

# Into the Fire

An adventure scenario for

AGAINST  
the DARKNESS



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## INTO THE FIRE: SYNOPSIS

A forest fire is spreading unnaturally quickly and threatening an isolated religious center and its elderly inhabitants. Can the characters get to the heart of the strange fire before the entire forest becomes a raging hell?

**STOP!** If you are going to play this scenario, do not read any further.





## SCENE 1: MUSTERING FOR THE FIRE

Everyone is awakened shortly after dawn Monday morning with the urgent news of a forest fire in the nearby woods. You can already smell the smoke when you step outside. The slight breeze is blowing most of it away from you, but you can see a dark gray cloud hanging over the forest. A handful of volunteer firefighters are calling for everyone's attention.

One man holds up a map of the local area, with the spread of the fire chronicled in red marker. It is mostly spreading in a widening oval in the direction toward which the wind is blowing, threatening the town of Pine Valley. However, there is an offshoot that strangely appears to be headed in the opposite direction, toward the retreat center. The speaker is asking for volunteers to help build a firebreak in front of that offshoot.

If asked, one of the firefighters will offer the opinion that maybe the offshoot was caused by animals that caught on fire, and set other areas alight as they were fleeing in panic. The firefighters don't seem to consider this to be a very *good* explanation, but nothing else logical has come to mind.

The firebreak needs to be built in a remote part of the property belonging to the retreat center. Two offshoots of the fire may be used if the GM wants to split up the player characters, or just raise the level of tension. It's possible that some non-player-character Justiciars could be available to deal

similarly with a second offshoot. Another possibility is that some other volunteers do the firebreak work on the second offshoot and the heroes are only called in to deal with the situation when the volunteers conclude that there is something "unnatural" about



it.

The player characters will be assisting the experienced volunteer firefighters ("Good, some warm bodies! This is nothing complex, we just need some space cleared. Grab one of those hard hats, and come on."), and taken to the work location in an older sport utility vehicle. The vehicle will hold nine people, including the driver. Logically there could be up to five player characters with the three firefighters, but at least two firefighters should always be included regardless of how many PCs are involved. The SUV will not be available to pick up the volunteers later; for that they will have to depend on the old truck owned by the retreat center.

## SCENE 2: BABE IN THE WOODS

The vehicle takes you along a rough dirt road, and then over even rougher terrain to a brushy meadow. One arm of the forest tapers off here, and that is evidently the direction of the threat. The meadow has brush that needs to be cleared and a few small-to-medium trees. It is bounded on the side opposite the woods by a small stream lined with trees. The team leader, Wade Ybarra, says that the object is to reduce the brush enough that if the fire reaches this meadow, it won't be able to spread any further.



The driver drops the team off with some equipment – shovels and a chainsaw, bottles of water, an emergency first-aid kit and protective blankets. If someone asks whether a particular tool or piece of emergency equipment is available, feel free to make a roll to see if it was included or simply adjudicate its availability based on common sense.

The area to be cleared has brush and relatively small trees. The trees need to be cut (using the chainsaw from the SUV – the firefighters will handle this unless a player character claims expertise with the tool), brush hauled away, and some digging done to set up a firebreak to stop the fire should it reach this point, or in case a controlled burn is needed in front of the approaching fire.

The leader of this team is Wade Ybarra. Along with him are Eleanor Tall Bear and Dominic Moy. (Character sheets are provided for these non-player characters.)

At this point players could ask questions, or say what their characters are doing. The GM may allow some time to pass, or move forward.

**You've all been working right along, and are making good progress. The brush is piled up along a small creek, and a couple dry, brachy pine trees have been removed from the area. Now work has started on digging a break in the grassy earth, to try to protect the plants along the creek. The air has become slightly hazy and the odor of smoke is strong.** [See sketch of the area.]

**The next time you set your shovel in the ground, you notice there are a lot more insects in the way than the last scoop. Looking around, you see dozens of black beetles moving away from the fire and crawling in your direction. In the time it takes to make two more scoops, the ground is literally covered with crawling insects. There is no place to step without putting your feet on the beetles, and hearing their shells "crunch!" beneath your boots. There seems to be almost a wave of them, creeping out of the forest and across the cleared area you all have made. What do you do?**

If the characters simply stand still, the beetles will crawl over the toes of their boots and around their ankles. The beetles seem intent on going by and do no further exploring, though it's not necessary to explain this too quickly. The clearing is quickly carpeted with beetles, and they don't disperse until after the next event.

**The sound of the chainsaw comes to a stop and suddenly everything seems incredibly quiet. Into that silence comes the sound of someone crashing through the underbrush from the direction of the fire. A high-pitched, almost sobbing sound can be heard. Then there is a crash, and a shriek, followed by soprano screams. The firefighters drop what they're doing and run toward the sound.**

#### **What do you do?**

The screams are coming from a small boy, about 7 years old. He is Russell "Rusty" Carr, and didn't realize until just now how much he really hates black beetles. He has been getting more and more distressed during his flight through the forest, and panicked when he fell into the middle of the beetles. The boy is a little distance into the woods, far enough that the clear area cannot be seen from where he is.



# AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: Eleanor Tall Bear

Position: volunteer firefighter

A fit young woman in her mid-twenties with short dark hair and a tan complexion, Eleanor is a college graduate and works as a chemist. She runs, and trains at a martial arts academy, but has never seriously considered the need to apply her skills in a real-world setting. Eleanor's maternal grandfather was a volunteer firefighter, and his stories inspired her to take the training herself. Firefighting is important to her, but it is less crucial to her identity than it is to some people. Eleanor is a member of a Native American tribe. She believes in the theoretical existence of the supernatural, but is not at all prepared to experience it in person.

## ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

<b>Corpus 4</b>	<b>d6</b>	<b>Mentus 4</b>	<b>d6</b>	<b>Spiritus 3</b>	<b>d4</b>	<b>Fidelis 3</b>	<b>d6</b>
Combat ‡	2	Animation		Cunning ‡	2	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	2	Hard Science	4	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	1	Medicine ‡	2	Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	3	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡	2	Wealth ‡		Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	2				

## SPECIALIZATIONS:

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# AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: Dominic Moy

Position: volunteer firefighter

Dominic's uncle was a firefighter in New York who died on 9/11. Dominic wants to emulate him but doesn't want to be in a city fire department. Younger than his two partners of the day (in his early twenties), he sees being a volunteer firefighter as a first step on the road to his dream of becoming a smoke jumper. Meanwhile he works at a gym and practices boxing because both give him great opportunities to increase his fitness, and he is taking paramedic classes at a nearby community college. Dominic has light brown hair and fair skin that burns easily in the sun so he carries sunblock with him and uses it frequently. He is an avid reader of science fiction, but does not expect to encounter the weird in real life.

## ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

<b>Corpus 5</b>	<b>d6</b>	<b>Mentus 4</b>	<b>d6</b>	<b>Spiritus 3</b>	<b>d6</b>	<b>Fidelis 2</b>	<b>d4</b>
Combat ‡	4	Animation		Cunning ‡	3	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	4	Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	1	Medicine ‡	1	Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	3	Psychology ‡		Holy Aura	
Speed ‡	2	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡	2	Wealth ‡	2	Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation					

## SPECIALIZATIONS:

# AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: Father Piotr "Pete" Radnisky

Position: retired Justiciar; former parish priest

Most recognizable by his wild shock of white hair (which he likes to compare to Einstein's) and large pectoral cross, Father Radnisky is slightly stooped but still spry at 79, though he does need reading glasses. He spent most of his adult life in one or another parish in Chicago, but in retirement enjoys the rural peace found in being the spiritual supervisor of the retreat center. Radnisky had a lot of opportunities over the years to develop a strong faith, and it is still healthy although his body has started to decline somewhat. He saw more evil than he would have liked during his years in Chicago, but that just means that now he has the experience to deal with almost anything – as long as he has a chance to lie down afterward.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

<b>Corpus 3</b>	d6	<b>Mentus 4</b>	d6	<b>Spiritus 4</b>	d4	<b>Fidelis 6</b>	d8
Combat ‡	2	Animation		Cunning ‡	3	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius		Divination		Divine Intervention	3
Mechanics ‡	2	Hard Science	2	Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡		Medicine ‡	4	Exorcism ‡	5
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	5	Psychology ‡	1	Holy Aura	3
Speed ‡	1	Occultism ‡		Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	2
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡	4	Wealth ‡	1	Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡				Wrath ‡	
		Translation	3				

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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# AGAINST the DARKNESS

Character Name: Sister Mary Dolores

Position: retired Justiciar; Sister of the Good Shepherd

Sister Mary Dolores wears a navy blue veil and skirt, silver-rimmed glasses, a plain light blue shirt, and sturdy shoes. She is somewhat frail at 82, has trouble with her knees, and uses a walker. Her mind is still very sharp, however, and she can offer a solution to almost any problem if someone will give her a thorough account of the situation. She also organizes the staff of the retreat center. Sister Mary Dolores has encountered many weird and evil things during her life, especially during the years she worked in Paraguay for her order, and the time she spent dealing with troubled youth in Kentucky. She has great faith in God and has no qualms about confronting the supernatural, if only someone can help her get to where she is needed.

ATTRIBUTES (Skills and Miracles: ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed)

<b>Corpus 2</b>	d4	<b>Mentus 5</b>	d8	<b>Spiritus 5</b>	d6	<b>Fidelis 5</b>	d6
Combat ‡		Animation		Cunning ‡	5	Discernment ‡	
Endurance ‡		Genius	4	Divination		Divine Intervention	
Mechanics ‡	4	Hard Science		Ghostliness ‡		Ecological Dominance	
Pyrokinesis ‡		Investigation ‡	3	Medicine ‡		Exorcism ‡	
Raw Physicality ‡		Knowledge	5	Psychology ‡	5	Holy Aura	
Speed ‡		Occultism ‡	4	Telekinesis ‡		Sacrificial Healing	
Transformation ‡		Technical ‡		Wealth ‡	5	Stewardship ‡	
		Telepathy ‡	4			Wrath ‡	
		Translation	4				

SPECIALIZATIONS: