The Wizard of Wiluna

An ESPER Scenario in the Land Down Under by mellonbread

The First Life Temple, a splinter of the death cult Aum Shinrikyo, is manufacturing weapons of magical destruction at their compound in the Western Australian outback.

Unfortunately for the cult, one of their bombers just blew himself up. The Australian Federal Police quickly assemble a Joint Counter Terrorism Team to investigate. With them: the psychic Talents of ESPER.

-

PLAYERS **3**
- ESPER 3
- JOINT COUNTER TERRORISM TEAMS 3

TALENTS **4**
- RHONDA XU - Telepath and Memory Modifier 4
- BRUCE ARMSTRONG - Remote Viewer and Retrocognitive 4
- MARK MACHEATH - Empath and “Combat Caster” 5

BRIEFING **7**
- TALENTS 7
- AGENTS 7

THE CHARRED HOUSE **8**
- THE DAMAGE 8
- BILL SULLIVAN 8
- THE WORKSHOP 8
- LEE NORTHRUP 8
- THE DEVICE 9
- THE MEMORABILIA 9
- THE HARD DRIVE 9

THE INVESTIGATION **10**
- THE BOMBERS 10
- THE CRYSTALS 10
- TRANSACTION RECORDS 10
- THE FIRST LIFE TEMPLE 11
- PROPERTY RECORDS 11
- “JANET KILGORE” 11
- THE JAPANESE GUY 11
- THE FIREARMS LICENSE 11

THE CULT **12**
LORD SANAT KUMARA 12
DISCIPLES 12
THE “BOMBS” 13
THE STATION 14

THE CLEANER **15**

PROGRESSION **16**
THE RAID 16
THE COVER UP 17

-

This scenario uses the following contest prompts:

- Lesser known Mythos threats (i.e. not in the Handlers Guide)
- Veteran of the psychic wars
- The enemy of my enemy...

PLAYERS

Players are a mix of ESPER psychic Talents, and Australian law enforcement and intelligence Agents. The cops and spies will be part of a Joint Counter Terrorism Team, while the ESPER psychics will be civilian consultants which the company has inserted into the investigation. The group should include at least one Agent and at least one Talent.

ESPER

ESPer Tech was founded in 1954, a private sector effort to research extrasensory perception and other psychic abilities. Today, ESPER is a management consulting firm, specializing in company culture and organizational turnaround. It disclaims the existence of the supernatural powers the company's founders sought to discover and exploit. But, the discoveries it made along the way in cognitive science and organizational psychology laid the foundations of the company's current work.

In reality, ESPER is a private sector counterintelligence agency, which defends the Sunburnt Country against the supernatural. Fearing what Australia's paranoid and surveillance obsessed government would do if given access to their psychic abilities, ESPER has never "come clean" about its discovery of psychic powers. Its Talents act as consultants to a carefully cultivated clientele in Australia's defense, intelligence, and law enforcement communities. People who need the "weird" cases solved quickly and quietly.

JOINT COUNTER TERRORISM TEAMS

A Joint Counter Terrorism Team is similar to an American Joint Terrorism Task Force. It's a convenient excuse for characters from different state and Federal agencies to work together on a mission.

Good agencies for a JCTT Agent on this mission are the Australian Federal Police, Western Australia Police Force, Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, Australian Bomb Data Centre, and Australian High Tech Crime Centre.

Agents may have worked with ESPER before (which may be why they were chosen for the mission) and have some awareness of the paranormal. If this is the case, they did not try to share this knowledge or expose ESPER's real work after that first encounter.

TALENTS

Players may choose from the following ESPER Talents.

Rules for the Talents' psychic powers are listed in their stat blocks. The main difference between Talent powers and the ritual activation rules in the Handler's Guide is that Talents do not need a ritual activation roll to use their powers.

Talents are vulnerable to psychic attacks from nonhuman entities. Any POW or SAN save to resist a mental assault by such a being is made at -20%.

RHONDA XU - Telepath and Memory Modifier

Daughter of a Lightning Ridge opal smuggler and a Chinese soy tycoon, Rhonda Xu was nearly driven insane by the voices in her head. Intrusive voices babbling about nonsense. Voices obsessed with sex and violence. Voices that sounded like people she knew, people in the room with her. ESPER stopped her from killing herself. Taught her to tune out the constant din of other people's thoughts. And to tune in, when they knew something she didn't.

STR 12, CON 12, DEX 12, INT 12, POW 12, CHA 12
HP 12, WP 12, SAN 48, Conversion Disorder (Hearing drowned out by cacophony of thoughts)
SKILLS: Alertness 50%, Art (Draw and Paint 50%), Computer Science 50%, Criminology 50%, Disguise 50%, Dodge 40%, Drive 50%, Foreign Language (Mandarin 40%), Forensics 50%, HUMINT 50%, Occult 30%, Persuade 50%, SIGINT 50%, Stealth 50%, Unarmed Combat 50%
BONDS: Andrea Xu and Xu Xiaoping (Parents) 12
Joe Krennel (ESPER Accounts Manager and Secret Crush) 12
Alexander "Alex" Cross (ESPER Mentor) 12

TELEPATHY: The Talent spends 3 WP and 2 SAN, and must overcome the target in an opposed POW test; if the effort fails, the Talent can try again at a further cost of 3 WP. On success, the Talent "hears" the Target's thoughts as though they were speaking in the Talent's head, and may "see" what the target is picturing or imagining in their head. Disturbing thoughts or visions can inflict their own separate SAN test on the Talent.
OBSCURE MEMORY: The Talent spends 3 WP and 1 SAN, and must overcome the target in an opposed POW test; if the effort fails, the Talent can try again at a further cost of 3 WP. On success, the Talent induces the target to forget one specific, brief event. This cannot reduce skills or increase SAN. A particularly frightening event may linger in the target's subconscious and nightmares even after the memory has been obscured. A single use can affect multiple targets, costing 3 WP each.

Rhonda is thin and nearsighted. She wears glasses because contacts irritate her eyes. Lulls in conversation make her nervous, but she forces herself to let other people fill the quiet spaces, listening carefully to what they reveal.

BRUCE ARMSTRONG - Remote Viewer and Retrocognitive

Bruce Armstrong dropped out of medical school because couldn't make the visions stop. The murders and drownings and monsters walking the earth. When he started seeing people he knew, he had an epiphany: these weren't just random hallucinations, he was seeing real stuff that had actually happened. ESPER sent him an offer after they noticed him sifting the gray literature for all their old research papers on remote viewing.

STR 11, CON 12, DEX 11, INT 12, POW 13, CHA 13
HP 11, WP 13, SAN 52, Depersonalization Disorder (Watch it happen to someone else)
SKILLS: Alertness 40%, Anthropology 60%, Bureaucracy 50%, First Aid 60%, History 50%, Medicine 60%, Navigate 50%, Occult 30%, Persuade 40%, Pharmacy 50%, Psychotherapy 60%, Science (Biology 60% Physics 50%), Search 40%
BONDS: Grace Howell (Fiance) 13
Dr Roger Moon (Faculty Advisor) 13
Alexander "Alex" Cross (ESPER Mentor) 13

RETROCOGNITION: This ability opens the senses to time and space. In effect, the Talent can experience the past of a given location. The cost depends on how far the Talent rewinds.

- A few minutes: 3 WP and 1 SAN
- A few hours: 6 WP and 1D4 SAN
- A few days: 9 WP and 1D6 SAN

Etc. The talent's visions may inflict their own SAN costs.
REMOTE VIEWING: At cost of 6 WP and D4 SAN, the Talent summons a vision of a distant, unseen target. They must know the person, place or thing they're looking for - either what the target looks like or where it is. Each additional minute of viewing after the first costs 1 SAN and 1 WP. The Talent's ability to direct the vision is limited, objects and people may move "out of frame" or speak inaudibly. If used to view another Talents, the target gets an INT test to realize they are being watched.

Bruce is small and sunburns easily. People naturally want to help him when he seems lost or confused, which is often. He never finished medical school, but learned a lot while he was there. He is nervous in the desert because he keeps having dreams about an ancient underground city in the sand.

MARK MACHEATH - Empath and "Combat Caster"
Marcus "Mark" MacHeath is a Mardu from the Western Desert. He was a troubled kid, swinging wildly from psychotic fear to total paralysis to murderous rage, with no idea what was happening to him. It got worse as he got older, bleeding out into the people around him, spreading chaos, terror and violence. ESPER found him living alone in the bush, where he at least couldn't hurt anyone else. Taught him how to control his powers. How he could use them to help people.

STR 13, CON 13, DEX 13, INT 11, POW 11, CHA 11
HP 13, WP 11, SAN 44, PTSD (Inappropriate fight or flight responses)
SKILLS: Alertness 50%, Athletics 50%, Craft (Electronics 40%, Mechanic 40%), Drive 50%, Firearms 40%, First Aid 40%, Heavy Machinery 50% HUMINT 40%, Indigenous Language (Wati 40%), Navigate 60%, Occult 50%, Persuade 40%, Science (Geology 40%), Survival 60%, Unarmed Combat 60%
ATTACKS: Lee Enfield w/ ACOG (60%, D12+2, 5 AP)
Big Knife (50%, D6+1, 3 AP)
Unarmed (60%, D4)
BONDS: Loretta MacHeath (Mother) 11
Alejandro Daggett (Priest) 11
Alexander "Alex" Cross (ESPER Mentor) 11

MIND BLAST: The Talent spends D6 SAN and 3 WP to implant a sanity rending vision in the mind of a target within line of sight. The victim must make a SAN test versus Unnatural. On a success, they lose as much SAN as the Talent. On a failure, they lose twice as much. If the target undergoes a temporary insanity, the Talent can choose whether the vision induces them to flee, fight or freeze.

FASCINATE: This ability takes only a single turn to entrance a target with an opposed POW test. Each attempt costs 3 WP and D6 SAN. Success renders the subject motionless and insensate, with only autonomic processes functioning, for up to an hour. Only physical assault or some other overwhelming event shocks the subject out of it in the meantime.

Mark is the nicest guy you'd ever want to meet. Handsome, cheerful, gladly suffering insults. Right up until someone picks up a glass and takes a swing at him. Then he melts their mind. In the bush, which is where he spends most of his time if he can help it, he carries his tricked out but fully legal SMLE.

BRIEFING

Talents and Agents are introduced to the mission in different ways.

TALENTS

Accounts Manager Joe Krennel calls the Talents. Everyone likes Joe. No one's sure if it's a psychic ability he's using on them, or if he's just a top bloke.

Got a job for you, out in the desert. Usual rate, plus expenses. Ugly shit, maybe you saw it on the news already. Cops are expecting you, no need to worry about insinuating yourself.

All the news said was that the Federal Police were investigating a house fire near Wiluna, out in Western Australia.

Joe shares a little more: the "house fire" was actually an explosion. A little too similar to one ESPer Tech investigated out near Banjawarn, back in '93.

The Public Mission: Assist the Joint Counter Terrorism Team as civilian consultants.

The Real Mission: determine whether the case has a paranatural connection. Prevent it from happening again. Prevent law enforcement from discovering it.

AGENTS

Last night, around 5:00 PM, several Wiluna residents reported a bright flash of light on the horizon and the sound of a distant explosion. First responders found a burning house with signs of a bomb blast, and notified the Federal Police.

A JCTT was assembled to investigate because it looks like a bombmaker who blew himself up. The Agents were attached to the case because of their applicable skills or geographic proximity. Rumors say the blast was caused by a new type of explosive using an unknown mechanism.

Superintendent Harbin Redletter of the Australian Federal Police gathers the Agents to explain additional details that should not be shared with the public or the rest of the team.

He's seen something like this before. He called some people. Special consultants, civilians. They'll know what to do. Listen to them, let them do their work, don't let them get away with murder.

The Agents greet the Talents as the civilians disembark a charter flight at Wiluna Airport, and the mission begins.

THE CHARRED HOUSE

The site of the blast is an hour drive from Wiluna. A one story house on a big lot, out in the bush. Owned by Dr Bill Sullivan as of two months ago, according to property records.

The damage is apparent from outside. The building is scorched where the fire spread before it was extinguished, and assorted debris is scattered around the yard in a roughly circular radius. Despite the dispersion pattern of the fragments, the building itself is not torn open, and there is no obvious path for them to have been thrown by a blast.

THE DAMAGE

According to the fire crew, the fire was not caused by an explosion, but by electrical shorts that cooked the wiring throughout the building.

Inside, the house is scattered with pieces of furniture and assorted objects, radiating out from the workshop. There is no way for an explosion to have deposited the fragments as there is no direct access to their source. The walls have not been pierced, but some have shrapnel or loose objects embedded in them anyway, “fused” in place and suspended.

BILL SULLIVAN

Bill Sullivan’s corpse is embedded in the wall of the workshop. Not because the force of the blast propelled him through it. He’s fused to it halfway through his torso, frozen in the act of being flung backward, with his head in the living room and his feet in the workshop, in an upright but angled position. Cause of death was the vertical cross section of the wall fusing to the heart and other important organs stored in his torso. The wall isn’t damaged, besides some charring and peeled paint.

