

Sample Scenario: Pinfeathers

Angela Osborne is an avatar of the Flying Woman, and she's in town to stir up some trouble. She's seeking a clueless magick cabal known as the Flock, a group of neo-pagans preparing to host a ritual to the Phoenix, a symbol of rebirth and transformation. Normally, this wouldn't interest her in the slightest. But a member of the Flock is a blood relative of famed aviatrix Amelia Earhart, and owns a compass that once belonged to Earhart. Earhart was likely an avatar of the Flying Woman (p. 170), and may even have been the human who ascended to embody the archetype itself. A bird-oriented ritual involving a blood relative of Earhart who has a symbolic item once owned by her could be a very potent ritual indeed. An avatar of the Flying Woman present at such a ritual could gain a substantial increase in power.

Angela wants two things. First, she wants to find the Flock and gain admittance to their ritual so she can participate in it and gain the benefits thereof. Second, she wants to gain possession of Earhart's compass, which she suspects of either being a magick artifact or the perfect vessel to become a magick artifact tied to her archetype.

Normally, this wouldn't be a problem. But there's an enforcer on Angela's trail who wants to put a bullet in her head. Her ex-lover—now a rival avatar—is also in town and she wants the compass, too. Finally there are the player characters, the wild cards in this particular round of cosmic poker. Raise, call, or fold?

GM Prep

Because it's impossible to know just what sort of player characters and campaign the GM is running, an *Unknown Armies* scenario requires some preparation. As you may have noticed from the preceding description, nothing states clearly just who is on the side of right and wrong. Is Angela an ambitious but sympathetic woman? Or is she cruel and ruthless? Is the enforcer on her trail a scumbag, or a hero? Either way, is he justified in his mission of murder? And what about her ex-lover—is she to be aided or opposed by the player characters?

We can't answer these questions for you. But we can help you make these decisions for yourself and your campaign in a clear and orderly fashion. The following steps guide you through the process. (Note that the scenario is set in whatever city you want.)

Step One: Major GMCs

This section profiles the major GMCs involved in the scenario. Each GMC includes a section called "Check One" in which three options for the GMC's personality are presented. Once you've read through all the GMCs, go back and look over those checkable options. Decide how you'd like to customize each GMC, and check off the appropriate boxes.

Angela Osborne

Summary: Driven avatar of the Flying Woman

Personality: Scorpio—obsessive, demanding, a perfectionist

Obsession: Orderly life. She hates surprises, loathes uncertainty, and always seeks total power over everything that happens to her. She'll do anything to ensure that no one else can tell her what to do.

Wound Points: 40

Passions

Rage Stimulus: Self-appointed authority. Anyone who tries to tell her what to do—even when they mean the best—makes her madder than hell.

Fear Stimulus: (Helplessness) Reaching out. She hates to ask for help, or to accept it. If someone offers her help then she can grant her permission, but otherwise, it's a problem.

Noble Stimulus: Tough women. She has sympathy for women doing their best to make their way in the world, and seeing a strong sister fighting the fight for independence makes her proud.

Stats

Body: 40 (short and stocky)

Speed: 55 (moves like a snake)

Mind: 65 (analytical)

Soul: 60 (perceptive)

Skills

Body Skills: General Athletics 18%, Fight Like a Hellcat 62%

Speed Skills: Dodge 57%, Driving 32%

Mind Skills: Authority 43%, Human Behavior 34%, Notice 26%

Soul Skills: Avatar: Flying Woman 73%, Charm 16%, Lying 19%

Madness Meter

Violence	Unnatural	Helplessness	Isolation	Self
1 Hardened	3 Hardened	0 Hardened	1 Hardened	0 Hardened
0 Failed	0 Failed	2 Failed	2 Failed	1 Failed

Check One

◦ A) *High Road.* Angela is a noble, free-willed follower of the Flying Woman and is seeking to grow as an avatar through peaceful means. She may lie about her plans and intentions, but she won't hurt anyone except in self-defense. If trouble arises from another source, she'll step in to save the day, even if she isn't the one threatened.

◦ B) *Middle Road.* Angela is so blinded by her ambition to become a godwalker that she'll hurt others to do it. She could still come back to the side of the angels, however, especially if she fails a Self check during a tense situation; the realization of what she's becoming could save her from her fate.

◦ C) *Low Road.* Angela is merciless. For her, anything is worth the price of personal freedom, to the point that she places her own choices and priorities above anything. She'll kill for a cup of coffee, if that's what she chooses to do. She cares nothing for the consequences of her actions.

Maggie LeTourneau

Summary: Cunning avatar of the Flying Woman

Personality: Leo—competitive, doesn't share the spotlight

Obsession: I'm Number One. If anyone close to her seems to be pulling ahead in some area, she has to leapfrog them and prove her own superiority.

