

NPC Pack 2: Petty Criminals

Principia Malefex

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Introduction

This is a set of five characters, all petty criminals, to be used in your games. Please note these characters use the revised character sheets. More information on the differences between this system and the first edition can be found in the Errata Pack, available as a free download from <http://www.malefex.com>.

Petty Criminals

The characters in this books are suitable for use as PCs in experienced groups, but are more likely to find themselves in opposition to the players. They are designed to be minor inconveniences rather than major opponents, but can still cause problems if they intervene at the wrong moment.

As none of the characters are mages or scholars, only front NPC sheets have been supplied.



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NPC Pack 2: Petty Criminals

Timothy Sanger

“It isn’t my fault the car was stolen Officer. Honestly I had no idea. I bought it in good faith. I suppose it has to go back to its owner? Please, just tell me you know who stole it.”

“We’re proceeding with our enquiries sir.”

“Useless coppers. Fine, I was in the pub and this guy came up to me...”

“That would be Gabby Daniels, a well-known fence, would it Sir?”

“I didn’t know that at the time. Anyway he said a friend of his was selling a beautiful BMW 7 series. Since the guy was in town, he dropped it off at the pub, I looked it over and paid cash. Look is there any chance I’ll get my money back?”

“It seems unlikely, sir, as Daniels has already spent it. Conveniently he can’t remember anything about the seller. He also has a definite alibi for the time the car was stolen. However sir, we suspect the person who stole your car and this one were one and the same. He created the loss and then made you pay him for it. Good evening sir.”

Background: Timothy is in his early forties with a bit of a beer gut. Surprisingly organised for someone with little formal education, Timothy doesn't see himself as a thief, except possibly in the Robin Hood sense. He steals cars to order, usually extremely expensive ones, has them re-sprayed and re-registered, and passed on to their new owner. As he sees it, his client gets the car they want, the guy he nicked it from gets the insurance money to buy a new one, and the only one the loses out is the insurance company.

If someone tried to argue him round, pointing out that insurance may not cover the replacement cost of a new car, or that a car may have sentimental value, he won't really listen because he doesn't want to. From his point of view cars don't have sentimental value, and if the insurance companies won't pay out enough for a new car, that just proves they are crooked and deserve to be ripped off.

Timothy is unemployed, after factory work in his area vanished. No longer seriously seeking work, he is claiming benefit and is an expert on working the system. His wife works part-time as a carer in a local home, and Timothy often ends up looking after his three sons at home. He doesn't mind, seeing it as a chance to play football and teach them about life.

Day to Day: Timothy is often found in the pub, or out looking for new cars he can add to his list of possible targets. He takes Sundays off to play football in the park.

Field of Expertise: Car Theft

Plot hooks: Timothy might steal the PC's car, or without realising it they could buy a stolen car from one of his contacts. When it is reclaimed from them, the only way to get their money back (their "salesman" having long since vanished) is to track down Timothy.

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Linda Gartland

The man stopped by the table, looking over the paintings displayed around it. Pulling out his glasses he looked more closely at one, half obscured towards the back.

"Excuse me, but where did you get this?"

"Oh I painted that on holiday." She pulled it out so he could take a closer look.

"You said you painted this yourself, but the style seems so different to your other work." She smiled warmly.

"I was experimenting." He looked at her, taking in the wire glasses, roll necked jumper and sensible slacks, and something seemed wrong about the statement. As he examined it, he noticed the slight wear on the frame, and muted colours from long display to light.

"How much for it?"

"£500" He pulled out his credit card and paid without blinking. As he walked away, having given delivery instructions for his new purchase, one of the fair's assistants came across to the stand to see if the trader wanted coffee. The woman patted her pockets regretfully, before she smiled.

"Would you take a cheque?"