(When the device went off, it created an explosion that flung Bill away, but also briefly removed the area around it from existence for a fraction of a second. When the house phased back into reality, Bill and the wall overlapped, fusing them together)

Bill is wearing safety goggles and electrician’s gloves. The exposed skin on the front of his face and arms is singed with first degree burns. His blood vessels and brain show signs of concussion, like a blast wave passed through them.

THE WORKSHOP

The walls of the workshop are singed. Objects are knocked over, broken, and stuck in walls. At the center of the blast, a corpse is hunched over a mechanical device. Assorted memorabilia is strewn around the room. A computer sits at a desk, scorched and broken.

LEE NORTHRUP

Lee Northrup’s corpse is in the workshop, hunched over a strange machine. It’s got a wizened, beef jerky appearance, charred and drained of water. One of the hands is clutching the metal frame of the device, the only thing keeping it standing. The other is frozen in a pointing gesture, finger outstretched at a little crystal at the center of the circuitry.

Unlike Bill’s corpse, Lee’s body isn’t charred by an explosion, or concussed by the blast wave. It’s like whatever blew up radiated outward from him, rather than passing through him.

Lee's cells are completely drained of energy at a molecular level, their little mitochondria sucked dry. That's not possible with present day technology.

(Lee was working on the device when he accidentally activated it. It sucked all the energy out of his body and stored it in the crystal, killing him)

THE DEVICE
The device is a metal frame the size of a suitcase, filled with circuitry.

The core of the machine is a crystal, wired up to the circuit boards and batteries. It's a little quartz prism, pointed on one end and flat on the other. It looks like the flat side was cut.

(Talents sense the crystal is an energy storage device. It's flawed, due to being cut in half. Something caused a dangerous feedback effect. It's currently charged with the bioenergy of one human being - 10 WP worth of life glow)

The circuits are scorched and fused together, like a wave of energy emanating out from the crystal cooked them.

The circuits are mated to an Arduino shield and a Raspberry Pi - little computers designed to control electrical systems. If they functioned correctly, these controls could be used to send a signal to the circuits on a timer, or if they received a signal remotely. Computer science experts notice the chips on the shield are inserted in the wrong places, normally a quickly discovered and easily corrected mistake.

No component of the device would attract law enforcement's attention if purchased together. All normal consumer electronics, except the crystal.

THE MEMORABILIA
There are a couple pamphlets and posters from the "First Life Temple" scattered around the room by the blast. They advertise exotic forms of transcendental meditation and energy manipulation through crystals. There's a phone number listed.

The phone number is disconnected. Phone company records have it registered to "Janet Kilgore". All the calls were routed through a cell phone tower in Wiluna.

THE HARD DRIVE
The computer's solid state drive is fried by an electromagnetic pulse, but recoverable by a computer science expert.

CAD files on the hard drive hold blueprints for both the device in the workshop, and tandem versions with multiple crystals in parallel

THE INVESTIGATION

THE BOMBERS

Dr William "Bill" Sullivan was a physicist, formerly a professor at University of Western Australia. Lee Northrup was an engineer with a degree from University of Melbourne, employed at Gorgon gas. Both smart people and functioning members of society, until a couple months ago.

Bill and Lee were both interested in "alternative" energy sources and other parapsychology. Bill had a paper on the energy storage properties of stones, while Lee had a patent for a bogus crystal healing device. Canvassing people who knew them, reveals that both were approached a couple months ago by a lady named Janet Kilgore, who offered them a demonstration of a new efficient form of energy storage, unknown to science. Whatever she showed them, it must have worked, because they both withdrew from society to the house in the desert soon after.

THE CRYSTALS

Occult scholars and historians of new religious movements recognize the crystals as "realizers", trinkets used in meditation rituals by a defunct American UFO religion called Enolsis. The cult's teaching claimed that meditation caused the crystals to release beneficial energy, healing and invigorating the body and mind. The cult was eventually destroyed in a destructive confrontation with the ATF in the late 90s, over the usual blend of tax irregularities, illicit sex and illegal firearms that immolated so many other cults at the time.

After the ATF crackdown, the short lived leftovers of the Enolsis hierarchy switched over from quartz realizers to a plastic version. The originals are rare enough that resellers of occult and UFO memorabilia turn a tidy profit off their arbitrage.