Wound Points: 55





Passions

Rage Stimulus: Defeat. If the chips are down and she's going to lose, she'll go ballistic—and maybe pull success from the jaws of defeat.

Fear Stimulus: (Isolation) Affection. She'll take a partner as long as they're as tough as she is, but if they display too much affection then she's outta there.

Noble Stimulus: Challenge. When someone offers legitimate, open competition to her, she gets excited, not vindictive.

Stats

Body: 55 (Tall, athletic)
Speed: 40 (Trips a lot)
Mind: 70 (Sharp)
Soul: 55 (Deep but vulnerable)

Skills

Body Skills: General Athletics 47%, Holds Her Liquor 28%, Struggle 23%

Speed Skills: Dodge 27%, Driving 48%

Mind Skills: Know-it-All 69%, Notice 18%

Soul Skills: Avatar: Flying Woman 46%, Charm 28%, Lying 15%

Madness Meter

Violence	Unnatural	Helplessness	Isolation	Self
0 Hardened	1 Hardened	0 Hardened	0 Hardened	0 Hardened
0 Failed	0 Failed	0 Failed	0 Failed	1 Failed

Check One

◦ A) *High Road.* Maggie may be competitive, but it's for a good cause. She's become a rival to her ex-lover, Angela, only because she's convinced that Angela doesn't have the right stuff to be a godwalker. She truly believes that she's the best candidate, and is trying to edge Angela out of the way just so she can make the world a better place.

◦ B) *Middle Road.* Maggie is jealous of Angela's progress as an avatar. She won't hurt Angela, but her arrogance is too great to let anyone win the prize but herself. But if Angela gets in trouble, Maggie will come to her aid.

◦ C) *Low Road.* Maggie wants to kill Angela and take her out of the running altogether. However, first she wants to best her in the current challenge to prove her superiority. Once she's beaten Angela, then she'll kill her in cold blood.

Morris Breecher

Summary: Overworked enforcer

Personality: Dustin Hoffman as an assassin—short, grumpy, tired

Obsession: Paradise. Morris just wants to retire to some tropical island and spend the rest of his life sipping coconut drinks and being fanned by beautiful island women. But his mother instilled a strong work ethic that he can't escape from, so he keeps working, telling himself that the next job will be his last and he'll have enough money to retire.

Wound Points: 60

Passions

Rage Stimulus: Frustration. He just wants everything to go smoothly and when obstacles arise, he loses his temper.

Fear Stimulus: (Helplessness) Death. Morris is scared of his own mortality and if presented with superior force, he'll cave and cut a deal.

Noble Stimulus: Killing scum. He really hates criminals, especially drug dealers, pimps, and pornographers. Wiping the floor with some dirtbag makes him feel superior.

Stats

Body: 60 (Tough little guy)
Speed: 85 (Skilled killer)
Mind: 45 (Unimaginative)
Soul: 30 (Self-absorbed)

Skills

Body Skills: Endurance 28%, My Body Is A Lethal Weapon 69% (*Cherries:* 11, New Damage; 22, Second Helping; 33, 44: Kung-Fu Grip; 55: Knock Down; 66: Monkey Dodge)

Speed Skills: Dodge 47%, Driving 44%, Firearms 48%

Mind Skills: General Education 23%, Notice 36%

Soul Skills: Act Sincere 24%, Lying 33%

Madness Meter

Violence	Unnatural	Helplessness	Isolation	Self
5 Hardened	0 Hardened	0 Hardened	0 Hardened	0 Hardened
0 Failed	0 Failed	2 Failed	1 Failed	2 Failed

Check One

◦ A) *High Road.* Morris only kills scum. He uses his martial arts abilities to disable anyone else, and makes sure they get medical attention after the fact. "Scum" means criminals and other low-lives, and those are the only kinds of murder contracts he accepts. If he learns that his target isn't scum, he'll track down whoever hired him and make them pay for deceiving him.

◦ B) *Middle Road.* Morris is just a hired professional. He'll kill whoever he's paid to. He is sympathetic to people who are being victimized or who were just in the wrong place at the wrong time, however, and can be persuaded to abandon a hit if the circumstances warrant. He hates doing this, though, so he usually avoids learning too much about his targets. When he gets drunk he confesses how much he loathes his life.

◦ C) *Low Road.* Morris is a cold-blooded bastard. He'll never find his beloved paradise; it's just the excuse he gives himself to justify a relentless life of dispassionate violence. Though not cruel or sadistic, he doesn't care about anyone but himself.

Sid Anderson

Summary: Leader of the Flock, blood relative of Amelia Earhart

Personality: New-age politician; gregarious, coalition-building, glad-handing, compassionate

Obsession: Legitimacy. He wants today's religious fringe to be tomorrow's mainstream. He wants to wear a pentagram to work and not get stared at.

Wound Points: 35

Passions

Rage Stimulus: Religious prejudice. Talking trash about new age/wiccan/pagan-style beliefs is sure to make his blood boil.