Background: Linda is a forger, and something of an expert at cheques and signatures. However she makes most of her money by forging artwork. Not a large scale crook by any means, she tends to sell the forged artwork at fairs and other trade halls. Rather than claiming it came from a famous artist, she mimics the style and then lets the dealers decide and buy it off her, for the slightly inflated price she quotes. She also allows friends to take her artwork away to sell it, most of whom are disbelieved when they say a friend painted it, by dealers looking to rediscover masterpieces.

Linda is a very good artist, though she prefers to work from sketches to photographs and when doing her own work, likes landscapes. She simply never got a break. Linda has absolutely no problem letting dealers' greed rip them off. If her artistic career had taken off, and her works got the acknowledgement she believes they deserve she would not have entered this line of work.

Linda's main area of expertise is forging paintings. She is familiar with the styles of most of the masters, and several lesser known painters.

Her usual methods of selling these paintings is simple. Once she has found a book of their design sketches, she paints something in that style and then either takes it to an art fair with her other work or gives it to a friend to take. Her friend is an innocent dupe in her scheme. When asked about the painting the reply is always truthful about the artist. However a surprising number of collectors do not believe it, and buy the painting believing it is an undiscovered master.

Ironically this is beginning to bring attention to her own paintings. While some buyers bin their mistaken buys, others have been salving their pride by praising the techniques and excellence of the picture. Linda was somewhat surprised to receive the first commission for a painting based on a family photograph to be done "in the style of..." but is rather beginning to enjoy the attention.

Linda's earliest forgings included cheques made out to cash, but after the furore when they were uncovered she was too scared of getting caught to continue. She knows very well her disguise skills are not good. She has occasionally forged cheques to third parties, shops or mail orders, but regards this as risky as she can only really forge signatures she is familiar with. Her old job as a librarian let her see many, but she always felt bad about ripping off people she had to see frequently.

Day to Day: Linda is usually in her studio, but often goes on holidays to area she would like to draw, sketching landscapes to paint when she returns. She might be met in some of the more remote areas of the country. Her hobby is working with the local improvised theatre group, usually preparing and painting scenery and props.

Field of Expertise: Forgery

Plot hooks: A PC might be asked to defend Linda if she is pulled up in court by a disgruntled buyer. Alternatively, the PCs may befriend Linda, and then discover her sideline when someone begins to put pressure on her to start forging cheques for them.

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Name	Linda Gartland		
Education	A-levels		
Career	Librarian / Artist		
Income	£12,000 p.a.	Savings	£43,000

General		Psychological		Combat	
Sixth Sense	4	Initiative	16	Strength	2
Perception	17	Willpower	10	Agility	5
Lore	5	Terror	5	Dexterity	12
Charisma	8	Nerve	15	Endure	18

	Maximum	Current	Action Times: 0.8, 1.7, 2.5, 3.3, 4.2,
Endurance	18		
Nerve	15		
Life	10		

Description: Greyhaired, with little make up and pale green eyes. She dresses severely and is not conventionally attractive, though charming.

Background: A frustrated artist who has never been discovered and turned to forgery to utilise her talents.

Family & Friends: A sister in Glasgow, who lives with her husband and one daughter. Her father is in a care home.

Property: Cottage in the middle of Wiltshire, and a small car..

Possessions: Artist's equipment, books on styles and master painters, pet cat, stout country clothes.

Injury or Insanity	Duration

Curriculum Vitae

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Skills	Level
Acting	30
Art Criticism	143
Bluff	131
Bureaucracy	57
Construct	56
Oil Painting	198
Psychology	89
Sketch	176
Combat Skills	Level
Weapon Skills	Level

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Thomas Pestell

“Look Ladies, gentlemen, at these cards. I assure you this is a perfectly ordinary deck. Ma’am if you would...” He was really very good. I’d noticed the disturbance outside the toy-shop from across the mall. When I wandered over I’d seen a teenager with a deck of cards doing tricks for a rapt audience of kids, and their parents. Technically I should have moved him on, but the impromptu show didn’t seem to be bothering anyone.

As the crowd became larger he wound up with one last trick, obviously deciding discretion was the better part of valour. As he walked away I couldn’t help but go up to him. He seemed a nice enough lad, though rather quiet without his magician’s patter. I wanted to contact him for the mall’s staff party this Christmas, since he was certainly an excellent performer.

