

## Scene 1: The Tavern (cutscene)

Civilized Scene qualities: Furniture-strewn, quiet/serene, sight-blocking. I interpret that as lots of cramped little rooms, it's the middle of the day and the tavern is mostly empty.

Academician, (Foe), from neighboring country, officer/special forces. Trait is cruel/malevolent. Sounds like a nice guy!

We'll call the academic "Gillbladle". Aleister Gillbladle.

Let's dig a little deeper about Gillbladle.

Is Lawlor the Bold (our protagonist) answering a call for heroes? (If no, then this might be Gillbladle seeking out Lawlor for some reason, or just a chance meeting.) Let's say it's Likely.

[28] YES {+1 Plot Stress}

Gillbladle was rolled up as a Foe, but given the circumstances let's just say he would ordinarily be a bad guy but has a specific need.

Ok, let's open the Scene. Check whether it opens as expected [73] it does.

Dialogue ensues.

Lawlor asks Gillbladle about the call for jobs. There automatically is a need, so we'll just roll for the Mission. Spy (7) ... let's say on a person: a Despicable Villain. We'll call him Mungrove. Larimor Mungrove sounds good.

Gillbladle's no saint. Lawlor asks: Are you two peers? (T&T L1 Saving Roll vs. Cha - 12+9 = 21 made it). {+1 Plot Stress}, so we get an answer (seems Likely): [84] NO {+1 Plot Stress}

Let's say no and they hate each other.

Lawlor asks: Do you know where Mungrove is, a destination place for the mission? (I decide no skill check needed, and Very Likely): [09] YES {+1 Plot Stress, just barely misses an Unexpected Event roll}

So we'll roll a Civilized Place - [17] a Library or Lab, well duh! To clarify, is it nearby (e.g., in town) (seems Likely): [70] NO {+1 Plot Stress}, but we missed it by just 5%, so let's say it's a cottage within a day's hike of here. To clarify further, is it in an isolated place (seems 50/50): [85] NO {+1 Plot Stress}. It's one town over, then.

I'll handwave that the payment for the spying is 100 gp. I'll also handwave that Gillbladle just wants to know what Mungrove is up to. There is no stealing or mayhem inherently involved in the job. Lawlor the Bold seems poorly suited for a spying mission, but money is money! He'll take it.

That seems good enough to start. Try to close the scene. [82] it closes successfully.

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## Scene 2: First try to get into Mungrove's Lab (Obstacle Scene)

Let's say Lawlor tries to talk his way into the Lab as some sort of bodyguard contractor (L1 IQ saving roll). He'll have to make nice with any staff there (L1 Cha Saving roll). And he'll need to avoid his cover getting blown (L1 Luck saving roll),

Civilized scene qualities: Estate, Garden, Plants. Sounds like Lawlor is outside the fancy manor house to try and run through this scene successfully.

Let's roll up a key person for the scene— and strangely we get another academic (but this one is a regular person, not Lorimar Mungrove). Let's call her Malage. Let's clarify her role, is Malage something like a personal assistant? (50/50, if no she could be a wife, or just staff) [27] YES {+1 Plot Stress}

Let's try to open the Scene. [87] Scene opens as described.

Lawlor approaches Malage and tries to convince her that they could use a(nother) guard, and that Lawlor is an ideal candidate. He'll even work for free for a trial time! (L1 IQ Saving Roll rather than Cha, as he is trying to spin a clever story rather than appeal personally –  $11+8 = 19$  just missed it). {+1 Plot Stress} Malage is unconvinced and politely brushes off Lawlor's offer.

Lawlor suggests a test of mettle with the captain of the guard, is that a convincing scenario for Malage? [05] YES there is a captain of the guard so that's workable. But the 05 triggers an Unexpected Event. Plot Stress is now 9. The UE is "Foe: Special Item". There are no Foes in the scene, so ignore the result.

Will they bring out the guard immediately for a discussion (50/50) [07] YES {+1 Plot Stress} and another UE triggered. [4] Trait, Negative in a Foe. Though Malage is technically not a foe, the action makes perfect sense with her Impulsive nature: She calls for the captain of the guard – immediately! To have a trial combat right there on the lawn.

We'll deal with Captain of the Guard with a Monster Rating. I did a  $d10 \times d10$  and got 40. That's a Level 5 foe! Lawlor is a Level 1 Warrior. He can't hope to compete. So let's try a L1 Cha Saving Roll for Lawlor to talk his way into bows instead, where he stands more of a chance. ( $12+8 = 20$  just made it – and it's one skill check toward Meaningful Success for the scene) {+1 Plot Stress}. So the two warriors got to talking, and the captain of the guard (let's call him Denovan) wants to see what Lawlor can do with a bow.