Fear Stimulus: (Helplessness) Cars. Sid has a life-long irrational fear of cars. He walks or bikes everywhere, and if he has to enter a car or other motor vehicle then he gets jumpy and scared.

Noble Stimulus: Solidarity. When he has a bunch of people working together on something, he's on top of the world.

Stats

Body: 35 (Scrawny but handsome)

Speed: 45 (Sure of himself)

Mind: 65 (College boy)

Soul: 75 (Spiritual)

Skills

Body Skills: General Athletics 16%, Look Good 38%, Struggle 18%

Speed Skills: Dodge 32%, Bicycling 49%

Mind Skills: General Education 57%, Notice 26%

Soul Skills: Lying 19%, Mysticism 53%, Persuade 48%

Madness Meter

Violence	Unnatural	Helplessness	Isolation	Self
0 Hardened	0 Hardened	0 Hardened	0 Hardened	1 Hardened
0 Failed	0 Failed	0 Failed	1 Failed	0 Failed

Check One

- A) *High Road.* Sid is just what he seems—the earnest leader of a neo-pagan sect. He wants people to get along, be happy, and not eat meat. He truly cares about those around him, and is always willing to help someone out when they're in trouble.
- B) *Middle Road.* Sid is ambitious. He'd like to be the Pat Robertson of the new age: a charismatic political/religious leader who can represent the eclectic liberal politics of the religious fringe. He is sincere, but his ambition makes him a little too eager to please. He can come across as phony, and occasionally he is.
- C) *Low Road.* Sid wants power. He preys on weak people, turning them into sycophants and clingers. He is sincere in his religious beliefs, but has secret yearnings to be seen as a near-messiah. He's like a cross between Donald Trump and John the Baptist.

The Flock

Founded by Sid Anderson three years ago, the Flock began as a loose-knit circle of friends who shared a common interest in neo-paganism and the politics of organized religion. Sid proposed that they formalize their association into a sect of sorts, and take an activist role in making the new age accepted by the mainstream. Now numbering fifty active members, the Flock mixes politics and religion in a heady but sincere brew. Their pagan-activist newsletter, *Soar*, goes to fifteen hundred subscribers across the region, and they have meaningfully endorsed a couple of local candidates in city elections. Last summer's *Soar Festival* at the

fairgrounds had five thousand attendees who shared a weekend of music, rituals, panels, and speeches. Members of the Flock take active roles in many other volunteer organizations, mostly on the liberal-environmental axis of local politics. The headquarters of the Flock is at Circle's Edge Bookstore, a non-profit new-age shop managed by the sect.

Step Two: The PCs

Now that we've got the main characters in the scenario covered and you've decided what kinds of people each of them are, it's time to figure out how the PCs get involved. This section presents several ways to start the scenario, divided up by the narrative structures presented on p. 117. If you're using a different narrative structure than those described in this book, you can use the following suggestions as a guide to making up your own.

The New Inquisition

Alex Abel has assigned the PCs' team to one or more of the following tasks:

- A) Infiltrate the Flock and assess how powerful they are.
- B) Recover Amelia Earhart's Compass.
- C) Prevent Morris Breecher from killing Angela Osborne.
- D) Kill Angela Osborne.

Magick Cabal

The PCs are joining the Flock at their upcoming ritual in a show of fringe camaraderie. In the days beforehand, they'll be meeting with Sid to talk about the Flock's goals and whether or not the PCs' cabal might want to form an alliance with the Flock.

Circle of Friends

Sid asks for the PCs' help because he thinks someone is after him. He figures the Flock are too visible to sneak around and figure things out, so he's calling in a favor from outside his sect.

Reality Cops

The PCs get wind of two trouble-making occultists who have arrived in town—Angela Osborne and Maggie LeTourneau—and want to find out what they're up to.

Occult Investigators

This "Flock" group is getting a lot of press. Are they for real, or do they have a hidden agenda? Time to infiltrate this cult and find out. This upcoming "ritual" certainly sounds suspicious.

Step Three: Plot Points

Several important plot points need to be examined by the GM. For each one, take into account your choices about the GMCs' personality types and the kind of narrative structure you're using, then make notes in the text as to what's going on in your version of this scenario.



Angela vs. Maggie

Angela Osborne and Maggie LeTourneau met in college a few years ago. Both were willful free spirits. Angela was an avatar of the Flying Woman and knew it, being fairly clued-in about the occult underground. Maggie was an unconscious avatar, following the Flying Woman's path without even knowing it. They fell in love, and Angela opened Maggie's eyes to the mystical journey they were both on. Once Maggie embraced her role as an avatar, though, the relationship went sour. Since then, they've been in competition to achieve the status of godwalker. The level and nature of their competition and their goals are dependent on the personalities you chose for each woman.

