

BOB FINE

Appearance: Working Joe & Barfly
True Nature: Semiotic Assassin
Job: Undercover Peace Officer
Motivation: To bring a bit of order to an untidy world
Secret: Loves animal films, cries every time he sees Lassie
Hit Points: 8

Everyone at Sad Mary's knows Bob Fine, working joe and regular barfly. They know about his working class lifestyle, his casual prejudices and his fondness for hard liquor. What they do not know is the fact that he is an undercover Peace Officer working for the feared Constance D'Aubainne and also a semiotic magician, a member of the sinister conspiracy group known as the Semiotic Assassins.

The movement of post modernism has taught us that power is knowledge and knowledge is power. The science of semiotics has taught us that much power is caught up in the meanings of words - the interpretation we assign to things defines their reality. The Semiotic Magicians have put this theory into practice.

If you can deconstruct a reality to its bare essences then you can destroy it or even reconstruct it in a different manner. Many primitive religions place importance on a person's true name. Control the name and you control the person. This is a form of Semiotic Magic.

The Semiotic Assassins are a conspiracy of semiotic magicians who use ritual semiotic magic to destroy or alter their targets. They recently struck a killing blow against their foremost enemy - a group of Atlantean sorcerers known as "Matagots" or something. These mages had a small eastern European country under their control, a country which no longer has a name. The Semiotic Assassins gathered the nine essences of the nation and deconstructed its reality - the name fell out of books and living memory, atlases rearranged themselves around the space where the country used to be, millions of people ceased to have ever existed. Rumor has it that one of the sorcerers escaped and is seeking revenge on the Semiotic Assassins.

The Semiotic Assassins use a device known as a 'Cypher Spike' to enhance their ritual magic. This piece of metal is embedded in the base of the skull and attunes the brain to semiotic resonances. Some Semiotic Mages are so powerful that they do not need to alter their minds in this way. In fact some latent semiotic magicians quite happily create and redefine reality without ever realizing it. Characters from stories may come alive, fictional places may become real. The Semiotic Magician who creates such things seems to have the power to alter the reality by altering the original text. It is rumored that the United States of America is the result of such an unintended semiotic construction by a group of nineteenth century Viennese novelists who desired to create a convincing fictional country. What is clear is that the creation may outlive the creator as America continues despite the fact that all five of the Austrian writers are long since dead.

Bob was not involved in the destruction of the unnamed country but he has been contacted by another Assassin, a blind pencil seller, who has told him that the escaped sorcerer has come to the island of Al Amarja and has been seen frequenting Sad Mary's. The Blind Pencil Seller represents the Fickle Trust, a group of powerful assassins within the conspiracy, which includes Brother Hystronicus (a Dominican friar), Lesser (a talking tapir) and Sir Hamilton (an entirely hairless man). The Blind

Pencil Seller mentioned the existence of the sorcerer to Bob and said that he would be in contact again in one of the private booths at Sad Mary's.

He never made the meeting. His corpse was found in a back alley, throat cut. Someone had dabbed astrological graffiti in his blood suggesting that the Aries Gang was responsible. The Peace Force have followed up on this murder by clamping down on Aries operations but Bob is sure that it is a set-up and the Matagot (whoever he or she is) is responsible.

The Semiotic Assassins are also interested in the writings of Bruno Roth, the American professor who is on holiday in Al Amarja. He is said to be working on a 'theory of everything' a philosophical work which could amount to a form of semiotic shorthand, a theory underpinning all of reality. This would be invaluable in the Semiotic Assassins' schemes for world domination. The Peace Force Central Dispatch has issued a general notice to keep an eye on Roth as various conspiracies may be out to get him and his theory. Bob has taken due note of this and has been following him around as he sees the sights of the Edge.

Dispatch has also put Bob onto the MC Hamish case. Hamish runs a pirate radio station which broadcasts from somewhere in the Critica Range. Hamish is a fundamentalist Christian and has incited much violence through his sermons on 'morality vengeance'. Basically he suggests that someone who does something to offend your sense of morality is actually committing a moral crime against you. The only course open for a victim of such a moral crime is revenge - an eye for an eye - usually through physical violence. Thus Hamish is responsible for a wave of outrage and violence against sex workers, abortion clinic staff and patients, homosexuals, drug users, non-Christians, fashion models, intellectuals and their pets. The Peace Force want him removed, permanently. The heat has got too much for Hamish and he has stopped broadcasting recently. Bob has found an old shack full of radio gear in the Critica Range woodlands. He saw an old land rover leaving the site but could not make out the muddy license-plate in the dark. Not much to go on.

Bob has also kept abreast of Peace Force investigations in other areas on the Plaza of Flowers. First there is an enormous black dog which has been killing people. Also, there is a new drug on the market. It is called "Fugue" and it apparently allows people to mold their faces into disgusting shapes. It usually wears off with the drug but prolonged use can be dangerous.

The Peace Force want this drug investigated. It has quite a high street value so Bob is interested in finding the source of the drug and taking over operations for himself. Drugs are officially illegal on Al Amarja but the Peace Force does little to enforce the laws unless it wants to persecute someone for some other reason.

Bob also knows buyer for a drug called "Milkwhite". A member of Doctor Nusbaum's staff (at the D'Aubainne Hospital) has offered Bob \$10,000 for a quantity of the drug. Bob has no idea what it is or where it comes from but this kind of money is too good to pass up. After all, cops earn lousy wages.

Finally, Bob has his eye on Hippensteel, the annoying street lunatic who frequents Sad Mary's. She is certainly up to no good. He saw her slip into a private booth with that scumbag Turgot the other day. Earlier this evening she skulked off to the mens' toilets. Elias Bettelheim, the old toymaker waited until he thought no one was looking and went after her. Perhaps she has some kind of sick sex thing going?

OBJECTIVES :

- Get the theory of everything for the Semiotic Assassin to use, furthering their sinister plans for

- world domination.
- Locate a source of Milkwhite to sell.
- Find source of fugue drug and take over operations using whatever means are necessary.

ABILITIES

Martial Training: After a round of combat, in which you are a direct participant, has happened, and the result is a tie, you may use this ability. To do so simply describe how your training has benefited you in the combat. You may treat the tie this round as if you won the round of combat. Usable 5 times. (General Ability)

Semiotic Mage: You know the Semiotic Assassin's ritual magic of reality deconstruction. You are not a very powerful mage, however, so for you this usually takes a very long time and a lot of research. If you had another more powerful semiotic mage to work with, however, you could work in concert and perform the ritual in a much shorter timeframe. (Fringe Power)

Tough: You have a particularly hardy constitution. If you are ever given a drug, the first dose used on you has no effect. (General Ability)

Cypher Spike: This appears to be some sort of metal spike implanted at the base of the back of the skull. It is used by Semiotic Assassins to augment their Semiotic Magery. If your body is searched, you must show the searcher the card for this ability. (Body Feature)

Cocky: You believe you are far more clever than everyone else. Any time you spend 10 or more minutes talking to someone during the course of the game, you must insult or put them down in some way. (Flaw)

EQUIPMENT :

- Handgun (concealed)
- Peace Force ID
- Wallet with \$100