Eclipse '99

Millennium Episode 2: The Present

Background

Chicago's West Loop leaps about at the end of the millennium. Every newspaper runs Y2K-bug warnings every week; Smash Mouth's All-Star is played on the radio non-stop; and the Euro is still new enough to marvel at. The weirdness is getting weirder out there: ghosts, mirror-people, strange echoing songs. In March a shipment of 20,000 textbooks were found that misplaced the beginning of the civil war in 1863 and featured numerous other elements of history that were just a bit... off.

Set-Up

The new Eclipse tower in the West Loop finished construction in January of this year, and is just now filling out it spaces. The wind is cold but no snow has fallen yet. As the PCs eat lunch in the square by the waterfront a door appears on a previously-blank wall and, with a hiss, falls open. A figure lurches out of the doorway and collapses against the opposite wall: a thirty-something woman wearing a mix of magitech gear and clothing.

She delivers a message to the PCs, the only ones who have seen her: the veil between worlds has thinned. Strange things are moving through the membrane, and the eventual connection of realities may have terrible consequences. She provides a device – the ***planar mirror*** – that will both guide them toward the source of the rift and protect them from possession, mind control, and the like for a time.

Scene 1

As if to punctuate that threat a pair of police officers (**guards** with light pistols (1d8, 30 ft) and clubs) step into the alley, speaking in garbled non-language before attacking the PCs and An-Lin; they reveal themseves to be sluglike **doppelganger** shapechangers when they hit 0 hit points. The planar mirror drags them toward the Eclipse Tower, displaying a countdown until its power runs out.

An-Lin Riftwalker

An-Lee is a traveller between worlds. She is a 5th-level half-elf ranger (horizon walker). She is currently poisoned and has 4 hit points. She carries a ***planar mirror*** and a ***+1 dagger***.

Planar Mirror

The planar mirror is a magical item that resembles an 8-inch diameter lens with glimmering runes scratched around the edges. It has 3 charges, and regains all spent charges at midnight.

A holder can spend a charge:
- to cast *protection from evil and good* on up to 6 creatures, with a duration of 8 hours.
- to cast *plane shift* on up to 6 creatures.

A holder can also spend a minute to make a DC 10 Wisdom (Weirdness) check to detect the location of the nearest planar rift if it is within 100 ft, or its direction if it is farther away.

Scene 2

The walk to the Eclipse Tower is a rush through back alleys, dodging as many people as possible; everyone not touched by the planar mirror is a possible threat. PCs must make a DC 10 group Wis (Survival) or Dex (Stealth) check to navigate there unseen, getting three successes. Each three failures 'summons' another pair of doppelgangers.

Entry to the Eclipse Tower requires either talking past Anna M Lee, the receptionist (DC 20 Deception), or picking the lock on the side door (DC 15 Thieves' Tools), or breaking down the door (DC 20 Athletics). Once in the stairway down is easy to follow.

Scene 3

The basement is a warren of ducts, cables, and storerooms. As the planar mirror drags the PCs forward they encounter strange flickering images, faint memories, walls that phase in and out of existence – effects of the veil thinning. In the midst of this the PCs are assaulted by strange meat-ghosts of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Thomas Jefferson (using the stats of **gibbering mouthers**), looking as if they've been peeled from dollar bills.

Scene 4

The rift room is a massive chamber thrumming below the Eclipse Tower. The rift itself is a kind of living energy, an entity that Eclipse Co. imprisoned to take advantage of its powers. A shepherd of the rift (***conjurer***) attends to it, giving the energy a form as a living being of red lightning (***fire elemental***). Damaging the equipment deals damage to the elementals' hp, but the shepherd will attempt to stop them. The elemental has resistance to all damage until the portal is destabilized.