Angela vs. Maggie Notes

Morris on the Hunt

Morris Breecher is here to kill Angela Osborne. Why? He might be a member of the New Inquisition, assigned to a hit. He might have been hired by Maggie LeTourneau (if she's on the low road) to find Angela, summon Maggie, and then kill Angela when Maggie gives the order. He might serve someone else important to your campaign. Depending on the personalities you chose for Angela and Morris, he might not want to kill her if he learns too much about her.

Morris on the Hunt Notes

Amelia's Legacy

We're assuming that Amelia Earhart was indeed an avatar of the Flying Woman, but whether or not she ascended to fill that archetype isn't important to this scenario. This means that the upcoming phoenix ritual will have some real potency behind it. Sid Anderson may not be an avatar of the Flying Woman (no man can be) but with Earhart's blood in his veins, something's bound to happen. We'll cover the ritual later, but for now, you should decide whether or not Sid's compass—which passed through the family and down to him—is presently a functional magick artifact or simply an historical item prime for enchantment into an artifact. An example of the compass as an artifact appears below, or you could make up your own in the space for notes provided. You might also want to make a note as to where Sid keeps the compass. In the text, we've assumed that it's in his apartment, but you can change this.

Amelia's Compass: This minor artifact was once a cheap pocket compass owned by aviatrix Amelia Earhart. Anyone who possesses it gets several benefits, but only while the compass is carried on the owner's person. First, no plane the owner is on will crash (unless the pilot deliberately does so); it'll just be smooth flying the whole way. Second, the owner can use the Avatar: Flying Woman skill at 50%. This skill can never be lowered or raised. (The owner isn't really an avatar; the magickal effect is just the same.) Finally, if the owner can make a Soul check then he always knows which direction to go to reach a specific location. Such locations have to be physical landmarks, such as houses, streets, mountains, and so forth; they can't be impermanent locations such as "wherever Fred is" or "wherever the cult is meeting." The compass will point in the right direction until it is reached. This power can only be attempted once per day.

Amelia's Legacy Notes

Step Four: Agendas

Now that you've settled on personality types for the main GMCs and made notes as to the major plot points, it's time to get specific and settle on the *agendas* for some of the GMCs—that is, what their true approaches and goals are in their dealings with the PCs.

The following sections give you the opportunity to select one or more agendas for each GMC. Keep in mind which personality types you've chosen—high road, middle road, or low road—as well as how you chose to approach the major plot points. You can certainly make agenda choices that seem to go against type; if that works for you, it could add flavor and depth to the characters.

If you want to choose multiple agendas, you might want to decide which is the main one and then circle that box in addition to checking it.

Angela Osborne's Agendas

Angela doesn't have customized agendas. We already know that she's in town to find the Flock, figure out which one is a relative of Amelia Earhart, get the compass away from him, and then attend the Flock's ritual with the compass in hand in the hopes of getting some more avatar power out of it. (She might wait and take the compass at the ritual or just afterwards.)

Angela will be off-stage for most of the scenario, only turning up when she's going to make a move. When that happens, just use her personality type as a guide for how she acts. She won't have enough direct interaction with the PCs to warrant subtler agendas.

Sid Anderson's Agendas

◦ A) Sid fears for his safety and wants to stay with the PCs as much as possible. He's had premonitions of impending harm and is very worried.

◦ B) Sid wants to make a good impression on the PCs, so he will act strong, capable, and independent. He encourages them to

pursue their investigation, but will dismiss concerns over his personal safety.

- C) Sid does not trust the PCs. He might think they are evil people, or he might see them as rivals. Either way, he could be looking for an opportunity to discredit or even endanger the PCs. If nothing else, he'll keep them at arm's length and rat them out to the cops if the possibility arises.
- D) Sid is attracted to one of the PCs and will flirt with that character; Sid's enemies may exploit this situation.
- E) Sid wants to make a hero play, either because he's conceited and ambitious or because he's resourceful and heroic. He knows things are dangerous, but when the chips are down he'll jump into the fray and try to grab the glory, possibly with tragic consequences.

Maggie LeTourneau's Agendas

- A) Maggie wants help because she fears what Angela is becoming and thinks that taking her on alone would be dangerous.
- B) Maggie isn't sure what Angela is like these days. She's recruiting the PCs and plans to put them in Angela's path to see what she does.
- C) Maggie wants to make sure that she's the one at the ritual, not Angela. She'll tell the PCs any crazy story she likes to ensure that they put Angela out of the picture when the time comes.
- D) Maggie has doped out what's going on and mainly wants the compass. She'll use the PCs to get Sid Anderson alone and vulnerable. If she gets the compass, she'll either blow town or kill Sid and frame Angela for the crime.
- E) Maggie is trying to work on her competitiveness. She'll ally with the PCs in an attempt to cooperate with someone else. She'll try to be a good ally, but her competitive streak may still come to the fore, possibly shattering their alliance or making the PCs suspect her of duplicity.