A few hours later, going to take details from two trouble makers, I realised I must have forgotten my pen.

Background: Thomas makes his living picking pockets. He grew up in various homes and foster homes, and learned to live by his wits. His extremely disruptive childhood has left him with problems trusting anyone. Thomas is extremely dextrous and now he has managed to find a place at a youth hostel he is looking for regular work. Currently he works shifts at the local fast food joint, but the money and conditions are poor and he wants to better himself. In his spare time he practices magic tricks and is an excellent street magician. He has put on a couple of informal shows for others at the hostel, and likes performing in front of a crowd.

Most of his magic tricks involve cards or coins as he works with the materials to hand and has not got the money for expensive shop-bought tricks. He is an excellent slight of hand artist and has a good line in patter to keep his audience distracted. Although he has tried performing in the street, he was moved on as he did not have a busker's licence. Since he has no idea how to get one he hasn't bothered trying again.

Picking pockets is a way of life for Thomas, and he is easily good enough to incorporate it into his stage act, making the victim think he is returning the item, while he actually drops it on a table behind him to amuse the audience.

Even if Thomas could make as good a living another way, it is likely he would slip back into old habits when the opportunity arose. He has been stealing to survive since he was eight, and he is not going to stop overnight. On a good day he can pick up £100 to £500 a day, though he tries not to get too ambitious. He usually avoids areas he knows have good CCTV, and prefers to return wallets once he has removed cash. Most of his victims don't realise what happened.

Thomas has a green tattoo on his upper right bicep. The design is based of the Queen of Hearts. He never gambles, but has been known to wager on the outcome of his magic tricks, then manipulate the result to ensure he wins. He cultivates a funny, joking persona for those around him. He is not a large man, and he finds that making people laugh is a good way to avoid being beaten up. Although this outward act makes him popular he has few close friends as he keeps himself reserved from most and no one has yet seen through the act.

His mother was diagnosed schizophrenic and placed in a hospital for the severely at risk having been sectioned under the mental health act when he was a child. She has only worsened and is now nearly catatonic. Thomas does not visit her. No one knows who Thomas' father is, and there is no name on his birth certificate.

Day to Day: He usually spends time outside work hanging around toy and joke shops, trying to get ideas for new magic tricks. He works 25 hours a week on varied shifts at the fast food bar, and sometimes hangs round the job centre, looking for a better place of work.

Field of Expertise: Picking Pockets and Sleight-of-Hand

Plot hooks: PCs involved in local programs with disadvantaged youth might know him. One of the more frustrating scenarios would be if they manage to get him set up and on his feet, with some actual prospects, only for him to be caught picking pockets. Thomas has a well developed survival instinct and will try to avoid getting mixed up in any real occult.

Skills:

Sleight-of-Hand: A deceptively quick movement that disguises his trick. To spot what he is doing a PC must roll their Perception vs his Dexterity.

Patter: A steady stream of words designed to distract someone. A successful roll reduces Perception to half for the purpose of observing him.

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Name	Thomas Pestell		
Education	6 GCSE's		
Career	Jack of all trades		
Income	£7,000 p.a.	Savings	£150

General		Psychological		Combat	
Sixth Sense	10	Initiative	10	Strength	5
Perception	9	Willpower	7	Agility	9
Lore	4	Terror	8	Dexterity	24
Charisma	13	Nerve	15	Endure	38

	Maximum	Current	Action Times: 0.5, 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, 4, 4.5
Endurance	38		
Nerve	15		
Life	10		

Description: A lithe dark skinned man, of average height, with cropped dark hair and hazel eyes.

Background: A product of the social services system, who learned to use his preternatural dexterity to full advantage.

Family & Friends: He doesn't know who his father is, and his mother is in an asylum. He has no known siblings. His few acquaintances get on well with him, but he has no close friends.

Property: Rented room at the youth hostel. Work uniform.