The slovenly and Hawaiian shirted Joy Santos runs an online store selling old UFO and cult memorabilia out of her apartment in Adelaide. Archived versions of her webpage list Enolsis crystals for sale, but not the current version. Someone cleaned her out.

When contacted, she gladly tells law enforcement who bought them - Janet Kilgore, PO box in Wiluna. Took her entire case of the little Realizers, and the big group meditation crystal too.

If anyone demonstrates the slightest interest, she tries to impress them with her knowledge about the crystals. Used in group meditation rituals by American death cult Enolsis in the 90s. UFO religion obsessed with the teachings of enlightened space men. They'd all hold their little crystals and meditate around the big one, do some energy depositing stuff. Rumor says the crystals could kill you if you cut them in half. Suck the life right out of you, or maybe explode. Or both.

Joy doesn't believe in aliens or wizards, but loves hoarding knowledge about them. Plus it makes her collection more valuable.

TRANSACTION RECORDS

Federal Agents can use Australia's surveillance panopticon to search financial records and internet transactions for anyone who purchased the combination of electronics used to make the device in the house.

Several of the more esoteric components were ordered over the internet to a PO box in Wiluna, registered to Janet Kilgore.

There's one hardware store in Wiluna. If the players think to ask there, the owner sold parts to a woman and a couple other fellas. He'd never seen them before, but assumed they'd bought one of the old cattle Stations out in the bush and were fixing it up.

THE FIRST LIFE TEMPLE
First Life Temple has a minimal online presence. Their Facebook page describes them as a wellness and mindfulness clinic that teaches transcendental meditation.

Scholars of comparative religion are disturbed to find that much of the descriptive text on the page is copied from old Aum Shinrikyo recruitment materials. Aum was a Japanese cult from the 1990s, famous for a series of killings carried out through the 80s and 90s, culminating in a poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway.

First Life is not registered as a religious organization, nonprofit, or corporation with any Australian governmental entities. It has no financial records or property to its name.

The cult has made several grocery runs to the Wiluna general store. The townsfolk think they're from the University of Western Australia, doing meteorology research out in the desert. Must be working out of one of the old cattle stations.

PROPERTY RECORDS
Agents who look up ranching stations in the area find that one was purchased four months ago by Janet Kilgore. It's hooked up to the region's electrical grid, but draws water from a well. It doesn't seem like whoever is there is engaged in agriculture.

"JANET KILGORE"
Janet Kilgore shows up in assorted records. A Facebook page. A Linkedin. A couple bank accounts.

All these records are fake. Janet Kilgore doesn't exist. Poke the alias and it deflates. Someone set up an imaginary person using financial trickery. They used the same one for multiple transactions, to avoid the expense and difficulty of creating multiple fakes.

The most interesting purchase attached to this false identity is a ranching station in the Wiluna area, purchased about four months ago.

THE JAPANESE GUY
If asked about Janet, or strangers coming into town to buy supplies, the people of Wiluna also mention a Japanese bloke who came through earlier today. Maybe early forties, tough looking. Paid for everything in cash. Went out into the outback in an old pickup.

THE FIREARMS LICENSE
The Wiluna Police processed paperwork for a temporary group permit issued to Katy Chamberlain, a meteorology student from the University of Western Australia. She filed papers for six bolt action hunting rifles of intermediate caliber.

THE CULT

Minus Bill and Lee, the First Life Temple has a leader and six disciples, living out of an old cattle station in the outback.

LORD SANAT KUMARA

Gilbert "Gil" Monroe, better known to his disciples as Lord Sanat Kumara, was recruited through an Aum membership drive in the 1990s. While the rest of the Aum cult pursued biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, Gil investigated weapons of magic destruction - how a man might slay his enemies in the thousands using only his mind. He escaped the purge of the cult by fleeing abroad, still determined to pursue the wisdom of the Ascended Masters.

The Masters of Yian Ho teach that the stepping stone to power is the life force of others. Once Gil discovered the Enolsis crystals' ability to leech bioenergy, his plan fell into place. He assembled his current cult, the First Life Temple, to assist his quest for power through supernatural terrorism.

STR 10, CON 12, DEX 10, INT 12, POW 14, CHA 11
HP 11, WP 14, SAN 40, Megalomania, Adapted to Violence
SKILLS: Accounting 50%, Archaeology 40%, Bureaucracy 50%, Criminology 60%, Foreign Language (Japanese 50%), History 50%, HUMINT 60%, Law 50%, Occult 60%, Persuade 60%, Science (Physics 60%), Unnatural 4%
TELEKINESIS: Sanat's telekinesis grants him a few powers.