Morris Breecher's Agendas

Like Angela Osborne, Morris doesn't have customized agendas. He's here to kill Angela. In the plot points section, you've already decided why he's here to kill her. In terms of his dealings with the PCs, just use the personality type you chose for him as a guide to how he behaves.

Looking Back

At this point you should understand the personalities and agendas of the main GMCs and the major plot points of the scenario. (Don't worry about specific plot events yet—we'll get to that soon.) Look back over the last few pages and examine the choices you've made. Do you know what each GMC wants? Do you know what each GMC is willing to do to get what he or she wants? If you can answer those two questions, you're in good shape.

As we've discussed in the rulebook, the core of drama is characters in conflict. The GMCs we've described are certainly in conflict, but there's a sort of dead zone right in the center: just *how* will they come into conflict and what will the nature of their conflict be? That dead zone is where the PCs come in, and it'll be up to them (and to you) to arbitrate the conflict and attempt to resolve it in a satisfactory fashion.

Angela Osborne and Morris Breecher are the simplest characters, since they'll be mostly acting off-stage. Angela is here to drive

the plot and serve as the central mystery—who is she and what does she want?—while Morris is here so that you can arbitrarily inject some action into the story whenever you need it. Maggie LeTourneau and Sid Anderson, on the other hand, are more complicated and are largely defined by how they relate to the PCs. Depending on the choices you've made, it may be that either Maggie or Sid is the real villain of the scenario; Angela may be a good person who's gone a little over the edge, and Morris may be a paper tiger who will abandon his contract if he figures out that Angela doesn't deserve to die.

Understanding the main GMCs is the key to running this scenario well. There are very few pre-planned events in the rest of the text. But if you understand the GMCs, then you'll be ready to roll with the punches as the PCs feel their way through the story.

Getting Started

Okay, enough preparation. This section presents the elements of the scenario itself, which you'll be using as you run the game.

Locations

There are several locations that will come into play in the course of the scenario. Each location is described, along with some examples of how it could be used. Beneath the title of each location is an address and a blank line. You can either use the address given, or write in your own. If you're setting this scenario in a specific city known to you and the players, it's a good idea to customize the addresses so that the locations appear in parts of town appropriate to your locale. You don't have to give the full street address to the players every time, but it's a good detail to throw into conversation. ("I'll be at my apartment, over on fourth street.")

Circle's Edge Bookstore

Address: 1224 Pine St. • Theatre District • 555-2463

Custom Address: _____

This popular new-age bookstore is frequented by the city's religious fringe. It's a storefront operation located in a block with four other businesses, including a coffeehouse (Cat's Inn), an art gallery (Open Space), a used-clothing store (Trade Ups), and a natural-foods store (Planet One). The store's hours of operation are from 10am - 8pm, Monday through Friday, and 1pm - 6pm on Sunday.

Inside, the store has high ceilings and lots of bookcases. Subjects include astrology, the paranormal, UFOs, wicca, and so forth. A selection of music CDs by local performers and some jewelry are kept in a glass case. Candles are everywhere, but due to fire codes they are kept unlit. On weekends and Wednesday nights, a professional tarot reader is present to give readings. The bookstore schedules special events once or twice a month, including author appearances, classes in meditation, and so forth.

An upstairs floor contains the Flock office as well as meeting space for both the Flock and for bookstore events and classes. Sid Anderson often works upstairs during the daytime, relieving bookstore employees downstairs when they take their breaks. Three aging computers are in the office, one of which is used for producing flyers, the newsletter, and other printed materials.

Circle's Edge has a secret. The basement of the store contains a small storage area for merchandise as well as an employee restroom,



but through an unmarked door there is an S&M dungeon. This area is used by the local sado-masochism community, and is decorated in black with red accents. A variety of S&M-related furniture is present, including manacles, benches, whipping posts, and so forth. Personal accessories such as whips, masks, and the like must be supplied by those using the room. Circle's Edge rents out access to the dungeon on a monthly basis. Members pay \$200/month for access, but must sign up for each four-hour slot at least two days in advance. All participants are here consensually, and nothing illegal occurs; it's just a private facility for local S&M fetishists. The bookstore does no promotion for the facility, but word circulates among the city's S&M crowd. If asked about the dungeon, Circle's Edge employees will freely admit its existence and explain its rates, but they generally don't volunteer information about it to avoid attracting unwanted publicity. A side benefit of the dungeon is that some of the city's political and financial elite are regular dungeon clients, an arrangement that helps Sid Anderson in his quest for new-age legitimacy.

Using Circle's Edge

The bookstore will be a focus of activity in the scenario, since Sid is there most every day. The other main GMCs will certainly drift through the store at some point during the scenario. You might consider having Angela be in the store the first time the PCs show up to talk to Sid. They won't notice her, since they haven't met her yet, but when she turns up again later on some PCs might recognize her from before. ("She was right there at the start!") Bookstore employees can also be a source of clues about the activities of the GMCs; Morris Breecher doesn't look like he belongs in Circle's Edge, for instance, and his presence might be noted by an employee.