Targets are brought out and bows are strung. Let's go right to a L2 DX Saving Roll for Lawlor to hit the target well enough to impress the Captain of the Guard. ( $16+6 = 22$ , nope) {+1 Plot Stress}. Lawlor's not bad but he comes off as a trained novice instead of a missile weapons expert.

So let's Ask for Trouble: Does the Captain of the Guard grow suspicious and throw Lawlor out? [98] NO {+1 Plot Stress}. With such a firm answer, it seems the Captain of the Guard took a shining to Lawlor – but he won't bring him on based on what he's seen.

Lawlor decides to go for double or nothing, suggesting a footrace (a test of speed). By this time let's give Denovan a Trait – he is cruel. Oh, joy. I'll handwave that Denovan lets Lawlor show off his footwork (as a L2 Spd Saving Roll to be impressive enough.  $15+7=22$ , nope again) {+1 Plot Stress}. I imagine Denovan, true to his cruel nature, is having fun getting Lawlor to make a fool of himself with no intention of bringing him on...

Lawlor admits defeat to Malage, but once out of earshot he's going to try Plan B, to get in with the servants of the estate as a groundstender, kitchen help or something similar. Let's try a L1 DX saving roll to sneak into the manor without anyone notifying Malage or Denovan. Failure will alert them in a bad way ( $16+4 = 20$  – success but not the threshold of meaningful success) {+1 Plot Stress}.

Now that he's in, I'll say having an open position that Lawlor can fill comes down to sheer luck. So let's have a L1 Lck saving roll:  $12+4 = 16$  – fail) {+1 Plot Stress}. The staff turns Lawlor away.

Talking my way in didn't work. I think Lawlor the Bold will have to resort to some sneakier form of spying on Mungrove. Let's throw in the towel for this scene, and try and close it. [40] Nothing else happens, scene closes cleanly.

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### **Scene 3: Second try to get into Mungrove's Lab: Manor at Night (Obstacle Scene)**

The Scene Qualities are all outside (fences/hedges, wide open space, sprinkling), so that's where we'll try to run the scene. We'll try first to sneak up and disable a guard at the perimeter. Then we'll do a Speed check to cross the wide-open spaces quickly. Then a strength check to climb up to the second story.

Let's try to open the Scene [30] scene opens as expected.

Sneaking in the dark, tagging hedges for a bonus (Level 2 DX Saving Roll):  $16+9 = 25$ , made the sneak even without the bonus. One skill check toward meaningful success. {+1 Plot Stress}.

Now I'll try to hit the guard with the bow, with surprise, and then defeat the guard. The guard has a MR of  $d10 \times 10$  for  $7 \times 5 = 35$ , which is very tough. We start with a roll to use missile fire at short range (L1 DX saving roll):  $16 + 8 = 24$ , success {+1 Plot Stress}.

(We've done lots of handwaving here that the guard fights until disabled in a long tough battle. Lawlor won but took 8 points of damage and has just 4 points left. The battle against a tough Level 4 foe counts as a meaningful success.) {The battle lasted about 12 exchanges, so that's +12 Plot Stress!} It makes no difference in game terms, but Lawlor fought to subdue (knock out) the guard rather than kill.

Now let's ask for trouble: Did others hear all the commotion of battle? Let's say it's even Likely. [78] NO {+1 Plot Stress}. Guess we were far enough away that it wasn't an issue.

Now Lawlor is on the grounds and will make a L1 Speed saving roll.  $15+6 = 21$ . Made it, but did not achieve meaningful success.

We're up to the building now, and time for a second ask for trouble – I've handwaved that the library/lab is on the second floor, but ... are the windows on that second floor area too small for a person to fit through (50/50)? [68] NO. Whew, second AfT out of the way.

Now to try and climb up the stone wall without rope. It's a L1 STR saving roll, failure means a fall and damage (I'll say arbitrarily  $1d6-1$  for landing on soft(ish) ground.  $11+6 = 17$  {+1 Plot Stress}. Right into the flowerbeds, and ... 3 CON damage. Lawlor has just 1 CON point left. Let's go for broke and try it again.  $11+9 = 20$  {+1 Plot Stress}. Whew, just made it that time! Fortune favors the bold.

We're now in the lab area, and a good third ask for trouble is whether there's someone in there, or else it's pitch dark. Let's ask if someone else is in there... [81] NO {+1 Plot Stress}.

Just 1 skill check away from meaningful success... let's try a L1 IQ saving roll, to see if Lawlor knows what to look for!  $11+6 = 17$  that's a fail {+1 Plot Stress}. Ok how about a L1 Luck saving roll, to see if

Lawlor happens to stumble upon something that really sticks out, like a special item?  $12+13 = 25$  Absolutely! {+1 Plot Stress} Let's roll for an Item [47] Inert crystal/rare earth. Let's try and clarify – is it clearly a clearly magical crystal, glowing or something? (50/50) [71] NO {+1 Plot Stress}. In that case we'll handwave and say the crystal is distinctive looking, and was mounted in such a way to really stand out as a centerpiece of research.

Lawlor stuffs the crystal in a pouch, then I'll check "Is there a way to descend that's less risky than the climb?" (remember, one more point of damage and Lawlor's a goner) (50/50). [42] YES. Lawlor clambers down a drain and drops part of the way without incident. He makes off into the night.

Does the scene close successfully? [28], no, there's an UE and Plot Stress drops from 38 to 19. "Trap/Ambush – arrest/confine". Oy, that's too bad. I think the rest of the scene writes itself without any further questions to ask. Lawlor lands hard, and Denovan - the Captain of the Guard - and a crew emerge from the hedges around the base of the manor. "You're not going anywhere..." Probably the extended battle tipped them off; maybe they saw Lawlor while he was running across the manor grounds, or maybe they heard when he slipped and hit dirt the first time. Maybe they were aware of all those things. What matters is that they have Lawlor at sword point, and he has just 1 CON left to stand on.

I decide we *can* close the scene there with a Meaningful Success. Surrendering resolves the conflict, though Lawlor cannot leave at will. I *could* ask whether they kill Lawlor outright – published Tunnels & Trolls adventures are famously lethal. But I don't want my demo for a write-up to end abruptly, so I won't pop that question. I'll ask questions about Lawlor's status next scene, where I will pick up with Lawlor as a prisoner.

I *will* need to try and close the scene again, where Plot Stress is now 19. [82] we successfully fade out on this scene.

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#### **Scene 4: Prisoner in the guard barracks jail (cutscene)**

Scene qualities: Foggy, Rainy, Running Water. Sounds like Lawlor wakes up in the morning in a dingy damp jail cell; the drizzle outside has turned into a downpour.

I'll put Denovan into the scene. Let's just confirm he'll be there with a yes-no question (Likely) [04] YES. This triggers a UE for the start of the Scene, so Plot Stress was 19, the new scene added 5, and the sum of 24 is now cut in half to 12. We'll get back to that in a moment.

I'm going to try and do whatever is necessary to negotiate a deal that gets Lawlor out of this predicament.

I won't ask whether the guards took all of Lawlor's stuff. Seems a certainty. I could also ask if enough time has passed to regain lost CON. Again I'll handwave and say Lawlor got some sleep on a rough cot. That's good enough to get 1 CON back.

Time to open the scene, there's already one UE in the hopper, let's roll to open the scene and see whether things otherwise go as expected [75] we're good.

Ok for the Unexpected Event result: Trap/Ambush (arrest/confine). Hm. I think we got that point covered – Lawlor's already in the jail cell - so we'll ignore this UE and move on. Got to keep in mind that Denovan's Trait is that he's cruel/malevolent.

“You kept me alive,” Lawlor says. “You must still need me for something.” (asking: Does the person have a need?). Let’s cut Lawlor a break and say it’s Likely [56] YES {+1 Plot Stress}.

“What do you want from me?” Lawlor asks. I figure no skill check is needed to get Denovan to say something, but later we’ll see about rolling a L1 IQ Saving Roll to see whether Lawlor detects Denovan clearly lying (ie. Reveal the Unknown).

Rolling a Mission: [7] Spy. This is too good, they must want Lawlor to turn on Gillblade, to spy on and rat out what his employer wants! Let’s say that is Very Likely [52] YES {+1 Plot Stress}.

Lawlor asks: “I’m supposed to report back to Gillblade on Mungrove’s activities. I need some story to tell him about what’s going on. You must tell me what this special crystal is all about?” That’s a L1 CHA Saving Roll  $12+14 = 26$ , for an easy Success {+1 Plot Stress}. We’ll assume Denovan knows the answer (or at least has a story prepared), so we’ll roll a Rationale [12]: Worship/Reverent. Well... is it some sort of religious icon? If not, then maybe Mungrove is reverent of the crystal for – reasons (50/50) [93] NO {+1 Plot Stress}.

ç so we assume Mungrove reveres the crystal, we’ll handwave that Denovan tells him Mungrove doesn’t know (or won’t tell him) what the crystal does yet. He is obsessed with researching this Item, which somehow fell into his hands.

