

# **Tough Gains**

## **A YELLOW DAWN SCENARIO**

**By David J Rodger**

### **CREDITS**

#### **Play Testers**

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#### **About the Author**

David J Rodger was born in Newcastle Upon Tyne in 1970. He has published three fiction novels within the Cthulhu Mythos and Cyberpunk genres. He has written freelance non-fiction for UK magazines and had short stories published in the UK, US and Canada. His presence on the Internet got him a place in a BBC documentary in 2000, 'Through The Eyes of the Young.' He spent 8 years working for a government agency, within the IT Division, developing a virtual communications service. He now lives in Bristol with a Braun coffee-maker, writing from a house on a hill with a view of the Earth's curve. He can be found on the web at [www.davidjrodger.com](http://www.davidjrodger.com).

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# Contents

GM Information .....	2
Overview .....	2
Background .....	2
Player Introduction.....	2
Voislav takes action.....	2
Visiting the Longhorn .....	2
The Weapon Deal.....	2
Assault on the Longhorn .....	2
Voislav's next move.....	2
The Russians Arrive .....	2
Into The Dead Zone.....	3
Victory .....	3

## GM INFORMATION

### OVERVIEW

This is a simple scenario that can be used with new or experienced characters; one or more of them must live in a Living City. The plot revolves around robbery, violence and revenge.

### BACKGROUND

This scenario takes place in New York but can be shifted to any Living City.

A new criminal gang has planted a stake in the Living City. Led by an Algerian, Matuke Zimi, its main base is just within the Dead Zone, beyond the boundary of the Living City, with a small foothold in the city itself.

The character(s) should have some kind of arranged accommodation in the city, with the option for there to be a flatmate or a neighbouring room/apartment. This flatmate (or neighbour) is a Czech called Voislav Kreed.

Voislav is a medial student who also works as a doorman at a popular nightclub. He works out heavily at a gym and has become a Rank 1 member of a large criminal gang, run by a Russian called Devolak Karossi.

Matuke Zimi's gang is known-of by the established gangs of the city... and Devolak Karossi.

The characters are robbed by the Algerians, who also rob Voislav Kreed's place. Voislav offers his help in getting their stuff back and uses his criminal contacts to get clues.

The criminal contacts – Devolak Karossi – sense a way of hitting the Algerians and taking over their HQ, by using Voislav and the characters as pawns.

## PLAYER INTRODUCTION

It's an ordinary evening. One of the characters should be near the trading tables; preferably they've just sold something or exchanged precious metal into credits.

Walking away from the trading table the character enters a street with poor lighting. A mud-covered pick-up truck pulls up beside him. There are two men on the flat bed in the back, dressed

in heavy outdoor clothing. They are thin but wiry, with Algerian features. The cab's windows are blacked-out, but the passenger side winds down and an accented voice asks in good English for directions to [a location within the city].

Out of nowhere, a taser will appear and the character will be stunned.

GM NOTE: you may need to contrive dice rolls to ensure this attack is a success.

The two men in the back jump down, bind the character's hands with strip-flex, wrap a dirty rag around his mouth, throw a hood over his head and bundle him into the back of the pick-up.

The character will experience a 20 minute vehicle journey hearing familiar city sounds but unable to call for help.

The truck slows. The character will hear distant thumps of water hitting a jetty, and the bell of a buoy tinkling. The truck slides forward then stops beside somewhere a television is playing very loudly, lots of canned laughter and bleeping game-show sounds. An old man's voice, shouting for somebody to bring him his medicine. The character will feel somebody jumping out of the truck. Then here a metal shutter rolling up. The truck then eases forward and into some kind of hollow building. Lights penetrate the hood. The metal shutter rolls back down. The television sounds are cut off.

The character is then treated to rough hands going through his pockets, searching for concealed pouches, taking everything they find. The character will lose everything on him. If there is no information about where the character lives on him, somebody asks him. This person uses violence until the character talks.

Then the metal shutter is rolled up again and they're off. A short drive. Then pulling over onto a busy city street. The character is helpless. He hears the crackle of a police radio. Hears men talking and laughing. Then nothing – although if he tries to move he's given a sharp prod by somebody sitting in the flat-bed with him.

Minutes drag by. Then he hears the crackle of the police radio again, and the voices laughing and enjoying something funny that just happened. One of the voices is very American, possibly a policeman. He says one thing that the character catches, "Where do you boys want to meet to talk about business."

Something is said that the policeman doesn't understand, and so asks, "What?"

The voice, heavily accented, says, "The Dead Zone." The policeman is bothered by this. "Why not your place by the Longhorn?" The policeman has just given a big clue to the location and identity of the Algerians, he has probably forgotten about the character bundled in the back of the truck. The response to the question is lost in traffic sounds. Shortly after the character feels the truck on the move again, but only moments later rough hands are hauling him up, his binds are cut and he's shoved hard...into empty. The fall is a microsecond. The character lands in a pile of rubbish, and hears the truck accelerate off.

The character will discover he's at the back of his accommodation building. Going back inside he'll discover that a policeman came in with several men (Algerians), went to his apartment and robbed everyone there... stealing everything that was small and portable. If Voislav Kreed does not live with the character, then he made the mistake of querying what the cop & men were doing, and was also robbed.

## VOISLAV TAKES ACTION

Furious with the situation, Voislav demands to know everything that happened to the character, everything the character heard. Voislav takes action by making a phone call, talking rapidly in Czech and the switching to slower less confident Russian.

After the phone call Voislav knows the following:

- The Longhorn could mean anything, but there's a boating club on the West Side with that name... and the character heard the sounds of water.
- There's a new criminal gang arrived in the city, Algerians, operating out of an area around there.

