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Introduction

This adventure uses the *GURPS Black Ops* setting. Game Masters running conspiracy, secret-agent or Mythos campaigns under a different setting or mechanics may be able to adapt it to their needs. Those intending to play characters in *A Minor Emergency* should not read past *The Mission*.

History

In its half-century of exploring and destroying the paranormal, the Company has dealt with bizarre circumstances more often than not. Things often happen that “never could happen,” but not all of these originate in the shadowy world of Greys and evil psis. Two of the Company’s own black ops, Nolan and Mia Mathers, created one of the stranger crises in 1985. They announced that they planned to have a child.

This, to say the least, violated Company policy. From day one, ops have been under orders to avoid procreation unless assigned one of the handful of outside secret identities requiring a family as cover. Neither of the Mathers – who had been romantically involved for about two years at the time – could claim this loophole. Both also were valued, veteran agents who graduated from the Academy in 1982. Nolan had forged a reputation in the Combat department with his macho charm and knife-across-the-throat tactics. Science op Mia’s colossal, no-nonsense intellect and huge telepathic potential had set her apart – though her cold manner and inability to communicate with Greys limited her standing among her fellow active ops and the administration, respectively.

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Neither backed down from their stated intention to have a child, and Mia was already entering her second trimester. The situation might have gone unsalvaged except for Mia's trump card: she intended to train the child, from birth, to become a black op. Her genes and Nolan's, combined with a lifetime of training, could create a superagent to put even the incredible black ops to shame, she argued.

Tempted with this proposal, the Company blinked first. The Mathers avoided disavowal, though they did endure punitive grief to show other ops that no further exceptions to the childbearing policy would get by – at least, until the Mathers experiment produced results. Mia gave birth to a boy on Dec. 16, 1985. She named him Dexter; many an op has argued whether it represents the one bit of humor she's ever displayed. The child's father took to calling him "grunto." His mother took to training him. They made their home at the Lab, the Science-department headquarters beneath the Gulf of Mexico.

The Wonder Years

Till the child reached age 5, things went fairly smoothly. Mia taught Dexter seven languages while he remained a toddler, had him reading by his fourth birthday and promised him geometry lessons as a fifth-birthday present. Nolan contributed a bit to the education, providing a perfect replica of a snubnose .38 as a rattle and teaching Dexter not to tuck his thumb into his fist when punching or into his mouth when teething. Mostly he provided an immense emotional anchor: while Mia did the child-raising, he roared his pride in both to anyone who would listen. Whatever strange bond existed between the outgoing Combat op and the mirthless Science op only deepened as Dexter grew.

Then Dexter started testing his knowledge. Mostly humor sprang from the first incidents, such as a 6-year-old Dexter sneaking a giant cockroach out of the specimen enclosures at the Lab, using a homemade bit and bridle to ride the beast. Mia went into a hygienic frenzy, but the other ops laughed. As the boy aged – and the pranks grew more cunning and inspired – fewer and fewer bystanders found themselves amused. Nor did the victims.

The situation escalated until six months ago, when Dexter, now 12, convinced Combat administrators that the Greys intended to set up a base at the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Ohio. Of all his many talents, none had grown more quickly than his expertise in data analysis. Though denied access to Blacknet, the pre-teen had mastered the Internet and other media outlets. He knew how to survey them



all for seemingly innocent factoids that led to a much larger, much darker picture. More importantly, at least for several red-faced Combat ops, he knew how to plant the same sort of information for others to "stumble" across.

This prank got him confined to his room at the Lab, though only after a mission had been assembled and a team formed. Three days later, he disappeared.

The Mission

The Mathers' situation is common Company knowledge; few active black ops are more well-known than Nolan and Mia and everyone's heard of Dexter. Every player should be familiar with the *History* and *The Wonder Years* data in the present day.

The adventure starts when the player characters receive an Omicron summons to a mission briefing on short notice. Once they assemble, a Combat op steps up and announces, "The biggest mystery in the history of the Company just got bigger. Nolan and Mia Mathers have disappeared.

"As most of you know, they've been going crazy trying to figure out what happened to Dexter. Yesterday, Mia failed to show up for a refresher course that was on her schedule. Omicron didn't