I’ll make a L1 IQ Saving Roll to see if Lawlor can tell Denovan is being deceitful.  $11+5 = 16$ , Fail! {+1 Plot Stress}

Next, Lawlor will insist he needs his things back to that he can report back to Gillbladle without seeming suspicious. T&T does not have circumstance bonuses but it doesn’t matter anyway,  $12+3 = 15$ , rolled an automatic Fail {+1 Plot Stress}. Maybe Lawlor lamely suggests he could come back and get his things once he’s successfully spied on Gillbadle and reports back. But we’ll deal with that attempt if we make it to a final cutscene. Lawlor is in no position to negotiate, so he’ll take the deal and promise whatever he has to – and he loses his weapons, armor, equipment and all his gold.

Let’s try and close the scene, plot stress is 18, and with [94] the cutscene closes successfully.

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### **Scene 5: Turncoat Lawlor reports back to Gillblade**

I’m assuming Lawlor didn’t even get to wait out the rain from the last scene, so he’s going to come back to his starting village drenched, miserable, stripped of his gear, penniless and with 2 CON. Could be worse, right?.

Scene qualities: Streets/alleys, high observation point, traffic/passers-by. Those scene qualities are definitely not in a library or lab, so let’s see what’s happening instead and why. Maybe Lawlor bumps into Gillblade before he makes it to the academic’s place? That seems Unlikely, in which case maybe he bumps into someone else who gets this scene moving [82] NO {+1 Plot Stress}.

Since there’s an observation point as a scene quality, maybe Lawlor witnesses something that’s important? Seems Unlikely, but the Scene Quality shifts it up to 50/50 [60] NO {+1 Plot Stress}. Third guess is the charm, and so I’ll introduce another person into the scene. [35] Niece/Nephew. Flipped a

coin, gave the nephew the name Eustace (he must be quite young, say 7 or 8, for Lawlor to be his 16-year-old uncle), and his guiding Trait is cautious.

For our skill checks for this Obstacle Scene, let's say Lawlor needs to make a CON Saving Roll to avoid getting sick from walking home in the cold rain. Then a CHA Saving Roll to pry some useful information out of Eustace. I'm leaning toward the third check being an IQ Saving Roll, as Lawlor tries to come up with an embellished story to tell Gillbladle (and cover for his deceit).

Time to open the scene. [10]. That cuts our 25 Plot Stress in half to 12. The Unexpected Event is [14], Foe: Call for Backup. Thank goodness there are no foes on the scene at this time, so let's ignore and proceed.

First we have that L1 CON Saving Roll to avoid being sick. I'm arbitrarily deciding bad sniffles will give Lawlor a -3 to IQ and -3 to CHA, a consequence that is potentially debilitating for the scene. But I am going to bring in Lawlor's Talent, which is his background growing up as a river boater. He must be accustomed to getting soaked and being cold regularly. That's good for a +3 bonus to this roll. The T&T rules are tough: There are no luck points or bennies or other breaks for PCs. So I'll further bend the rules a bit and rule that using the Talent bonus does not change the difficulty needed for meaningful success. The Skill check is  $12+7$  (+3 for Talent) = 22 {+1 Plot Stress}, and is one Skill Check toward Meaningful Success in the scene. If it had failed, I likely would have needed to throw in the towel on the whole adventure.

So Nephew Eustace is on scene, I guess I'll start by asking if everything seems ok with him (let's be good to kids even in games, so this is Likely): [13] YES he's fine but that just barely triggers another Unexpected Event [5] Random Trait activates. Since Eustace is the only one on the Scene with a Trait, his cautiousness kicks in. He's probably leery that Lawlor is drenched, shivering and has nothing but the shirt on his back. Smart kid.

I'm assuming Eustace has some useful information, but since his Cautious trait is on the table, we'll up the difficulty to a L2 CHA Saving Roll for Lawlor to get anything out of him. That's extremely hard.  $12+10 = 22$ , that's a fail {+1 Plot Stress}. So we'll say Lawlor gets nothing out of Eustace, so Let's Ask for Trouble: Will Eustace blab to everyone around that Lawlor is back and looking like a drowned rat? That would make it harder for Lawlor to be discreet as townsfolk start getting in his way (50/50) [57] NO +1 Plot Stress}. Nothing happening there, so let's say goodbye to Eustace for now.

We could see if Lawlor makes it discreetly to Aleister Gillbladle's place, but we already asked for trouble on that topic, so let's move ahead to the house.

