

New York, New YAHHH!!!!

Background: Characters can come from all walks of life, but should have experience in espionage, infiltration and interrogation (either subtle through seduction or openly through other means). Another helpful skill would be a second language, as the campaign could easily take them overseas. The group should be composed of first or second level characters, since they will be just coming into their own and making a name for themselves. They should almost certainly be of Scrupulous or Selfish alignments (Principled are too goody-two-shoes for this, and evil wouldn't give a rats ass), with perhaps an Aberrant as another possibility. Personally, I see the ideal party for this to have one Ex-Government Agent (or similar OCC), a Nightbane, one Magic-User or Psychic, and one wild card (meaning just about anything). This gives the group a large amount of diversity with each character needing the other characters and vice versa.

The group begins not knowing each other (at least not personally), but each has made a name for themselves in the international intelligence market (meaning they've had a couple of successful spy missions and the other characters may have heard of him/her). They can be just about anything, but Nightbane, sorcerers, and any of the faction O.C.C.s (they would have to be some type of ex-member or someone who never hooked up with a faction, but still had experience in intelligence somehow) work the best. Each member of the group is contacted separately through e-mail, personal invitation by an agent of the employer, or other such means on behalf of Business Microsystems, a multinational manufacturer and distributor of various technologies (including telecommunication, computer parts, and anti-hacking software).

GM Note: There is no mention of other people being involved. As far as the player knows, this is a solo mission.

Their presence is requested at the corporate headquarters where they will meet with their employer (to keep with the mood, it is probably best to have this take place late at night). This is the scene upon their arrival at the appointed place (I made it so you can read it directly to the players):

You step out of the elevator into a hallway. Conservatively decorated, small, indoor trees grow in pots at regular intervals along the mirrored wall. Looking around you see an attractive woman sitting behind a desk, typing away at her computer. As you approach, she looks up.

"Can I help you?" she asks. Her voice is almost as beautiful as her figure.

Here, the players need to respond. It should be something along the lines of: "I'm here for a meeting with the CEO." Simple enough. After the receptionist receives a satisfactory answer, continue on (I only gave the description for the first person, of course people get added as the whole thing progresses and other players may have already arrived):

The secretary leads you into a large conference room. Large picture windows with, currently, opened vertical slats, cover two of the walls, giving a view of the city lights. The secretary asks you to have a seat, letting you know that the CEO will be with you once the others have arrived.

Once everyone has arrived, allow a little mingling among the players, it helps build the suspense. Give them about three or four minutes to conduct conversations (in character, of course) and possibly speculate as to why they're here and why they were chosen. After that time, continue:

The vertical slats begin to close slowly, darkening the room almost completely. The lights in the room are barely enough to allow you to see, though those of you with nightvision are able to see

quite clearly. You hear a set of doors open, but not the same ones you came through, and can only barely hear the sound of footsteps as someone approaches. The lights soon begin to brighten the conference room and a young man, stands at the head of the conference table. He is a little below average height, probably around 5' 8", and has the facial features of an Italian. His black hair is slicked back, tied into a pony tail. His skin is lightly tanned and he has brown eyes. His face is cleanly shaven. He wears a high quality business suit and hard soled loafers. His face shows no emotion as he looks at each of you. Then, as if he had to think about it, he smiles ever so slightly, then returns to his emotionless facade.

"Thank you for coming," he says. "My name is Antonio Russolini. I own Business Microsystems. That means that I am in charge of the very livelihood of every employee this firm employs. And when that livelihood is threatened, I must do something about it. Well, that livelihood has become threatened. And I need your help to protect it. Before I disclose any more information, I must have your word that this meeting remains secret." With that, he looks at each of you, waiting for an answer.

Once he has an answer from everyone, he will continue. Anyone who does not wish to swear to secrecy, is asked to leave. Should anyone resist being thrown out they will discover just how ferocious Antonio can be. Once everyone has agreed or not, continue on.

"Excellent. In advance, I thank you all for your help. Now then, here is the need to know information. The government has tried to shut me down numerous times on false charges. In reality, it is only because I have hold of the most powerful resource in the world: Information. The government conspires to close me down because I have information that could expose a number of their own secret projects, but not enough to provide substantial proof. Only enough for them to perceive me as a threat.. I have survived only because of my great many contacts. Unfortunately, every time I call in a favor, my contact disappears."

He looks around at each of you, solemnly, then begins to walk slowly around the table as he continues.

"I normally would not care about any dealings or projects the government is conducting, except that they have made this personal. They have taken my darling Clarissa from me, my wife. I have exhausted all my contacts and favors in order to learn what I am about to tell you, so do not fail me. The government has secretly been conducting experiments on humans, manipulating DNA, testing experimental drugs, and other horrible atrocities. My wife's body was found about 150 miles northwest of Syracuse, in the national forest. She was horribly mutilated, only identifiable by her dental records and DNA, though even that was horribly mutated.

"The area where she was found has been plagued by mysterious disappearances, strange phenomena, and monster sightings since Dark Day. I believe that the government lab is in this area, but I have not been able to locate it. What I need each of you for is simple. You are to travel to Albany where you will be met by several representatives of my company. They will provide you with transportation, camping gear, and supplies for two weeks. I assume you each have access to your own weapons and will not need any provided, however, should you require something more, I will see what I can do.

"Once you have arrived at the national forest campground, maintain your cover, watch, and wait. Try to locate the lab and infiltrate it. Once you have infiltrated the lab, do everything in your power to expose the atrocities being conducted. Use video, audio, get names, files and anything else you can to aid you in this. This is your secondary objective."

He seems to have stopped pacing and comes to stand at the head of the conference table once more, looking at each of you in turn.

"Your primary objective is to find my brother and bring him back alive. He disappeared in the forest while on a camping trip with his family. If he is dead, I would like to at least put him to rest and so the rest of us may go on with our lives with some assurance that he is not suffering. When you have accomplished this task, return here and I will give you each your payment in full."

Where you take it from here and how much you offer the player characters is up to you, though you might want to keep it reasonable. Also, if the players ask, Antonio will supply special ammunition, weapons and equipment (20% chance of being able to get anything illegal) if the player characters feel it necessary. As for payment, don't give them too much. Maybe \$5,000 up front to buy equipment (trust me this buys a lot), and another \$20,000 on completion. You might even go a little less on completion if you don't want them to be able to get access to a lot of stuff.