Possessions: Few cheap clothes. Combat trousers (for the extra pockets) A pack of cards, pocket change, notepad and pen

Injury or Insanity	Duration

Curriculum Vitae

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Skills	Level
Appraise	77
Bluff	131
Numerate	98
Patter	163
Pick Pocket	196
Sleight of Hand	172
Streetwise	114
Write	25
Combat Skills	Level
Counter	30
Dodge	
Weapon Skills	Level

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Jason Massie

“I’m sorry sir, but the contract clearly states no monies paid are refundable.”

“...”

“Yes I am aware that the flight is not convenient for you, but it is the best we can do. If you prefer I can write a credit note out for a future...”

The man on the end of the phone had hung up. Jason put the receiver down and heaved a sigh. His creditors were building up and, although money was coming in, he was using it to pay off his start-up loans, not to buy flights for customers. If this carried on, he would have to wind the company up and face a long line of people who would only receive a fraction of their money back.

As the phone began to ring, his flustered secretary answered it. Jason smiled.

Background: Jason is a con artist, there is no other way to describe him. He left home at 16 to become a used car salesman, and the tricks he picked up in the job are ones that have stayed with him. Too smart to get stuck in that job, he moved on and up in the world. Now he runs his own company, or rather companies, a web of them that ensure that when one fails, the first creditors to be paid are his other enterprises.

Very basically, he sets up a scam company, cheap holidays, flights, whatever, and then takes customer's money. When he has enough he declares the company bankrupt as it has to repay the start up loans. These loans came from one of his other companies at a rate which means that all the money the customers have paid in goes to it to pay the interest, and the other creditors are left with nothing. He has a number of more sophisticated scams, but the end result is always the same. All his property is in his wife's name so that it cannot be repossessed if he slips and leaves himself legally vulnerable.

Jason is very, very intelligent, but utterly unprincipled. He doesn't care about other people, seeing them simply as a way to line his own pockets. Appeals to his better nature are pointless. He is only interested in the fastest way to make the most amount of money with the least amount of work. Addicted to the thrill of pulling off these scams, he is not interested in any conventional means of making a living.

After he was the subject of an expose by an undercover reporter a few years ago, he dropped out of sight and let others front his enterprises. Now all the hubbub has died down and his name has been forgotten Jason is back in the front office role, making promises he doesn't intend to keep, selling products that don't work and promising refunds he will never give.

Ironically Jason is actually worse off than he would have been in a normal life style, as he has a string of annoyed creditors after him. It is only a matter of time before he rips off the wrong person.

Day to Day: Jason will be found in the front office of his current business during the day. In the evenings he will be found with his wife at a variety of nightclubs and functions, networking to gain potential future victims.

Field of Expertise: FlimFlam

Plot hooks: Jason may rip off the PCs or one of their more vulnerable friends, dragging them into the long drawn out legal battle to shut down his operations.

Alternatively he may turn up dead after ripping off the wrong person, or end up on the PCs' doorstep begging for help dealing with the creature an irate magus has sent to torment. Of course, when they discover why the creature was sent, they may decide not to help.

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Name	Jason Massie		
Education	BTEC		
Career	Business Owner		
Income	£40,000 p.a.	Savings	None*

General		Psychological		Combat	
Sixth Sense	8	Initiative	17	Strength	6
Perception	4	Willpower	11	Agility	9
Lore	2	Terror	16	Dexterity	5
Charisma	19	Nerve	27	Endure	20

	Maximum	Current	Action Times: 0.5, 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, 4, 4.5
Endurance	20		
Nerve	27		
Life	10		

Description: Slickly dressed, in a sharp suit Jason is utterly charming, with blonde hair and brown eyes. He is about 6 ft tall and well built.

Background: A used car salesman who found a better scam.

Family & Friends: A wife and three kids, as well as his retired father

Property: Moves frequently, but always a large house with land..