If possible, try to find a way for the existence of the dungeon to be disclosed, probably when the PCs least expect it. Perhaps they hear screaming from beneath the floor while they're in the shop, or maybe someone is chased into the dungeon, interrupting a member of the city council as he's receiving a spanking. (If some bright spark uses the manacles or other implements in the dungeon to make Angela stay put, remember that Angela's Avatar: Flying Woman skill is high enough that she can escape from bonds.)

Sid Anderson's Apartment

Address: Gull Apartments • 4533 Third St. #416 • Downtown • 555-4469

Custom Address: _____

Sid lives in an old but decent apartment building downtown, on the fourth floor. The front door is kept locked at all times; visitors must use the intercom to reach a resident, who can then press a button to unlock the front door. There is no front desk, though the building manager has an apartment on the first floor and can be buzzed from the entrance. Despite security, it's pretty easy to walk in behind another visitor or resident as they open the door: it's just a matter of good timing and looking casual.

A single elevator serves the entire ten-story building. It's an old elevator, cramped and slow. A staircase lies at either end of the small lobby. There is a large service elevator, which only the manager has a key to; it's used for moving in new tenants and other large deliveries.

Coming out of the elevator, a visitor approaches Sid's apartment by turning right and heading down the hall about eight doors. His apartment is on the left side of the hall.

The apartment has a central living room with an open doorway to a small kitchen on the left and two doors leading to a bedroom and bathroom on the right. Sid lives simply. The living room contains a thrift-store couch, three chairs, and a dented table, plus a bookcase and some miscellaneous decorations. His bedroom has a large futon, with a boom box in one corner and an unkempt pile of compact discs. His clothes stay in his closet.

Sid doesn't spend a lot of time here. He's at the bookstore almost every day, and even uses the upstairs area there for entertaining, rather than his apartment. His computer and papers are all at the office.

Unless you've decided otherwise in the Plot Points section, Earhart's Compass is in Sid's apartment. He keeps it in a jar in the kitchen, sitting on a windowsill.

Using Sid's Apartment

Depending on circumstances, Sid may invite the PCs to stay at his apartment if they need a place to crash. He has some sleeping bags in a closet that he can break out for such a need.

Angela, Maggie, or Morris might break into Sid's apartment, looking for the compass or Sid or each other. It's even possible that *all three* will break in, one after another, which should provide ample confusion for the players.

If Sid is in jeopardy, the PCs might have him hole up at the apartment and keep watch. Keep in mind that Angela has the Avatar: Flying Woman skill at a high enough level that she can *fly*. She could zip up outside Sid's window and come in that way, or just spy to see what's going on.

Assorted Motels

Address: Gentry Inn #212 • 475 Fourth St. • Downtown • 555-8972

Custom Address: _____

Tenant: _____

Address: Motel 23 #106 • 5038 45th St. • University District • 555-8836

Custom Address: _____

Tenant: _____

Address: Teepee Sleepie #118 • 3528 Aurora Ave. • Business District • 555-9903

Custom Address: _____

Tenant: _____

These are the three motels where Angela, Maggie, and Morris are staying. (Hey, they've got to sleep somewhere.) Note that the Gentry Inn is one street over and about six blocks down from Sid's apartment building; this can be intentional or accidental, as desired. On the "Tenant" line, write down who is staying in which motel. All three motels are inexpensive, tacky, and have minimal security.

Using the Motels

The most likely reason for one of these locations to come into play is if the PCs follow a GMC back to where he or she is staying, or figure it out with magick. Confrontation scenes are likely. If the PCs ally with Maggie, she may meet up with them at her room at one time or another—drawing the attention of anyone watching Maggie.

Liston Farm

Address: 3718 Rochester Lane • rural area outside of town • 555-3475

Custom Address: _____

Darryl Liston is an organic farmer and member of the Flock. His family has a small farm about an hour's drive from downtown that the Flock uses for monthly ceremonies. The upcoming phoenix ritual will be conducted at the Liston Farm.

The farm is about a hundred acres, and contains a one-story farmhouse, a barn, tool shed, and lots of cultivated fields. Roughly a third of the acreage is densely wooded, and within the woods there is a beaten-down clearing that the Flock uses.

Other farms lie adjacent to Liston's. He lives there with his common-law wife, Cindy, and their ten-month-old daughter Shelby. They keep numerous cats, who are moderately feral, and have a few cows to supply milk. The Listons are vegetarians, and do not raise any animals for meat. Darryl inherited a sizable family fortune, with which he purchased this farm about ten years ago. It runs at a small loss, but Darryl can afford it.