Voislav says wants to visit the area to check it out: in truth he's been told to do so by his Russian contact.

## VISITING THE LONGHORN

The Longhorn is no longer a luxury collection of pleasure craft. It occupies a carpark on the edge of the Hudson river, a raised area of asphalt now covered with pre-fabricated living cubes. The pleasure craft replaced by battered launches and the small river taxi's that ply trade between here and Tappansee Bridge. Their owners live on the carpark.

Voislav can creep around here, possibly picking up unwanted attention from suspicious residents. But, at some point, the character should hear the loud television, see a sad old man sitting alone in front of a cracked hardscreen... and every now and again he turns his head to shout to some long-gone wife who never comes.

Beside this old man's place is a more solid, original structure of concrete... once a boat garage with an adjoining office and apartment. The metal shutter is rusted and covered in different layers of paint but the padlock is shiny new.

At the moment there are 5 Algerians inside.

Every hour, there is a 20% chance of the pick-up truck leaving. This event is marked by the sound of outboard motors buzzing from across the river. The sound of motors gets closer, and then sputter out not far away. Then 4 men hurry up from the jetty area and walk to the boat garage. At which point the shutter rolls up, the pick-up truck pulls out, and there is a change over of men. Four men head back to where the outboard motor sounds came from, two men drive off in the pick-up, and two men go inside and lock the shutters.

Voislav has no weapons. If the characters want to take action now, great... jump to "Assault on the Longhorn". Otherwise Voislav says he needs to make a call.

After the call Voislav says he has found somewhere he can get weapons. In truth he's been told to come get what he needs and deal with the problem. The Russians want to get rid of the Algerians but they don't know how powerful the Algerians are and don't want to risk a war... yet.

## THE WEAPON DEAL

It is very straight forward. They head to an old brownstone in the Harlem area, where big Russians check them out and let them inside. Voislav is met by a barrel chested man in late 40's with a grizzly grey beard and brown hair, watery grey eyes. The place smells of sausages and boiled cabbage. The man also greets the character(s) and introduces himself as Vassily.

Vassily is a Rank 4 Russian Mobster.

Vassily gives them vodka (home-brewed) and shows them a bag of weapons. They can take what they like but MUST bring them back afterwards.

## ASSAULT ON THE LONGHORN

When the pick-up truck left, there were 3 Algerians inside the boat garage.

Every hour there is a 20% chance that the pick-up truck returns, with the other 2 Algerians.

Inside the boat garage, the three Algerians are in the front room of the adjoining office...a tiny single room with a door leading into a kitchen/toilet, and a 2<sup>nd</sup> door leading into the garage. They are all sat on sofas watching Arabic television beamed down from Orbit.

Above the office, accessed by a flight of wooden steps at the back of the building, is a tiny two room apartment. This is where the Algerians sleep but is empty of any people or anything useful.

If the characters succeed in taking over the boat garage they find:

- The weapons used by the Algerians
- 1d6 artefacts (stored in the garage part)
- 1 PA with phone tags recently used (linking this site with the main site over the river)
- A cash card on each Algerian (1d20x100 credits)

## VOISLAV'S NEXT MOVE

Once inside, Voislav calls his Russian contacts to tell them the good news. Once off the phone Voislav says they need to stay there and keep the Algerians from learning what's happened... until his Russian friends arrive.

This means waiting there 2 hours.

Every hour there is a 20% chance the pick-up returns (with 2 Algerians). And a 20% chance that a Zodiac zips across from the dead zone with 4 Algerians.

If the Algerians arrive and learn that their comrades have been killed...and manage to escape long enough to call back to HQ, then the characters have failed. When the Russians arrive they will quickly vanish again, as they have lost the element of surprise.

## THE RUSSIANS ARRIVE

Vassily has taken the information from the PA found at the boat-garage, transmitted by Voislav...and determined the exact location of the Algerian HQ.

The Russians arrive enforce. There are 2d6 x 3 of them. All Rank 3 gangsters.

Vassily is there. He offers the characters the option to come over with them and get their stuff back.

The characters have the option to leave at this point, but if they do they receive nothing from Vassily.

The Russians have arranged for a tug boat to meet them at the jetty, which takes them across the river into the dead zone.

## INTO THE DEAD ZONE

The Algerians HQ is directly across the river from the boat-garage. This is where Matuke Zimi is based.

Once the characters & Russians disembark, they need to travel 200 metres to reach the Algerian's stronghold... use the rules for travelling through Dead Zone (proper) and determine chance of attack.

Once they reach the Algerians HQ, use the MASS COMBAT system to determine who wins.

The Algerians have:

- 12 x Rank 3 Mobsters with weapons of modern warfare. Troop Quality [3], Weapon Quality [x3], they occupy a Fortified structure [x 1.5], so Combat Strength is  $(12 \times 3) \times (3) = 108$ ,  $\times 1.5 = 162$ .
- Their leader's Combat Sense is 60%, and Leadership Skill is 40%

The Russians have:

- How many men are left after engaging any possible zombies.
- Rank 3 Mobsters with weapons of modern warfare.
- Their leader's Combat Sense is 40%, and Leadership Skill is 50%

Don't forget to include the characters within the Combat Strength.

## VICTORY

If the Russians and characters succeed in taking over the HQ, then this fulfils what Vassily wanted. He is very pleased. He asks the characters how much they lost in the robbery. Vassily pays them in cash this value  $\times 1d3+1$ , and ensures they have a water ride back to the Living City.

If the Algerians win, they probably strip any living characters of weapons and throw them out into the Dead Zone to see how long they survive. It's a 1,400 metre swim, or a 12 KM hike to the bridge that connects New Jersey to the Living City

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