Possessions: Sharp suits, flash car, signet ring, Rolex (real), Latest mobile phone, PDA and computer

Injury or Insanity	Duration

Curriculum Vitae

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Skills	Level
Appraise	140
Bluff	200
Business Law	100
Civil Law	120
Criminal Law	50
Gamble	90
Psychology	190
Combat Skills	Level
Strike	59
Weapon Skills	Level
Improvised weapon	72

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Tanya Fludger

Doctor Greene sighed. He had been Tanya's GP for twenty years, and recently he seemed to be seeing more and more of her. Although she'd always been in the rudest of health, he wondered if her age was catching up with her. As he ran through the questions and examination, he had to admit he didn't really like Tanya, and he wasn't even sure why.

Considering everything she had been through she couldn't be blamed if her attitude was a little brusque. First her daughter had that messy affair, and after patching her up twice he had to admit he'd cheered when she threw the thug out and changed the locks. And now her grandson was apparently getting into trouble as well.

"Tanya, I think what is wrong with you is mainly stress. I'll renew your prescription, but I really think you need to try to relax. In the long run it'll be much better for you than the pills." She nodded. Picking up the receipt, she gathered her things to leave, then paused at the door.

"Oh believe me, doctor, I know rest does people the world of good. But these help me a great deal at the moment."

If he hadn't known better, he could have sworn she was laughing at him.

Background: A Retired nurse, Tanya is seventy-two and an unlikely candidate for a criminal mastermind. She works with Phil, her fourteen year old grandson in what she jokingly calls "the family business". Phil's mother Sandy isn't part of it, and would regard it with distaste, so neither of them mention it to her.

Tanya gives her prescriptions to Phil, who trades them on the street for cash and gives her a cut. She is on several medications for ailments both pretend and real (though often exaggerated). Since insomnia is relatively easy for her to feign, she has a repeat prescription for sleeping pills, and painkillers to quell her arthritis. Tanya is careful not to claim her prescription more often than she would if she was taking them herself.

Tanya has also expanded her operations recently, and now grows both poppies and marijuana in her back garden. She isn't sure how to refine the poppies yet, but she is an enterprising woman and is sure she will figure something out. After all, "Granny's Home-Grown Stash" seems to be a lucrative addition to her line in prescription medicines. She keeps the money from her prescriptions in a jar in a drawer and adds it to her bank account slowly to make it seem she is saving from her pension, not gaining extra income.

She is quite open about what she is doing in her garden and plays the slightly daft, slightly forgetful old lady perfectly. Almost everyone who comes in contact with her thinks she is delightful, a guise she is very careful to maintain. If asked about her plants she pretends she didn't have a clue, and might ask if she has to tell the police "After all, they make such a nice background for the primroses..."

Her plan for the second line of defence if that one breaks down is that she is using the pot as pain relief for her arthritis. The obvious problem with this is that she's still been claiming prescription painkillers for it at the same time. If they mention the prescriptions, she will deny all knowledge, possibly hanging Phil out to dry at the same time.

Day to Day: Tanya can be found at home most days, except for her coffee mornings Tuesday and Thursday, and her flower arranging club Wednesday nights.

Field of Expertise: Prescription Drug Dealing

Plot hooks: A PC may encounter Phil selling prescription drugs on the street. Alternatively, Tanya may end up beaten up by some thugs who know she gives out pills and want them free. What they do not anticipate is that this will result in a press campaign to protect pensioners, a police manhunt, and Phil's clients "seeing to" the culprits in a back alley. An interesting story for a PC journalist to unravel.

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Name	Tanya Fludger		
Education	O-levels		
Career	Unemployed/Car thief		
Income	£15,000 p.a.	Savings	£3,000

General		Psychological		Combat	
Sixth Sense	7	Initiative	23	Strength	2
Perception	3	Willpower	10	Agility	4
Lore	5	Terror	9	Dexterity	5
Charisma	6	Nerve	19	Endure	11

	Maximum	Current	Action Times: 1, 2, 3, 4
Endurance	11		
Nerve	19		
Life	10		

Description: A silver haired lady with a well-lined face and watery blue eyes. Her manner is somewhat brusque, from her nursing days.