The clearing is ringed with fifty-four stones (one per member of the Flock), each weighing just four or five pounds—about the size of a football. Each stone has been painted or decorated or carved in some fashion by its owner in the Flock, and left here to mark the clearing as a sacred place.

Using the Farm

There is no real use for the farm until the night of the phoenix ritual. However, if some violence has occurred, Sid or another Flock member could suggest using the farm as a safehouse.

Events

This section presents several important incidents that are likely to occur in the scenario, though their order may vary.

Event: Meeting the Flock

One way or another, the PCs are likely to have some kind of introduction to Sid Anderson and the Flock. This will most likely involve a meeting at Circle's Edge, including a tour of the store and the upstairs (but not the S&M dungeon, which isn't mentioned). If the PCs are a magick cabal of some sort (or posing as such), then Sid and a handful of Flock members will invite the PCs to a prayer-and-drum session that evening above the bookstore after business hours are over. This will be a small gathering of a dozen or so members, with some general (and brief) neo-pagan rituals followed by a drum jam and some dancing. Visitors are welcome, so you might consider having either Angela, Maggie, or even Morris be present. The event should be a fun, welcoming one, and Sid will invite a PC representative to introduce the group members and explain their beliefs.

If the PCs aren't a magick cabal, they could still be invited to the session purely for social or practical reasons. Alternately, PCs staking out the bookstore could hear drums and chanting inside and wonder what was up. If the latter is the case, they might spot a GMC also staking out the bookstore, waiting for Sid to come out and follow him home.

Event: Meeting Maggie

At some point, Maggie LeTourneau will approach the PCs and ask for help of some kind. (You should already have decided her agenda for doing so.) She'll explain briefly that a woman she knows, Angela Osborne, is in town and is seeking a member of the Flock who owns a compass that once belonged to Amelia Earhart. Maggie will provide the PCs with a photograph of Angela and will coordinate with them to deal with Angela, protect Sid, or what have you. Modulate her story, suggestions, and requests in accordance with the personality type and agenda you chose.

Event: Spotting Angela

Once the PCs know something about Angela, they may begin spotting her around town, following them or Sid or just skulking about. Her ability to fly (which she does only when she isn't being observed by normal people, unless things are dire) should make any sort of pursuit or avoidance interesting. Angela might allow herself to be captured or at least confronted in order to learn more about the PCs, confident that her ability to escape from any bonds (her Avatar: Flying Woman skill) will let her slip away once her curiosity is satisfied. The outcome of any such encounter depends on the choices you've made about Angela, but she should retain enough independence that she'll pursue her goals without the PCs as allies, barring persuasion.

Event: Morris Attacks

When, where, and how Morris Breecher attacks Angela is up to you. You should at least wait until the PCs have had an encounter with her, since that should help to determine if they are favorably inclined towards her or not—and also suggest what their reaction to Morris's attack might be. You should definitely stage Morris's attack when the PCs are around, whatever the circumstances. Ideally, he should fail at this point so that he can attack again at the ritual on the farm. If the PCs aren't intervening, Morris's attack will fail because of Angela's Avatar: Flying Woman ability to flip rolls and get out of sticky situations, an ability that could manifest in visible ways or that could generate some unnatural phenomena in the vicinity.

Event: The Ritual

The climax of the scenario should, if possible, occur at the phoenix ritual held by the Flock out at Liston's Farm. If your game reaches a different and satisfying climax, that's fine. If, however, things get resolved in an unsatisfying or undramatic fashion, you might consider revising your personality choices. Should Angela die or get arrested early, for example, you might switch Maggie to a Low Road personality type (assuming she isn't already) and have her betray the PCs at the ritual, or Morris could have additional assignments such as killing Maggie, stealing the compass, or what have you.

The ritual occurs within just a day or two of the start of the scenario; the exact day and time are up to you, but it should be in the evening. About an hour beforehand, more than a dozen cars and trucks depart from different parts of the city and head out for the rural farmlands beyond. These contain about fifty members of the Flock, most of them traveling in groups of three or four. Joining the exodus inconspicuously is easy, given the large number of vehicles—for the PCs or for GMCs.

The main body of vehicles enters the farmland and parks in a large open area near the house. A few members cycle through the farmhouse to visit the restroom, and then candles are lit and the walk to the clearing begins. (It's very easy for someone to park up the road a ways and then sneak onto the Liston farm.)

The Flock (and anyone with them or following them) arrive at the clearing in the woods after just fifteen minutes or so. Each member takes up a position in front of his or her stone (as described earlier), with visitors standing just outside the ring. Stealthy observers can easily hide in the trees just a few yards from the ring and observe the proceedings.

Sid begins at the ring but moves inwards to lead the group. He has Earhart's compass hanging from his neck, assuming it hasn't been stolen already. He presides over some general blessings/invocations, and then begins the phoenix ritual.

