to their union reps. After putting the phone down Rookie was almost launched across the room as Michal jumped up and did a little dance.

“Mummy’s going back on the job pusscat!” Rookie wasn’t impressed, “Hey, I need to earn a wage to keep you in dreamies.” At the mention of her favourite treat Rookie’s ears pricked up, “You only love me because I feed you, you little ingrate” Michal muttered as she went to get the bag of treats. They’d also mentioned the entire cohort of inmates were being charged, but Michal knew no-one could prove anything, and even if made it to court they’d never be convicted. Not unless the Jones family bribed the entire jury pool, judge and lawyers, which Michal wouldn’t put past them, but they were convinced it was the police department at fault, not the criminals, and there were other wealthy families who were more than happy to see the back of Aldus Jones.

For once the press was working in their favour, with all the sordid details of his crimes spread over every channel, no-one was sorry he was dead. Someone had leaked the shrink’s report, the bit where they said “... has confessed to his many crimes, and shows no remorse, I can say

with as much certainty as is possible, that he will re-offend if released into the general populace.” was oft quoted, the Jones’s were social pariahs, there was talk of them leaving the city. Good riddance to bad rubbish, Michal was just happy to be back on the job, she continued to dance around the flat as Rookie looked on in disdain as she crunched on her treats. Back on the job, that was something worth celebrating.