- Sanat can lift objects at cost of 1 WP per 1 kilogram, or twice that if he wants to move them especially fast or far.
- For 5 WP, Sanat can strike a target telekinetically for D6 damage. The target must make a STR save or be knocked prone.
- Sanat can stop incoming kinetic damage if he is aware of the attack, at cost of 1 WP per point of damage.

SUPERCHARGE: If one of the bombs goes off and sucks the life out of some people, Sanat can use his group meditation crystal to drain the stored energy out of the realizer crystal. He gains WP equal to the total drained by the bomb. Thus supercharged, he can upgrade his telekinetic abilities. He can levitate himself, and spend 8 WP to deal 2D6 damage with his telekinetic attack, or 10 to deal 3D6.

Sanat has gotten older and fatter since his Aum days, but is still hairy and still handsome. His voice is loud and he talks very fast.

Sanat knows the Aum cult was cultivated by the Japanese government. He keeps this knowledge in his back pocket for defensive purposes, in hopes of bartering or blackmailing for his freedom if caught. He's got Aum documents (the cult was obsessive about record keeping) proving the connection stashed away in a safe deposit box.

DISCIPLES

The cultists are smart, wealthy people, fooled by Sanat's demonstration of telekinesis and the power of crystal energy storage. Aside from Katy, they do not know the true function of the bombs, and think they are machines for activating people's psychic powers. None of them know about the Aum connection.

Katy Chamberlain is Sanat's second in command. She owns the cattle station under the alias Janet Kilgore. She knows that the bombs are actually used to drain people's life force, not activate latent psychic abilities. She's ok with this - it worked out for Sanat Kumara, and she wants to become like him.

She tolerates his demands for sexual favors in hopes that he'll teach her his secrets. If she could get his powers by betraying him, she'd do so without hesitation.

Fred Goya is having second thoughts. Bill and Lee were his friends, and he heard about the house fire. Sanat Kumara says not to worry, it was probably just an electrical thing. He's beginning to suspect that the crystal devices aren't as safe as he's been told. He would have left the cult by now, but is worried about what Sanat might do.

Besides Katy and Fred there are four other cultists at the compound.

- Kevin Clapham
- Angela Davis
- Paul Guofeng
- Ilsa Freeman

STR 10, CON 10, DEX 10, INT 12, POW 10, CHA 10
HP 10, WP 10, SAN 45
SKILLS: Alertness 40%, Athletics 40%, Firearms 40%, Melee Weapons 50%, Unarmed 50%
ATTACKS: Dingo Rifle (40%, D12, 3 AP)
Big Knife (50%, D6, 3 AP)

The disciples will fight at Lord Sanat's command, but are not hardened combatants. If they fail a SAN test in combat, they run instead of shooting.

THE "BOMBS"
The Enolsis Realizer crystals were designed by aliens to clandestinely siphon and store bioenergy from humans over a long period of time. Their human cultists taught a group meditation ritual that caused the personal realizer crystals to release the energy into a larger group meditation crystal, a globe about the size of the grapefruit.

If damaged or used improperly, the little crystals fatally drain everyone around them of WP, then explode in a physics-altering blast that briefly "phases" everything around them out of existence. The devices created by the cult are designed to do just this, without requiring the user to sacrifice themselves triggering the effect. An IED that sucks the life out of its victims, storing it in the crystal at its core.

When a bomb is activated, everything within its area of effect is drained of WP at a rate of 3D6 WP per round. Being drained of WP in this manner is fatal. The drained WP is stored in the crystals. The area of effect scales exponentially with the number of crystals used in the bomb's construction. One crystal creates a two meter radius, two crystals four, three crystals eight, all the way up to the largest, a six crystal bomb with a sixty four meter area of effect.

Sanat has one of the group meditation crystals. He can use it to pull energy out of the smaller realizer crystals once they're charged.

Sanat's plan is to set off one of the bombs in Perth, sucking the life energy out of hundreds of people and storing it in the crystal, which he'll then suck into himself to supercharge his psychic abilities.

If attacked in the cult compound, he tells the rest of the cult to hold the cops off. He sets off the biggest bomb he can, draining as many cultists and cops as possible. Then he sucks all the energy out of the crystal, becoming supercharged by all the WP of the people the bomb drained.