This ritual takes about half an hour and requires that another half-dozen members of the Flock step forward and assist Sid in saying rites and making ritual movements. At some point during the ritual—whenever the GM feels is dramatic—things begin to happen.

Ritual Weirdness

First, Sid begins to glow. An aura of pale blue light surrounds him. Sid is unaware of this, but everyone present can see it. As events unfold, this aura will come to resemble a great bird—a phoenix. Second, a low hum begins within moments of the aura appearing. This hum seems to come from all around—the earth, the trees, the sky. It quickly grows louder. Any PC with aviation experience may make a Mind check or appropriate skill check; the sound is the noise of an aircraft engine, specifically an older one powered by propellers.

The PCs may choose to take some action, possibly trying to disrupt Sid and the other celebrants. If Angela and/or Maggie are present (perhaps hiding in the woods) then they step forward into the ring and hold out their arms. Should Morris be around, he might get spooked and decide to take out Angela right there and then before she does anything weird.

In the midst of whatever is going on, additional magickal events occur—the process cannot be stopped, only survived.

The hum of the propellers grows louder and within seconds it's deafening; no one can communicate by voice. Suddenly the hum goes wrong, the brief sound of a small explosion kicking off a terrible, high wail. It is the sound of an airplane in an uncontrolled dive, but it merges with the sound of a woman screaming.

Whatever actions the PCs and GMCs are taken can continue through this situation, but keep in mind that it's impossible to hear anything other than the weird noise—and any gunshots that might occur.

When the actions of the PCs and GMCs are climaxing, throw one more magickal effect at them. The wail turns into a roar and then there is a terrible, screaming crash. PCs and GMCs alike must make a Speed check or be thrown to the ground.

Concurrent with the sound of the crash, a flood of water appears from nowhere and fills the clearing to a depth of fifteen feet. The edge of the water coincides with the edge of the stone ring; it's like a freestanding swimming pool that, impossibly, has no walls. The water is salty—it's sea water.

At this point, anyone thrown to the ground finds themselves at the bottom of the watery pool. Everyone else is lifted quickly up with the water and is treading on the surface. Initiate use of the drowning

rules (p. 61) as needed. The water is turbulent, but not overpowering. Swimming (Swim skill or half Body) to the edge of the ring allows one to slip out of the water and drop to the ground beyond.

Assuming Sid is still within the ring, he's glowing brightly underwater. The aura has fully taken the shape of a phoenix with a fifteen-foot wingspan. Sid/the aura begins to flap its monstrous wings and rises slowly through the water and then into the air.

The PCs and GMCs are still free to act throughout these events, though of course they are hampered by the circumstances (halve all Body and Speed skill checks while in the water). Angela and Maggie (if present) will both believe that Sid is about to ascend to the Invisible Clergy, and (depending on their personalities) may attempt to either kill him, drag him out of the stone ring, or protect him.

If Sid is killed, knocked unconscious, or moved out of the stone ring, the magick stops working. The freestanding watery pool collapses, splashing salt water, Flock members, PCs, and GMCs into the trees around the ring. Everything goes back to normal. Since all of the candles are now out (from the water) and Sid is no longer glowing, it's pitch dark in the rural night, possibly leading to some interesting results.

If Sid remains where he is, the magickal event climaxes in a flash of light as the phoenix-aura leaves Sid's body and flies up towards the sky. It vanishes, and the water collapses as described above. Sid is left at the center of the ring, unconscious. Sid's fate is dealt with under "Repercussions," below.

Whatever climax the PCs and GMCs orchestrate is perfectly fine—anyone can live or die. The climax of their actions might occur before, during, or after the final moments of the ritual. Nothing in this final event is scripted. Use your personality choices and agendas as your guide, and bring things to a satisfying conclusion.

Repercussions

A wide variety of repercussions are possible, depending on the personalities of the main GMCs and the actions taken at the ritual. The PCs might have made enemies, allies, both, or neither. One or more of the GMCs might owe the PCs a debt, or seek vengeance.

The PCs' future relationship with the Flock should be considered. The ritual event was unprecedented in the Flock's experience, and they're going to be very curious about what happened. The PCs might end up as allies of the Flock, or might simply use them as contacts somewhere down the road.

Sid's Fate

The fate of Sid Anderson depends on what happened at the ritual. If the final migration of the phoenix-aura was prevented—by killing, incapacitating, or removing Sid—then he's just plain old Sid (or maybe plain old dead Sid).

If, however, the final element of the ritual still happened, then Sid suffers quite a different fate, one obvious to anyone who sees Sid in the immediate aftermath of the ritual.

Sid is now a woman.

The power of the Flying Woman archetype being channeled through a male body was overwhelming, and resulted in Sid being remade into a woman. She—Sid—is not an avatar of the Flying Woman, however; rather, the transformative nature of the process has placed her squarely in the path of the Mystic Hermaphrodite, the same archetype followed by the Freak. Sid's future should prove interesting.