Let's assume someone is home, but check if Gillbladle himself is in residence? (50/50): [16] YES Gillbladle is there {+1 Plot Stress}. Lawlor has come up with a story to embellish the crystal and Mungrove, how he is obsessed with it, how he is researching it, how he is trying to draw out mystical properties. Gillbladle is smart but the fantastical story has some foundation in truth, so I'll say a L1 IQ Saving Roll to make it sound believable enough.  $12+11 = 23$  Success {+1 Plot Stress}. Gillbladle may think the warrior has his facts screwy, but believes the story.

Now time for Lawlor to try his counter-spying. He tries to ask innocently: "So what how do you interpret all this? What will you do?" (That's a version of: "what is the reason behind the need?") Let's say it requires a L1 CHA Saving Roll.  $12+8 = 20$  We now have our 3 successes {+1 Plot Stress}, and only need to ask for trouble twice to get Meaningful Success and end the story victorious.

Gillblade's rationale [9] "Hate/Anger" fits right into his malevolent personality. Does he fly into a rage (50/50)? [47] YES {+1 Plot Stress}. Asking for Trouble: Is Lawlor the target of that rage – ie. He now has a fight on his hands? [79] NO {+1 Plot Stress}. Gillblade unloads invective about what he's going to do to Mungrove, the academician's work and his possessions, especially this mystical crystal research.

Now for the last Asking for Trouble... Lawlor the Bold deceived Aleister Gillblade successfully, but ... given how Gillblade is malevolent, is he willing to let Gillblade walk with the 100 gold... or does he subscribe to the idea that the dead don't talk? [39] Oooh, that's trouble . {+1 Plot Stress}. Is Gillblade the sort to pull a weapon? Seems Unlikely, he seems more the Poisoning or Magic type [44] NO {+1 Plot Stress}. So how about the Magic? [41] YES {+1 Plot Stress}.

Well, Gillblade was first rolled up to be a Foe, so I guess this was inevitable. "Unfortunately I can't let you go," the academician wizard says and begins to cast. I'll give Lawlor a L1 Speed Saving Roll to try and duck away as the casting begins.  $15+11 = 26$  {+1 Plot Stress}. Success with flying colors.

At this point we can try and wrap. Lawlor high-tails it out of Gillblade's place, lucky to be alive. Gillblade will pursue, but we can just check by asking if Gillblade's place is remote enough that he can get another shot at killing Lawlor [67] NO {+1 Plot Stress}.

Let's try and close the scene. Plot Stress is up to 18, and [37] it closes cleanly.

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## Scene 6: Aftermath at Larimor Mungrove's Manor (Cutscene)

Let's say a few days have passed, so Lawlor has recovered 2 more CON (up to 4 points) but is still without any gear. He has returned to the Mungrove estate to report to Mungrove on his spying, ask for his stuff back, and maybe get some cash. Since it's the first time we meet Mungrove in person, time to give him a Trait... turns out he is Cowardly.

The three rolled Scene Qualities are: Estate (how fitting), streets/alleys and machinery/magic (that last Scene Quality may be promising to try and get more information about the crystal – maybe.

Scene open [56] happens as planned.

First a yes-no question on whether this is a cordial meeting (with tea and cakes maybe?) Seems Likely [61] YES {+1 Plot Stress} but since it's a close one, we'll say the setting is neither lavish or warm... it is down to business.

Let's try for Lawlor to get all his stuff back, by asking before he reveals anything. We'll make a L1 CHA Saving roll for that.  $12+9 = 21$  {+1 Plot Stress}. Yes, Denovan will return his things. That's good.

Next, Lawlor tells Mungrove about what happened, with Gillblade flying into a rage and trying to commit murder. Now Lawlor will discreetly try to ask whether maybe Mungrove is willing to foot the coinage that Gillblade promised? Seems Unlikely though [01] YES. {+1 Plot Stress}. That triggers an Unexpected Event. [4] Trait, Negative. Mungrove is the only one there, so would a negative instantiation of his cowardice mean he wants Lawlor out of there? (Likely) [68] NO. {+1 Plot Stress}.

So let's say Mungrove is having a general panic attack (maybe hearing about Gillbladle flying into a murderous rage was too much for his sensitive sensibilities), promises the 100gp payment to Lawlor and then excuses himself.

Lawlor will try to keep Mungrove around to ask him about the crystal, but that will require a L2 CHA Saving Roll – made harder because the Cowardice Trait was triggered.  $12+9 = 21$  Failure {+1 Plot Stress}.

I guess that's all we'll get. No insights from anyone on what the crystal is all about. Lawlor will collect his things and his 100gp bounty, then be on his way. Let's try to close the scene [ 85], and it closes successfully.

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Lawlor got 243 Adventure Points from the game and picked up 100gp. He'll spend 120 AP to increase his Strength from 11 to 12 and bank the other 122 Adventure Points for now.