THE STATION

The cult lives in the homestead of an old cattle station - a ranch out in the outback. It's a large plot, with a well for water and a hookup to the regional grid for electricity. The sheds, barns and cattle yards are all disused.

There are three assorted trucks and jeeps parked outside the house, and a van in the garage.

The First Life cultists live in the big one story ranch house. The living room is now used for group meditation. The ping pong table has been removed from the game room to make space for a workshop. There's a box of crystals and several devices of the same type found at the burnt house. The largest one is one of the parallel models that has six crystals.

There are six .223 bolt guns in the kitchen.

THE CLEANER

Aum Shinrikyo was a plot by a clique within the Japanese government to clandestinely acquire weapons of mass destruction. Both the ultranationalists and the pragmatists were concerned that the United States might lose its enthusiasm for protecting the Land of the Rising Sun in a confrontation with North Korea or China, and wanted a backup deterrent that they could control themselves.

And Aum did get weapons of mass destruction. Things got a little out of hand. The intelligence service handlers didn't watch Aum closely enough. Ignored some warnings. Didn't let the police do their job until it was too late. The Tokyo subway attacks brought an end to the operation, and a mad scramble by the conspirators to clean up the evidence.

Three decades later, they're still cleaning it up.

Satoshi Saejima is officially a Federal Agent with Japan's National Police Agency - Organized Crime Department. His real mission, the one that took him on a "vacation" down under, is chasing down the surviving Aum splinter groups. Not to stop further terror attacks, that's just a bonus. There are still cultists out there who know the secret of the Japanese government's care and feeding of the cult. They've got to go.

SATOSHI SAEJIMA
STR 13, CON 12, DEX 13, INT 10, POW 12, CHA 9
HP 13, WP 12, SAN 45, Adapted to Violence, Toxiphobia (Extreme fear of being poisoned)
SKILLS: Alertness 50%, Athletics 50%, Bureaucracy 40%, Criminology 50%, Drive 50%, Firearms 40%, Foreign Languages (English 40%, Korean 40%), Forensics 30%, HUMINT 60%, Law 50%, Melee Weapons 50%, Occult 50%, Persuade 50%, Search 50%, Stealth 50%, Unarmed Combat 60%
ATTACKS: Big Knife (50%, D6+1, 3 AP)
Small Knife (50%, D4+1, 3 AP)
Garotte (D6, 50%, pins target)
Unarmed (60%, D4)

Saejima is middle aged, well built but not tall. He speaks slowly to ensure his accented English is understood. He is a burakumin, descended from Japan's historic caste of hated untouchables. He takes sadistic pleasure in hunting down the sneering elitists who once made up Aum's membership. The Australia trip is a bit of a disappointment, the man he's chasing isn't even Japanese.

Saejima is aware that some of the Aum spinoffs do have genuine supernatural powers, cavorting with demons and monsters. He is not a religious man, but allows that some superstitions may actually be true, and views their devil magic through this framework.

Saejima's mission is to kill Gil Monroe (the head of the cult, Sanat Kumara) and anyone Monroe has told about Aum's ties to the Japanese intelligence service, and to recover or destroy any material evidence of such. Actually stopping them from carrying out more terror attacks is supererogatory. He will carry out this mission regardless of the consequences to himself, including capture or death.

PROGRESSION

At the start of the scenario, Satoshi is doing reconaissance on the cult compound at the cattle station. Unfortunately for him, they catch on to his presence and run him off the road in a high speed chase. The cultists bundle him into their truck and take him back to the compound, leaving his wrecked ute on the side of the road, facing West, Japanese passport still in his luggage in the boot.

Sanat is absolutely terrified by his presence. He frantically interrogates Satoshi, demanding to know who else is after him and how much they know. Satoshi doesn't crack, even when they try to torture him.

Persecuted by both the Australian and the Japanese security forces, Sanat advances the timetable on his terror plot. If the cult isn't stopped within a day, he gets in a van with Katy, two other disciples, and the biggest crystal device the cult has built so far. They head for Perth, planning to deposit the bomb in the crowd at one of the Perth Festival parades. That leaves three disciples at the station, along with Satoshi. Satoshi escapes confinement in an unguarded moment, kills one of the cultists, beats up the other two to learn Sanat's plan, takes a rifle and a truck, and sets off after him.