Background: A widow who decided to find ways to supplement her state pension.

Family & Friends: Sandy, her daughter, and Phil, her grandson live in a council flat nearby. She has no other surviving relatives.

Property: A bungalow in a retirement community. "lifeline" emergency pendant to signal for help if she has a fall.

Possessions: Knitting, Gardening, Greenhouse, many scattered seed packets. A treasure trove of accumulated junk has accrued over the years.

Injury or Insanity	Duration

Curriculum Vitae

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Skills	Level
Bluff	132
Cooking	90
First Aid	50
Flower Arranging	70
Gardening	170
Herb Lore	120
Medicine	50
Numerate	130
Pharmacy	100
Combat Skills	Level
Weapon Skills	Level
Club (Handbag or umbrella)	90

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Supporting Characters

Phillip Fludger

Phil enjoys being part of his Gran's sideline and finds it gives him a steady income and a chance to be looked up to by his mates. He has been in trouble with the law before, and is currently trying to avoid petty crime since he doesn't want to get busted as a drug dealer. In an area of high unemployment his chances of finding other work are virtually non-existent, and he hopes to be able to get in on some of the bigger rings.

He is very careful about selling only to people he knows he can trust, and on his rare appearances in school, makes sure he is clean. He has little formal education, preferring to play around in the classroom. The person he most respects is his father, who he contacted behind his mother's back some time ago, and who has been encouraging him in disregarding school and attempting criminal pursuits. If Sandy found out, she'd throw him out.

Sandy Fludger

Phil's mother and Tanya's daughter, Sandy has been claiming disability benefit due to her bad back for some years. She has got out of the habit of looking for work, though she is perfectly fit for light duties, so long as they do not involve lifting, and even if she had not, there are no jobs available.

She threw out Phil's father after he beat her up when she was pregnant. Over the years, she has been trying to instill a work ethic in Phil, but it has failed, and she blames herself for his poor performance. If she knew his father was back in his life she would be horrified, and take it as a complete betrayal. She wants nothing to do with "that man" and has a restraining order in case he ever tries to come near her again.

Roberta "Bobbi" Sanger

Timothy's wife married him when she was nineteen and just starting a nursing course. Now she is nearly forty and works part-time to bring money into the family. She is loyal to her husband, and does not ask where the additional money he has been bringing into the family has come from. She is simply glad to get it. More recently Tim has taken an interest in the boys' education, and for the last year he has been backing her up on punishing failing school grades.

If she knew why he is suddenly so keen that they are properly educated (especially in languages) she would not be so happy, since Tim has decided an intelligent French speaking colleague would be a great asset negotiating with foreign dealers. And where better to find one than keeping it in the family?

Gavin "Gabby" Daniels

Named for his constant chatter and surprisingly wide mouth, Gabby is a fixture at many of the local pubs, and normally half drunk. A shabby man, he also acts as a fence for most of the local crooks. This is ideal for them because half the time he can't remember who sold him what, and the police have never managed to prove he knew the goods were stolen.

Gabby is unlikely to live a long life, as decades of drinking have begun to take their toll on his liver. He has no real friends, and is pathetically grateful to anyone who buys him a drink, even when he has a wallet full of money.

Rose Massie

Jason's much loved wife. Jason would never cheat on her, he needs her too much. Likewise he is paying for the lifestyle she always wanted and if it comes through fraud and underhanded means, well, she can live with that. Everything they own is in her name, and she is well aware that if she walked out on him she would be a very wealthy woman. She is also too sensible to dump the goose that lays the golden eggs. After realising how much money she had control over, Rose took several courses in handling finance and hired an advisor. As a result she is effectively responsible for making and saving them money on their investments through legitimate means, and she is very good at it.

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The End
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Ragged Angel Ltd
P.O. Box 37524
London
SE25 6YW

<http://www.malefex.co.uk>
malefex@malefex.co.uk