THE RAID

If the players interrupt Sanat before his road trip, he sacrifices his cultists instead. He tells them to hold the cops off while he prepares the ritual that will make them all invincible. Then he sets the biggest bomb in his arsenal on a timer and gets the hell out of the blast radius. Katy realizes what's about to happen and runs out of the house, but anyone else left alive is sucked dry of energy. Then Sanat uses his big meditation crystal to absorb all the energy drained from the dead cultists. At 10 WP per remaining cultist, plus Saejima (unless he was somehow rescued or never captured), Sanat gets 60 WP to play with using his new supercharged psychic powers.

A stealthy, lightning fast raid can take the cult down before Sanat can set off the bomb. Telepathic surveillance risks alerting him, as does any law enforcement interaction prior to a swift assault.

JCTT Agents can mobilize law enforcement to help them. Redletter can quickly mobilize three patrolmen from the Wiluna Shire of the Western Australia Police. Further reinforcements from the Federal police would have to be flown in, which takes a further day.

HARBIN REDLETTER and other Federal Police
STR 12, CON 12, DEX 12, INT 12, POW 12, CHA 12
HP 12, WP 12, SAN 55
SKILLS: Alertness 50%, Bureaucracy 40%, Criminology 50%, Drive 50%, Firearms 50%, Forensics 30%, HUMINT 60%, Law 30%, Persuade 50%, Search 50%, Unarmed Combat 60%
ARMOR: 3 points of soft Kevlar or 6 points tactical body armor and helmet
ATTACKS: Glock 22 (50%, D10)
G36 w/ Reflex Sight (70%, D12, 3 AP)
Unarmed (60%, D4-1)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE - Nigel, Albert and Doug
STR 11, CON 11, DEX 11, INT 11, POW 11, CHA 11
HP 11, WP 11, SAN 55
SKILLS: Alertness 60%, Bureaucracy 40%, Criminology 40%, Drive 50%, Firearms 40%, First Aid 30%, HUMINT 50%, Law 30%, Melee Weapons 50%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 40%, Search 40%, Survival 50%, Unarmed Combat 60%

ARMOR: 4 points of soft Kevlar
ATTACKS: Glock 22 (40%, D10)
Remington R4 (40%, D12, 3 AP)
Taser (60%, Stun)
Chemical Mace (60%, -20% Penalty)
Unarmed (60%, D4-1)

Sanat's plan gets a lot nastier if the cops raid his compound. He tells the cult to barricade themselves inside the house instead of shooting at the cops in the driveway, that way the police have to come inside the house and get them. Then the bomb goes off and slurps up the cops with the cultists, giving him even more WP to burn.

THE COVER UP
Albert helps the Agents clean up the mess after the showdown.
He can spin burnt houses and crispy corpses as meth labs gone bad, explaining both the fires and the Federal police involvement.

- Anyone shot by the police died while violently resisting arrest.
- Police involved in the raid are offered a choice between being decorated heroes who defeated vicious gangsters in a shootout, or telling crazy stories about magic crystal wizards.
- Dead cops are harder to cover up and Albert will not be happy with ESPER, even fingering the Talents for the deaths if he thinks it was their fault.
- Dead Talents similarly put him in an awkward position, and he'll take it out on the careless Agents who let it happen.
- If Albert dies in the scrum, everyone is in trouble. He was the guy running bureaucratic interference to even get the consultants on the case in the first place, and the surviving Agents better have excuses ready for why he's dead.
- The crystals never find their way into an evidence locker
- Satoshi is brushed off as a tourist who wandered into a meth lab while on vacation

If the cult is dealt with, even messily, Joe Krennel is happy to pay out the Talents' bonuses. Agents who keep their mouths shut receive letters saying their stock in ESPER has appreciated considerably in value, and the dividends will appear in their accounts shortly.

Unless he killed a cop on his mission, Satoshi is free to go, his actions written off as self defense and quietly forgotten. If Sanat is still alive, Satoshi continues hunting him. Otherwise, he returns to Japan. If he killed a cop, Satoshi refuses to explain why. Australian law enforcement assumes there's an organized crime connection and prosecutes him accordingly.

Joe is especially happy if the Talents learned the secret of Aum from Satoshi, though this is only really possible through telepathy. He tells them not to share it with anyone, and files it away as potential ESPER blackmail material against the Japanese government.

Joy Santos keeps selling cult memorabilia and UFO garbage. Her vast knowledge about and lack of belief in the paranormal would make her an excellent ESPER asset, provided they buy up anything dangerous off her before it hits the collector market.